

In this Issue:

The Prisoner - p. 2

Open Letter to Bertrand Russell - p. 3

Scuttling 'George Cross Island' - p. 4

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Free thought is a refusal of thought to be controlled by any authority but its own."

—J. B. BURY.

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Threepence

DO WORKERS WANT PEACE ?

THE extent to which our national economy is involved with and is kept going by the rearmament programme is demonstrated by the flutter which is being caused by the coincidence of three areas under the British Government having 'problems' which depend upon rearmament for their solution.

In Malta dismissals from the naval dockyard, and in the Isle of Wight the loss of a contract by the Saunders-Roe aircraft firm, have threatened thousands of workers and their families with unemployment and want. In Scotland the reverse has happened. The Government's proposal to create guided missile bases along the East Coast (pointing Russia-wards of course) for the accommodation and convenience of the American 'defence' forces, has opened up prospects of employment in an area with a higher than average percentage of workless.

The pretty question then raises itself: how much are British workers interested in the 'peace' policies of their leaders? Bearing in mind that every political party finds it politically necessary to declare itself the most peace-loving and the one which can best resolve the tensions with Russia, and thus bring about an end to the arms race—what are they telling the electorate about the effects upon the national economy that disarmament will bring about?

No Political Suicide

They cannot tell them anything. None of the three parties in Britain have the slightest intention of doing anything to interfere with the capitalist mode of production and distribution, with its insistence upon 'Export or Die'. One of the most profitable export industries is the armaments industry—including aircraft and, shortly, missiles—and with Russia muscling in on what were traditionally British markets, like Egypt, there isn't a politician of status in the country who would be prepared to commit political suicide by even suggesting any unilateral cutback in 'orthodox' armaments.

With Aneurin Bevan calling for H-Bomb apparel for British foreign secretaries, there is no significant section of any major party doing more than call for yet another 'Sum-

MISSILE MANIA

THE aircraft industry, 97 per cent. of which is in California, is now the largest private employer in America—a work force of nearly 1,000,000 people and still growing.

Last year's sales figure—9,496 million dollars—was topped only twice during the World War II and 75 per cent. of the goods went to the Defence Department, chiefly the Air Force.

The profits are fat. There are many Wall Street brokers who deal only in the aircraft industry; and some now who deal only in missiles. . . .

. . . the aircraft missile industry works hand-in-glove with the Air Force and runs a continuous propaganda campaign. The public relations men selling air-power theories around Los Angeles have long since displaced the Hollywood Press agents.

On first impressions, a visitor to the U.S. to-day might be convinced that the nation was on the brink of war.

Maps portray the likely route of "the enemy." Articles frankly discuss Russia as that "enemy."

—BRUCE ROTHWELL in News Chronicle, 17/12/57.

mit' conference to try and talk Krushchev into an agreement to ban H-Bombs all round. Economically speaking, this is a feasible possibility, since the numbers of the personnel involved in H-Bomb manufacture must be relatively small, and could fairly be swung over to the more peaceful side of atomic development.

Where Will They Work?

But what are the aircraft workers to do? Where are the workers in munitions, tanks and guns going to find alternative employment? Not in civil aircraft, for the Bristol Britannia is now going to be Britain's only long-range airliner and the major plane manufacturers intend co-operating in the production of medium range aircraft—and such rationalisation usually means less jobs, not more. Nor in the motor car industry, where redundancy, through (a) shrinking markets and (b) automation has been a problem for the last two years.

It is fashionable to blame Mr. Dulles and his brinkmanship for the rigidity of American foreign policy. This naïve 'personalising', however, overlooks the interests which Mr. Dulles has to represent. A few weeks back the News Chronicle printed a surprisingly revealing article (albeit in an obscure position) demonstrating the interest of the booming American aircraft industry, now madly developing rockets and missiles, in preventing any developments in foreign policy which would lessen demand for their products.

The old story of the merchants of death, and from there one goes on to castigate the blood-thirsty plutocratic war-mongering capitalists preparing to drown the workers of the world in blood.

On the Gravy Train

But alas for the concept of the sturdy worker standing shoulder-to-

shoulder with his class-brother of other lands. In the boom-towns of California the American aircraft worker is on the gravy train, and anyone who suggests any halt in the armament drive is a dirty Red and what's more is threatening the employment of the good American aircraft worker.

And in Britain? Similar capitalist merchants of death have their vested interests in the armament drive. And the British working class also. In the Isle of Wight nearly 2,000 workers in the Saunders-Roe works are going to be sacked because the new German Luftwaffe chose to buy the American Starfighter instead of the SR177.

We are sure there are workers in Saunders-Roe to-day who worked hard and patriotically during the war making planes to destroy the Luftwaffe (and German homes) and who believed Churchill's promise of no more German rearmament for fifty years once the war was won. Now they are put into a position of maybe having to give up their homes because the Luftwaffe didn't buy their wonderful rocket fighter.

