

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"All arbitrary power is an usurpation against which a people may at all times revolt."
—HELVETIUS.

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Threepence

France's Miracle Man - or SALVATION BY GAULEITER?

THE remark by an Unknown Frenchman in a Dunkirk café last Sunday night: "Enfin! For the first time in three weeks I feel *decontracté*," was not an announcement that his intimate relations with his wife had suddenly improved, but simply a sigh of relief that the political excitement sparked-off by the Algerian *putsch* and the sensationalism and the uncertainties that it had provoked in France, were at last at an end. That afternoon the French Assembly by 329 votes to 224 had accepted General de Gaulle and his Cabinet and, for their efforts, were promised at least six months holidays with pay! For millions of other Frenchmen the de Gaulle myth had probably succeeded by default. Last Sunday we witnessed not the bankruptcy of a system but human weakness laid bare. The system had been saved (for the time being, at any rate) as much by the *loyalty* of politicians as by the apathy of the public as a whole.

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THE unfolding of political developments during these past three weeks is less chaotic than the Press headlines would lead one to believe. The Pflimlin government, in spite of its overwhelming vote of confidence, declared, by its actions, that it was prepared to play the rôle of a pawn on the political chess-board but only so long as the major pieces showed that they were of the same colour!

Tito Disappointed

WITH an air of quite unwarranted surprise the Yugoslav Communist Party newspaper *Borba* reports the Russian postponement of credits to Yugoslavia of £100 millions. The U.S.S.R. has broken the spirit of the Belgrade Declaration of co-operation between the two countries, bleats *Borba*, and continues, as if a new discovery had just been made: this shows in true light the pressure imposed by Russia in international relations.

It is hard to believe in the naivety of *Borba's* report, suggesting as it does by implication that Yugoslavia would never have supposed that the U.S.S.R. could have such despicable motives as to postpone the credits so that Yugoslavia would have time to "correct itself". If not—no credits.

But, the newspaper goes on: "The responsible circles from which the anti-Yugoslav campaign is conducted should remember how world opinion welcomed the Belgrade Declaration as a contribution to peace and socialism." (Frankly we can hardly recall a ripple in the pond of world opinion, which in any event has difficulty in making the connotation between Declarations by Communist countries and either peace or socialism.)

In a burst of the idiom which characterises Communist journalese, *Borba* makes its Marxist analysis: "The breaking of these principles, for which Yugoslavia bears no responsibility, will be appraised as negative practice from positions of peace and socialism."

It's blackmail, comrade.

For his part Pflimlin displayed his "good faith" when he resumed shipments of arms and troops to Algeria, only four days after Massu's *coup*; when he neither armed the people nor demobilised the army; when he refused to accept the communist votes as part of the vote of confidence. We imagine, however, that he also made it clear to the Algerian generals that he would do the opposite (even if, in the event, he would hesitate to arm the people) if the rebels sought to extend their activities to the French mainland; and to General de Gaulle that he would be resisted by the "solid majority" in the Assembly, and by a campaign in defence of "democracy" and "civil liberties", if he attempted to exploit the situation to achieve his personal ambitions for power.

If the resignation of Pflimlin's government is explained by the fact that excluding the communist vote (in spite of the fact that they *did* vote for him!) he had only a majority of 101, then why does General de Gaulle with only a majority of 105 feel justified in carrying on? To our minds the answer is to be found not in an acceptance of de Gaulle's estimation of himself as a miracle man, as someone above the petty ambitions of ordinary mortals, and unanimously acclaimed by politicians and public alike, but in the fact that the General has clearly understood that in spite of his "illustrious past" (in which, be it noted, he saved the system, not France, since what the French people and the world needed above all—even as a counter to the growth of

Stalinism—was a social revolution away from privilege and authority) there were enough politicians pulling enough strings to prevent his return to the political limelight. Since his first short, cryptic statement of May 15, de Gaulle has been obliged to temper many of his ambitions and sympathies in return for the opportunity to achieve some of them. The fact that his Cabinet excludes a Soustelle but includes a Pflimlin (*Pflimlin au poteau*—"to the stake with Pflimlin" was, after all, the battle cry of the rebel generals!) will not please his insurrectionist supporters in Algiers. And the inclusion of two former Premiers as Ministers of State suggests that the General is only allowed to attempt to clean-up the mess ("the failings of the public authorities") with the same old broom, albeit with a new handle! When de Gaulle made his first offer to "save" France he was vain enough to imagine that France would welcome him with open arms. He was wrong, for France began to be interested in him only when Pflimlin and Co. decided, for their own political reasons, to sell him as the alternative to "civil war".

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DE GAULLE, with the connivance of the political leaders (from Mollet Socialists to Pinay Conservatives), proposed himself and was accepted "for the attempt to lead the country once again"

to the salvation of the State and the Republic, and that, designated by the

Continued on p. 3

Health and the Bomb

SOME of the results of a two years' study, sponsored by the United Nations, by the world's leading scientists on the effects to human health from nuclear tests have now been published. Their findings confirm the opinions of many independent scientists that, if the tests continue, they will threaten future generations.

The study represents two years' work and estimates that, even if tests do not continue after this year, they will have caused 200 to 800 cases of leukaemia. If they continue it is estimated that the yearly total will be 300,000. But even if the tests are halted now, the damage already done will cause 3,000 to 120,000 yearly future cases of "major genetic defects". These figures may be higher, it is emphasised.

The astonishing thing is that these scientists, who are to meet again in New York in June to work on a final report, are divided on "whether to urge the General Assembly to call for an end to all tests".

Belgium's Professor Zenon Bacq, the committee chairman, asks the committee to acknowledge that "considerations involving effective control of halting tests are outside the scope of its work" which, if adopted, means that they would not be prepared to take any moral responsibility for the continuation of nuclear tests.

Russia's Professor V. Lebedinsky says that "the findings justify a recommendation to take a decision to prohibit test explosions forth-

with". We would like to think that this statement springs from a sense of responsibility to the human race, but since it is in agreement with the Russian government's "line" on the suspension of nuclear tests, we suspect Professor Lebedinsky's motives. There is nothing virtuous about scientists condemning nuclear tests when their governments (as in U.S.A., Britain and U.S.S.R.) are already in possession of the H-bomb.

We await with interest (and fear) the full report of this special United Nations study, and the final decisions of the scientists involved.

Dr. Soper on Civil Disobedience

"Inasmuch as the production and testing of nuclear weapons depend on the technical skill of ordinary workers, as well as of extraordinary scientists, such workers and scientists who are opposed to nuclear armaments should seek to hamper and frustrate the policy of the Government. They must withdraw their labour, particularly, from these projects, and more generally, if need be, from other fields of production which are necessary for a nuclear programme.

