

# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

## Bevan at Bay in Saint Pancras

# THE SAINTS GO MARCHING IN

IT happens to most politicians sooner or later. Indeed for the erstwhile rebel it is an absolute must if he is to achieve his ambitions; it is the equivalent of a 'blooding' at a fox-hunting meet, and of initiation in all equally primitive communities.

It happened to Aneurin Bevan last Sunday. Five years ago, when anarchists were cynically claiming that Bevan would go the way of all political flesh, the faithful were staunchly maintaining their faith and assuring us how wrong we were. Last Sunday some of the faithful turned up at a Labour Party delegate meetings and shouted down their erstwhile idol.

Five years ago, such a happening was unthinkable. Bevan was leading a militant campaign for a more socialist policy for the Labour Party. He had resigned from the last Labour Government and was disagreeing with the 'right wing' leadership over German rearmament and payments for the Health Service—this latter was a great issue of principle for the former Minister of Health—rearmament in general and in fact the whole range and tendency of Labour policy.

For the minority of militants among the rank and file of the Party, the emergence of Nye Bevan came like an angel from heaven, after the creeping purgatory of the six years of office, with its inevitable adjustments to the necessities of running British capitalism. The Party was in the doldrums and was obviously on the way out, it had not introduced a new form of society into war-weary Britain and the strain of giving birth to such reforms as it did introduce was too much for the poor old Party's metabolism. The labour pains were getting it down, and the still-born social revolution which emerged was a great disappointment to the family.

### Jumped the Gun

Bevan clearly saw in 1951 that Labour was going to lose the

next election and got out of office. When he resigned from his position of Minister of Labour, therefore, he was confident that he was making no great sacrifice, but was in fact jumping the gun. Better to resign in a blaze of glory than just to be slung out with the rest of the boys, for then he had the chance of rallying the Party's scattered forces behind his own personality banner.

As the *Tribune*-Bevanite campaign gathered momentum the 'split' in the Party was said to be doing it a great deal of harm, but that was not the view of this paper. The Bevanites were in fact the shrewdest political tacticians of the lot and knew fully well that Labour had not the slightest chance of getting back to power in 1955, and that the best game was to breathe life into the tired old body and build up for the election after that—by which time, it was safe to bet, the electorate would be sick of the Tories and ready to send the pendulum swinging back. It was our contention at this time that Bevan, in spite of superficial evidence to the contrary and the shadow-boxing with the 'Right wing' leadership, was in fact serving the Party well in bringing back the disgruntled militants.

But as far as Bevan himself was concerned, we wrote at the time of his original resignation from office:

'Mr Bevan is a shrewd politician, and an able word-spinner, and an ambitious man. Such characteristics, to our minds,

convince us that Mr. Bevan's "sacrifice" is just a tactical move in the struggle for leadership of the Labour Party. He has no more intention of floundering in the political wilderness preaching revolutionary socialism than the anarchists have of standing for Parliament.'

### He Gets the Bird

Seven years later Bevan's shrewdness, the cunning of his tactics and the measure of his sacrifice are now becoming clear to all—even to the suckers who cheered him as their champion five years ago, when their votes, from the constituency Labour Parties, were keeping him in the Party Executive while the Trade Union bosses were afraid of his tac-

\*FREEDOM 28/4/51—See "Selections from Freedom" (Mankind is One) Vol. 1, 1951, p.42.

tics and the 'right-wing' leaders of his influence.

Last Sunday Bevan got the bird from his former source of strength in the Party. But now he no longer needs them, so it doesn't matter. Now he is lined up himself with the 'right-wing' and in the running for the job of Foreign Secretary should Labour win the next election. And after all Foreign Secretary is Number Two to the Prime Minister, and it is by no means impossible that the Number One job could fall in Nye's lap if he plays his cards correctly. And that would indeed be a great achievement for the ex-pit boy from the Rhondda Valley.

His phraseology on Sunday, in meeting the challenge from his ex-supporters was interesting. During

"When Government and the people quarrel, Government is generally in the wrong."

—EDMUND BURKE.

his defence of his present pro-H-Bomb policy, he was shouted down, and he replied:

'There you are: there are the moralists. These are the pure saints; you see how these comrades like to polarise the movement.'

There were more loud and long shouts of protest at this, and Mr. Bevan appealed, 'Do not let us destroy this movement by charges of insincerity from one side or the other.'

Which is pretty rich from the man who led the Bevanites in denunciation of the insincerity of the official leadership when he was mounting his crusade. The difference is, however, that Bevan was playing a game; the delegates on Sunday really meant it.