Whining to the Government

And what do the workers of Saunders-Roe do? Do they breathe a sigh of relief that now they haven't got to supply the Luftwaffe? Do they now think in terms of switching over to the production of peaceful goods? of kitchen equipment or prefabricated buildings, or any other products for which an aircraft firm is suitable?

They do not. For one thing they do not think in constructive terms because they have no say in their work and have never fought for control of production. So they send their union officials whining to the Government to ask them please to give them another contract for war-

planes to enable them to keep up the payments on the telly, the car and the house.

Won't someone please tell these workers that one hydrogen bomb would practically knock the Isle of Wight right under the oily waters of the Solent? And won't somebody please tell them that armament races are preparation for war—and that if they really cared for their wives and kids they would get them as far away from naval and aircraft installations as possible and would themselves have nothing to do with armament production?

They'll go Sky-high

Whores in boom-towns always prosper and the armament workers of America, Britain and Russia are enjoying prosperity to-day. But if ever the products of their well-paid labour are put to use, the security to which they cling so pathetically will go sky-high in a mushroom cloud along with themselves, their wives and children. Should that ever happen, those who take the opportunity to pull out now may live to thank the Luftwaffe for not buying the SR177, although we must admit that, so efficiently do the aircraft workers and their allies in armaments do their work, we do not see how anyone in Britain could survive if their products are ever fully put to the test.

Morals and Missiles Don't Mix!

WE wonder if the Scottish Nationalists will stage an effective protest against the proposed missile sites to be built in East Scotland with the same energy and determination they exercised when stealing a slab of rock from Westminster? They now have an issue of some substance into which they can get their teeth and, according to a few reports from Scotland, outraged protests greeted the first disclosures indicating the Government's intentions. We await developments, however, with more than a little scepticism which is not at all lessened by the resolution passed by the Scottish executive committee of the Labour Party condemning the Government's Paris decision to build missile launching sites in Scotland. The Scottish Labour Party claims that it is not so concerned with the whereabouts of missile sites as with the Government's foreign policy and the reluctance "to hold talks at the summit first".

The National Union of Mine-

workers supports the Labour Party's resolution, but the Scottish Trade Union Congress which holds a meeting of its economic committee to-day (Monday 6th), has stated that the resolution was "rather premature" and "takes a much closer examination than we have had". The President, Mr. William Mowbray, in one of those "statesmanlike" observations calculated to make an impression, has stated: "If it is established that it is in the country's needs, I see no particular reason why we should protest against the sites being put in Scotland". Mr. Mowbray may well be a patriot and feel that sites for destructive weapons (making targets out of areas where they might be located), best serve the interests of the country. But there is a much more pressing and immediate reason why the leaders of the TUC in Scotland are not condemning missile sites immediately and rallying to support the Labour Party's resolution.

In the areas where the missile sites are likely to be built there is considerable unemployment. The argument is that eighteen months or two years of work on these sites would solve the immediate problem of many unemployed. But this can only be a temporary measure and is an easy way out for the trade union leaders whose jobs after all depend upon the strength of a paid up trade union membership. One can understand six thousand unemployed men on the Aberdeenshire coast anxious to find work so that they can feed their families, and we suppose it is too much to expect them to take a moral attitude to the nature of the work offered. This is depressing enough, but so is the inevitable expedient adopted by official groups to the whole problem of capitalism, war, unemployment and politics.

There is no satisfactory answer to the problems thrown up by capitalism as long as our economy is guided by the profit motive. The threat of war is inevitable as long as our social system functions by the way of power politics and narrow national interests.

We do not expect socialists, trade union leaders or conservatives to advocate an anarchical form of social relationships, but once in a while we would appreciate an honest statement from "our leaders" which goes further than the usual clichés: things are going to be difficult; we must tighten our belts; make sacrifices, etc., as if by doing all these we

(continued at foot of previous col.)

First Shots in the Diplomatic War

WHATEVER else 1958 has in store for us—and in the main it will not differ much in its broad outline from what was served up in 1957—it seems certain that we are in for a bumper year so far as diplomatic activity is concerned. Mr. Macmillan's parting shot, on the eve of his departure, for six weeks, to warmer climes, has given the Press something to chatter about after the Xmas lull. 1958 will almost certainly be a "Summit Meeting" year, and the coming weeks will be used to condition public opinion to "want" such a meeting, so that, when eventually it is held, some will cherish the illusion that Summit Talks were the result of public pressure. In a "democracy" there is nothing more reassuring than the idea that the government represents the will of the people, an illusion, the maintenance of which, is the bread and butter of politicians no less than ignorance is the health of organised religion!

Mr. Bevan whose present concern to be first on the band-waggon is as great, as formerly it was to be the enfant terrible of the Labour Party, has already expressed himself on the topic for 1958 in last week's Tribune in an article with the unequivocal title, "Yes, There Must be a Summit Talk". In his opinion Bulganin's letters were "open diplomacy

tactics" addressed "more to the people of the West than to the governments" and the "obvious intention was to create a public opinion favourable to the Russian initiative". For, as Mr. Bevan points out

It is true that letters written in general terms are not suitable instruments for reaching diplomatic agreement. They are not intended as such.

