

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

Politics is naught else but
 pill-taking.

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Threepence

The Political Conference Season Opens

THREE PARTIES IN SEARCH OF VOTES

THE "silly season", as Fleet Street calls the holiday months, is over: the new political "term" has started with three Party conferences in quick succession. As we write, the Labour Party at Brighton is "lashing out" (according to the *Evening Standard*) against the Government and the Prime Minister (who has been described by Mr. Harold Wilson as "a great book-maker turned pawnbroker"), just as the Conservatives will, a week or two later at their conference, praise the Premier and "lash out" at the dangers of Labour in office. Preceding the conferences of the Big Two, was the desperate voice of Liberalism from the beaches of Southport attacking both Tory and Labour and proclaiming the need to "split the vote if this means you will unite the country". Obviously only liberalism can unite the country!

While warning his audience of the dangers of electioneering

The two major parties would get more and more absorbed with their chance of office, and pay less and less attention to the country's problems.

the Leader of the Liberals, Mr. Grimond, got so carried away that he was quite unaware of the fact that his own speech was no more than a forceful piece of party pep-talk, unequalled even by Mr. Harold Wilson on the opening day of the Labour Party conference. But it is not surprising. The Liberals under Mr. Grimond are desperate men and women.

"We have passed the point of no return. The old lifebuoys which have kept this party afloat so long are dropping astern, and in the next 10 years it is a question of 'Get on or get out,' and let us make it 'get on.'"

It was no use for Liberals to try to liberalise the Conservatives or denationalise the Labourites; a kind

of "brains trust standing on the side-lines shouting advice to Tories and Socialists alike". Mr. Grimond was, in fact, not prepared to lead a "party of eunuchs or a party which had foresworn direct political action". And his final peroration was directed to those people "who wanted to keep their hands clean of politics", from angry young men and women, up to the professional classes and business management.

Too many of them, he said, were simply the Pontius Pilates of modern life, quite ready to criticise but not willing to take the ugly decisions and take the blame for them. But the situation was too serious for anyone to stand on the side-lines. He believed that if political confidence could be restored for the future, there was nothing which could not be cured in the country's economy.

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WHAT, we wonder, are the "ugly decisions" Mr. Grimond and his angry young men would have to take if in office? Opposing "socialist solutions"—it was "partnership the workers required in industry, not nationalisation"—as well as the

Conservatives' ineffectualness in keeping in check the cost of living, Mr. Grimond plumped for a bit of Socialist controls and bit of Conservative free-for-all (and the devil . . . ?) as the Liberal approach.

If the situation got desperate controls might be unavoidable for a very short while, but Liberals would oppose their reimposition except in the direst need, because production would be retarded and inflation not cured but merely turned into new channels.

Clearly this is not a policy but political tactics, of the way the Liberals would muddle through. (After all, the Tories do not believe in controls until the situation created by the financiers forced them to curb their activities "for a very short while"! If anything Mr. Grimond said in his speech is significant it was surely the following:

the temper of a Government was even more important than its practical proposals, and it was this which had been lacking over the last six years. Only those who thought the random strokes of a chimpanzee created great art could possibly believe the spasmodic interventions of

the Governments since the war added up to a policy.

If we understand him aright by "the temper of a Government" he means the determination with which it governs. Not *less government* for the bogus heirs of radicalism; but *more government*; not *spasmodic intervention* but presumably a *firm hand*; a *laissez faire economy* with workers and bosses happy partners, but firm political control. We can sympathise with the Labour party man who cannot make sense out of this approach, but then neither do we believe that an electioneering speech ever makes much sense when transferred to the cold columns of print. In the atmosphere of the Conference Hall, aided by loud-speakers and delegates yearning for a cocktail of hope and inspiration, Mr. Grimond's criticisms of the Big Two were substitutes for a policy.

Catching Them Early

According to the following news item from the *Manchester Guardian* the Liberals of Derby have stolen a march on the Catholic Church which believes in getting its flock when they are young and tender:

The claim that he is the youngest paid-up member of the Liberal party in England has been advanced for five-week-old Tom Wigley, whose mother, Mrs. Cynthia Wigley, of Hope Street, Derby, has just paid his subscriptions to the Derby Liberal party.

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WORLD POPULATION GROWTH

Scientists of differing schools of thought vary considerably in their prophecies regarding the effects of the present rapid increase in world population. Will demand for food exceed the possible supply? Is widespread use of birth control becoming a necessity? Or

will other factors provide a (more or less) natural balance?

We publish below points raised by Dr. C. B. Goodhart at a British Association meeting and printed in "The Advancement of Science", March, 1957.

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WORLD population is now multiplying so fast that at the present rate, it is bound eventually to outgrow its food supply, however much that can be increased, and then famine and disease will intervene to prevent further popula-

tion growth . . . The only solution seems to be the immediate and universal application of a policy of deliberate family limitation, and few are so optimistic as to believe that this is either practicable or likely to be effective in time to save us from the crash.

