

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

ALDERMASTON & AFTER

IN a week-end of rain and arctic conditions which apparently set up new records for the time of year, the mile-long file of marchers to Aldermaston was as a warm ray of sunshine penetrating the heavy clouds of mass apathy, mass unimaginativeness and mass defeatism. Even a hard-boiled, cynical press which on Saturday was doing its best to write-off the march as a joke and the marchers as cranks, changed its tune on Monday. Saturday's headline in the *News Chronicle* gloated over the "Heavy fall-out on the road to Aldermaston". Saturday's downpour seems to have washed the sneer from Mr. Barber's lips, and his report in Monday's issue carries the headlines: "Wet and blistered H-marchers are still undaunted". "The freaks and the faint-hearted—he reported—have dropped out, and a thousand or more H-bomb protesters swung into Reading this evening... Few people can be doing this for fun now..."

By Monday the march had earned a place in the editorial column. Not of approval, but a sneaking regard for these "few hundred" from a city of many millions who "are seeing the march through" is clearly detected:

Yet this move to renounce Britain's possession of the H-bomb is by no means negligible. At its lowest it represents a mood that has gripped the population. At its highest it is a sincere attempt to steer a course away from nuclear madness.

In our view the movement has chosen the worst possible course for the best possible motives...

To the credit of the marchers and campaigners they have at least made an impression on closed minds. But we do not believe their policy is practical.

The *Manchester Guardian* which headlined its Saturday piece of jour-

nalistic whimsy "EARLY DEFECTIONS IN MARCH TO ALDERMASTON. But 2,000 still in the running" on Monday headed the sympathetic report from its special correspondent "PEOPLE WITH A PURPOSE—1,000 marchers at Reading". What had "started on Good Friday as a Londoner's holiday delight... has turned to a recognisable gesture". "The 40 miles since Friday have pared down the march to an assembly of people with some purpose."

The Sunday Press reports we have seen, sobered perhaps by Saturday's rain, were nevertheless coloured by political considerations. The *Sunday Times* headed its report "Disillusion in H-Bomb March", the disillusion, that is, of the "kindly Christian pacifists" who were made aware of the political nature of this allegedly non-political "crusade". According to the *Sunday Times* Fenner Brockway "made the one speech so far which seemed genuinely to try to avoid making political capital out of the march", and their correspondent not only heard a voice crying out in the night (Friday), as the marchers retired to the local church halls, "To-morrow's *Daily Worker!* To-morrow's *Daily Worker!*"—a sure sign that the Communists had a finger in the pie*—but he even discovered a live anarchist among the marchers whom

*It is a fact that by far the most detailed and sympathetic reports published in the daily press appeared in the *Daily Worker* which obviously sought to make capital out of the march even though it does not appear to have been supported by the party members.

According to the *Times'* special correspondent: Suggestions of a political bias in the march have been frequently denied, and one admitted Communist ruefully reflected that there were few present who shared his own ideological viewpoint.

he reports in the best Sydney Street traditions of journalism.

Patrick O'Reilly, an unemployed Irishman, in a knotted red scarf, told me there were ten members of the London Anarchists Group going, as he put it, "part of the way with these people. It's governments who have bombs, and we're against governments."

The Co-operative Party boardcasting van blared out an appeal to "close the ranks, otherwise it looks straggly."

"They want perfection already," the Anarchists grumbled.

(Why is it that for some journalists anarchists cannot talk like other people, or be reported as having "said" this or that, but always "grumble". Is it because they always "see" anarchists talking through their black capes drawn over one shoulder and only revealing eyes alight with murderous intent?)

The *News of the World* with two juicy divorce cases and a further instalment of the memoirs of the naughty Deniza spewing all over its pages, can think up nothing better than "On the Road to Aldermaston" for its short report on the March which, nevertheless, places emphasis on the defections; of the speakers who returned home, of the marcher who "bowed under his rucksack, shook the drops from his umbrella and asked: 'Which way to the station?' Directed, he walked

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News of the Depression Crisis in Shipping and Textiles

Nearly one million tons of shipping are now laid up idle in British ports and anchorages. About two-thirds of them are British-owned vessels and about one-third foreign. The Chamber of Shipping is now issuing its statistics monthly, so as to keep pace with the crisis that the industry has encountered and which is growing at an extraordinary speed.

A year ago the ships laid up for reasons other than repair were a mere 36,000 gross tons. This total began to grow rapidly in the autumn months of 1957, and by February 1, 1958, it had reached 778,703 tons. The latest figure, for March 1, is 967,655 tons.

To find comparable figures for idle tonnage one must go back 25 years, to the great depression of the early 1930's. Bad though the present position is, it is likely to get worse. Freight rates are still low, so low that neither dry cargo ships nor tankers can earn a profit. Owners are continuing, therefore, to lay up their ships.

(*Manchester Guardian*)

Crisis in Textiles

Reports from various European countries on mill activity and sales in the fourth quarter of last year, which are published in the latest issue of the "International Review of Cotton and Allied Textile Industries", indicate a widespread deterioration in conditions. A slower flow of fresh orders and consequent curtailment of production seems to be the general experience, and several of the reports mention accumulating stocks and pressure on selling prices. Most of the countries, moreover, refer to

"A real man has no need of governments, of laws, of moral or ethical codes, to say nothing of battleships, police clubs, high-powered bombers and such things."

—HENRY MILLER.

increases, some of them heavy, in imports.

In nearly all instances domestic demand is reported to have become slacker, and there are suggestions that buyers were holding back because of uncertainty. The causes of the uncertainty are not usually defined very clearly, but the report from Sweden mentions fears of a recession in Swedish exports and business in general, that from Switzerland emphasises the ill-effects of larger imports, and that from the Netherlands refers to restrictions on Government and private expenditure. The difficulties, indeed, seem to be much the same as they are here.

Japanese Mills Cut Production

Japan, confronted with mounting difficulties in its textile industry caused by the over-expansion of facilities and trading firms during recent boom years, is deliberating on emergency measures to cope with the situation. These are expected to include reductions in imports of raw cotton and wool and the enforcement of drastic cuts in production both of natural and of synthetic fabrics, together with the strengthening of inspection agencies to ensure that Government-imposed quotas are not exceeded.

Measures recommended by the Government's experts are understood to include production cuts of 50 per cent. in rayon filament yarn; 30 per cent. in staple fibres and woollen yarn; and 20 per cent. in cotton yarn, the idea being—according to an informed official source—for the industry "to produce only what it can sell and no more, and thus prevent present heavy stocks from becoming still heavier."

Strike in the Bahamas

Mr. Lennox-Boyd, the Colonial Secretary, has gone to the Bahamas for a nine day visit. Not for a holiday as might have been supposed, but in order to hold discussions with the Governor, the authorities and "leading members of the community."