He believes that Marshal Bulganin resorted to open letters because private ones sent at the time of the preparations for the Anglo-French coup in Egypt "proved ineffectual". He then does some routine political thinking for a couple of columns and to the question "What should be the character of the reply to the Russian advances?" he replies:

In my view it should combine both methods; that is, private preparations leading to a "Summit" conference. The date of the conference should be fixed beforehand. The diplomats would thus have a target date to which to work. This would also discipline their efforts.

At the same time we could all rest assured that the talks would come above ground on a known date and in a way which would make it possible to ascertain the behaviour of our respective representatives.

Less than this will not content the peoples of the world who are sick with prolonged anxiety and deeply troubled

with the thought that the possibilities of ensuring peace are not being effectively explored.

And to think that these mealy mouthed platitudes are "World Copyright Reserved"!

What emerges from Mr. Bevan's article is not that he believes the voice of the people should replace that of government and the professional diplomats, but that he, like Bulganin, obviously wants to use public opinion as an instrument in the political struggle. But when we

Continued on p. 3

would eventually solve all the economic and social difficulties.

In short, we do not expect anything of any value from professional leaders but while millions of other people do we can look forward to blood, sweat, toil and tears. Scotland will get her missile launching bases, some people will eat well again and fewer still will enjoy the greater privileges which capitalist enterprise offers. The possibility of self-destruction which may result from short term policies seems to bother them very little. Why does it bother us? Because we are interested in living. Not just existing until our Government or some other government decides it is time for us to die.

PEOPLE AND IDEAS

LOOKING FOR A FUTURE

TWO gatherings addressed by distinguished scientists looking into the future, but there the resemblance ends. One (reported in *The Observer* for 24/11/57) was held in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York: "A few of its acres were hired one day this week by the Seagram Liquor Corporation, which had the fancy idea of celebrating its centenary with a kind of luncheon seminar on the theme of 'The Next Hundred Years.'" The other (reported in the *Gloucestershire Echo* for 10/12/57) was held at the Rotunda, Cheltenham, on the subject 'Outlook for this Century'.

The audience there was the Cheltenham Business and Professional Women's Club. The audience in New York consisted of "1,000 leaders of industry, finance, education and Government" and included "besides Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney; the architect Miss Van Der Rohe, who is putting up the world's first bronze building for Seagrams; and Tammany boss the Hon. Carmine G. De Sapio."

The speaker in Cheltenham was Dr. Jacob Bronowski. The speakers in New York included two Nobel Prizewinners, while "for the centre-piece they had secured Dr. Wernher von Braun, the German rocket man who created (to use the corporation's verb) the V2, and who is now director of the United States Army Ballistic Missiles Division". Dr. von Braun, who had, says *The Observer*, "the general bearing of a matinee idol who eats too many cream cakes", began by describing the inter-continental ballistic missile as "just a humble beginning to the cosmic age".

"He went on to describe, with presumable seriousness, the universe of 2057 in which honeymoon hotels will be established on the moon and the earth will be encompassed by a whole family of artificial satellites—some serving as uninterrupted global television relay stations, some as post offices handling all communications between places more than 500 miles apart and some as military observation posts registering ship and aircraft movements and new construction work."

"More immediately interesting than this vision, since they came from so notable a source, were von Braun's assumptions that earth satellites as such, possess, or may possess, military value and that control of outer space is as necessary now for great Powers as control of the sea was to maritime Powers of the 17th and 18th centuries."

But this was not all that the thousand

notables at the Waldorf-Astoria were told about the future, for

"The most startling contribution to the Seagram show was undoubtedly that of Dr. Hermann J. Muller, who ranks as one of the world's leading geneticists. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for his work on radiation and hereditary endowment... He said that he thought it would be possible very soon to prescribe the sex of a child and to produce at will identical or fraternal twins or still more multiple births."

Dr. Muller went on to declare that "Foster-pregnancy, which is already possible, will become socially acceptable and even socially obligatory. It will seem wrong to breed children who mirror parents' peculiarities and weaknesses. In the future children will be produced by the union of egg and sperm, both derived from persons of proved worth, possibly long deceased, who exemplify the ideals of the foster-parents. The first nation to do this will be so superior that it will dominate the rest."

BACK in Cheltenham, a quite different kind of thinking about the future emerged from Dr. Bronowski's lecture. "I have not the slightest doubt," he said, "that by 2000 quite a number of people will have been to the moon. But I don't think going to the moon or space travel is of the slightest interest... It is not worth talking about because when we look ahead we want to know first what

the daily lives of people will be, not whether someone will have been to an out-of-the-way place".

"We have all been through one of the most gruesome and depressing periods in history," he said. This was because of the number of conflicts between the "people who have" and the "people who have not".