It is important to remember, however, that population increase is primarily a biological phenomenon, and that the arguments of Malthus, though mathematically sound, are based upon the assumption that Man has some specific and constant rate of reproduction. . . .

The selective advantages of fecundity are obvious and they are particularly strong in dense populations living under unhygienic conditions and subject to acute epidemic disease and a high rate of infant mortality. Cholera and plague strike indiscriminately at rich and poor, strong and weak, alike, and where only a fraction of the children born can hope to live to rear families of their own, only the larger families will be represented in the next generation, irrespective of the quality of the individuals concerned, for small families are liable to be wiped out completely. In primitive races of pastoral nomads or hunters, however, who live widely separated under hygienic conditions, disease may be less important and the principal limiting factors will be periodical shortages of food. Here fecundity loses much of its selective advantage, compared with such other qualities as strength and intelligence, and may even become a liability (e.g. Eskimos).

. . . in many of the most advanced nations and classes . . . declining numbers certainly cannot be attributed to genetical selection by famine . . . and we must not overlook the possibility that those qualities leading to success in Man may have become genetically correlated with relatively low fecundity . . . an exceptionally good-looking and intelligent young woman has little difficulty in finding a husband . . . Attractive girls will usually marry and the fecund will have large families while the less fecund

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If Nuclear War Comes

Learning What to do in Easy Stages

The Government is planning, should another war break out, to evacuate 40 to 45 per cent. of the population of the highly industrialised areas, leaving only the able-bodied men and childless women.

Air Marshal Sir Lawrence Pendred, Midland Regional Director of Civil Defence, disclosed this to a conference of industrial civil defence officers of England, Scotland, and Wales, at Swynerton royal ordnance factory, near Stoke on Trent, yesterday. He said that, in the event of an atomic attack the Government's official view was that we should get five minutes' warning.

Sir Lawrence said that with regard to shelters, the Government would, when it considered the time proper, tell the public what it could do for itself. He claimed that a slit trench would be a secure shelter from blast and heat, even at so close a distance as three miles from a 10-megaton hydrogen bomb. This, he said, was one of the lessons learned from tests.

Sooner or later, the public would be taught about the hazard of fall-out. A popular edition of a book entitled "Nuclear Weapons", was to be published next month and would be on sale at bookstalls. Other facts would be given to the public in a householders' handbook when the Government thought the time was ripe.

The Government's intention was not

to issue the handbook yet, but to have it ready in draft form so that it could be produced in millions directly international relations became strained and war seemed closer.

Major-General G. P. D. Blacker, Chief of Staff of the Commander-in-Chief of the United Kingdom Land Forces, said the army would co-operate with the civil authorities in the event of nuclear attack. This afternoon a large scale civil defence exercise is to be staged at the Swynerton factory.

(Manchester Guardian).

This report sounds as if it must be an official hand-out. It is good to know that when the government "considered the time proper" it would tell us what we could do for ourselves apart from being roasted in a slit trench; and again that "sooner or later" we should be "taught about the hazard of fall-out" and that "other facts" would be given to the public "when the government thought the time was ripe" by means of a "householders' handbook". It sounds as exciting as a book of exotic recipes, or a "What Every Young Woman should know about Sex" type of manual.

But how thoughtful of the government to spare us the details until it is absolutely necessary. We hope the instructions as to what to do are short and easily understood. After all we shall only have five minutes warning!

Where is Vladimir Dudintsev?

AFTER Stalin's baneful influence supposedly began to wane in Russia and the more liberal atmosphere supposedly preferred by Khrushchev began to appear, Russian writers began to sip the heady wine of self-expression rather than the stale beer of social-realism-in-the-service-of-the-Party.

To tell them semi-officially that things were now different, Ilya Ehrenburg wrote a book called "The Thaw"—explaining the passing of the long frozen Winter of Stalinism and the coming of the Spring of 'liberalisation'. This was all right because it was Ehrenburg doing the explaining, and in the whole of the Soviet Union there is no cleverer explainer than Comrade Ilya, who in his day has explained the need for peace and for war, for tyranny and for the relaxing of tyranny.

But other writers were not content to leave the field to Ehrenburg alone, with his semi-official explaining. They began to explore the possibilities of greater freedom as writers, in literature, not as Soviet citizens in the service of the State.

Out of the intellectual turmoil that arose began to emerge new attitudes on the part of the writers, who dared to express criticism of the Soviet's action in Hungary, for example, and who then began to be told not to go too far. But one writer managed to get a book published which took the whole country by storm. Vladimir Dudintsev's *Not By Bread Alone* (which will undoubtedly be reviewed in FREEDOM before long) is a simple story of a young inventor struggling against bureaucracy, and whereas at first it was tolerated by the bureaucrats, it had such a wide success, aroused so much interest

and his quips the (amplified) roar of defiance by the "people" against "the arrogance of the two major parties". How heartening that "The vote belongs to the people not to any political party" must have sounded in that little world of liberals!