At the end of last year in the capital of Nassau there was a considerable difference of opinion over the granting of a franchise to a bus company to serve the airport. The coloured independent taxi-drivers protested strongly at the inequitable arrangement by which they would lose financially; and of course the bus company was white. Eventually the protest grew into a general strike, surprisingly widespread and unanimous.

In the Bahamas it has long been the proud boast that there is little if any racial intolerance or discrimination, but nevertheless the 15,000 whites own almost all the businesses which serve the tourist trade—the colony's only industry. The 85,000 coloureds, who represent 85 per cent. of the population, have some difficulty in making their presence felt through the Legislative (or anywhere else) because voting depends upon a property qualification.

However, since the general strike the Bahamians have discovered their best weapon, for it completely de-

vastated the whole island—the tourist trade came to a dead stop. In consequence of this some concessions were granted and the Bahamas continued its business of earning dollars from American tourists. But the Bahamians may not be content with their small gains, and having now found the only way to successful bargaining with the Gov-

ernment, will probably demand more and threaten further strike action if nothing happens.

And thus it is that Mr. Lennox-Boyd comes to visit this tiny colony, this outpost of Empire which earns so many invaluable dollars. The British Army can do no good in the Bahamas, there is not likely to be violence—nor can there be, for the visitors from America want to enjoy themselves, not be blown up by a hand-grenade.

An American on Americans Industry Produces Conformists

CLEVELAND, MARCH 22 (UP). Americans are not interested in civil liberties any more because industrialism is producing men "who are not free in any real sense and who may not even want to be free," Robert M. Hutchins, president of the Fund for the Republic, said to-day.

Dr. Hutchins told the Cleveland City Club that the search for peace of mind, security and success was making Americans into conformists who were "seldom much interested in freedom and justice for other people, including other Americans."

"We may say that the aim of industrialization is to get rid of men altogether, except as consumers," Dr. Hutchins said, "and to make them interchangeable parts of the industrial machine."

"But the interchangeable man is not a man. Since he is not, freedom and justice are of little importance to him."

The former president of the University of Chicago said the Bill of Rights "appears to concern only those who find they can make some personal use of it."

"Editors, publishers and broadcasters are interested in the First Amendment [freedom of religion and press] because under this banner they may be able to extort more news from the Defense Department and send reporters to China," he said.

But most of them, he said, "with some honourable exceptions," are not interested in other amendments "or even those parts of the First Amendment which do not mention them" and have "customarily condemned those who plead the Fifth Amendment [against self-incrimination] and have deprecated the suggestion that a fair trial might require the elimination of cameras from the courtroom."

"Eccentric sects like Jehovah's Witnesses are interested in the freedom of religion," he went on, "but they are not much interested in the freedom of the Bill of Rights."

"Communists and other people likely to be investigated by Congress are interested in the Fifth Amendment, but not in the freedom of the press, or freedom of religion, or any other amendment."

Similarly, Dr. Hutchins said, criminals are interested in the Sixth Amendment [right to speedy trial] but no others, and interested in the Tenth Amendment [powers of state], but not in the First, Fifth, or Sixth.

"People who are not or who do not expect to be publishers, members of eccentric sects, Communists, criminals, or extreme states' righters are not likely to be much interested in civil liberties," he said. "In fact doubt has been expressed in the highest quarters that the Bill of Rights could be adopted to-day."

THE CANADIAN ELECTIONS

THE overwhelming victory for the Progressive Conservatives in the Canadian elections is partly a reflection of the anxiety which Canadians feel about the extraordinary measure of domination which America has over their economy. When the Conservatives were elected last June with a majority government, after more than two decades of uninterrupted Liberal rule, it only seemed as if the electorate had become dimly aware of the fact that the Liberals, under Mackenzie King until 1948 and Lester Pearson thereafter, considered themselves so firmly entrenched in power that not only could they do no wrong but that it was no longer necessary for them to do anything right.

When Diefenbaker and his Progressives arrived in control the Liberals were shocked to the core, but there was nothing they could do. The new Prime Minister, although giving every outward sign of being an unimpressive sort of character, managed to persuade numbers of Canadians that his policy of greater national independence was going to work. He had difficulties in parliament because he did not possess an absolute majority. Hence the recent election.

Obviously he has made a considerable impression, for he now has 208 seats to the Liberals 49.

All he now has to do is deal with the problems which are worrying the people who elected him. He must reduce the volume of exports to the United States—no less than 60 per cent. of the total—which means that trade must be increased with the rest of the world; this means to a great extent with the Commonwealth, but it is also the intention to trade with China. He must also try to reduce the percentage of American ownership of shares in Canadian companies. But hardest of all will be the problem of how to alter the economy so that when the U.S. dumps surplus wheat on the market Canadian farmers will still vote Conservative, or when the U.S. restricts imports of crude oil and raises tariffs to impossible heights the standard of living should not fall below vote-catching level. It will also be necessary for Diefenbaker to reduce the present 10 per cent. unemployment figure.

It is unlikely that the Progressive Conservatives can manage much of what is expected of them, but for as long as the policy of *American dollars go home* will last, the Diefenbaker government will thrive. Success in politics largely depends upon promising the right thing at the right time, the ability to carry out that policy is secondary. Explanations, with suitable statistics, are only necessary at the next election.

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BOOK REVIEWS

PROSTITUTION IN U.S.

CAST THE FIRST STONE.
Published by W. H. Allen. 18s.

THIS study in prostitution by the Chief Magistrate of New York, John M. Murtagh and Sara Harris, a trained sociologist, reveals some interesting differences between the law in this country and the treatment of prostitution, and the laws which govern the State of New York.

In the foreword it is pointed out that: In New York both the solicitation and the sexual act following are unlawful. In this country both solicitation and the sexual act are unlawful only if they constitute a menace in law, that is, an act in breach . . . of the right of the community to be free from premises so conducted that they are a menace to morals and decency.

The law in this country is so worded that it can be widely interpreted, but as far as we know the police here do not generally adopt the practise used by the New York 'vice squad' which is to circulate plain clothes men in the areas where prostitutes hang out, act as interested customers, then when the women have sufficiently compromised themselves arrest them for soliciting. It often happens that sexual intercourse actually takes place, but the women rarely offer this in evidence because it is not advisable to involve the police.

America is said to idealise its women, which is probably the reason why prostitutes and other social outcasts are treated like animals when imprisoned by the law. Prison conditions are bad, and the authors state that while vagrant men are sent to Hart Island, a rehabilitation centre, women are sent to jail. A second visit to the House of Detention for women located in the heart of Manhattan is dreaded by all who have been there. But in spite of the supposed deterrent effects of prison the same prostitutes are convicted and imprisoned time and time again.

Within the House of Detention are two other sections known as the cooler and the tank. In the cooler disturbed and hysterical women are placed sometimes for days without any attention. Drug addicts are accommodated in the tank "which is the only 'hospital' women

addicts in New York, whether under arrest or self-committed, ever get to know."