"If I feel some diffidence in advocating such action it is not because I doubt its rightness, but because I shall escape its consequences. . . . I must contemplate other steps which come under the over-all description of 'civil disobedience'. I hope that I shall find the courage to practise 'passive resistance'—the kind of non-violent and unheated opposition to law and order that Gandhi raised to a fine art and made a tremendous weapon."

Tribune 30/5/58.

TRANSPORT CHIEF TALKS "TOUGH"

LONDON Transport workers will find little solace in the results of the week-end talks between Sir John Elliot, Chairman of London Transport, and the Transport Union Secretary, Frank Cousins. Neither will they have found hope in the actions of their fellow workers, few of whom, apart from the East London petrol tanker men who have pledged support for any action ordered by the Union's executive, have offered any practical support.

Sir John Elliot's arrogant statement to the press indicates his contempt and disregard for the future of the transport workers, and shows the strong position which the Transport Executive feel themselves to be in. It is now revealed that when work does resume London Transport intends to cut the bus services by 10%. By October the plan is to reduce the number of buses by 500 at least, "whether the unions like it or not." This should save the executive £2 millions per year, but what of the fate of the redundant men? This is a minor problem which will not cause Sir John Elliot many sleepless nights (his salary will not be decreased).

When turning down the Union's demand for a 4/- "token payment" while their future pay rate is being discussed for the 14,000 men not included in the Central busmen's 8/6 rise, Sir John Elliot stated:

"Our attitude will not change. My attitude is a tough one. I feel that public opinion is behind it. I do not care for surrender—it does not attract me. The buses cannot be back until Christmas unless this issue is settled one way or another. It has been said over and over again that nationalised industries have no guts, that they will have to pay anything because the money is not shareholders' money, because they are not like private enterprise.

"This is a public service run here on commercial principles. We believe that the bulk of public opinion is strongly behind us in standing up against the strike. We cannot be told 'The union is not prepared to accept the result of arbitration, therefore you must tear it up. We are not going to do it. We have told Mr. Cousins that until we are black in the face.'"

The 4/- token payment from the employees outside the Central area would amount to £3,000 a week. Cousins pointed out at the week-end meeting that this sum was small compared to the £300,000 which the

strike was costing the executive.

The position seems to be, as we see it, that Frank Cousins cannot accept the London Transport proposals because it would give rise to dissatisfaction among the men with the union, the leaders of which have organised a strike without giving too much thought it seems to the possible reactions from other sections of the workers. As we pointed out in FREEDOM, May 17th:

If the Underground and suburban trains had come to a stop last Monday with the buses the strike would have been over by now. And that is how strikes should be: big and short. Big to be effective, short to result in the least hardship for the strikers—and, in the case of a public service, for the public.

Sir John Elliot's "tough" talk is partly bluff. The London Transport is losing money and this must be making the executive pretty sick, but they can hold out longer than the busmen who have no reserves on which to fall back. The threat of future cuts in services may well have the effect of panicking quite a few bus workers into voting to return to work in the hope that the proposals may not come to anything.

Whatever the results of the strike one thing must be very clear to the bus workers, that is the necessity of support from other transport workers if a strike is going to be short and effective.

We do not suppose that Mr. Cousins (who after all supports the capitalist system), the London Transport Executive or the majority of bus workers, will listen to the anarchists who suggest that society could be organised in such a way as to render the wages system unnecessary, thus doing away with profit and privilege and the need for industrial disputes. Essential services could then be run solely on the basis of what is good for the community, and workers would receive "awards" according to need, that is the satisfaction of basic essentials without which a full life is impossible.

Look Out, Sir John Elliot!

The Marylebone Magistrate, Mr. Geoffrey Raphael, said yesterday to a bus driver who is on strike and who was accused of theft: "I have not the heart to send you to prison, but I wish I could send the people who put you in this position."

Manchester Guardian 29/5/58.

PARIS REACTIONS

MR. MICHAEL FOOT, ex-Labour M.P. and currently Special Correspondent of the *Daily Herald* was expelled from France a week ago. He was arrested in Paris and kept at police headquarters for ten hours. He was then escorted to Le Bourget airport by three gendarmes.

It is claimed by the French Government that Mr. Foot insulted President Coty in an article in the *Daily Herald*.

According to Mr. Foot, his fingerprints were taken in a prison cell, and despite long arguments he could not discover what it was all about. The British Embassy, it appears, made no efforts to get him out of prison.

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A film unit belonging to the B.B.C.'s "Panorama" team, consisting of five Britons and a Frenchman, was also arrested in Paris a week ago and detained for four hours in a 9ft. by 5ft. wire cage. The unit was merely asking questions about the French crisis and filming scenes in the Champs Elysees.

The security police were particularly abusive but amongst the more polite remarks was: "You can commit your idiocies in England but we do not want foreign journalists nosing in here." The unit is now back in London.

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These are early days as yet, but no doubt represent the shape of worse things to come.

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Mr. Macmillan remains quite unperturbed however, and sends this comradely greeting to General de Gaulle:

"I send you my best wishes on the occasion of your investiture as Prime Minister of France.

"It will be a great joy for me to be in a position to renew our war-time friendship, forged in those days when, as President of the Committee of National Liberation, you were leading France to victory.

"Recalling these days and the indissoluble ties of friendship and interests which unite our two countries, it is with pleasure that I offer to work with you for our common causes."

REPORT ON THE CO-OPS - 4

(Continued from previous issue)

THE two most controversial proposals of the *Co-operative Independent Commission Report* concern management and amalgamation. It is over these that 'vested interests', fighting in the names of Co-op Democracy and Co-op Tradition, are likely to put up the fiercest resistance to change.

When the first Co-op Stores were set up, there was no clear-cut division between the management and the members. The members often took turns behind the shop counter and to serve by rotation on the management committee. The meetings of the latter, as at Rochdale where election rather than rotation was the practice, were also often attended by the ordinary members. As societies grew in size, however, the differentiation of authority between the ordinary membership, on the one hand, and the members of the management committee and appointed officials and employees, on the other, grew more marked. Nevertheless, the practice remained that service on the management committee was a part-time, voluntary occupation, unrewarded except by a relatively small honorarium and also, perhaps, by the usual 'perks' of office, material and psychic. The committees also continued to see themselves as essentially management bodies concerned with the closest details of administration, the officials and employees acting directly under the orders of the committee. This interpretation of their function inevitably meant, in the larger societies, that the work of the committee could be got through only if powers were delegated to several standing sub-committees, each sub-committee dealing with a main department of the society's trade.