### The Workers' Allies

Even more interesting were his later remarks. Following further opposition, he cried:

'Those who desire Great Britain should have no allies and only Russia should

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## The 'Law of the Sea' Conference

# FISH: FOOD OR FINANCE?

FOR the past two months the representatives of 86 nations have been attending a "law of the sea" conference in Geneva. Only a few incurable romantics might imagine that this could be a gathering of fisherman and sea-dogs from all parts of the world exchanging yarns and experiences. And they would be as hopelessly wrong as they are incurably romantic! We would be

prepared to wager that the Geneva conference was in fact a gathering of lawyers, representing the 86 governments with more lawyers, representing business interests lurking in the background, watching every move, and "advising" their national spokesmen in the name of "the national interest". The Geneva conference was no step towards greater freedom of the sea; on the contrary it was convened, among other reasons, to seek to define the territorial sea. That is to extend the national frontiers beyond the visible land and to erect our economic and political iron curtains on the "continental shelf" which was defined at a plenary session as

the seabed beyond territorial waters to where the sea becomes 100 fathoms deep—and also beyond that limit to where any additional depth of water still allows exploitation of natural resources on the seabed. It also applies to the seabed round islands.

But while the nations were able to agree almost unanimously on baselines, roadsteads, low-tide elevations, closing lines, outermost harbour works, they could not decide on the limits of territorial waters and fishing rights! And it is obvious that they never will, or if they do it will only be as a result of some pretty fishy diplomatic sleight of hand. As it was the American compromise solution of a six mile limit as opposed to Britain's preference for the old three-mile limit and Iceland's interest in increasing it to twelve miles, was violently attacked by the Canadian and Saudi Arabian delegates who accused the Americans of having used "surprise tactics, deplorable manoeuvres and undue pressure behind the scenes". Only Australia's proposal that the matter should be shelved until next winter prevented more dirty linen from being washed in public.

Britain who had reluctantly agreed

to the 6-mile compromise then declared that "if the new proposal, coupled with a standstill agreement during the interim period, is carried, Britain proposes to make the following statement". And the statement is worth reprinting:

"That acceptance of this proposal is subject to the understanding that at the resumed discussion of article 3, the position of all states will be unaffected by any proposals which they may have made or supported at the present conference, and that no prior commitment will be involved for any state by reason of any such proposal."

For those readers who fail to understand what this legal jargon means, we quote from *Reuter's* report that "the British statement is understood to be aimed at preventing any unilateral action by Iceland in extending its exclusive jurisdiction over fishing rights in the waters around its coasts.

Perhaps all this fuss over territorial waters is accepted by the public as part of the day-to-day business of the world. After all we have reached the point where even the air above us is controlled, and now the politicians are getting down to defining national rights in outer space, not to mention the Arctic and Antarctic wasteland. In this age of missiles anything from an iceberg to a submarine, from a back garden to a platform in outer-space, is a potential launching ground and a threat to peace!

★

BUT we have mentioned this "law of the sea" conference because to our minds it is clear that the inability to reach agreement on the limits of territorial waters is not a matter of defence but of financial and economic interests, and illustrates once again the anarchist contention that there is strife in the world to-day not because of, but in spite of, "man's nature".

The life process depends, at all stages, on co-operation, mutual aid and love. Yet the social superstructure of our so-called civilised world is based on competition, coercion and hatred. Unfortunately this contradiction remains unresolved as one generation is conditioned by the pre-

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## The Case of Driver Trew

# Responsibility and Social Service

THE driver of the steam train which crashed into an electric train at Lewisham in December, killing a number of people, had a harrowing time in the dock at the Old Bailey last week, when a jury failed to reach a verdict on the charge of manslaughter of the guard of the electric train.

Trew, who has been driving for 25 years (without an accident), throughout the trial, and indeed, since the accident, showed obvious signs of mental strain which is hardly the manifestation of an individual indifferent to the lives of others.

It seems to us unnecessarily cruel and pointless to put a man on trial for an accident which occurred under the most trying conditions. (Not that the legal system is ever very concerned with humane principles.)

Descriptions of the conditions were given by two drivers, one travelling as a passenger in the electric train into which the steam train crashed, the other was the driver.

It was stated that after leaving New Cross the track went into a cutting, which was a "trough of darkness". Under normal conditions a signal was a bit difficult to see. It was behind a bridge . . . when the fog was dense a driver would be running "practically blind".