"Forty years from now the world is going to be a much more equal world. I don't mean that nobody is going to be poor or rich, I simply mean that the sort of inequalities will be no larger than those between the Hebrides and Durham".

Both Durham and the Hebrides, said Bronowski, like everywhere else in Britain, enjoyed the same National Health Service, telephone service and postal service, regardless of the resources of the area. The possibility of equalising the world had come with the discovery of potential energy. With the increase of automation would come social changes, with a tendency for people to drift away from the large industrial towns, and to set up isolated, compact, smaller communities. The social changes, he concluded were the most interesting feature of the developments predicted between now and the end of the century.

The difference between the two approaches is fundamental. Both Dr. von Braun and Dr. Muller see the present struggle for dominance between nations as still existing in a hundred years' time, and they see their sciences merely as in-

struments towards this dominance. Dr. Bronowski on the other hand sees science as a means of ending the gross inequalities between nations, and hence, in his view, of the causes of war. The gains that Dr. von Braun sees resulting from the conquest of space are laughable in their puerility, while Dr. Muller's vision of bottled babies is like a realisation of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* in which 'Mother' has become an obscene word while 'Bokonowsky's Process' enables the Hatchery Centres to split each fertilised egg into 96 identical twins that are incubated in rows of test tubes, producing, according to social and industrial requirements Alpha Plus administrators or Epsilon Minus Semi-Morons.

Huxley's novel was written in 1932, and he then projected it six hundred years into the future. After the last war he wrote a foreword to the new edition in which he observed that "the horror may be upon us within a single century". He also remarked that

"If I were now to rewrite the book, I would offer the Savage a third alternative. Between the utopian and the primitive horns of his dilemma would lie the possibility of sanity... In this community economics would be decentralist and Henry-Georgian, politics Kropotkin-esque and co-operative. Science and technology would be used as though, like the Sabbath, they were made for man, not (as at present and still more so in the *Brave New World*) as though man were to be adapted and enslaved to them."

In another of his post-war essays (*Science, Liberty and Peace*), Aldous Huxley returns to this theme:

"Let us suppose that those who make it their business to apply the results of pure science to economic ends should elect to do so, not primarily for the benefit of big business, big cities and government, but with the conscious aim of providing individuals with the means of doing profitable and intrinsically scientific work, of helping men and women to achieve independence from bosses, so that they may become their own employers, or members of a self-governing, co-operative group working for subsistence and a local market".

If, he suggests, this were to become the acknowledged purpose guiding the labours of inventors and engineers, a progressive decentralisation of population, of ownership of the means of production, of political and economic power, would become possible. Something like this kind of thinking seems to actuate Dr. Bronowski, with his talk of "compact, smaller communities" resulting from technological developments.

IT is the social changes which, as Bronowski said, are the ones really worth thinking about, but they are the ones to which in fact too little thought is given. As an example take that cited recently by John Wain. In this century, he pointed out "the physical sciences have changed out of recognition, while the civil law has remained in the nineteenth century; we still cannot get rid of the death penalty or revolutionise the prison system". The trouble is in fact the slowness of change, not its speed:

"The surface of life has altered very quickly, but the inner core was restructured in about 1912, and until the next major step forward—which may not be for a century or two, if ever—it is unlikely to alter much. Journalists don't realise this because they think that things like television, artificial satellites and cars without clutches are signs of change—are, indeed, changes in themselves. But of course the only change worth taking any notice of is a change in character".

And a change in the character of society is just what the Seagram Circus at the Waldorf-Astoria could not envisage. New sources of energy, automation, and so on certainly help to make possible a society more closely adapted to the satisfaction of individual human needs, but it is only too easy to imagine that their use geared to an obsolete social and political system, and an obsolete distribution of population can produce a world just like our own—but more so—the world of the 'anti-utopias' of Huxley, Zamyatin and Orwell. This is why we so desperately need those who are capable of looking beyond the nearest sputnik to seek out the opportunities, as well as the perils, as well as the trivial novelties, which technical developments hold open. C.W.

BOOK REVIEW:

THE PRISONER

TO some extent, one way or another, almost everywhere, brainwashing goes on all the time. One book on the subject suggests that, of all such overtures, Uncle Sam's Korean Launderette Blues was a harmonious composition truly termed a voluntary.

Enunciating a new principle of freedom—that prisoners of war may choose the side to which they prefer to be released, either the team with which they were temporarily transferred by capture—"Heroes Behind Barbed Wire", by U.S.A. Colonel Kenneth K. Hansen (D. van Nostrand Co. Inc.) purports to tell the full story of how 88,000 Communist Chinese and North Koreans took advantage of a unique opportunity to consolidate their capture on the field of battle by volunteering to fight for the other side next time.

Opportunist copyists as the Americans are, they jumped at the example Chinese Communists set of treating war prisoners with kindly consideration and weaning them from their original allegiance. Rationalised into a procedure by rules and regulations, ostensibly safeguarding the rights of both teams of belligerents while guaranteeing perfect freedom of choice to individuals, the tug-of-war in the prison compounds of Korea, after the 1953 armistice, with Indian Custodian Forces as referee, is exultantly described by this advertising agent, turned United Nations Command Chief of Psychological Warfare, in words assertive, if nothing else.