It is this system of management which still widely obtains in the retail societies. In only two of the

larger societies—Royal Arsenal and Barnsley British—has there been a move in the direction of full-time committees, the former having a full-time committee of seven and the latter a committee of three full-time members plus other part-timers. In both these societies the full-time members are elected by the membership in the ordinary way. The functions of the federal wholesale societies made management by a part-time committee impractical. Almost from the beginning, therefore, these have been governed by full-time committees but, again, committees democratically elected—this time by the constituent societies. Since this structure of co-operative government was first laid down, however, enormous advances have been made in managerial techniques. The complexities of large-scale organisation have called forth a special class of people, equipped with specialist techniques, capable of managing such concerns. The result has been that in private organisations effective power has come to concentrate more and more in the hands of these managers. Some recognition of this trend has manifested itself in the Co-op Movement. Attempts have been made to draw a distinction between policy and day-to-day management or administration. Control of the former, it is asserted, should be the responsibility of the management committee—or better still, to emphasise the point, the board of directors—while day-to-day management should be the responsibility of the appointed officials. This type of set-up is found, however, in only a few of the larger societies, notably in Nottingham and Portsea Island, the two most go-ahead co-ops in the county.

The Independent Commission, as one might expect, comes down firmly on the side of the specialist managers. It roundly condemns management by amateurs. For the CWS it proposes an adaptation of the Swedish system—a part-time lay Supervisory Council will appoint the management board, exercise the function of democratic control and sanction policy decisions, a full-time chairman presiding over both bodies. For the retail societies, its proposals are rather less radical. The lay committee is to continue but it will concentrate on major policy and ultimate supervision, leaving detailed management to paid officials—the set-up found in Nottingham and Portsea Island. Sub-committees will meet at the very most only weekly and possibly monthly. Additional recommendations call for a clear-cut management structure, with unambiguous job specifications and an explicit chain of command; a more generous attitude to managerial salaries—Co-op officials are notoriously under-paid in comparison with their equivalents in private enterprise—coupled with a willingness to sack the incompetent—Co-op employment is notoriously more secure than private employment; the introduction of management trainee schemes, which are common in large private and public concerns and which will attract university graduates; and the setting up of personnel departments and machinery for regular joint consultation with employees.

The Commission's recommendations might be interpreted as a deliberate proposal to foster the development of 'the managerial revolution' in the Co-ops. Their analysis of this aspect of the problem is distinctly 'managerial' in tone. They assert that changes in retailing during the present century "all have one characteristic in common: they call for increasingly expert and scientific management. No layman to-day, however able and assiduous, can have a proper grasp of the more and more complex techniques of (to take some example at random) unit stock-control, scientific stock-assortment, budgetary control and forecasting, modern accounting systems, and so on indefinitely. Of course, this trend is not confined to retailing.

It reflects a wider change common to all economic activity, and caused by the constantly increasing scale, complexity and intricacy of modern business. As a result, the gifted amateur is everywhere more and more at a discount. The layman gives way to the specialist; and management, in retailing as elsewhere, becomes an expert and scientific profession. Under these circumstances, active management by Co-operative lay committees becomes, in our view, a dangerous anachronism. Management must now be delegated to specialist officials who are appointed by the Board to carry it out, and who alone are technically equipped to do so."

However, before the battle-cry of "Democracy versus the Managers" is raised abroad, it is necessary to take a closer look at the problem. The Commission itself explicitly denies any wish to foster a 'managerial revolution' in the Co-ops and to weaken the distinctive Co-operative element of 'lay democracy'. And it even goes on to argue that the adoption of its recommendations would strengthen Co-op democracy. The ground for this latter assertion is that the present system in practice frequently results in *too-much* managerial control. The lay committees are so busily occupied in discussing details—for example, who shall get which job and which member of the committee shall go on some 'plummy' jaunt—that they have no time to sit back, reflect and seriously consider matters of long-term policy. The result is that policy decisions are often perforce practically made by the chief officials. Also, since the committee sees its function as management, the function of exercising democratic control goes by de-

fault: the chief officials are often immune from effective criticism and rebuke; and, if they are guilty of failure or incompetence, they can always lay the blame on the interference of the committee.

I believe that there is a good deal of substance in all this. It is quite probable that many Co-ops at present get the worst of both worlds: effective managerial control and incompetent management. If one has to choose between the present set-up and the Commission's proposals, I would choose the latter, for at least they hold out the prospect of greater efficiency. I am sceptical, however, about the Commission's claim that their recommendations would improve democratic control. If the lay committees are incompetent to manage, are they not also incompetent to supervise the professional experts? They may spend more time in discussing broad policy matters, but is it likely that they will be able to formulate intelligent policy or even to make a reasonable decision about policy formulated by others? The Commission's proposals hinge upon the distinction between policy and day-to-day management but experience of the public corporations, in which the same distinction is made, suggests that this is a highly artificial distinction. Real decisions always involve more or less policy, more or less day-to-day management or administration. The logic of the managerial analysis is that the layman is incompetent even to judge policy; all he can do is to judge the results. It is precisely this which places the modern democrat in a dilemma. For to judge by results—a crude enough criterion in any case—does not call for any special machinery of democratic control, other than the simple one of giving someone else a chance to do better. In "democratic states" this

is achieved by voting for the opposition party; in a Co-op it calls only for the opportunity to take one's trade elsewhere. Certainly, those Co-ops like Nottingham and Portsea Island which have already adopted the precepts recommended by the Commission are not shining examples of Co-op democracy. In both societies effective power is largely concentrated in the hands of their Chief Executive Officers, two very able men who, no doubt, have deliberately encouraged the development of the set-up the Commission favours just because it allows them their head. So much is one of these societies under the control of its top manager that he is notorious in the movement for grandiose references to 'my committee.'

I conclude, therefore, that the Commission's proposals on management would be likely to improve the efficiency of the Co-ops but unlikely to increase the element of democratic control. Of course, if efficiency is all that matters, that is the end of it: the choice is obvious. If, however, one still has regard for democratic values, one must think again. Managerialism is coming anyway and sitting tight on the present structure will not stop it. If one wants to avoid irresponsible managerialism, the hope lies in creating new organs of control as yet untried in large-scale organisations. The problem is not peculiar to the Co-ops and neither is the solution. That solution lies along the road to workers' control—control exercised from within the structure of industry and not from outside. But control of this kind in retail Co-ops would call for a radical revision of traditional notions both about what a co-op is and about what democracy in Co-ops means.

GASTON GERARD.

(To be continued)

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BOOK REVIEWS

Report on S. African Treason Trials

THE TREASON CAGE* is about the infamous South African Treason Trial, the personalities and organisations involved, the political events which preceded the arrest of the 156 leaders and those which took place while they were wearily sitting through the months of the preliminary hearing. Indeed, there is more here about the personalities involved—Chief Luthuli, Professor Matthews, Ismail Meer, Rut First, Walter Sisulu, and others—and their organisations, than about the progress of the hearing, and in this sense the book complements Solly Sachs' and Lionel Foreman's book.