What have the Liberals got that the other two between them haven't? What have they to offer the people that the others haven't already tried out? Even Mr. Grimond doesn't really know why the Liberals should be preferred to the other two parties. At least it is what this extract from his report of his speech sounds like to us:

The Liberal party could not carry the day but it was a nucleus. Its policies might require to be further developed but that would come very rapidly if it could reach the position of being the alternative. He was not interested in how many seats they were going to fight—they had 150 candidates at the moment—but they would fight as many as the country demanded.

Isn't Mr. Grimond putting the cart before the horse; of wanting to be the "alternative" first and then developing the policies after? Or is it not a confirmation of the validity of the questions we have just asked, and that the Liberals are banking on being returned to power

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and got people talking so openly about bureaucracy that they quickly changed their minds.

They quickly changed their minds about liberalisation altogether when the lid blew off in Hungary, when Poland stirred, when Soviet writers began exercising their new-found freedom instead of just thanking the Party for it.

With the result that Dudintsev has disappeared. In all the Party papers, articles began to appear attacking authors, musicians, poets, historians who forgot that their first duty was to the Party, not to their art. The State, terrified at what can happen if a little freedom is allowed, is now clamping down the lid again on all free expression.

But, as Frank Barber writes in the *News Chronicle*:

. . . the really astonishing fact brought to light by Dudintsev's book is that three decades of purges and political terrorism have failed to destroy the idea of freedom and the sense of justice in the Russian people.

For three dark decades the lid was kept screwed down, but when it was lifted for a few short months, there you saw a bubbling ferment of ideas and hopes and confusions and contradictions as encouraging as anywhere in the free world.

Perhaps the intellectuals of the 'free world' will now show their concern for their fellows in the Soviet Union—for now that we can clearly see that Soviet writers are not all Party liners by conviction but by construction.

Where are the writers of the 'free world' who will lead a free-world-wide cry of 'Where is Vladimir Dudintsev?'

Three Parties in Search of Votes

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on a wave of public disgust for the other two political parties?

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NO political party or organisation however left-of-centre it may be can present itself to the public with a "policy" which clearly differentiates it from that of any other party or organisation, so long as it proposes to implement its policies through the existing State and governmental machinery. Truer still, we believe, is this assertion when the existing economic and financial set-up is the basis of these policies! In such circumstances policies may perhaps differ in details which the party propagandists magnify into "an issue" at election time, but viewed objectively these differences only serve to underline the common ground which makes the change of government a no more serious interruption in the daily life of a country than the death of a king or president. In saying this we do not underestimate the influence such "details" in policy have on the elector when it comes to voting. This does not disprove our argument, it only strengthens it! For, it means that a swing in the votes is brought about by details and not on basic differences between the parties.

It is widely conceded that if there were a general election to-morrow Labour would win. This foregone conclusion is based (apart from the general assumption that a change of government might be for the good—though objectively there is no reason why it should not be for the worse!) on the Rent Bill introduced by the present government which hits more people than it favours among those who voted Conservative, and which the Labour Party proposes to amend if it is returned at the next Elections. Important as this issue is in the day to day problems of our lives it is surely a proof of the superficiality of the public's approach to life itself and to the individual's understanding of self-interest when an election can be decided over an issue such as the Rent Bill.

To Labour's vote-catching Ace, Lord Hailsham could well reply for the Tories with the Joker of Tax-free overtime and sixpence off the price of cigarettes, and thereby create a real dilemma for millions of electors which could only be resolved by calculations to determine which Party best represented the "people's interests". And on this basis the public preference for one party might be decided by a saving of a few shillings per family per annum!

We are not trying to be facetious though we admit to not being able to take these Party conferences seriously. They remind us of the market place in which three eloquent salesmen are trying to talk us into believing that the very ordinary tin of baked beans each is offering is really the most exquisite *Harcots blancs a la Maitre-d'Hotel, Cassoulet de Toulouse* and *Harcots rouges a l'Etuvé* respectively.

We might be forgiven for being seduced by the salesman's eloquence and the colourful labels, into sampling not one but all three tins. But to go on conference after conference, election after election trying their tins and expecting them to contain anything but baked beans (red, white, or green) does not invite forgiveness but makes the testing of one's brains imperative!