The driver of the electric train was asked by the defence what chance a driver of a steam train had, standing in his ordinary position, of seeing signals if his boiler was 30 ft. long. The reply was that, in his opinion, he could not see them.

The case for the prosecution was that the driver showed "such disregard for the life and safety of others as to amount to a crime against the state and conduct deserving of punishment".

Crime against the state? Does this mean destruction of state property and the fact that the railway authorities will have to compensate the relatives of the people killed?

The assumption is too that drivers involved in these accidents accused of having a disregard for other people's lives also have a total disregard for their own. It was merely chance that Trew was not killed himself.

The responsibility which is placed on public drivers for other people's lives is rarely acknowledged by the majority of people. We take it for granted that when we step in a train or a bus every day we will arrive to and from our destinations in safety. Yet when these men make a demand for higher wages there is usually a "public outcry". If they go on strike to press their claim, fellow-workers and others grumble at the inconvenience.

Accidents will occur in any society, although it is obvious that they can be minimised by improvements on road and rail conditions. Further, if reactions slow down as men get older, thus making it necessary to replace older drivers with younger ones, any economically sane society should arrange for the replacement without loss to the older man who has given years of work to public service.

## Don't Look Now—But I think your Defences have Slipped!

WASHINGTON, APRIL 18.

Western scientists have now found a way to defeat enemy radar. It is done by painting aircraft with a special coating which will prevent the aircraft registering on the radar screen. No paint yet developed will completely hide an object from radar, but the better paints are said to reduce greatly the chances of detection.

Work is still going on, but officials of the Department of Defence in Washington say the method should have wide use after it has been perfected. There is only one fly in the ointment—Russia is believed to be working on the same line of research. If that is the case and the Russians develop a good anti-radar paint the protection offered by the Distant Early Warning (Dew) line in Canada and the Texas tower radar warning stations out in the Atlantic will be greatly reduced.

The greatest concern is what these new coatings will mean to the Western programme of developing an anti-missile missile. Radar is still the most advanced and probably the easiest equipment to incorporate in a missile to destroy other missiles. The United States already plans to paint its intercontinental missiles with anti-radar coatings if the Russians develop an anti-missile missile dependent on radar.—British United Press.





## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

## What do we think of the Bomb?

DEAR SIR,

It is not my habit to indulge in long newspaper controversies—my experience being that if an editor won't face up to an argument first time, he is far less likely to admit an error subsequently. Further, if the first editorial reply is abusive and personal, then the succeeding answers are more so. However, I will make one more try.

Firstly, a word about some rather unwholesome, as well as antedeluvian, features, of the editorial reply.

(1) A serious misprint in paragraph 8 of my letter—by transposing words and italics you had me saying "but we do have to choose between two wars", instead of "but do we have to choose between two wars . . . ?" The misprint made nonsense of what followed, for what followed were remarks suggesting that it was by no means clear, or certain, that we were faced with this choice—that the nuclear campaign might lead to conditions ruling out all wars. A reasonably vigilant sub-editor would have picked this one up.

(2) Gratuitous information is supplied to the effect that half the editorial staff were jailed for opposing the last war\* I can only reply that I fought for four years in the last war—that the prospect of England under the Gestapo and my country under the Kempai Tai—gas ovens, concentration camps, the lot, still appals me, and I am very glad we won—as I have no doubt that the Editors are glad. I respect their views, as I hope they do mine—but they must see that my fighting, and their not, has nothing to do with the rightness or wrongness of their or my views, or arguments. What they have done is to come the old soldier—in reverse. Such moves are disreputable. Let us not live in the past!

(3) Reference is twice made to the fact that I did not march every day—(only 2 days). This too must be assumed to connect with the rightness or wrongness of my views. Does it? In between, the Editor states that he also did not march all the way—so his views must be similarly affected—or unaffected. I had very good reasons for not marching all the way—quite likely so has he. But his reasons don't interest me—they are irrelevant to the validity of his arguments and the correctness (or otherwise) of his facts. A very childish and unskilful performance!

As to the rest, the reply bears out the points in my original letter. The editor does think the H-bomb is a deterrent i.e. a force for peace. I will leave readers to decide whether his argument for this view was in any respect adequate or closely argued. He thereby supplies the missing premise needed to support his

\*Has nothing interesting happened to them in the last 13 years? Why not put it in as well?

## BEVAN AT BAY

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have allies are enemies of Great Britain and, not only that, they are enemies of the working-class movement. We are able to have an influence on the rest of the world only if we have friends in the rest of the world.