It is a useful book, though slight. Mr. Sampson, who formerly edited *Drum*, the African picture magazine, and wrote a book about it, is no more than a competent journalist—which, in an era of incompetent journalists, is intended as a compliment. And he is a journalist of much knowledge (his sources are impeccable), experience, genuine sympathy, and an unusual honesty. He makes it quite clear that the vast majority of white sympathisers with the non-white 'cause' in South Africa are either liberals (who are isolated from the National Congresses) or ex-Communists and fellow travellers into whose arms so many radicals are driven in South Africa by the lack of any multi-racial movement with an egalitarian programme.

Mr. Sampson also evaluates the differing influences within the African leadership—the conservatives, the moderate nationalists, the Africanists, the Trotskyites, the (what does one rightly call them now?) Stalinists. And he calls attention to the significance of the Trial on the world scene—perhaps he exaggerates it—arguing that African opinion will decisively withdraw its tacit support from the segregatory practices of the South African white ruling caste.

Personally, I believe that there is in Africa the potential of a distinctly different political and social pattern—provided Africa is not too rapidly compelled to make this kind of choice between 'Western democracy and Communism'. If that choice is forced upon Black Africa at the present juncture it will almost cer-

*The Treason Cage: The Opposition on Trial in South Africa, by Anthony Sampson. (Heinemann, 21s. net.)

tainly go with Russia and China in the fallacious belief that it will thereby escape imperialist domination and political persecution. But, if Africa is given time to assert itself, to win equality in its own way, something indigenous might emerge from the racial and cultural melting pot. This could be a genuinely non-racial society with a high degree of political devolution—or it could be a

racial oppression in reverse. I am not, however, prepared to stake any money on it either way.

However, whilst *The Treason Cage* will not suggest the likely course of events, it is an informative book which illumines some important aspects of the South African scene and draws attention to some notable individuals.

O.C.

Life in Southern Spain

REAPERS OF THE STORM, by Elizabeth Lyttleton and Herbert Sturz. Dennis Dobson, 18s.)

Reapers of the Storm is a documentary, in fictional form, about a village on the coast of Malaga, Spain. Its authors lived there for over a year, collecting material and pretending to write a book favourable to the régime. This they did to deceive the authorities. And to protect those whose stories they tell they have had to use the disguise of a novel.

In their Introduction they wrote: "Everyone is biased to some degree. To deny that our sympathies were with and remain with the hungry and ragged people of Spain would be not only wrong but absurd. However, an attempt was made to compensate for that bias, and to adhere in these pages to what we actually saw for ourselves, or, when that was impossible, to what was community knowledge, substantiated by the greatest number of witnesses."

The result is no abstract, statistical analysis, nor a dry, turgid thesis based on some preconceived academic theory. The people in this book are living, individual human beings and what it loses in precise data it gains in correctness and warmth.

What emerges is an indictment of the poverty, corruption and injustice of the Spanish social system—evils which the Franco government has aggravated but not caused. We are shown the cruelties and compassions of both rich and poor and, caught between the élite and the mass, the precarious and tragic existence of the few who desire a different order

of things: the idealistic peasant who becomes an assassin, the socialist who is the ex-mayor, the former Falangist who falls victim to his erstwhile comrades.

Underlying this indictment, however, once can catch a glimpse of something which is not limited to Spain alone. From this episodic story of the little happiness and great sadness of a village arises a picture, extreme but authentic, of the present human condition. In it is outlined the frustration, irresponsibility and unfreedom which is the lot of the wealthy and the impoverished, the governors and the governed, whatever inequalities of status and poverty may mark off one from the other.

Such an interpretation may not meet with the approval of the authors of this book. Works of art, however, often carry a meaning which their creators did not intend. It is to the credit of Elizabeth Lyttleton and Herbert Sturz that their book reaches beyond the conventional left-wing view they appear to have of recent historical events in Spain. Their tale of the fisher folk and peasants of "Farola" deserves to be placed alongside the works of such writers as Silone and Levi.

S. E. PARKER.

... and increase
the readership of
FREEDOM
please!

Salvation by Gauleiter?

Continued from p. 1

Head of the State, I find myself led to ask the National Assembly to invest me with a heavy duty.

It is necessary to have the means for executing this duty. The Government, if you desire to invest it, will ask you to grant these means at once. It will ask you for full powers in order to be able to act with the efficacy, rapidity and responsibility which the circumstances call for.

It will ask you for these powers for a duration of six months in the hope that, at the end of this period, order will have been re-established in the State, hope found again in Algeria, and union restored in the nation, thus permitting the public powers to resume their normal functioning.

But only provisional solutions would be found if they did not "put an end to the deep-seated cause of our troubles". This cause, declared the General

lies in the confusion and consequently the impotence of the public authorities. The Government I shall constitute as the result of your confidence will, without delay, lay before you a project for the reform of Article 90 of the Constitution, the Assembly thus giving the Government authority to draw up and then to lay before the country by means of a referendum the changes which are indispensable.

In the preamble to this project, which will be submitted to you at the same time as the text, the Government will define the three principles which must be the basis of the Republican régime in France, and to which the Government undertakes to make its proposal conform.

Universal suffrage is the source of all power. The executive power and the legislative power must be effectively separated, in such a way that Government and Parliament, each for its own part, and on its own responsibility, assume the respective power in full. The Government must be responsible to Parliament.

How the Government can be responsible to Parliament and at the same time enjoy executive powers is probably clear only to the General who is guided by Divine inspiration. Neither does he explain in his address to the Assembly what his next move will be if the Referendum goes against him. He is obviously too sure of himself to imagine that his proposals might be defeated. And what happens at the end of six months if "order" will not have been "re-established in the State". More holidays for the Assembly?

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AS de Gaulle waters his wine (already the Algerian "ultras" are disconcerted by the composition of his Cabinet), opposition to him in France grows. The non-communist (but communist supported!) demonstration in Paris last week revealed a mood in the streets which was disappointingly lacking three weeks ago. Similarly the recent 24-hour strike by French schoolteachers, and a growing number of anti-de Gaulle resolutions passed by professional and other groupings in all parts of France* would indicate that the sighs of relief expressed last Sunday when it was announced by Press and Radio that de Gaulle had been legalised were not, by a long chalk, shared by everybody in France. De Gaulle, we ardently hope, will be

*Including the French Anarchist Federation which at the end of last month held a three day conference to discuss what was the most effective action its members could take to oppose the "fascists" and the militarists.

The Testament of Jayaprakash Naryayan

"The faith and hope that the people seem to repose in politics appear pitiable to me."

—Jayaprakash Narayan.

JAYAPRAKASH NARYAYAN arrives in this country on Wednesday—the most interesting and attractive political figure in India: a man who epitomises the dilemma of Asian socialism, as well as its possible destination.

Though it is several years since he renounced politics, he is still spoken of as a successor to Nehru. When, for instance, in April there was talk of Pandit Nehru's resigning from the premiership, the *Manchester Guardian's* Delhi correspondent recalled Nehru's invitation, after the 1953 election, to Jayaprakash and the Praja Socialists to joining the government.