Stated thus simply; it all sounds like the properly conducted choosing between candidates at election time—except that this voting from a short list was compulsory, and the choice was merely of exchanging one sergeant-major for another.

Nowhere does this proudly proclaimed principle allow for the prisoners' contracting out of war absolutely. No, sir! If you opt for us, you choose to fight for us and, if need be, against your former fellows. If you opt the other way, you choose a fate worse than death, anyhow. There is no third way.

Screened as carefully as gold from dross, but from what total numbers this book does not say, these aspirants to the title of Anti-Communist Hero (a title we are assured they chose for themselves by democratic ballot) were exclusively those who swore they would forcibly resist repatriation.

It was all done by kindness—by tea and sympathy, so to speak: though unlike the heroine of Robert Anderson's play, these professors of psychological warfare refused to dispense sex to their prisoner-pupils, even in the form of an educational lecture, and even in the face of American fears that when the agreed opportunity came for the Communist point of view to be "explained" to the prisoner electorate, the unscrupulous Easterners might employ strip-tease girls, or even prostitutes, to lure converts to the pure West back behind the Bamboo Curtain.

Not being Hollywood trained, the

Communists apparently never had this idea. Describing it as one of this naive enemy's many errors of judgment, Colonel Hansen says, sadly: "The only requirement the Communists laid down for their feminine personnel was that one be able to tell them, at a glance, from a mud fence."

The mysterious East, indeed. Despite the occasional discord of camp eruption, due to an infiltration of Communist agents, the American all-male chorus scored brilliantly with their Korean Launderette Blues. To give the Americans their due, this trumpet solo is not all wind. They provided to some tune a first-class rehabilitation programme so expertly rendered it resounded to the extent that, of those prisoners they admitted to the non-Communist camps, only three per cent. eventually elected to return to a life under Communist rule.

It is with an understanding chuckle that Colonel Hansen records what thieves his protégés were; and with evident relish that he relates the tricks they go up to when facing the Communist "explainers". In high blee he describes the low cunning with which, within a safely demilitarised zone near Panmunjom, the Anti-Communist Heroes would get near enough to beat over the head, with any weapon that came handy, these Red interrogators, who would have explained away the totalitarian evil, and spirited away all legitimate resistance. Actions speak louder than words.

Colonel Hansen can well afford to admit to the paltry success gained by the Communists in keeping to their side a solitary Britisher and a mere 21 Americans, naturally described as renegades. For what are such numbers beside the 22,000 cheering and singing Anti-Communist Heroes who marched away, one fine and frosty morning, to join the free world of President Chiang Kai-shek?

This enormous success naturally engendered considerable confidence in a new conception of the prisoner. This is that in future warfare the prisoner will matter most. Every combatant still in the field, and their civilian counterparts at home (especially in satellite countries) is thereby seen primarily as potential prisoner material upon which the psychological warfare experts might get busy.

There is ample evidence that Hansen's estimate of the importance and place of the prisoner in the scheme of things, and his confidence in the malleability of this material, is shared, though more soberly appraised, by the U.S.A. Defence Department.

Readers who may well dismiss "Heroes Behind Barbed Wire" as sanguinity bred of singular success, should ponder some remarkable testimony offered, symposium fashion, in *The New Yorker*, dated 26th October, 1957, in which Eugene Kinkead present the other side of the medal Col. Hansen so proudly pins on himself.

Pausing only long enough to confirm Hansen's statement that 21 only of the Americans captured in Korea as members of the United Nations forces decided to remain with the enemy, *The New*

Yorker reporter proceeds to quote eminent members of the U.S.A. Defence Department that, nevertheless, it is a fact that one out of every three Americans taken prisoner collaborated with their captors in some degree—and mainly because they simply gave up, in a most unsoldierlike way.

Distinguishing somewhat subtly between brainwashing and indoctrination, and marking off cruelty from atrocity by purely military measure, these judges of their fellow Americans concluded that it was less the undoubted unscrupulous, and sometimes cruel, methods of their Chinese captors, than the feeble quality of the prisoners' resistance, which was responsible for the most startling defection from military and human virtue ever officially admitted.

Continued on p. 4

Film Review

Mother India

PATHER PANCHALI (ACADEMY) COUNTRIES which take over Western civilization generally succeed in taking over the worst elements. The Indian film industry was a case in point. Anyone who has seen any Indian films of the post-war vintage will remember the imitations of Hollywood they turned out, some of them out-Hollywooding Hollywood with musicals plus tragedy plus melodrama. Presumably this output still goes on but side by side with it has grown up a more mature film industry. "Pather Panchali" is the latest product of this school winning a prize at the Cannes Film Festival for the best Human Story.