Now there are socialists who think that the allies of the working class in any one country are the working classes of other countries. Bevan, now that he has long left the ranks of the workers and joined the ranks of the governors, is apparently saying that the ally of the British working class is the American Government.

This is as laughable as the Communist pretence that the Russian Government is the friend of the British working class.

The Labour Party delegates at Sunday's meeting have made the mistake of thinking that a British Government could be the friend of the British working class if it is a Labour Government. How many more lessons do they need? How many more examples of the similarity of governments, communist or capitalist, do they need before they realise that no government can befriend the workers?

They have learned one more lesson about the behaviour of leaders. Can they not go one step further to apply it to all leading or governing bodies?

contention that "you will also be ensuring that there will be another war". Now these are his words—not mine, and it follows that such a march was not only in vain, but actually, if successful, calculated to cause a war, not prevent it. If he can't, or won't, accept the implications, that is his affair. But let him not accuse me, or others, of a "well known but dishonest debating trick". Readers can judge where the dishonesty lies.

The editor then says that FREEDOM tried to get associated with the march, and informs us that individual anarchists marched. This only aggravates the offence—or rather, the confusion. To seek to be associated with a march which one believes will (if successful) ensure that there will be another war, is an offence against reason, not to say morality. And for anarchists to sell copies of FREEDOM denouncing the march in these terms, and then to march—reflects poorly upon their intelligence (assuming they had read the article, and agreed with it).

This all shows the utter confusion in which FREEDOM was in on April 5th† and no amount of abuse, no parade of red herrings, will alter this. Subsequent articles have been more careful; more phrases like "in the writer's opinion". And very welcome too! But, as FREE-

†Had they been taken on the committee, would the April 5th article have been the same?

## Editorial Reply

MR. TEICHMANN gets fiercer and fiercer; so much so that his blind spots are showing and his blood pressure is getting the better of him. It is understandable that he should be annoyed about the misprint to which he refers—such errors are always annoying, but at least in our reply to his letter (19/4/58) we restated his question correctly and dealt with its implications. But this he chooses to ignore.

In point of fact he chooses to ignore our whole argument, to the extent of crediting us with things we did not say, like "The editor then says that FREEDOM tried to get associated with the march". We said no such thing, and we are very happy for our readers to judge between Mr. Teichmann's honesty and ours not only on this point but on his whole attempt to twist our argument.

This he tries to do by claiming (ludicrously) that we say that the Aldermaston march will cause a war. We refer serious readers to our long reply

DOM says, "assuming Mr. T. has read all this (the 3 articles on Aldermaston) he is probably thoroughly confused by now as to just what anarchists stand for." Are you kidding? But only Mr. Teichmann?

Which brings me to my last point. Too often, particularly recently, the views of the editors are equated with anarchism—they have the tablets in Red Lion Street—they tell us what the facts are. (Who is the current Pope?) Now anarchism speaks for itself—they speak only for themselves. There are no tablets. The only defensible procedure for an adult is to ask, "what is true—what are the facts?" Then, perhaps, "how does anarchism square with this?" If it doesn't square, then so much the worse for anarchism, or any ism. Instead, we see the question as to whether a fact is a fact, or whether a conclusion follows from a premise—settled by reference to what anarchism teaches. And this in turn by what the editors think. Sheer Stalinism! Now I don't believe for a moment that "anarchists stand for," the view that the H-bomb is a deterrent, or that the march will ensure another war—nor that nuclear war is not different from other forms of war, i.e. anarchism does not entail pacifism. Let there be more "in the writer's opinion," more attention to facts and logical entailments, and more humility.

Oxford, April 22. MAX TEICHMANN.

## Witch-Hunts

## 'Totalitarianism Gone Berserk'

THE lengths to which the United States Government is prepared to go in its fear of politically harmless individuals is exemplified in the case of William Heikkila, son of naturalized American citizens who brought their son from Finland at the age of 2½ months—he is now 52.

It seems that at the time of the depression William Heikkila joined the Communist Party, and for his sins he was obviously subject to a routine check-up of ex-C.P. members which started in a big way at the time of McCarthy's purges.

No other proof of a man's "guilt" is necessary if he has had the misfortune to be born in Finland and a member of the Communist Party in the 'twenties.

The absurdity from any point of view of this man's deportation may have passed unnoticed except for the unfortunate individual involved, but for the fact that some newspapers, notably *The Washington Post*, which described the action as "totalitarianism gone berserk", have given it a lot of publicity.

The State Department has now issued instructions to the U.S. Embassy in Helsinki to give the man papers which will allow his immediate return to the U.S.A.