As soon as a girl has had an enema and been examined in all her body orifices, she is herded into the tank with all the others for the beginning of her cold-turkey cure . . . She will lie in her bed in the vomit and diarrhoea, nobody bothers to tidy up. After a while, she will get out of bed and join the other tankers who sit around the corridor alternating between sweating and shivering. Day or night, they wear the filthy wrappers in which they sleep.

The authors write that a day in the tank would devastate an outsider, but there is a vast difference between the way male addicts are treated and females. Males are placed in the prison hospital as soon as they arrive, they are permitted to smoke and there are facilities for their comfort. Not so for women.

A former school teacher turned addict and prostitute stated when interviewed by the authors:

"I'll tell you what every cure I've had has done for me. It's made me start whoring again with a vengeance because I had to get the stuff quick so I could get over being haunted by the experiences I had while I was in . . . I've seen women in such pain that they tried to hang themselves".

Are we really to believe that such treatment is designed to reform the prisoners? Is it not rather that they are being cruelly punished for their weaknesses, the causes of which are often the direct result of the family or community life from which they originated?

The reasons why women become prostitutes vary as do their social backgrounds; poverty, desire for attention, pleasure, lack of intelligence and chance meetings with men who have persuaded them into it, being the most important.

With few exceptions they seem to be devoted to their pimps who often have five or six women in their 'stables' sleeping with each one in turn. The women refer to one another as wives-in-law and rarely show signs of jealousy although each one seems to have a secret fantasy that she alone is the favourite. Most prostitutes are loyal to their pimps and have an extraordinary feeling of gratitude for them.

It seems to be more difficult for investigators to get information about the pimps. A large proportion of the men cited in this book are coloured with a background of poverty where sex as practised in crowded rooms by their parents and in the streets meant no more than using a lavatory. It is not surprising that sex to them is merely an endless source of revenue.

It is never quite understood why pimps have such control over their women and it is generally suggested that sex does not play a big part in the relationship. This report suggests that virility is an important attraction for the women although certainly not the only one.

The fact that most men treat prostitutes as mere paid pleasure things while pimps do not 'look down on' them because they have been with other men is another reason for their gratitude, even if the pimps have started them off on the streets.

The intention of the authors of this book is to draw attention to the doubtful methods adopted by the authorities in dealing with prostitution, and to the social reasons which make 'criminals'. The exposure of some of the police tactics is timely and may have some effect in changing attitudes to people who are less harmful to our moral well-being than the lunatics planning our eventual destruction.

Conversation Piece

'The Liberal Tea Club, Uncommitted'

THERE'S nothing like a cuppa and a natter half way through the mornings' work. That's why I enjoy so much our little tea club at the Lab. I call it the Liberal Tea Club. I christened it thus some time ago when, soon after its inauguration, The Speaker, a fellow researcher, told me "Things will evolve". He has since given me much further advice, like "It's no good banging your head against a brick wall" and "There's no point in taking things seriously", which has convinced me that he thinks doing things interferes with being left in peace to talk about them. Altogether, he is a charming fellow with the objectivity of the Man in the Moon. I doubt if he even plays chess lest he is forced to make a move—but I'll bet he knows all the best moves! You'll appreciate why I call him The Speaker.

Another club member is Dr. — whom I know as The Extremist for reasons that become obvious just as soon as I tell you how he accused me of making idols of the next generation when I dragged my kids into the H-bomb argument—we haven't had more than two nuclear do's because they tend to become serious. As I said, it is a Liberal Tea Club. I would like you to meet The Extremist. To him every vegetarian is a St. Francis of Assisi:

anyone who signs a petition is a power-seeking agitator. The Extremist won't be marching to Aldermaston.

Then there's The Baiter. He upsets the carefully prepared atmosphere, much to the dissatisfaction of The Speaker. No matter how thoroughly The Speaker has worked to ensure that the discussion shall be completely harmless, no matter what precautions he has taken in the interests of what I would call "absolute disengagement", The Baiter will (purposefully, I suspect) put his foot in it. Like when The Speaker, settling down to his pipe and cuppa, said "Well, let's have the Algerian business to-day chaps. Now I'll be for, who's going to be against?" Which meant that the stage was set for a matey-debatey ten minutes. Only thirty seconds had gone when The Baiter struck.

I can't remember what it was The Baiter said. Never can. The spark gets lost in the ensuing raging furnace. Put it this way: he challenges me. It has been his habit ever since he learned that I was an unconditional pacifist. It was a dogmatic attitude, he told me. And he marked me down for the particular attention of the Tea Club.

Whatever it was that he said, I briefly gave my views. I committed myself. I condemned.

That was too much for The Extremist, who bellowed with emotion "It's all very well for holier-than-thou's to scream morality at the Froggies from the safety of England. If they were Frenchmen they would be doing the same. It smells of priggishness!" "Anyway," said The Speaker, "It's impossible to form an opinion on situations in Algeria, India, South Africa or anywhere else—nor can you feel for those foreigner chaps because you simply can't begin to understand their feelings."

Meanwhile the door had opened, giving entrance to a Liberal Supporter (they have many supporters). And, dragged in, albeit willingly, by The Baiter, he opined "Of course. If we were Frenchmen we would understand why they behave as they do." "How can we in Britain judge?" he added with an air of finality. Which was received gratefully by the club members, seeing that France was the Country of the Liberal Supporter's birth.

The Extremist was on the floor again. Pacifists, do-gooders, agitators, grossly overpaid miners, welfare staters and semi-left wing liberals were scattered and consigned to hell as unreasonable fanatics. Implicit in his utterances was the contention that £2,000 p.a. graduates would still be £2,000 p.a. graduates if people like Tom Paine, John Wycliffe, Karl Marx, Tolstoy, Gandhi, Bakunin (and Jesus???) had never existed. As he fulminated his hacking jacket and grey flannels seemed to evaporate, leaving him naked but for a scanty bearskin covering. His close-shaven face appeared to sprout a straggling beard. I imagined his pen enlarging into a sturdy blood-spattered club. With amusement I pictured him endeavouring to set down his Ph.D. thesis on rock with the aid of a flint marker and a stone mallet.

I suppose I should have told him. Maybe I should have given him some Anarchist enlightenment. But, fudging the issue, I justified myself in giving a week's trial to The Speaker's thesis "Things will evolve". After a week it may be safe for me to slip him a copy of FREEDOM—the issue with Henri Alleg's story in it.

Even The Extremist couldn't call Henri Alleg a "holier-than-thou prig".

"DREGS".

no pensions. Everyone would be able to have at least the necessities of life simply because he was human and therefore entitled to a share, whether he contributed to it or not.

Of course it is just possible that things will be much as they are now, in which case the joke will be on me, but I think this is not likely. It is a pity about my prospective widow, but women are generally able to look after themselves nowadays. The lady has not yet appeared over the horizon in any case.

But on the 23rd of September, 1997, I shall perhaps think of this article, and of the pension I might have had. Whether it will be in a turf-roofed hut, full of smoke because only some of it finds its way through the hole in the top, or in some glass-domed, bubble-like construction on the sands of Mars, who can say? W.