It was directed by Satyajit Ray who was in touch with Renoir when Renoir was making "The River"; and he visited Europe and studied the work of de Sica. It is also obvious from this film that he studied the work of Sucksdorff, who also made a film in India.

The film was produced by a government agency and carries the same message as "Two Acres of Land" on the necessity for the individual to break old habits and start a new way of life. The problem of the Government of India is the same as that of the Soviet government in the twenties, that of putting across a message to the illiterate peasants. For this they have chosen the film as a medium. The propaganda in the two Indian films is not so crude as the Russian, but their directors are not in the same rank as Eisenstein and Pudovkin.

The Indian government does not suggest any solution to the people's problems except to uproot themselves from the old way of life. This is the fault of propaganda films, ultimately the solution lies in the hands of the individual. It is quite true that India has a surplus of intellectuals but it is no solution for the

intellectuals to migrate to the towns which is obviously the message of "Pather Panchali".

If one is to see propaganda films it is better that they be true to life and well-made which, with certain exceptions, this film is. The acting is excellent, notably that of Chunibala Devi as the ancient Aunt, begging to die but with enough life in her to know when she has overstayed her welcome. The children, as usual, are excellent and steal much of the film.

The director, Satyajit Ray, has allowed himself to be carried away by the dance of flies on the water with the accompaniment of Indian musical instruments (excellent all the way through the film); by the waving, tall grass; by the progress of the sweetmeat seller, indeed the story is not important, it is the telling which is the important thing. We gaze up at the screen like the audience squatting round a story-teller in a bazaar. The incidents are the incidents of life itself, birth, death, marriage, work. When the story departs on to the peak of melodrama it rather overdoes it, the death of a young girl and the ruin of a house both occurring on the same evening is, as Alf of "Alf's Button" complained of the genie, 'too bloomin' 'olesale'.

It is probable that the Indian film will occupy the high place in the history of the cinema that the Russian, the German, the Italian, and the Japanese have done. All the makings are there, the social conflict, the material poverty and the tradition of artistry in story-telling. Satyajit Ray is a director of promise and one looks forward to the sequel we are promised ("Aparajito—The Unvanquished") in the next Academy programme. Artistically we look forward but from a propaganda point of view it may be a backward glance at Nehru's Five-Year Plan.

J.R.

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First Shots in the Diplomatic War

Continued from p. 1

have ascertained "the behaviour of our respective representatives" what then, Mr. Bevan? Supposing we are highly dissatisfied with their behaviour. Will Mr. Bevan tell us what we do next. If he tells us that we must get rid of the government will he tell us how he suggests we do that before the next election, which is not due to take place until 1959. And if he replies that we must force the government to resign, are we expected to "eliminate" (or convert?) the Conservative majority in Parliament, or perhaps hire the services of an efficient Guy Fawkes?

★

DO not blame us for being facetious. Blame those, like Mr. Bevan, who are an integral part of the political machine and yet who would have us believe that we could, and should, have a say in how it operates. In fact a careful reading of Mr. Bevan's article leaves no doubt as to where he stands. Open as opposed to secret-diplomacy does not touch the problem of power. In his impassioned speech at the Labour Party's conference recently he showed that he obviously had more faith in the H-bomb as a weapon of diplomacy than in the support of public opinion. And in his article under discussion the only merit he can ascribe to open diplomacy is that if

the prospect of reaching some agreement with Russia proves fruitless, it is absolutely essential that responsibility should be fixed where it belongs. This could only be done in open conference.

From the point of view of "the peoples of the world sick with prolonged anxiety" to know whose fault it all is, is poor consolation. Only a politician, thinking in terms of the power struggle can see in it an advantage, a propaganda advantage, which, in real terms, is as ephemeral as that achieved by Russia in being the first to successfully launch the sputnik.* The world has no less forgotten the Summit Talks in Geneva† in 1955 than it has Messrs. Sputnik I and II who nevertheless continue their determined circliments of this planet, day in day out. It's the politicians who live in cuckoo-land. This would not matter much, but for the fact that they also have the power to implement their aberrations. That is the problem; and it is also the strongest, the most "realistic", argument for anarchism!

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WHY do we allow ourselves to be dominated by political maniacs and the same time surround ourselves with rules and regulations to curtail the freedom of action of those of our fellows whose condition we define as "mental"? Is there so much difference between the mental condition of a Hitler (in power) and the inmate of an asylum who imag-

*Is it not extraordinary that the politicians can talk of the peoples of say, Africa and the Middle East, being influenced in Russia's favour as a result of that country's penetration of outer space? Apart from the fact that millions of them have probably not heard of the "event", we can well imagine that as many don't understand quite what it all means in any case, and an equally large number, much more interested in where their next meal is coming from, "couldn't care less"!

†Readers who have forgotten and wish to refresh their memories can, if they have that invaluable *aide memoire* to the political scene which are the *Selections from FREEDOM*, refer to two articles in Vol. 5: *Big Four and You* (p. 139) and *Second-Rate Comedy in Geneva* (p. 151). They will find that the politicians were talking the same nonsense three years ago as they are now!