"But the idealist in J.P. prevailed and he missed the opportunity of acquiring practical administrative experience. Recently he has been criticising the present system of democratic government and advocating a form of decentralisation. . . . But the very fact that people should think of him as a possible successor to Mr. Nehru is itself a tribute to his qualities. It would be premature to say that Mr. Nehru has abandoned all hopes of reclaiming him . . ."

Guy Wint writes that JP "has the type of personality which appeals to the length and breadth of India", but the suggestion that he stands 'in the line of succession' to India's ageing Prime Minister, ignores not only the political weakness of the Indian socialists, split as they are into the two factions now led by Asoka Mehta and Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, nor the unlikelihood of the Congress Party consenting to a coalition dominated by a non-Congress politician, nor JP's inability to play the political game successfully with the tough Congress bosses, but it also ignores the evolution of Jayaprakash himself since his twenty-year leadership of the Socialist Party.

"JP is never as far out of politics as he would like, nor as far in as his friends would like", writes Herbert Passin, in a profile of Jayaprakash in the current issue of *Encounter*, and Jayaprakash himself, the close of his long letter to a friend in the Praja Socialist Party, serialised in the Bhoodhan magazine *Sarvodaya* (Dec. 1957—March 1958), leaves the door open for a return to political activity. He draws a distinction between *rajniti* (politics of the state) and *lokniti*

(politics of the people) and his letter concludes:

"I should also add that though all my energies would be bent towards developing *Lokniti*, I shall not shut my eyes to what happens in the sphere of *Rajniti*. For good or ill, *Rajniti* does to some extent influence the lives of the people. It shall be my concern from the outside to see that that influence is as salutary as possible. I am aware of the risks involved in that, the risk, for instance, of being misunderstood and charged with 'playing politics'. I would regret very much if anything like that happens. But perhaps one cannot always avoid misunderstandings in public life. I wish, however, to assure that for my part I cannot but view every issue from a detached, non-partisan point."

Jayaprakash's letter is a 'political testament' of great interest, describing his evolution from nationalism, through Marxism and democratic socialism to his present position as a co-worker of Vinoba Bhave in the Bhoodan or land-gift movement (which Vinoba had begun in 1951, and which has collected over 4 million acres of land for redistribution, and persuaded over 2,500 entire villages to pool their land and work it as a co-operative).

★

AS a boy, he writes, he was an ardent nationalist, but even then the story of Ghandi's South African *Satyagraha* fascinated him. "Before my revolutionary leanings could mature, Ghandi's first non-co-operation movement swept over the land as a strangely uplifting hurricane", an experience which left imprints which "much familiarity with the ugliness of reality have not removed". Working his way through college in the United States he "drank deep at the fountain of Marxism" which "seemed to offer a surer and quicker road" than Ghandi's technique of civil disobedience and non-co-operation. There too he fell under the influence of the Indian communist M. N. Roy. (Roy too moved far from his original position after his expulsion from the Executive of the Comintern, becoming the leader of the decentralist 'Radical Humanist' movement).

On his return to India in 1929, JP found that the Indian Communists, faithful to what was then Moscow's line, were denouncing Ghandi as a 'lackey of the bourgeoisie'. Faced with a Soviet-dictated policy which he could neither reconcile with Marxism nor with common sense, he and his friends (after a

year in prison for their part in the 1932 civil disobedience), formed the Congress Socialist Party within the Congress. Eventually when Stalin's policy suddenly changed, and the Popular Front was initiated, the Indian Communists performed their own dutiful *volte face*.

"Still wedded to Marxism, this new policy filled my heart with joy and sent my hopes rising high. I began to dream of the possibility of a united Socialist-Communist party and of the rapid strides that both the freedom movement and Indian socialism could make under such united leadership! Some of my leading colleagues such as Rammanohar Lohia, M. R. Masani, Achyut Patwardhan and Asoka Mehta were opposed to this policy and felt sure that it would end in disaster."

It did (just as it did for anybody else who ever tried to collaborate with the Communists), and at the same time the Moscow trials and other events compelled JP to re-examine the basic postulates, not only of Soviet Communism, but of Marxism itself.

In 1939 (to leave JP's internal narrative, for Mr. Passin's chronicle of the external events of his life), he was arrested for a seditious speech in the steel-manufacturing city of Jamshedpur. "Released after one year, he was immediately re-arrested at the prison gates" and imprisoned in the fortress of Deoli.

"In Deoli began the series of incidents that turned JP into a national hero. Finding conditions in the prison unbearable, he led several hundred political prisoners on a hunger strike. The strike lasted 31 days, aroused the entire country, and finally forced the Government to yield to their demands."

Meanwhile Congress had decided to accept Ghandi's proposal for a civil disobedience campaign, the famous 'quit India' movement.

"Gandhi and other Congress leaders were immediately arrested. The public reaction was a tremendous outburst of violence and sabotage, very much against Ghandi's intentions, in which Socialists took a leading part. Frustrated to find himself in Jail when a real 'revolution' was under way, JP made a dramatic escape in September . . . After several months of secret revolutionary work, JP was compelled to move his base of operations to Nepal, where he helped start Azad Dasta, or the Army of Liberation. However, tracked down to Nepal, he was again retaken. On the way to detention in British India, the police party was attacked by a band of guerrilla fighters from the Azad Dasta, and JP together with Rammanohar Lohia

escaped. But once again, after several months of underground revolutionary activity against the British, he was recaptured in September 1943, and imprisoned in Lahore Fort."

★

THEY were not released until 1946. It is the classic case-history of political leadership in colonial countries, and Jayaprakash writes to his colleagues, "We have worked together and together have we suffered imprisonment, lived through the adventures of the underground, and tasted the ashes of independence". He adds later that, unless socialism is transformed, future generations will have to taste the ashes of socialism too.

"The Soviet experience made it further clear to me that socialism was not merely the negation of capitalism; that it was possible for capitalism to be destroyed, for industry, trade, banking, agriculture—all to be nationalised and collectivised, and yet to remain far from socialism; nay, not only to remain far from socialism, but even to go counter to it. In Soviet Russia we saw not only denial of 'formal' freedom, but also denial of social justice, of equality; the growth of a new class of bureaucratic rulers, of new forms of exploitation."

For Jayaprakash the usual explanations of what went wrong in Russia from Marxists' apologists, are too superficial:

"It seemed to me that all that has happened in Russia was not the result of the wicked deeds of a paranoiac, as Krushchev would have us believe now, but the end-product of the socio-economic system that was set up there. Over-centralisation of political and economic authority and total *statism*, were clearly at the bottom of the evil. Looking back, even that does not appear to be a sufficient answer now, because it is pertinent to ask what was at the bottom of the over-centralisation and the *statism*."