PROBLEM

Should I Pay?

ON the 23rd of September, 1957, I entered the Woolwich Polytechnic for a course of full-time study. In the corridor a notice caught my eye, informing me that as a student I was not obliged to pay contributions to National Insurance. It also warned me that my pension prospects would be affected if I did not contribute. However, since I could use the money saved, I decided to chance it.

When I returned my card, stamped only till the commencement of my studies, with a note explaining my position and a copy of my Certificate of Admission, I received a leaflet, "Students, Unpaid Apprentices and Trainees." In it I read:

"The absence of contributions for a period of tuition after age 18 may have a serious effect upon right to retirement pension and widow's benefits. For example, a student who is taking a three year course at a university and who decides not to pay contributions will have a substantial gap in his contribution record when he has finished his course. If he should die in early life and leave a widow, she might not be entitled to widow's benefit because less than 156 contributions had been paid by her husband before his death. Even if this test of 156 contributions were satisfied, the rate of widow's benefit would be reduced because the absence of contributions for his period at the university would cause his yearly contribution average to fall below 50."

So the sins of the husband are to be visited on the wife and children as usual. The second paragraph however sent my mind ranging into the future:

"Where retirement pension is concerned, even if the student paid 52 contributions a year from the time he started work after leaving the university, he would not be able to restore his yearly contribution average to 50 by the time he reached age 65, and his pension, and that of his wife, if she relied on his insurance for her retirement pension, would be subject to reduction."

At the time when I ceased paying contributions the age of 65 was 40 years away. Subtract 40 years from 1957 and it does not require an electronic computer to give you the date 1917. In 1917 there was still a Tsar in Russia, the Mexican Revolution was still going on, the First World War was at its height, the aeroplane was still in relative infancy, women had not got the vote, China had only just ceased to be an Empire . . . the world in fact was very different. Halve the time, go back only 20 years, to 1937. Russia, although growing in power, was still not, as a state, a serious menace. China was negligible, Japan was the power in the East. Communism was thought to be the enemy, then as now, but the great Fascist powers were in existence. Since that date whole populations have been massacred, two cities destroyed in seconds by a new type of bomb, and all life on earth rendered more precarious

than ever by the creation of a yet more powerful bomb, which makes the other look like a toy.

Considering that scientific progress is going faster and faster, and the political situation is at least not getting any less perilous, it does not seem far-fetched to suppose that the world of 40 years from now will be even more different from what we know at present than the world of 40 years ago.

When I become 65, and eligible for a pension, I will most probably be a sixty-five-year-old cloud of radio-active dust, unless I am killed by that other product of glorious modern science, the motor car.

However, if that is not the case, it is almost certain that the régime in this country will have changed so unimaginably that (if records have survived at all) the question of what you paid, or did not pay, 40 years ago will not matter much or at all. The whole financial system may have collapsed through inflation, as it did in Germany between the wars. In any case, at the present rate things are going, fifty shillings a week in 1997 might pay for a telephone call or a visit to the public convenience, if there are such things by then.

What may the condition of Western Europe be in 40 years?

(i) A radio-active waste.
(ii) A culture at Stone Age level. In this case there will be only a few inhabitants, who will live in conditions perhaps not far from anarchy. At such a level communal ownership will be a necessity, and pensions hardly a matter of consideration, although there may be a moral obligation on old people, who can no longer contribute to the community's survival, to commit suicide by allowing themselves to be abandoned, as used to be the custom in some parts of the world.

(iii) A barbaric semi-civilised society. Domestic animals, agriculture and metals. I can see myself as an old old man in the tribal council, mumbling in my long white beard about the brave old days of civilisation, when I was young, and they did not kill a mere handful in some petty cattle-raid, but millions and millions in great wars. No one will really believe these stories.

(iv) "1984". Living conditions will be so grim, pension or no pension, that I would rather not be alive at all.

(v) "Brave New World". As a result of new scientific techniques for prolonging life I may be still quite a young man, I may be living on the Moon or on Mars. Present society will be regarded as unbelievably primitive, and its social and financial arrangements will no longer apply. Actually the prospect of this synthetic robot culture does not appeal to me, but in any case it will be very different from what we know now.

(vi) "The Free Society". This is the least likely of all. Yet, who knows? If it was so there would be no money and

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Child of Communism

CHILD OF COMMUNISM, by Ede Pfeiffer. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 18s.

A CONNECTED series of anecdotes rather than a developing account of the life of a young Hungarian, who was nine when the Red Army drove the Germans from Budapest, and twenty when he fled from Hungary after the rising in 1956.

It conveys the frustration and bitterness which must be the lot of every such person living in a highly totalitarian state. At the same time, and probably unintentionally, the writer makes it appear that the difficulties he meets are the same ones with which we are familiar in "democratic" states, being dominated by school teachers imbued with an authoritarian ideology, not being able to attend University despite being academically qualified, being forced by outside pressures to undertake unpalatable work, but that they are experienced in a more extreme form.

It is not however a good book. Hardly any new facts are revealed, and the story is told from a narrowly egoistic point of view. An imaginative writer could have made a communicable individual message from experiences such as Pfeiffer has evidently gone through. An analytic thinker could have put them into the context either of the development of Communism or the Hungarian régime in particular. Here however, there is very little information about the political moves which were taking place in Eastern Europe during the period with which the book deals, the anecdotal style makes everything seem less real than the bare facts and figures would, the writer seems obsessed by the general freeing of sexual life in post-war Hungary, ignores the fact that a Fascist régime existed until 1944, and has no positive ideas against which to hammer out his dislike of Communism. He has in fact failed in the task of a political biographer, which is to bind together the events of the political world, and their effects on an individual.

This is, in the case of the East European states, a task which has still to be accomplished. P.H.

Aldermaston and After

Continued from p. 1

away—to catcalls from his comrades."

The *Sunday Pictorial* true to its unique journalistic formula opens its short, clipped report with "Squelch! Squelch! Squelch! It was a SNIFFLE group which played the anti-H-bomb marchers along the slushy roads yesterday". Only *The Observer's* report combines atmosphere with a sympathetic approach to the marchers, and one suspects that Mr. John Gale (who writes the report) was a marcher as well as a journalist!

★

THE Aldermaston march was a warm ray of sunshine because it was generated by ordinary people and reached the hearts and minds of other ordinary people along the road from London to Aldermaston and beyond. To our minds this is the positive, practical achievement of the march (apart from the personal satisfaction which those who took part in it undoubtedly derived). The organised "hostility" was far outweighed by the expressions of sympathy and the manifestations of solidarity which the marchers met en route. As the *Times* special correspondent reports (April 7):

As the march has moved westward the attitude of spectators has mellowed. Apart from isolated comments there have been no active displays of hostility, and the number of spontaneous acts of hospitality has increased. The offer of accommodation at the Berry Hill Country Club last night is a case in point, and there was the intervention of a woman who, on the outskirts of Maidenhead, tossed two umbrellas into the midst of the dripping procession.