This may have been a mistake of routine bureaucracy, but the action cannot be explained away as easily as that. The appalling thing is that the machinery which deported this man is part of the government set-up which can deprive a man of his freedom and livelihood because at one time in his life he supported a political party now out of favour with the authorities.

The frustrating situation for us is that people are being asked to choose between two forms of totalitarianism in the struggle for political dominance. Anarchists refuse to make such a choice.

P.H.

## 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

MAY 4.—Gene Sharp on  
NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE

Questions, Discussion and Admission  
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## 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).

## ★ 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

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32 Percy Street  
Tottenham Court Road W1

Open to Public  
Jazz Men welcome  
Organised by IAC

Every Wednesday at 7.30 (prompt)  
BONAR THOMPSON speaks

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## Needs versus Financial Interests

ABOUT three years ago, when a fall in the prices of foods such as butter occurred, it was acclaimed as being the result of a housewives' strike, and people were urged to continue to refuse to buy at high prices, in order to gain further reductions. There was never any conscious expression of such a boycott, and it seems far more likely that the fall in prices was due to external economic affairs, than to direct action.

Now the price of butter has fallen again. This time however, the news was not greeted with such unmixed enthusiasm, for at the same time a New Zealand trade delegation was in London discussing the effects of English prices on the dairy farming industry in New Zealand. Whereas some years ago the *Daily Express* had been foremost in telling its readers to buy at the lowest price they could find, last week's *Sunday Express* was urging them that the remedy lay in their own hands, to not mind paying the extra few pennies for Commonwealth products, rather than buying those dumped on us by Sweden, Finland and Argentina.

The "Cheap Food League", which works backwards in a slightly different direction, issued a statement welcoming the low prices and exalting the right to buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest.

The main reason that butter is being dumped in England, is that the dumping countries have a great need for sterling. The fact that irks the apostles of competitive economics, and of course the Commonwealth dairy farmers, is that since the governments of these countries subsidise, and hence control their farming economics, they are able to put their products on the British market at prices which are not only less than those on their own home markets, but are in fact less than production costs.

An international conference in Geneva has been discussing The Law of the Sea for several weeks, and one of the problems on which very little agreement has been reached has been that of fishing rights, and territorial waters. The tradition has been that a belt of water extending three miles from the coast has been considered as under the sovereignty of the State concerned, and foreign ships have of course been barred from fishing there. The coastal waters are usually very rich in certain kinds of fish, and this has continually provided a source of dispute, for example the question of whether the three mile limit off Norway should follow the indentations of the fiords, or be measured out from a mounding line. Now several States want to extend the limit to twelve miles. This would in particular exclude the Hull and Grimsby trawlers from the very rich fields off the Icelandic coast, which have for many years been a source of wealth to them. They are threatening that if Iceland unilaterally imposes a twelve mile limit, they will retaliate by banning Icelandic trawlers from British ports.

But why does Iceland want a monopoly of the fishing grounds off its coast? Not because of any shortage of fish for its own people but because, for reasons of financial balances, it needs to be able to export everything it can to England.

Both these cases illustrate the way in which financial policy and government control bring chaos into the matter of producing and distributing food.

Farmers all over the world are producing milk and butter, and people all over the world need it. Yet the Swedes are paying high prices for it, and at the same time paying high taxes so that their government can dump it in England,

thereby knocking the New Zealander out of the market and causing confusion among their farmers. The English consumers seem to be doing well out of it on the surface, but if New Zealand becomes short of sterling it will reduce its demand for goods manufactured in England and increase unemployment here. And of course while the 'civilised' nations are engaged in these economic struggles, most of the world's people are underfed.

There is yet no shortage of fish in the sea, and it makes no difference to its food value whether it has been caught by Englishmen or Icelanders, but between Icelandic gunboats and English bans, we may end up by not getting the fish at all.

Advocates of government argue that the chief reason for finance is to make the exchange of goods easier and fairer, and that laws, and the coercive machinery behind them are to ensure this happening, and to prevent the strong and powerful from exploiting the weak. What it has done in these two cases, as current examples, is to distort a very simple situation where food is being produced by some people, and is needed by others, and it would be the easiest thing in the world for the producers to make it freely available to those who needed it. Because power resides in the hands of small groups they are able to use the production and distribution of food as a weapon, to regularise the situation by the passing of laws, and back them up with threats of economic and physical violence.

The people who suffer under this system would probably be among the first to assent that the abolition of government—would produce chaos. It rests with them however, to feel the need for, and determine to institute a more rational way of organising things.

P.H.