Perceiving the inadequacies and disasters of Marxism he "naturally turned towards ideas of decentralisation and the gradual attenuation of the State and the fashioning of alternative forms of collective behaviour and social control", but "on the rebound I was anxious not to get stuck in what I had so long considered to be the quagmire of reformism and revisionism". At what he calls the "half-way house of democratic socialism" he recalled that

"Since Asia regained her political freedom from Europe (though the process is yet to be completed), European socialists have been visiting us and giving us all manner of advice. All this advice and friendship are welcome, but there is one little matter which European socialists must not forget. If European Communism has failed, European Socialism has been no conspicuous success."

The questions raised by politics kept, as he puts it, "humming in my head, leaving me dissatisfied and urging me to seek an alternative."

Continued on p. 4

The Fittest Won't Survive

"The ultimate development of the ideal man is logically certain—as certain as any conclusion in which we place the most implicit faith; for instance, that all men will die."

I HEARTILY subscribe to these words of Herbert Spencer, even in this thirteenth year of atomic grace. The ultimate development of man, ideal or otherwise, is indeed logically certain, if it is certain that all men will die. My own implicit faith, however, which carries me on from day to day, and year to year, is that I will not die this day or this year, whatever other men may do.

In his younger days Herbert Spencer had written: "Nature in its infinite complexity is ever growing to a new development". To this also I most heartily subscribe. With a little help from man, Nature is anything but repetitive. A-bombs and H-bombs are still a novelty, and it is only to be regretted that with so much ingenuity and attention centered upon them, we are not given a fair chance to appreciate the equally interesting possibilities of chemical and biological warfare, deliberate blighting of crops and herds, and of chemo-therapeutic

destroyed by his own vanity. Algeria will prove a stumbling block which even his "prestige" will not overcome. But above all it is to be hoped that as the voice of the Assembly is constitutionally silenced so that of the people will growingly make itself heard; not for a reinstatement of the Assembly but for the true expression of *la voix du peuple*, of the voice of the people. The last three weeks have been dominated by party politics in France. The politicians have found a *modus vivendi*. It is high time the people of France discovered where *their* true interests lie!

means and drugs in the hands of ruthless dictators.

Unfortunately I cannot help reflecting that these and similar man-aided fulfillments of Nature's potentialities may all take place in my absence. It is all the more a melancholy reflection because I consider myself fit to see these wonders, and I have been for a long time a staunch believer in the "survival of the fittest".

Only the fittest survive, because the fitness in question is the fitness to survive, and as long as one is alive while others are dead one is provenly better equipped against death, time past and passing of time.

So far I agree with Spencer. But in assessing the main characteristics exhibited by successive generations of survivors I feel compelled to do with his theory what Marx did with Hegel's pyramid—turn it upside down, and give myself a pat on the back for being so clever.

Spencer's idea of the survival of the fittest is, as popularly adopted, that the strong and the tough, the daring and the aggressive, the fighters and the conquerors always manage to keep on top while the others go down. No insurance company, however, would wittingly put a high premium on young men going to the wars. True enough, a modern State pays out pensions to widows and orphans, and is not likely to go bankrupt on that account. But this does not invalidate, but rather proves my point, because according as it pays pensions to widows and orphans it helps them to survive, who did not go to fight, while it does nothing whatever to bring back to life the gloriously fallen.

What has happened in century after century, as any history book will tell you, is that the tough and the bully went on seeking one another out and knocking one another down. So, by a law of natural selection, the number of the peaceful increased as that of the warriors decreased. A time came at last

when warriors, reduced in quality and in number, just found it too much for them to play the leading rôle in human affairs, and so gave way to people more interested in making money than in ripping people open or cracking their heads. That is the long and short of the industrial revolution, of the rise of the bourgeoisie and democratic institutions. As with all obvious things, it took a genius to see it—in this case, Frederick Nietzsche. As a genius can never keep a secret, Nietzsche trumpeted his discovery from the roof-tops, and so spoiled what had been up to then an innocent game. No sooner had he finished inveighing against the rule of the weak, of the coward and the slave, than there was an orgy of killing such as had never been seen before.

There is not much natural selection possible with compulsory military service, total mobilization and total warfare. With the bombs kept in store for us it will be reduced to nil. The least willing to fight will be the most exposed to destruction, and that is most unnatural, and very very sad. When the coward, who is the only one who truly appreciates life and does more than anybody else to preserve it, does not stand a chance, it is all up with mankind. It is chiefly thanks to cowardice (and to the prolificness that goes with it) that every animal species alive to-day managed to survive.

After stating that all living forms in his day were the lineal descendants of those which lived long before the Silurian epoch, Darwin wrote in the *Origin of Species*: "Hence we may look with some confidence to a secure future of equally inappreciable length. And as natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental environment will tend to progress towards perfection."

Like Nietzsche, but for quite different reasons, both Spencer and Darwin would have done much better to keep their mouths shut.

JACK DUDD.

THEY WILL FIGHT TO THE LAST ROBOT

WASHINGTON, MAY 11.

The National Planning Association today predicted the development of a system of retaliation against enemy missile attack which would work even if all the defending forces were wiped out. It said:

"Since a surprise attack in the nuclear age may well knock out a major part of the personnel of any defending force in a matter of minutes, the 'push-button' after the dead man's hand' sort of device is likely to receive careful attention. Such a device could be set off by blast, heat, explosion, or radiation levels."

The association, a private organisation of leaders of business and the professions, said it was also conceivable that the moon would be used as a refuge in some future war.

WILL YOU WAIT?

"I don't see any point in American planes flying about with H-bombs on board," said a friend the other day. "If the Pentagon is right about Soviet intentions, it seems to me that the Kremlin must have won the war already." "How's that?" I asked. "The Russians," said my friend, "have had nuclear weapons now for some years. There has been nothing to stop them taking the parts of bombs into the US and assembling them in cellars in every American city. So if they really are the kind of people the Americans think they are, then America can be blown up any night the Kremlin chooses.—So either the Russians don't want to destroy America, or they have already won the war. We can only wait and see which is true."

New Statesman, 24/5/58.

The Rattling Bones of 'Freedom'

Like the periodic prophet of doom, the crisis-monger makes his appearance just about as often, except perhaps for this time apart from his lament, he may have a practical suggestion or two. The Anarchist Movement seems to appear and practically disappear in spasms. It's either feverish activity of one sort or another or deadly lethargy, just about managing to tick over. Flicking an eyelid here and there its only symptom of life is often the weekly paper FREEDOM.

When the Malatesta Club was first opened there were not enough jobs to go round for all the eager hands. Budding ideas jostled in fertile brains straining to see the light of day. Twenty-two full-time paid up members ran everything from catering to social and intellectual discussions. It was open seven nights a week and twenty-two people could even sit in judgement deciding or deriding any new applicant for full membership. Responsibility was the most sought-after ingredient in the new applicant's make-up and if that was totally lacking, but you still liked the comrade, you invented it for him. Which veteran of the early days can deny that a night at the Club was not a night well spent in congenial atmosphere of song and dance and refreshing original thought. Intellectual Benzadrine of the highest order. Now the cycle has done its full turn and the Club can barely keep open three nights a week while a meeting of full members hardly produces half a dozen. Those very precious few who still run the Club have no relief whether sick or otherwise. No more clamouring for full membership, and going to the place nowadays is mostly in the last resort.