It is true that at Twyford a road house owner refused to supply hot water to the marchers to make tea: "To have done so would have meant me losing between £60 to £80 in turnover", he told press reporters. On the other hand at Longford the landlord of a public house supplied them with free soup. It is true that the Rural Dean of Windsor and Maidenhead refused accommodation for the night in the church halls because, as he put it "I don't approve of the march". On the other hand, Mr. Mark Pick, proprietor of a country club, gave all the marchers coffee, tea, sandwiches, and cakes in a marquee in his club's grounds, provided sleeping accommodation for 75 women and children in the club premises and found accommodation elsewhere for a hundred men marchers.

And what of the confectioner in Slough who distributed bags of sweets and chocolates, and the baker who gave the marchers, buns, cakes and rolls; or the householders who offered shelter for the night. In a hundred different ways the bonds of human oneness were kindled by the march and obviously meant as much to the givers as to the receivers. In this respect the Aldermaston march was a resounding success.

What a pity the committee did not leave it at that! Instead, as we write (Monday night), we learn that a resolution is to be sent to 10, Downing Street and the United States and Soviet Embassies calling on the respective governments to cease "the testing, manufacture and storing of nuclear weapons immediately". As if governments have a heart or a conscience which can be moved by a thousand, or hundred thousand marchers, who instead of spending the holidays at home, at the Zoo, watching football or the changing of the guard, trudge all the fifty miles through snow and rain

THE motor-car situation in America is like our own—but much more so. There are 3½ times as many people in the United States, and 8 times as many cars. Each year 5½ times as many people are injured on the roads and 7 times as many killed. But the land area of America is 38 times bigger than that of Britain. On the basis of the present density of cars in Britain, the United States would have 680 million cars on the road, while if we had the same ratio of cars to people as America, there would be 18 million on our roads, in which case we would have to leave them there to rust, while we walked.

One would suppose that the vast space, the wonderful highways and elaborate freeways, the universal suburbia with super-markets and places of entertainment far out of town, would enable the Americans to solve their traffic problems in a way impossible in this overcrowded island. But here is a description (*The Times* 6/1/54) of Chicago:

"Each morning, day after day, the great expressways leading into the heart of the town throb with the relentless stream of cars. If a driver stalls his engine at a traffic light there is a glare of angry horns behind him. If a woman takes a wrong traffic lane she will meet few courtesies to comfort her. It is a part of the race to live and drive there faster. Thus the very process of going to work becomes an ordeal that is a nightmare by any European standards".

along A4 to Aldermaston as an earnest of their deepest feelings and sincerity! As if governments which conduct their affairs at "summit level" and impose their policies on the people by the threat of force against whoever dares to disobey, will suddenly change their ways because some, a few, of the people protest!

Not all the marchers were so naïve. The *Manchester Guardian* (7/4/58) reported that:

Sprinkled more thickly than report has given out are obstinate ones who insist on thinking. An Oxford undergraduate complained of "All this guff about Britain giving a moral lead." He admits the truth of the "moral stuff—but what we want to know is what political action we can take to change the Government's policy even by a little—and nobody here has said a thing about that."

That is a question which neither the political Left nor the allegedly politically uncommitted progressive movements, such as the Peace Pledge Union or the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, can answer so long as they continue to use public agitation as a means for changing—or influencing—government.

A future march to Aldermaston will answer that Oxford student's question—or rather will modify it—when we make it clear that we march to Aldermaston not as a symbol but the reality; that is, we march to Aldermaston to speak to the scientists, the technicians and the workers engaged on the production of the H-bomb and not as a gesture which we hope may move governments. We shall begin to "influence" governments when we persuade—or failing that, prevent—our fellow beings from engaging in the development and production of nuclear—AND conventional!—weapons.

How to set about this task calls for long and serious discussion and the examination of the armaments industry in all its ramifications. At the same time an effort must be made to reach all workers engaged in that industry and make them conscious of the anti-social nature of their work. (Note that the problem of the workers' "vested interest" in armament production and their resistance to appeals to refuse to engage in this work, exists even if one's appeal is made through the agency of governments).

The Aldermaston march was a magnificent gesture and a moving protest. Now if we mean business, it is needful to clothe the slogans with action informed by a dispassionate examination of the problem.

PEOPLE AND IDEAS

THE MOTOR AGE - 4. AMERICA

And here is Victor Gruen on *The City in the Automobile Age*:

"This automobile population infringes on the rights of humans in a violent manner, its rate of growth is larger than that of humans and its need for space per capita is twenty times as great. In fact, it is insatiable in its requirements for *Lebensraum*. The automobile demands large amounts of space for its birth (manufacturing), for finding human companionship (sales, resales), shelter (garages, parking lots), health and beauty care (repair shops, wash racks, waxing and polishing plants), sustenance (gasoline stations), and burial after death (automobile cemeteries). Thus the automobile population is threatening to push the humans all but out of the city. As its numbers grow, the mechanized being is battling with its own kind for space, for right of way, for the last parking stall, and for every inch it crawls forward on our streets. If at one time roads were ribbons in the midst of the city-scape, so areas of human habitation may soon be cut into ribbons between freeways, parkways, highways, and parking spaces which form the empire of the automobile. The automobile has rendered the American city an unlivable environment, inefficient and ugly. It threatens to inflict the same fate on cities and towns of other countries".

★

THERE are three reactions to this situation in American thought. Firstly the demand for ever more motorways and for an enormous amount of central parking space. The powerful motor industry backs this demand with all its resources, and so do millions of motorists. Secondly the demand for restrictions on private cars in cities and for more 'mass transit' (public transport services). Bus services in American towns are less developed than those in Britain, and the existing ones suffer just as ours do from the lessening of business because of private cars. A magazine *Mass Transportation* declares that "For too many years the automobile has been re-

garded as some sort of sacred cow and no expenditure has been considered too burdensome to satisfy the desires of its owners", and Mr. George Hildebrand writes of Los Angeles:

"Enormous subsidies to the motorist have largely destroyed our mass transportation system, feeding the traffic problem and urging the authorities to use of the motor car in the mistaken objective of efficiently moving vehicles rather than people".

The PEP report *Solving Traffic Problems: Lessons from America* comes to the conclusion that attempts to provide internal relief roads and extra parking space in towns has simply the effect of

"generating huge volumes of private-car traffic, especially commuter traffic, so that they cease to function at maximum efficiency during peak hours, and many even aggravate the traffic problems in central areas".

Another American authority quoted in the reports comments:

"Our experience has indicated that we can never provide all the space needed for growing automobile traffic downtown. The harder we try, the more we spend—on widening streets originally built for horse-and-buggy traffic, and on demolishing buildings to make way for parking, and on constructing expressways and freeways to make it easier for motorists to drive downtown—the worse our traffic congestion becomes. These steps serve to attract still more automobiles into the central business district".