HEALTH IN A SANE SOCIETY

(Continued from previous issue)

THE relationship between poverty and ill-health may appear obvious to most of us, as it did to the early Socialists, but this depended on crude observation and was not so easily proved. It was argued by those that would not see that heredity and good breeding accounted for the difference between the physical standards of the poor and the nobility. The high death rates of the former were explained away by 'natural selection'. Poor living conditions and disease were said to be the results of ignorance stupidity and low morals. It was only between the wars that the first really indisputable statistical evidence was produced and John Hewetson has summarised much of it in this booklet "Ill-health, Poverty and the State". Ironically and significantly the true prevalence of ill-health was first dramatically revealed by examination of recruits for the army. In 1918, a survey of over 2 million examinations revealed that of every nine men of military age in Britain, presumably the healthiest section of the community "only three were fit and healthy, two were on an infirm plane of health and strength, three were incapable of undergoing more than a very moderate degree of exertion and the remaining one was a chronic invalid". School surveys also revealed a sad state of affairs. In 1927, 87% of children in a large survey showed some sign of rickets, 83% showed abnormalities of the ears, nose and throat, 94% had decayed teeth, and so on. At the Peckham Health Centre, of 1,530 men, women and children of a relatively well-off group only 9% were normal. Of the remainder 83% had something wrong but were doing nothing about it, since they were actually unaware that they were less than perfectly healthy. This indicates the low standard which most people accepted in matters of health. We have got so used to seeing ill-health around us that we no longer recognise it. In the poorer districts, however, it is obvious that people are pale, weak, tired and spiritless. Cosmetics hide many sins of society.

Once interest was aroused by the poor quality cannon-fodder the relationship between poverty and ill-health was quickly established. Statistical breakdown of the mortality rates published

by the Registrar-General into five economic groups—Professionals, Clerks and Shopkeepers, Skilled Manual Workers, and Unskilled Workers—showed that the mortality was 23% higher in the unskilled workers than in the professional classes. But for children the differences were fantastic. In 1930 to 1932 the infant mortality of the lowest group was five times that of the well-to-do. This figure is really grotesque. Richard Titmuss calculated that "54,000 deaths would not have occurred in the single year 1936 if the standard of health reached by the Home Counties applied to all England and Wales". And the Home Counties standard of health was very far short of our Utopian concept. Poverty must have been responsible for many hundreds of thousands of deaths per annum in this country alone. And when one includes other poorer countries in the Far East and Africa, this crime against humanity is incredible. And these are death figures which give us no indication of the immense misery, pain and suffering endured by surviving men, women and children living in conditions of poverty.

How does poverty produce ill-health? There are many factors in poverty which have been blamed, e.g. over-crowding, overwork, lack of exercise, excessive worry, ignorance and poor diet. They probably all play some part but poor nutrition has been shown to dwarf all the others in importance. Obviously tuberculosis will spread more easily if a number of people occupy the same bed, but the poverty which reduces a family to living in one room invariably also reduces it to a state of malnutrition.

In fact when poverty descends, food is usually the first to suffer since rent, taxes and insurances must be paid by law, and fuel, light and clothing make obvious and immediate demands on the budget. It is only when these items have been disposed of that the residue of the budget can be used for food, the most important single need of man. This residue may often be too small for many

families to obtain a physiologically adequate diet even if the most economical foods were bought and most efficiently prepared by a dietician, which is seldom the case. Sir John Boyd Orr, whose figures were accepted somewhat reluctantly by the Ministry of Health in 1936, showed that a diet completely adequate for health was reached at an income level about that of 50% of the population. Thus more than 50% of the population were undernourished. The most unfortunate aspect was that the families who were worst off were those with children. Now Sir John Boyd Orr was rightly concerned with the diet necessary for full and vigorous health, that is, a minimum diet for maximum health. This is much higher than the level of diet necessary simply to keep people alive and sufficient to prevent gross disease, which was the previous standard, that is, a maximum diet for minimal health. The majority of people probably exist somewhere in between, in a state of subnutrition though not actually ill. Many do not recognise this state of subnutrition rather than malnutrition but the proof of the pudding has literally lain in the eating. Controlled feeding experiments have proved the existence of this state of subnutrition in people whose diets have long been regarded as ample. Dr. Corry Mann demonstrated that the addition of a pint of milk per day for a year to the diet of a group of schoolboys increased the average height by one inch, the weight by over three pounds, improved mental and physical performances, and reduced the incidence of illnesses such as colds, coughs and chilblains. More dramatic were the results of giving food supplements to expectant mothers in South Wales, after improved obstetric services and educational propaganda had had almost no effect. The maternal death rate was cut to one quarter and the infant mortality to one half of what it was in the group that was not supplemented. When the experiment was concluded the feeding scheme was discontinued! In another experiment the

army proved that in three months 24 out of 33 recruits who had been rejected as unfit for service could be accepted, after being exposed to good food, rest, fresh air and exercise. The cost of the extra food was 7/6 per head per week. A small sum to pay for health, yet just beyond the reach of so many.

Thus, by a blunderbuss technique of biological deprivation, mainly nutritional, capitalist societies have, in the past, maintained large, dependent, apathetic working populations. But the method is obviously rather slap-happy. The balance is rather precarious so that periods of relative plenty alternate with periods of depression, extensive unemployment and extreme poverty. Wars take their natural place in this economic chaos and cause further devastation, accentuating poverty and malnutrition.