Perhaps the real yardstick of the crisis is reflected in the only lasting monument to anarchy in London or England, in the paper FREEDOM. Weekly it rattles its dry as dust skeleton bones making the usual clatter and quietly retiring for a few days to shake itself once again the next Friday morning. This hard tack gets so difficult to swallow that often a glance at the titles is sufficient to make one turn direct to the announcements on the back page, the only island of interest, the only drop of Worcester sauce on a plateful of stale steak. Knowing the Editors as I do I must emphasise that this is not a criticism of their efforts. Indeed, these old war horses have been flogged unmercifully by time. Each week rolls by with terrible inevitability and each week four pages must be filled. The constant and perpetual search for material becomes a compulsive investigation through papers and magazines for articles and ideas that can be Anarchistically

slanted. Periodically, in throes of utter despair the Editors appeal to readers and sympathisers for articles and letters, desperately imploring them to do something, but as this appeal appears with definite regularity the response must be negligible. Now and again some comrade during his own study comes up with something original and of interest that has a direct and human quality, a letter or two may discuss an idea or experience culled from someone's actual life.

Generally speaking most of the articles are barely readable unless of course, sleep is the ultimate object of one's reading. The function of the paper has never been defined. Is it to educate, elucidate or correlate anarchist ideas? Or is it a forum for ideas from any source that are worth repeating. Is news that is generally disseminated by the press as a whole in need of repetition even if it is well studied with anarchist clichés. Humour is sadly lacking and poetry has seldom graced its pages.

Now the Editors, battle weary and horse tired, deserve every decoration from the Kropotkin Cross to the Malatesta Medal for fighting against time and so gallantly holding the fort, but whereas in the past they threw a weekly "bomb" today it is only a small cracker and often that is just a feeble fizz.

Now it is my suggestion that these honoured ladies and gentlemen should be retired for a few months on double helpings of oats and huge lumps of sugar where tired brain and aching limb would have time to recuperate and really know the meaning of freedom. No doubt people will ask "what about the paper". Well the point of this literary observation is to make a practical suggestion. The Editors of FREEDOM should invite a dozen people in London whom they feel are responsible enough to run a paper for a few months, not all of the dozen need to be active participants, but if half of this number agree to assist, then the object will be achieved. This should not be interpreted as "handing over of power" but only that an extra shoulder be temporarily lent to lift a heavy load. Perhaps one of the present Editors would assist in a technical advisory capacity while the other Editors heave sighs of relief and wait with baited breath and jagged finger nails the appearance of the next issue. A different mood in the paper might produce a different response, who knows perhaps people may even read the front page before the advertisements.

London

S.F.

AND A REPLY:

Straight from the (Tired Old) Horses' Mouths

IF only to show that we do not lack a sense of humour, we publish yet another contribution undoubtedly provoked by our appeal of some weeks go to "readers with something to say".

No one can accuse our readers of being yes-men or party liners. You can't pull the wool (or manes?) over their eyes even if you tried! But, just because they are strong individualists with minds of their own, they at least ought to have the modesty to recognise that their reactions to FREEDOM may equally be very personal and not necessarily shared by other readers. As just one example of this divergence of opinion, compare S.F.'s summing up on FREEDOM with that of Socialist, Llanely published in our April 12 issue.

For S.F. "Generally speaking most of the articles are barely readable unless of course, sleep is the ultimate object of one's reading . . . Humour is sadly lacking . . ." But "Socialist, Llanely" instead reads our "lively paper and find[s] a 'puckish' pleasure in its light-hearted irresponsible vindictiveness" and he declares that he can hardly treat us seriously "because you can hardly be called serious types".

But S.F. is too arrogant to speak for himself. He takes it for granted that all readers share his feelings of nausea, as before "a plate of stale steak", when he opens his copy of FREEDOM and glances at the titles (clearly he is a headline addict and should stick to the Yellow Press). In attacking those who have lost interest in the Malatesta Club or who drop out of activities for the movement he is attacking everybody except

himself. Or is it, perhaps, that without knowing it, his bitterness is a piece of unconscious self-criticism?

WE WOULD like to take his proposal seriously regarding a breath of purifying air in the old horses' home. But if there are a dozen, or half-a-dozen, people in London ready and willing to bring out FREEDOM every week we have yet to hear of them champing at the bit. Perhaps we are going deaf in our old age and suggest therefore that any comrade who is prepared to work for FREEDOM (unpaid of course), should send his application in writing, preferably accompanied by an article as an indication of his good faith!

DEAR S.F., we are sure you mean well, and that you don't think we really are "old war horses . . . flogged unmercifully by time" nor that we live on oats and lumps of sugar.

But perhaps we do appear to you as a bunch of poor old Boxers and Clovers plodding away "compulsively" and "inevitably". Perhaps indeed, we do share Boxer's devotion to a cause, but not in his unthinking, compulsive way. We do what we do in furthering anarchism with our eyes wide open, and without blinkers (or so we think), and because we want to, and because, so far, others are not saying what we have to say. But unlike Boxer we shall watch out for the well-meaning enthusiasts who would send us, albeit medalled, to the knacker's for a "well deserved rest"!

AFTER MORE than twenty years helping

Continued from p. 3

"The Party with the corroding and corrupting struggle for power inherent in it, disturbed me more and more. I saw how parties backed by finance, organisation and the means of propaganda could impose themselves on the people; how peoples' rule became in effect party-rule; how party-rule in turn became the rule of a caucus or coterie; how democracy was reduced to mere casting of votes; how even this right of vote was restricted severely by the system of powerful parties setting up their candidate from whom alone, for all practical purposes, the voters had to make their choice; how even this limited choice was made unreal by the fact that the issues posed before the electorate were by and large incomprehensible to it."

Not only this, the party system, it seemed to him, was emasculating the people and perpetuating their servitude: "It did not function so as to develop their strength and initiative, nor to help them establish their self-rule and to manage their affairs themselves. All that the parties were concerned with was to capture power for themselves so as to rule over the people, no doubt, with their consent! The party system, so it appeared to me, was seeking to reduce the people to the position of sheep whose only function of sovereignty would be to choose periodically the shepherds who would look after their welfare!"

Even when democratic socialists talked vaguely of decentralisation, "the democratic socialist State remains a Leviathan that will sit heavily on the freedom of the people", for

"in practice I found that their entire concern was, as it still is, with the capture of power. They seem to believe that even decentralisation of power was possible only after the present centres of power had been conquered, so that decentralisation and de-institutionalisation could then be legislated into being. They do not see the absurdity of this procedure. Decentralisation cannot be effected by handing down power from above to people who have been politically emasculated and whose capacity for self-rule has been thwarted, if not destroyed, by the party system and concentration of power at the top".