The third kind of American solution involves motorless zones. In Detroit for instance, the Gratiot-Orleans Redevelopment Project is a large slum-clearance scheme in a 'downtown' district within ten minutes' walking distance of the city centre consisting of three neighbourhoods with a 'belt-road system'—an inner ring road, within which there will be no motor traffic. It is envisaged as a pilot plan for the rebuilding of twenty-five other downtown neighbourhoods of Detroit.

Delinquency - A Reflection of Society

ELSEWHERE in this issue we have drawn attention to a depressing survey of prostitution in the city of New York and how the problem is 'dealt' with by the police.

The social causes for prostitution and its accompanying crimes are not very much different from those which give rise to juvenile delinquency, a subject which has been recently investigated by Harrison Salisbury (five years Moscow correspondent of the *New York Times*), who has published his findings in a series of seven articles in that journal.

He cites typical examples of some of the gangs, of which there are between 75 to 100 in New York; (quoted from *Time* news magazine):

"All but a few of them are Negro; there are separate Puerto Rican gangs, and thoroughly integrated ones. The members are, in their own language, all "shook up" and cling together for defense against others as well as for the comradeship they can find nowhere else. They range in age from eleven to 20, occupy themselves chiefly with the protection of their own "turf" (territory). Trespassing on one gang's turf by another gang—or the stealing of another's property of girls, even an insult—may bring on councils of war, choice of a battleground, scouting forays. Finally comes the "rumble", a bloody combat with knives, machetes, guns, rugged garrison belts and—a favourite weapon—skinning automobile-radio aerials stolen from any handy car."

Here we find the pathetic attempt of youths who have known little else but violence and squalour trying to make a protective world of their own which they do not even like. The same feelings were expressed by most of the boys Mr. Salisbury interviewed; hatred for the life they lead and bitter frustration at being unable to cope with it. What hope have they of every becoming constructive members of the community? The follow example seem to

be typical of the pattern of young delinquents:

"The Chimp, 18, nephew of a "famous Brooklyn gangster," belongs to a gang that is largely Italian and Irish, was expelled from parochial school for bad conduct, was arrested once for larceny, will probably gravitate to the Brooklyn docks where, as he well knows, big time crime is rampant. "Sometimes guys come to work on the docks," he says. "They hope to make money, save it and get away and go into business. But they never make it. How can they? Where else can you earn that kind of dough?"

Economic or Social Causes

Seventy-five per cent. of New York's juvenile delinquency is attributable to 20,000 so-called "multi-problem" families. Of these, 2,000 families live in the city's 10,000-family, low rent housing projects. This project has turned into a slum and we get some idea of the economic and social reasons in the following report:

"Brooklyn's famed Fort Greene Houses, one of the world's biggest housing projects (3,500 families: 57% Negro, 18% Puerto Rican) is a \$20 million slum with a third of its families on relief. At Fort Greene some residents prefer to use the stairs rather than face the "stench of stale urine that pervades the elevators." "Nowhere this side of Moscow," writes Salisbury, "are you likely to find public housing so closely duplicating the squalour it was designed to supplant." A heavy portion of the 300,000 Puerto Ricans and many of the 300,000 Negroes who have arrived in the city in the past seven years have settled in such projects and in older tenement slums.

"How could these expensive new monuments to good intentions turn into new slums? Chiefly because admission to low-rent projects is controlled by the city, which sets an arbitrary income level for tenant families. As they rise on the economic ladder, the better-off families must move out, making room at the bottom for those whose economic and social levels are ever lower. There the gangs thrive, for as one Youth Board official says: "Wherever you have great population mobility and disrupted population areas, gangs spring up to replace the

"Its inhabitants will not only be able to walk to stores and offices, to the civic centre and places of entertainment, but it will be easier for them than for their suburbanite friends to reach the countryside. The project is a direct result of the efforts of a citizens' group composed of men concerned with the fate of their city".

A more striking scheme, the "downtown revitalisation project for the city of Fort Worth, Texas", is a master plan for the centre of this town of 500,000 people, also prepared as the result of "initiative on the part of a few leading citizens". This envisages a ring road enclosing the central area with six parking garages and nine bus stopping points so arranged that no building is more than a three minute walk from bus, taxi or parking places. Goods delivery and services will be from a tunnel connecting with the ring road and adjoining rail and warehouse areas. Within the centre all the existing streets will be given over to pedestrians, the whole area becoming a pedestrian island where "with the pig out of the parlor, street esthetics are no longer an academic subject".

"By the elimination of automobiles and trucks from the city streets, four and a half million square feet of road surfaces would become available. About half of this space could be converted into landscaped areas with fountains, flower beds, trees and public walkways, leaving the remainder free for additional structures. The land thus reclaimed for productive purposes would represent a value of about forty million dollars which would cover the cost of the underground service road system."

★

THE American car industry is dominated by its Big Three who produce 95 out of every 100 new cars. General Motors is the largest industrial corporation in the United States, Ford is the third largest, and Chrysler the seventh largest. It is the automobile, as everybody says, which keeps the economy going. To which Richard de Haan adds:

"Not only is it a luxury, but, as we used to say in the old Chicago Stude-

Continued on p. 4

broken stability of the group." Adds a Brooklyn junior high school assistant principal: "The kids reflect the adults and the world they live in." Says another school official: "We try to make them act the way we don't. We try to teach them to be generous, to believe in the sacredness of human life, to respect the rights of others. But the kids have eyes".

Smug people claim that there will always be those who will turn houses into slums and criminals who can never be adjusted to a decent society because delinquency is in their nature. To prove the point they cite the cases of people who have been brought up in squalor but who have, in spite of it, risen above their environment.

It is true that as long as we have poverty, as we must under capitalism, there will be people without the will to cope with it. As long as our society applauds the spirit of greed (under the heading of healthy competition) and promotes organised violence there will be those who succumb to greed and violence, which will not always be expressed through socially acceptable channels.

Weak people who are unable to cope in a reasonable way with their environment and who express their frustration in anti-social acts are in greater need of sympathetic attention from society than the individual who manages to rise above a hostile environment. Social progress can be measured by the attitude of the community to its weakest elements.

But our society has little time, sympathy or money to rehabilitate a handful of delinquents or law-breakers of any kind. The supporters of our existing social system are too busy organising violence on a large scale and defending a civilization of which war, murder and poverty are an important part, to realise that people are largely conditioned by their environment. If this were accepted the obvious conclusions would have to be drawn.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Should Freedom be a Political Forum?

DEAR EDITORS,

As a regular reader I was interested in your special item: 'The Readers With Something to Say' (FREEDOM, March 29). You cite reasons why you refuse to publish certain types of correspondence. O.K.—that is your affair but it is an acknowledgement of authority!

The question arises who gave you that authority and can it be taken away?