Even when the general dampening effect appeared to be operating satisfactorily, there were for too many individual variations. The results lacked scientific uniformity. For a variety of reasons individuals persisted in dropping below the level of subnutrition into a state of real malnutrition which crippled their activity and usefulness. Many fell prey to severe physical diseases, ranging from the true deficiency states such as rickets and pellagra to bacterial infections such as tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, pneumonia and gastro-enteritis. Chronic bronchitis and early degenerative diseases took their toll. Even cancer had a higher incidence amongst the poor. Occupational hazards, particularly exposure to silica dust, and industrial accidents were another great source of ill-health, much of it preventable, but disregarded because of the obsession to keep production costs down.

H. M. Vernon has calculated that the contributions of heredity, occupation and social environment to physical ill-health were 10%, 25% and 65% respectively. In a sane society we could thus aim to eliminate 90% of organic disease.

(To be continued)

Authority and Sovereignty

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precisely, are the conditions which allow the combination of co-operative activity and individual sovereignty? How far is it true that the formation of anarchist groups depends upon the activity of a single person, however 'unauthoritarian' in the popular sense? Opposition to the principle of leadership does not mean that anarchist movements lack leaders in the sense of persons who are recognised by other anarchists as playing a special role: we know, for example, who to turn to for a more or less 'authoritative' exposition of anarchist theory. How do such leaders interpret their role? And what effect do they have on the stability of the group? In many associations the stability of the group over a period of more than one generation is achieved by the institutionalisation of power. The personal power of the mortal leader and initiator of the group is replaced by the vesting of authority not in a person but in a role which certain individuals are designated to perform. The leader is then obeyed not because of his personal power or ability (which may be negligible) but because of the authority the group has vested in his role. The general impression that an outsider has of anarchist groups is one in which there exist leaders exercising personal influence. How do these groups survive the death or withdrawal of such leaders? In other associations the period during which personal power is transformed into the authority of office-holders is frequently marked by crises. Are similar crises met with in anarchist groups and is the instability of some of these groups due to the refusal of their members to institutionalise power when the 'natural' leaders have left?

These are some of the questions which suggest themselves to someone who is prepared to accept a broader definition of politics than the traditional one. If a serious attempt were made to answer them, I should be surprised if anarchists in the process did not discover facts which both illuminate and perhaps also modify their own theories. G.O.

THE BUSMENS' HOOLIGANISM

How Bad Was It?

THE correspondence between Philip Sansom, G.G. and N.H. concerning the recent bus strike seems to hinge on the alleged excesses committed by irresponsible striking workmen. Like Philip Sansom, G.G. and N.H., I also accepted the stories printed in the national newspapers as containing a modicum of truth and in numerous discussions attempted to justify the action of the men on strike by the usual analogy of men in war fighting not only a common enemy but also traitors within their own ranks. As for the reported cases of violence . . . I said that they were unavoidable but in all probability exaggerated by a biased press. My hearers usually replied that they were sympathetic to the men on strike but the attack on children, etc., etc., filled them with horror. This week I received a copy of the official journal of the Transport & General Workers' Union, Vol. XXXVIII and an article on page 7 makes salutary reading for all of us who smugly imagine that we are immune from the wiles of the propagandist. I can do no better than to quote chunks of this article by Frank Coyle.

"Our investigation was thorough, and our facts were obtained from—among others—the police, employers and those who drove and operated passenger vehi-

cles through the strike. In regions Nos. 2 and 3—that is that great tract of territory that stretches from West Surrey to Land's End—there were no incidents at all; the conduct of the strikers was quiet and orderly. The local press and police commented favourably on the orderly conduct of the strikers; so they did in the Derby district, and in Region No. 10 (from the Wash to the Humber). And here is what happened in some of the places where incidents did occur. In North Wales (Region No. 13) a lorry was carrying children to school; it was stopped by a striker. However the nearest pickets were seven miles away and the striker, who stopped the lorry, merely wanted to warn the driver that the lorry was carrying too many children for safety. The local Press who first reported this as an act of aggression later gave the right angle to the story. In Liverpool, a passenger coach was waiting outside Lime Street Station and when the driver was asked for his clearance pass he struck one of the two men comprising the picket. The other man went to the assistance of his mate and soon afterwards the picket left the scene. The local Press reported 'Liverpool Coach Driver Kicked'. Pickets stopped a bus carrying hospital workers and it was reported locally that a crowbar was used as a weapon. Inquiries revealed that the bus was certainly stopped but allowed to pass when it was established that only hospital workers were being carried. One of our members was carrying a bicycle pump after using it on his bicycle—no crowbar was present. In Edinburgh a number of our members, acting as pickets, went to interrogate the driver of a coach. The driver of the coach drove into them, all jumped clear except one, who held onto the radiator and was carried a mile. Again, in Edinburgh, pickets approached a driver of a bus; the police arrived and one of them boarded the bus. The pickets started to walk away and as they did so the driver ran into them; one man was slightly injured. In Edinburgh also, pickets deflated tyres of two buses which were conveying workers to a factory in Bathgate. The driver of another bus failed to stop when approached by a picket, and ran into two men and a girl who was injured.