★

IN this frame of mind he re-examined the Gandhian philosophy which he had previously rejected.

"I continued to feel strongly that human freedom could be fully and wholly realised only in a State-less society. I was, and am not sure of the State would either wither away completely, but I am sure that it is one of the noblest goals of social endeavour to ensure that the power and functions and spheres of the State were reduced as far as possible. I became at this time, and still am, an ardent believer in Gandhiji's maxim that that Government was best that governed the least. The test of human evolution for me became man's ability to live in amity, justice and co-operation with his fellowmen without outward restraints of any kind. That is why I have considered the human and social problem to be at bottom a moral problem."

to pull the cart even the dimmest editorial hack learns a thing or two about his fellows. And one of them is to be wary of the restless and temperamental "race-horses", who tire quickly, after their initial sprints of enthusiasm. They remind us too much of Mollie, of *Animal Farm*, that

"foolish, pretty white mare who drew Mr. Jones' trap, [and] came mincing daintily in, chewing at a lump of sugar. She took a place near the front and began flirting her white mane, hoping to draw attention to the red ribbon it was plaited with."

THE WORLD is full of critics and political dilettantes. Is it asking too much that they should show us what they can do for a change? We have no doubt that there are many intelligent young people in our movement who could do what we are doing, with a freshness of ideas which we old hacks have probably lost by now. What, unfortunately they seem to lack is the energy or the conviction that it's worth doing. And until they succeed in viewing their anarchist activity as an integral part of their lives—and not as the first thing to be dropped when a career or a girl-friend appears on the horizon—their criticisms of others will be sterile . . . and we, who dream of S.F.'s plans for our retirement on double helpings, who already have the smell of pastures sweet in our nostrils, must accept the hard reality that it's just another of S.F.'s "red ribbons"!

But the stable door is ever open and we are always ready to make room for those who are willing to get in harness!

JAYAPRAKASH NARYAYAN

Looking back after Gandhi's death, especially when it was seen that "every one of Gandhiji's political colleagues had taken to the traditional path of politics", it seemed to Jayaprakash that not only he himself, but many others, had entirely lost the significance of Gandhi's programme once independence had been won:

"The significance of the fact, for instance, that after having led the freedom movement to a brilliant success, he did not take power himself to use it for remaking the country in accordance to his ideals, had completely escaped me. Likewise, when he proposed that the Congress should withdraw from the field of politics and confine itself to constructive work of service and should convert itself into what he called a *Lok Sevak Sangh*, the import again of that extraordinary proposal was lost on me."

From his political experience JP understood the truth of "Gandhiji's pregnant words: the *panchayat* (village commune) can function only under a law of its own making" and on this axiom he comments "This capacity to self-regulate the life of the community must be created and not bestowed from above in the name of decentralisation. The process must be started from the bottom . . . It is exactly this task that Vinobaji has undertaken". When Vinoba Bhava began the Bhoodan movement in a remote village of Telengana in 1951, "my first reaction to the event was of the usual sort; it would take hundreds of years in this manner to redistribute all the land in the country, I thought". But he found that Vinoba's method worked, which was more than could be said for the kind of politics he had previously engaged in:

"I decided to withdraw from party-and-power politics not because of disgust or any personal frustration, but because it became clear to me that politics could not deliver the goods. The goods being the same old goals of equality, freedom, brotherhood, peace . . ."

More significant for him even than the success of Bhoodan, was that of *gramdan* (village-sharing), which he calls "the germ of total agrarian revolution":

"Private ownership of land (including *zamindari* and peasant proprietorship) has been abolished in other ways in other countries; namely by the compulsion of law or direct physical violence. The social resultants of these 'revolutions' have been uniformly unhappy; such as bitterness and hatred; misery and tyranny; growth of an agricultural bureaucracy and reduction of free peasants to the status of serfs; concentration of power and dictatorship. In the beautiful revolution of *gramdan*, ownership was not abolished by force of any kind, but freely surrendered to the community. The outward social change was accompanied with inward human change. It was an example of what Gandhiji meant by a double revolution. In place of social tensions, conflicts and tyrannies, there were freedom and mutual goodwill and accord, making it possible for an unprecedented output of free collective initiative and endeavour. It may be remarked parenthetically that production of food-grains in Mangroth has trebled in the course of a little over four years . . . And I could find no reason to suppose that what had happened to Mangroth could not happen in all the villages of India. The people of Mangroth were by no means angels."

The politics of *sarvodaya*, concludes JP "can have no party and no concern with power. Rather, its aim will be to see that all centres of power are abolished. The more this new politics grows, the more the old politics shrinks—a real withering away of the State".

★

UP to this point in Jayaprakash's long letter, it is possible to express complete agreement with him from an anarchist point of view. (We have already in FREEDOM cited his very anarchistic utterances—see 'A Village Exhortation' 16/7/55 and 'The Indian Socialists' 26/5/56). But at the very end of his long letter, he makes the remarks about *Rajniiti* (State-politics) and *Lokniti*

(people-politics) which we have quoted at the beginning of this summary, and says (and this must be the thing which leads people to predict for him a return to the political arena):

"I should add that there can be no question of any hostility between *Rajniiti* and *Lokniti*, nor can the two be kept apart as two unmixable castes. *Lokniti* is but the child of *Rajniiti*. Between the two there must be constant contact and co-operation. Democratic *Rajniiti* cannot possibly ever resist the idea that the people should practise self-government as far as possible. All democratic parties should, by definition, be prepared, nay, anxious to hand over power to the people as soon as possible in the same manner as every good father is anxious to hand over to his sons when they are of age . . . I shall try some time later to place before the country my humble suggestions in regard to the evolution of our policy from *Rajniiti* to *Lokniti*".

But has not Jayaprakash himself, in the remarks quoted above about political parties and democratic socialism, already seen through this pious hope? The two principles of *Lokniti* and *Rajniiti*, which correspond to Martin Buber's Social Principle and Political Principle or to the notion of Society on the one hand and the State on the other, are surely of their nature *opposed* to each other—where one is strong the other is weak. And the very thing that makes Jayaprakash unique among the socialist thinkers of Asia is that he has moved out of the struggle for control of the state into the struggle to replace it by a network of voluntary and autonomous communities. C.W.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

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

LECTURE - DISCUSSIONS

JUNE 8.—Tom Curran on
JAZZ AND ANARCHISM
JUNE 15.—Philip Holgate on
WHAT CAN ANARCHISTS DO?
JUNE 20.—Donovan Pedely on
Subject to be announced
JUNE 29.—Tony Gibson on
PARANOIA AS A SOCIAL FORCE
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all free.

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ACTIVITIES

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

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