If you do not believe in Democracy (with all its faults), how can you now reconcile your authority to refuse letters from people who desire to express themselves?

You cannot at the moment speak of space as you are, you write, not receiving letters from readers.

There may be many readers who would enjoy a statement from say the S.P.G.B., the I.L.P. or 'Christian' organisations with your reply to 'this case.'

The S.P.G.B. give space to their enemies to 'state a case' and then make a reply.

ARE WE AFRAID OF THE S.P.G.B.?

DEAR FRIENDS,

It is obvious that FREEDOM readership is composed, in the main, of non-members of the Anarchist Cult, Organisation, or whatever one may call Anarchists in the mass. This, of course, is nothing to be ashamed of and is a situation shared by other journals including the journal of the Socialist Party of Gt. Britain. However, your announcement, deploring the lack of letters and criticism is not surprising.

Some while ago I wrote a letter to FREEDOM which was neither printed nor acknowledged. On further enquiry I was told that it had gone forward to some committee or other and that was the end of that.

I have no inclination of re-writing the contents again but now perhaps you might answer the following:—

In your condemnation of Socialists and Socialism, you constantly refer to the Labour and Communist Party gymnastics. You never mention the attitude of the S.P.G.B. on the particular topic under review. Can it be that you are unaware that there is a Socialist Body which has no common cause with these two parties whom you correctly condemn as enemies of the Working Class? Is it in some way disadvantageous to you, that readers of FREEDOM should know that the S.P.G.B. stands for the abolition of the Wages System; that it has no room for the pious God-guided, Heaven Inspired 'leaders' of the masses? Why do you not tell your readers that there is a political party, which like yourselves (though your movement did assist, with other parties, in governing the Spanish workers), is opposed to all other parties, etc., claiming to stand in the interest of the Working Class.

As a Socialist, I read your lively paper, and find a 'puckish' pleasure in its light-hearted irresponsible vindictiveness.

I can hardly treat you seriously because you can hardly be called serious types.

Oh well, thanks for my Sunday evening instalments of 'Damn the Capitalists' which, anyway, is a damned sight better than the B.B.C. 'Community Hymn Singing'—and infinitely more amusing.

Yours faithfully,
"SOCIALIST LLANELLY."

Llanelly, Mar. 30.

DOWN WITH THE DEFICIT!

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 14

Deficit on Freedom	£280
Contributions received	£217
DEFICIT	£63

March 28 to April 3

Tudsley: J.H.M. £2; Falmouth: R.W. 1/-; Bonselaeer: G.T. £1/15/0; Glasgow: S.M. 3/-; N. Geelong: O.R. £3/10/0; Dereham: J.B. 2/-; London: S.B.* 1/9; London: Anon. 6d.; London: J.A. 1/9; London: J.S.* 3/-; London: Anon. 3/-; Bakewell: D.M.* 5/-; London: W.E.D.* £1; A "Geordie" 10/-	
Total	9 16 0
Previously acknowledged	207 15 1

1958 TOTAL TO DATE ... £217 11 1

GIFTS OF BOOKS: London: C.W.; London: A.S.; London: C.F.

*Indicates regular contributor.

Surely that is a greater freedom than you allow in FREEDOM!

Many times I have stated to organisations to which I belong that they should allow such liberty.

Although I am not an Anarchist yet am sure many Anarchists will agree with my contention. But how can they overcome your authority should they agree.

Are We Authoritarians?

OH dear! Each time we seek to encourage readers to contribute to our correspondence columns we seem, at least to one or two of them, to be doing the opposite! Last time we happened to mention that we had a waste paper basket, and this brought forth a spate of protests about the relationship of editorial waste paper baskets and dictatorship. This time we stated that FREEDOM's columns were not available for the statement of what this or that political party or religious body stands for" and explained why: "that we are specifically an 'anarchist weekly', and any of our readers interested in these other isms are as free as we are to read their journals". And this has brought us the two contributions published above from readers who, we suspect, much prefer to see FREEDOM publishing the views of the S.P.G.B. than putting over Anarchism!

Mr. Warr declares that our attitude amounts to "an acknowledgement of authority" and he wants to know who gave us this authority and who can take it away. Let us first get a few facts straight, Mr. Warr!

★

WE asked no-one's permission to publish FREEDOM nor has any organisation engaged us to edit and publish the paper for them. Our weekly continues to be published because on the one hand we raise the money from sales, subscriptions and contributions to print it each week and on the other because a group of anarchists undertake to do the work—unpaid—of publishing it, with all that this entails not only editorially but also from the point of view of administration. Outside the group some com-

Surely you would not argue that it is possible to establish endless numbers of journals which are bound to fail for economic reasons.

Thanking you in anticipation of the use of your authority to allow me to read my correspondence in a future issue of FREEDOM.

Yours faithfully,
Romford, Mar. 30. SIDNEY WARR.

rades and sympathisers help to distribute the paper, others assist in the work of dispatching the paper, while others contribute articles. This outside activity generally speaking is not engaged, in the sense that these comrades for the most part are unwilling to commit themselves, to accept a share of the responsibilities which the regular publication of a weekly paper involves. We say this with regret, not only because of the additional burdens it imposes on the editorial group, but because we are convinced that the quality and influence of FREEDOM would be greatly enhanced if there were more anarchists prepared to give some of their time and thought to this work, not sporadically, but week in week out, year in year out!

Many of our readers are known to us personally or through correspondence, and their opinions or criticisms are valued and where intended for publication, given space in our columns. But FREEDOM as "Socialist Llanelly" so rightly points out is read by more non-anarchists than anarchists—and this from our point of view is as it should be, if we are to make any headway. Among our readers there are socialists of all complexions, from the purest S.P.G.B. to the shadiest Victory for Socialism elements; communists, from the excommunicated and extinct factions to the expiating or exalted party members. We also have government offices, politicians, writers, dog-lovers, anti-vivisectionists and M.I.5 among our subscribers. The more the merrier, but only, from our point of view, if these people read an anarchist paper.

Mr. Warr accuses us of being authoritarians because we do not share his

view that FREEDOM should be a repository for people "who desire to express themselves". If he honestly believes that a paper should print everything that its readers care to write, then he is saying in effect that it should be controlled by them. We have no objection—on the contrary we would welcome such initiatives—so long as the readers take on the responsibilities involved, appoint the editorial staff and pay them as well as instructing them as to the policy of the paper. Thereby they will have the kind of paper they want to read, and through which they can express themselves. O.K. Mr. Warr?

Now it so happens that a group of anarchists want to publish a paper expressing anarchist ideas. They don't appoint or employ editorial staff, but do the work of editing and running the office themselves. The paper they produce interests some anarchists and some non-anarchists who receive it on payment of threepence—which does not in fact even cover the cost of printing let alone paying the staff—or free of charge if they plead penury but declare their desire to receive the paper. It seems to us that we are entitled to publish the kind of paper that interests us, to the point, if we so wish, of writing everything ourselves, without inviting the charge of being authoritarians.