OPEN LETTER TO BERTRAND RUSSELL

DEAR BERTRAND RUSSELL,

Some years ago I asked you if you would consider speaking at the annual Anarchist Summer School, and in the course of a very courteous refusal you said that although a long time ago you had considered yourself an anarchist you had later come to doubt whether any form of social system based on principles of anarchy would work for a technically advanced civilization. Your point of view implies that for a technically advanced civilization such as now exists some alternative form of social organization will work, and if I understood you rightly you mean that it must be a system dependent upon the ultimate coercive and organizational power of the State.

Having been a student of every sort of anarchist blueprint for society, I must agree with you that anarchist theory is weak when it deals with utopias, but a topical controversy in which you are taking a leading part suggests to me that it is worth while discussing further just what we mean when we consider what form of social organization "will work". It is becoming increasingly evident, I think, that as technical power increases governmental society just will not work. As you have pointed out in a recent article, it is of paramount importance for every State to ensure the physical existence of its citizens, yet that is precisely the thing that the most technically advanced modern States are unable to do. Increasing provision is being made for the citizen's material comforts—but what about his sheer physical survival in the threatened holocaust? The most advanced technology is now being directed into preparation for the obliteration of human life. While this is no new phenomenon in the history of militarism, the modern angle is supplied by the fact that it is certain, dead certain, that every State involved in this game is planning on operation which involves the obliteration of its own citizens. Never before in history have peoples been led to prepare for their own wholesale demise with such clear and open-eyed fatalism. In these circumstances I do not think that you can validly claim that this form of society dependent on the State works at all when a certain pitch of technical perfection is reached. But where and how do we cry halt?

ines himself to be Hitler? What are the reasons that lead one to power the other to the lunatic asylum? Why is it that people hold in esteem the judge, though he accepts a post which requires him to pronounce the death sentence on his fellow beings and confers on him the power to commit them to varying terms of imprisonment, and yet despise the murderer and ostracize the criminal?

To say that one is administering the law, the other breaking it is the obvious answer. It not only presupposes, however, that the law is invariably good and law-breaking invariably bad, but also that the professional safe-breaker is anti-social and the judge whose job involves him in ordering people to be locked up (which apart from depriving the individual of his liberty imposes suffering and hardship on those near and dear to him), is a social, normal human being. We would suggest that there are less psychopaths among safe-breakers than among judges, just as we are prepared to recognise that some judges are as conscientious in their jobs as are safe-breakers.

But the fact that the public as a whole makes, what we have called the "obvious", distinction between judge and criminal, to our minds stems from their blind, or conditioned, acceptance of authority as a moral value, which places the individuals who wield that authority above suspicion. Power it would seem only

It is easy to be wise after the event and this is perhaps the province of future historians; yet I maintain that the present dilemma could have been foreseen had historians and sociologists not been blinded by their emotional entanglement with the assumptions of their own social system. The anarchist criticism is that the State is not a moral being and is not concerned with human ends or values. Some people agree with Hegel and regard the State as "super-human", others with Bakunin and to them the State is "sub-human", but surely it matters less whether we look on it as super- or sub-, than the important fact that it is non-human in its values. You as a humanist have taught the importance of the individual conscience as against the mechanical operations of law, which is the expression of the will of the State. In times past State and citizens have rubbed along together, and most people agreed that it was to the general advantage. The Hegelians and their descendants viewed the State as the flower of human existence; the Utilitarians and humanists saw the State as a necessary machine. This situation has been possible in times past when the technical means of government have been relatively crude and the power of the State has been limited. The Czarist State for instance, achieved only a limited control over society, but with the technological refinements of the 20th century came the wonders of totalitarian control. In times past, honest men could convince themselves that the murderous power of the State in its armaments at least secured peaceful life at home. Now this is no longer so, and the Thing that rules us is trying to get

us reconciled to the fact that we must, in effect, dig our own graves. In saying "we" I speak as an internationalist and include citizens of other States. I hope that you will agree with me in this view of the situation.

Kingsley Martin recently referred to the present situation by likening us to a fold of sheep awaiting the

arrival of a mad butcher. I find the analogy apt in two particulars. First, in that the peoples of both the totalitarian and the democratic countries have a sheep-like dependence on the Thing that rules them; second, that the butcher is mad. His probable actions are determined by no rational motives. I note this in connection with your recent letter to Krushchev, which puzzles me. Your letter is written as to a reasonable man who is operating on a range of reasonable choices. Now it seems strange to me that you should address any politician at the head of a modern State *qua* politician, as though he were a reasonable being moved by human considerations of rationality. Were Krushchev the head of a finance corporation, a merchant empire or a robber band, one might approach him in such rational terms and expect to get a rational response. But when we approach those who are the creatures of this or that great power (whether they are entrenched dictators or elected ministers in an office which is temporary), we are entering a universe of discourse where human rational values are simply irrelevant. Krushchev's reply to your letter is similar to that given by Hitler when George Lansbury made an appeal to him.