"Allo—a group of strikers approached a garage in Clackmannan as extra runs had been made by several of the buses being operated from there. The owner and several others armed themselves with pitch-forks and other weapons, and then threatened the strikers, police arrived and everyone dispersed. On one occasion a brick was thrown through the window of our Liverpool office. That was certainly not done by strikers. There were altogether about 30 instances in which strikers actually took aggressive action. In about eight of these a brick, or stone, was thrown. In each instance it was a single act, nothing like a volley was heard of during the strike; in the remainder of the instances, tyres were deflated or petrol tanks interfered with. There were no instances more serious than this."

A purist might ask, how do I know that these versions are correct, and I could only answer that I do not know.

But this I do know, and that is that in any strike the blackleg can command the support of the whole of the upper, middle, and certain sections, of the lower classes. The police are there for his protection and behind them the military. The press will plead his case and the employer and his wife will regard him as their social and intellectual equal. For once in his dim life he will be accorded the dignity that will be denied to him when he is no longer of service to them. As for the strikers standing in little groups in the gutter . . . they are beyond the pale . . . may my sympathies and support always be with them.

London ARTHUR MOYSE.

Some Are More Equal Than Others

VATICAN CITY, SUNDAY.

The Pope said to-day that men and women are equal.

God had created them "as persons equal in rights and dignity."

But, he went on, a woman must subordinate herself to her husband.

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT!	
Deficit on Freedom	£780
Contributions received	£534
DEFICIT	£246
September 20 to September 26	
London: Various Anon. 2/3, Capetown: M.L. £1; Hitchin: H.E.H. 5/-; Bletchley: R.S.* 2/6; London: J.S.* 3/-; London: Hyde Park Sympathisers 1/6; Los Angeles Group: per A.S. £8/15/0.	
Total	10 9 3
Previously acknowledged	524 1 0
1957 TOTAL TO DATE	£534 10 3
*Indicates regular contributor.	
Fire Fund	
TOTAL TO DATE	£382 3 3
GIFTS OF BOOKS: London: K; London: C.F.	

Parents, Teachers and the Tender Trap

"The most fruitful and far-reaching development of education in our generation will come as a result of conceiving of it not only as a matter of psychology but also as the core of social and political philosophy; and of regarding education as the fundamental principle, and educational institutions as the essential material of concrete social organisation. The organisation of communities around their educational institutions is capable of universal application in any society and at any stage of culture. It is also the ultimate form of social organisation."—HENRY MORRIS.
(Paper read at RIBA, 15/5/1956).

AT the risk of boring you with still more snippets from the misgivings of American sociologists, I would like to go back to the contrast between the educational panacea of Human Relations as offered with so much reasonable conviction by Ashley Montagu, and the shortcomings of this doctrine in practice in America noted by David Riesman. Dr. Montagu in *The Direction of Human Development*, writes of the coming together of parents and teachers in the complementary task of developing the potentialities of the child:

"The parents would contribute what the teachers ought to know, and the teachers would contribute what the parents ought to know, for the benefit of the child as well as for the benefit of all concerned. The teaching the child receives at home and the teaching it receives at school must be joined and unified. The teaching of the elementary skills of reading, writing and arithmetic is important, but not nearly as important as the most important of all skills—human relations."

But David Riesman in one of the essays in his book *Individualism Reconsidered* makes this comment on the situation of the children of 'Crestwood Heights', (the Canadian suburb studied in the book of that name by J. R. Seeley, R. A. Sim and E. W. Loosley):

"Their parents want to know how they have fared at school: they are constantly comparing them, judging them in school aptitude, popularity, what part they have in the school play; are the boys sissies? the girls too fat? All the school anxieties are transferred to the home and vice versa, partly because the parents, college graduates mostly, are intelligent and concerned with education. After school there are music lessons, skating lessons, riding lessons, with mother as chauffeur and scheduler. In the evening, the children go to a dance at school for which the parents have groomed them, while the parents go to a Parent-Teacher Association meeting for which the children, directly or indirectly, have groomed them, where they are addressed by a psychiatrist who advises them to be warm and relaxed in handling their children! They go home and eagerly and warmly ask their returning children to tell them everything that happened at the dance, making it clear by their manner that they are sophisticated and cannot easily be shocked. As Professor Seeley describes matters, the school, in this community operates a 'gigantic factory for the production of relationships'."

This really frightening description pulled me up with a jerk. Accustomed to think of parent-teacher co-operation as unequivocally a Good Thing, I had never considered its possibilities as a tender trap, a well-intentioned conspiracy against the child. For where home and school are two separate worlds a child unhappy at home might find a means of escape in the different life of school, and a child who is miserable at school might find consolation in the atmosphere of home. But if home and school are

'joined and united', all avenues of escape are closed. After all, how many children of your acquaintance enjoy discussing their school life with their parents or their home life with their teachers? Is not the plurality of environment one of the child's means of defending itself against the prying omnipotence of the adult world?