Freedom of the Press, means the freedom to express one's ideas and viewpoint in print, without interference or the need to seek permission from some outside authority. It does not mean that every newspaper or periodical must be an open forum. After all, would Mr. Warr accuse the editor of a woman's magazine of being an authoritarian because he (or she) did not publish articles on, say, the problems of heavy industry or boxing? Then why accuse an anarchist paper of this crime when it declares that it exists to discuss anarchism and is not prepared to accept articles dealing with the aims and objectives of political parties or religions?

★

HAVING put the case in its extreme form let us return to the offending appeal for letters from our readers. Far from wanting to monopolise the columns of FREEDOM, privately as well as publicly we are always exhorting those of our comrades who we know have something to say and have the ability to express it clearly by the written word,

The Motor Age - 4. America

Continued from p. 3

baker plant, a necessity: every Studebaker worker needed one to get over to Ford in time for the night shift!

In the struggle to keep up consumption the workers themselves play a part. Frank Marquart in a long study of The Auto Worker (*Dissent*, Summer), writes:

"In 1954 when a serious recession hit the industry, Chrysler workers canvassed the neighbourhoods urging prospective customers to buy Chrysler and not General Motors or Ford cars, so that Chrysler workers could have jobs, even if Ford and General Motors workers were dumped on the streets".

The all-time high in car production was reached in 1955 when 7,920,000 cars were made, and though in the industry everyone is agreed that this was due to extraordinary circumstances, Ford and General Motors have made enormous expansion investments to give an annual capacity of 10 million cars. As the stocks of new cars pile up, more and more pressure is put by the makers onto the distributors. Take more cars or give up your contract. Then: take just eleven more cars, register them in the names of your employees until you find customers. Customers: take a new car on credit with no down payment at all. An article in *The Reporter*, "Up to Our Ears in Autos" even says that:

"Where a buyer wanted transportation above all, and has little visible credit standing, they suggested he make an inventory of his domestic chattels, take it to a small-loan company, bring back the cash, and ride away in a car financed by a loan on the washing machine".

But the new unwanted cars pile up unsold, and the two-year-old ones are lifted by cranes on to the top of a pile of unwanted cars to be found on the outskirts of every American city. (Look at the pictures in the papers—by English standards these obsolete monsters are all new).

Only one thing can save the industry: missiles.

"When Motor Products Corporation closed down, a joint union-management delegation went to Washington asking for defense contracts. The Democratic Party and its chief economic theoretician, Mr. Keyserling, accused the administration of selling the country short by cutting defense expenditures".

Now the government has come to the aid of Ford and the Chrysler Corporation with 52 million dollar guided missile contracts and Michigan's unemployed are pinning their hopes on the billion dollar expenditure in the next two or three years on the 'auxiliary hardware' of the missile age. And the auto workers cheer. What else can be done with an industry capable of making two cars every second of the year, except to drive cars off the production line at one end, and back to the beginning to be melted down to start the process again?

★

ONCE this thought has struck you, you begin to wonder whether the 'problem' of the motor age is a rational one at all, or whether it is in fact not a problem but a religion. Mr. Hildebrand says crossly "Once a means to other purposes, the automobile is now the principal end in life, a religious shrine for which gasoline is the sacramental wine". To each man his own tin god, his own sacred cow, his own guided missile. They are lethal enough certainly: 40,000 worshippers made the supreme sacrifice last year—a record as usual. More Americans have died in motor accidents since 1930 than in all their wars from the War of Independence to the Korean War. Perhaps that is why so many of the motifs of American car design remind us of war machines—those bomb-shaped protuberances, rocket motor nozzles and tail fins, jet air intakes.

"To look into the interior, ribbed, metallic, the seats covered in black leather with a faint authentic crackle, the instruments grouped in heavy banks, gave us that sudden tremor, that imitation of extreme conditions that we feel when we look into the cockpit of a one-man submarine or a fighter . . ."

Like most other religions it has its libidinal side. William Faulkner in *Intruder in the Dust* calls the automobile "our national sexual symbol" and contrasts the American's relations with his car to his less satisfactory ones with his wife. And it has its initiatory or puberty rites: Dr. J. H. Weiland writes:

"The most common reason why boys

want to drive or have a car is that they hope to raise their masculine status and prestige.

"Not only did nearly all the boys studied show this reason for wanting to drive, they just as frequently felt they could not be accepted as 'men' at all without a car."

Like most religions it has its travelling revival meetings; in this case the touring Motorama show put out by General Motors, with its emphasis on Dream Cars not intended for production at all, and like most religions it is a cult of the irrational. The Chrysler Corporation a few years ago "courted the delusion that the function of the automobile in the United States was to provide transportation to people who wished to move safely, efficiently, and economically from place to place." As a result, sales of Chrysler cars slumped so badly that Wall Street was hastily getting rid of their shares, until they rejoined the race to make bigger, heavier and more wasteful nineteen-foot long two-tonners. American insurance companies have for obvious reasons, been experimenting in designing cars "from which the occupants could walk away unharmed from a 50 m.p.h. collision". But does anyone want them? A Ford director, Mr. A. L. Haynes told a Congressional Committee on 6/8/57 that safety belts in cars and lorries would cut road fatalities by more than half, but that after an initial spurt sales had dwindled away.

The American family car is now too big for the garage, so big that it can carry two families, the engines are so powerful that they could pull a ten ton truck, even the luggage boots are so big that criminals on the run steal a car, lock the owner in the boot and drive off. The makers give these floating double-beds names like "The Turbo Flash", "The Golden Command". But the younger generation derisively call them "the family barge", and the increasing sales of European cars in America may indicate the turn of the tide. When everybody, including the Joneses, has one of these carnival floats, small cars, old cars, or scooters may become the expression of the American dream, for as even the *Detroit News* declares:

"Surely there is some point at which the pyramiding of bigger bodies and bigger engines must stop or the private automobile will go the way of the dinosaur."

(To be continued)

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

APRIL 13.—Philip Sansom on
ANARCHISM & THE CLASS STRUGGLE

Questions, Discussion and Admission all free.

HAMPSTEAD LIBERTARIAN GROUP

Fortnightly public discussions are held on alternate Mondays at 7.45 p.m. in the basement of 12, Oak Hill Park (off Froggnal) N.W.3. Nearest tube station: Hampstead (Northern Line).

MONDAY, APRIL 14th

★ Malatesta Club ★

SWARAJ HOUSE,
32 PERCY STREET,
TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, LONDON, W.1

ACTIVITIES

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

Trad Jazz at the Malatesta

Every Saturday from 7.30
THE MALATESTA JAZZ BAND
Admission 2s. includes coffee
MALATESTA CLUB
32 Percy Street
Tottenham Court Road W1

Open to Public
Jazz Men welcome
Organised by IAC

Every Wednesday at 8 p.m.
BONAR THOMPSON speaks

Every Thursday
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