In presuming to make these criticisms I am not moved by a wish to carp at the failure of governmental society to "work" when great technical progress has been made. I am honestly concerned that the causes should be investigated and understood. It seems to me that many people of great intelligence and integrity are now bewildered by a situation which has been slowly developing between the great powers. From an anarchist standpoint such a situation is exactly what was to be expected. Adherents of the ideals of political democracy are now finding that they have in fact no more control over these vital events than have the people in a totalitarian form of society. Can it be that a great deal of re-thinking about the basic nature of our society will be undertaken?

I need hardly say that I both admire and approve of your efforts to awaken interest in the urgent necessity to face the very real danger which confronts us. It seems to me that all such efforts will be of little use if intelligent people, including those who contribute to the *Observer*, *New Statesman*, etc., persist in regarding the hydrogen bomb and all that goes with it as an aberration of our form of society, instead of seeing it as a necessary and inevitable manifestation of it. Too much has been written contrasting the totalitarian and democratic States: what is needed, I submit, is that we should begin to understand how very alike they are, and see that they have a common feature which eclipses all others in importance.

Yours sincerely,

TONY GIBSON.

A Pan-American Anarchist Conference

LIBERTARIAN ideas have always exerted a lively influence on the social movement of students as well as of workers and peasants in Spanish American countries, in spite of military dictatorships and even totalitarian régimes with which it had to cope in the past, and in some countries still has to cope with now. We need not mention any other sign of the vitality of these ideas than the number of publications in Spanish and Portuguese which we have been receiving for several years from

New York, Havana, Buenos Aires, Rio de la Plata, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Lima, Santiago de Chile, Alajuela, etc., besides other publications in English, Italian, Russian and Yiddish.

Last Summer we received from Uruguay a beautiful pamphlet of 32 pages with a colourful cover, containing a report on the anarchist Pan-American conference held at Montevideo from the 14th to the 21st of April, 1957, with the direct participation of the following organisations:

Argentina:

1. Argentinian Libertarian Federation (2 delegates).
2. The Committee for International Anarchist Relations, established by La Protesta, La Obra, Libre Palabra, the La Plata and the Cordoba groups and other comrades scattered through the country (2 delegates).

Brazil:

1. The Social Culture Centre, the Anarchist Group and *Nossa Chachara* periodical.
2. The Libertarian Group of Porto Alegre.

Chile:

The Chilean section of the International Anarchist Federation.

Cuba:

The Cuban Libertarian Association (2 delegates).

Uruguay:

The Uruguayan Anarchist Federation (3 delegates).

Unable to go to Montevideo, the U.S.A. Libertarian League comrades, those of the Mexican Anarchist Federation, of the Peru Anarchist Federation, and anarchist groups from Bolivia, Equador, Haiti, Panama and Santo Domingo had sent their adhesion and their written contributions to certain points on the agenda.

This agenda dealt with the following themes: Study of the American situation (each country to be studied from the political, the economical and the social angle); general examination of world and Latin American problems; anarchist contacts and co-ordination on a worldwide and American plane; achievements and resolution. An agreement was reached on all these points without recourse to voting. We give now the outline of the main resolutions passed, in order to give an idea of the seriousness and cor-

dial atmosphere that presided over eight days of intensive work:

(1) The Continental Commission for American anarchist relations has been asked to draw up, with the help of all the organizations that supported the conference, a documentation and presentation of problems as complete as possible on various aspects of Latin American social situation on the international, national and regional scale.

(2) Practical steps have been taken for the organization of a regular exchange of information material, whether or not meant for publication, in order to internationalize the contents of the libertarian press and the outlook of anarchist militants; in order also to spread over the countries where there are not organs of anarchist expression.

(3) The Conference has reaffirmed the existence of the CCAAR and the links that join it to the Commission in International Anarchist Relations (CIA)—whose address is at Paris, Maison des Societes Savantes, 28, rue Serpente—judging that the CIA is the international organism indispensable to the information and strength of all anarchists without any distinction of tendencies.

(4) The Conference has foreseen the development, through a system of mutual help on a continental scale, of the International Anarchist Library and Archives established at Montevideo—and that with the help of the comrades from Sao Paulo as regards publications in the Portuguese language.

(5) Concerning the World Anarchist Congress whose preparation has been entrusted to the CIA, it is recommended that the elaboration and exchange of material which is its best guarantee of success, be intensified by a greater use of the CCRA and CIA; that the resolutions passed by the Congress should be given as pointers and not as orders; that federative tendencies should be sponsored on an international scale through the CCRA and the CIA.

Unanimous resolutions have also been passed on the participation of anarchists in the workers' movement, and in particular in the Unions and Syndicates working outside Blocks, States and Parties; on activities within cultural organizations; on the creation of communities based on free work and fraternal convivence; on the support to be given to peoples under the Bolshevik and the Franquist dictatorships.