IT was almost with relief that I realised that the basis of my support for the idea of parent-teacher associations was not educational theory but social theory—the social theory of anarchism. For the anarchist, seeking functional, as opposed to political, answers to social needs, and contrasting the social principle with the political principle, sees in the state's control of education a usurpation of a social function. (Historically of course, the Education Act of 1870 didn't 'usurp' anybody's function, but if you accept the conception of an inverse relationship between the state and society—the strength of one resulting from the weakness of the other—you can see how the social organisation of popular education was, so to speak, atrophied in advance, by its political organisation. That this has not been the disaster—though some would say it has—that anarchist thinkers like Godwin predicted, has been due to the local diffusion of control, the divergent aims of teachers and the resilience of children).

Functionally, the administration of the school is the concern of parents and teachers, and if we really seek a society of autonomous free associations, we must see parent-teacher associations as the kind of body whose eventual and 'natural' function is to take over the schools from the Ministry, the County Councils, the Directors, Inspectors, Managers and Governors who, in a society dominated by the political principle are inevitably their controllers. I do not know whether schools so administered would be any better or any worse than they are at present, but I do believe that a 'self-regulating' society would run its schools that way. Among privately controlled schools in this country which exemplify this kind of organisation, are, for instance, Burgess Hill School, owned by a Friendly Society of parents and teachers, and King Alfred School, governed by a society of people interested in modern educational methods and administered by an advisory council of pupils and staff. I have not heard of any parent-teacher associations in the ordinary school system which aspire to such a function, though if they develop with anything like the intensity of the Home and School Association at Crestwood Heights, one can imagine the members reflecting after a time on whether their own intense 'participation' had not rendered the usual complicated and expensive bureaucracy of school administration superfluous. One can also imagine that if the responsibilities of such associations extended to the functional questions of actually running the school, there would be a lessening of that dreadful overconcern about the 'normality' of the child which is such a depressing feature of Crestwood Heights, where children are regarded as cases "the moment they lag behind the highly formalized routines of their mates or show signs of distinctive individuality".

IN this country the pioneer of parent-teacher co-operation was the Home and School Committee of the New Edu-

cation Fellowship. Another body, the National Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations was founded last year. Some of these associations have sprung up in a negative way to resist, and in some cases successfully avert 'closing down' orders for schools. In the case of one independent school in London (St. Paul's Junior School, Hammersmith) due to close down because the existing building could not economically be kept in repair while the trustees could not find the money for a new building, the parents successfully raised loans for it announcing last year that they "would accept financial and educational responsibility for a new school". On the other hand, at our local primary school, due to be closed by the LCC as part of their educational re-organisation, a parents' association was formed, thirty years too late, to resist the measure, but proved successful only in making a handsome present to the retiring headmistress! Another local school makes clear its opinion on the proper place of parents with a notice at the entrance: "Parents are requested not to accompany their children beyond this gate".

Other associations have seen their function in improving the school's equipment—providing a film-projector, a record-player, stage-lighting. At secondary schools in Hertford and Hatfield, the Parent-Teacher Associations have built swimming pools. Having completed the swimming pool at Morgan's Walk School, Hertford, the Association is turning its attention to the provision of a library.

Some of the results and the pitfalls of this kind of organisation are described in *The Times* (16/9/57). The staff at one school reported that

"the progress of several children in arithmetic was being impeded by well-intentioned efforts to help them at home. At a series of evening meetings, the staff worked through specimen arithmetic papers with the fathers and mothers, explaining the particular methods in use at the school. Similarly, the headmistress of a village school introduced italic handwriting, a move which appeared to perturb some parents. As a result of discussion several mothers became interested and asked her to arrange evening classes so that they might learn it for themselves.

"Formal association between parents and teachers does face certain difficulties. On occasion it may provide a

hunting-ground for the committee-minded man or woman, and a trap for the excellent teacher who may be less adept at committee work. Another criticism is that it does not necessarily bring in the type of parent with whom contact is most needed; for example those whose children present particularly difficult problems, perhaps because of their home background".

THERE are plenty of indications—the formation last year of the National Federation—the recent long correspondence in the *Manchester Guardian* on Parental Apathy—Dinah Brook's articles in *The Observer* on Parents in Action, that the movement for bringing parents closer into the life of the school is continually gaining strength in this country. Does this mean that with all our good intentions we are on our way to Crestwood Heights? David Riesman was shocked when, after his description of that suburban community, one of his colleagues declared that children were worse off there than they had been under the *ancien régime*. Historical amnesia had blinded him, as it blinds many now-fashionable critics of progressive education, to the brutalities and savageries in the treatment of children a hundred or so years ago. Then children were harnessed to the engine of society with often little concern for their own development. Many were too frightened or too cowed to be anxious. And he goes on (soft pedalling the economic background and the contradictory aims of the Crestwood Heights commuters described in last week's FREEDOM) to attribute the pervading anxieties of the parents and children of Crestwood Heights to the fact that, in their way, its inhabitants are frontiersmen, explorers:

"Whereas the explorers of the last century moved to the frontiers of production and opened fisheries, mines, and mills, the explorers of this century seem to me increasingly to be moving to the frontiers of consumption. They are opening up new forms of inter-personal understanding, new ways of using the home as a 'plant' for leisure, new ways of using the school as a kind of community centre, as the chapel of a secular religion perhaps".

This conclusion is a reminder that beyond the *impasse* of Crestwood Heights, the changing relationships between parents and teachers, between par-

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will do their best and will certainly leave some descendants. Unattractive but highly fecund girls will be less likely to marry, but those that do will have plenty of children. . . . However, the group that is both unattractive and infecund will be at a double disadvantage and so will tend to be under-represented in future generations. Consequently in each generation, owing to the elimination of this last group, we would expect to find that the mean fertility of nubile and attractive mothers should be below that of the less attractive. . . . Using similar arguments we would expect that most other human characteristics leading to success in life will become genetically associated with lower fecundity, quite apart from the fact that in more advanced communities low fertility in itself usually results in a higher standard of living. . . .

. . . since artificial feeding is now perfectly satisfactory, selection against low milk yield has ceased [and] a considerable number of civilised women are unable to feed their own babies. . . . In less advanced peoples, on the other hand, the only children to survive infancy are those whose mothers did have an adequate milk flow. . . . So also, if selection for the highest fecundity is replaced, we would expect to find a fall in the average fecundity of the population, as is in fact seen in advanced races with low mortality. . . .

There is another important argument in favour of our suggestion that the selective disadvantage of lower fecundity is compensated by other characters of high survival value associated with it, and that is in the inheritance of intelligence. . . . it has been suggested that since the less intelligent seem to be the most prolific this means that the average level of intelligence of the population will be falling [but] observations. . . . failed to show any sign at all of the expected fall in mean intelligence. This has been considered a very puzzling and unexpected result, but it is puzzling only

on the assumption that the fact that the largest families are to be found among less intelligent people means that as a group the less intelligent will leave proportionately more descendants in each generation. . . .

If intelligent people, though fewer of them have really large families, more often marry and have small families than do the less intelligent, they may well leave as a group as many descendants as the less intelligent, of whom a few have the largest families but a higher proportion leave no children at all. . . .

[Again] we know that more or less complete sterility is surprisingly common, affecting perhaps 10 per cent. of married couples, besides those people who never intend to marry and who must be considered psychologically infecund. Such infecundity is generally intrinsic and not due to injury or disease, and it is therefore likely to be at least partly conditioned by inherited congenital factors. Since selection against infecundity is absolute, and stronger than for many rare and harmful though not actually lethal genes, how could any genes responsible for it possibly occur at anything like their present level in the population unless the lines that tend to produce infecund individuals had some important compensating advantage as compared with other lines in which the incidence of infecundity was lower?

It is to be expected. . . that at first when new medical techniques are introduced into formerly disease-ridden and fecund populations, there should be a rapid rise in numbers, but as the less fecund lines begin to benefit from the new situation, and increase, the mean fertility should fall and the population should taper off to a new position of equilibrium. . . .

[Thus] it is at least conceivably possible that prosperity may provide its own solution to the problem by being the cause of a natural lowering of the rate of increase of the population.

ents and children, between children and teachers, and between work and leisure, can lead to an entirely different conception of the school, "calculated", as Godwin wrote (in 1797!) "entirely to change the face of education. The whole formidable apparatus which has hitherto attended it, is swept away. Strictly speaking, no such characters are left upon the scene as either preceptor or pupil. . . ." Or as Bakunin envisaged,

"They will be schools no longer; they will be popular academies, in which neither pupils nor masters will be known, where the people will come freely to get, if they need it, free instruction, and in which, rich in their own experience, they will teach in their turn many things to the professors who shall bring them knowledge which they lack".

A number of experiments foreshadow this changed school in one or more aspects—the Pioneer Health Centre at Peckham, the Cambridgeshire Village Colleges, the Leicestershire County Colleges, Teddy O'Neill's school where "time-tables and programmes play an insignificant part, for the children come back when school hours are over, and with them, their parents, and older brothers and sisters", or A. S. Neill's "community of children and adults". The school as an extension of the family, as a family centre in which, according to the needs of the individual, the cohesion of the family could be heightened or its tensions loosened, as a source of autonomy and reciprocity, as a functional 'plant' for learning through childhood and adult life, as a centre for the exchange of skills and experiences—all might flow from the association of parents and teachers if it is pursued beyond the tender trap of Crestwood Heights.

C.W.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

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

LECTURE - DISCUSSIONS

OCT. 6—John Smith on LIVING IN SOCIETY

OCT. 13—Donald Room on FREEDOM & OWNDOM.

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London Anarchist Group Meetings (see Announcements Column)

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