

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"The power to command and the weakness to obey are the essence of government and the quintessence of slavery."
 —CHARLES T. SPRADING

Propaganda is a Question of

The Right Lie at the Right Time

IN affairs of propaganda Mr. Krushchev has often shown himself to have quite a flair. He would no doubt have made an excellent Public Relations Officer for some large firm in the West—say the ICI or General Motors. One of his original gimmicks is to write to small non-State organisations in other countries—just as if he were an 'ordinary sort of chap'—support whatever that organisation stands for, criticize the actions of the government concerned and speak of his desire and constant fight for peaceful co-existence. Occasionally he manages to make a genuine impression, even upon the relatively cynical British and Americans. Obviously therefore this kind of tactic must do well in countries where there is no all-out anti-Russian propaganda pounding away in local press and radio.

He has recently written to the Brentwood, Essex, division of the "Movement for Nuclear Disarmament" stating that Russia is ready to pledge, jointly with the Governments of the U.S. and Britain, not to use nuclear weapons in any circumstances, either by means of aircraft or rockets. Furthermore says Mr. Krushchev, the Soviet Union would continue to work for the banning of nuclear weapons and would do everything in its power to relieve mankind of the dangers of a nuclear war. However, he continues, deprecatingly, recent events had shown that the British Government unfortunately chose an entirely different road. Jointly with the U.S. it was engaged in "unprovoked armed intervention" in the Middle East, which threatened to end in a world conflict.

No doubt Mr. Krushchev's letter

will not have much effect on many people in Brentwood, who, despite their anti-H-bomb activities probably supported the Jordan and Lebanon landings, but the same cannot necessarily be said of the populations of relatively uncommitted nations, particularly those of the Middle East.

It is no doubt by such methods of propaganda, increased a thousand fold and suitably orientated for wherever it might be, that the USSR has created the myth of being the one true protector of peace against the aggressive and imperialist West.

Since it cannot be said that the Arab Governments, for example, have ever been pro-Communist, but have if anything tended to ban Communist activities in their countries, it must be faced that the Krushchev method is vastly more successful than those methods adopted by the West. Not that we are suggesting that Mr. Macmillan should write to the Women's Organisation Against Submarine Warfare in Minsk, stating the real story of missile-carrying submarines, or even that a circular letter from Mr. Dulles to the membership of the Lebanese League for Peace would necessarily bring about great change.

The point we are trying to make is, that in order to win friends and influence people in other countries it has become essential to sell them the right type of propaganda at the right time. The truth of the matter is of no importance, but it is essential for success to put the lies and half-truths in an acceptable form for the particular audience of the moment. Failures will naturally occur since it is not always possible to gauge with absolute accuracy the

degree of acceptability of a given piece of propaganda.

Considerable assistance may of course be gained from the choice of material appearing to have some relevance to the political situation peculiar to the country of propagation. As is the case in the Middle East where the USSR has only to campaign against British and dollar imperialism in order to become the immediate champion of the Arab cause. With the addition of a background of anti-Semitism and a foreign policy directed against Israel it is but a short step to the present state of affairs in which most Arabs are convinced that all Russians are everybody's friends, especially benevolent Big Brother Krushchev.

Such is the power of propaganda in our times that it has become second nature for the peoples of the world to believe what they are told because they are afraid to believe anything else. The truth is nowadays too painful and propaganda has become the more acceptable. It is easier to believe that the hydrogen bomb is a deterrent to war and is therefore peace than to think of it as the ultimate in destruction. It is easier to believe that the leaders and politicians are sane, peace-loving men than to think of them as power-hungry despots who will take the world to the brink of war to-morrow morning.

Rockets to the Moon

O Moon of Our Delight

WE do hope that all our readers are aware of the momentous nature of the present point in time.

This, dear readers, is a moment of destiny. Last Sunday Man made his first effort to reach out to the moon, to learn its secrets and to pave the way for his own journey into space.

After years of visionary research by men of genius and painstaking application by men of mere talent, the moment has arrived when it is possible to launch a rocket to the moon with a hope of success.

It was a great pity that the rocket that swooped up into the Florida sky lasted only 77 seconds and covered only ten miles of its 220,000 mile journey before it blew itself to pieces; that the hope was only a hope. But we need have no fear but that the intrepid explorers of outer space from Cape Canaveral—who publicise their intentions so well that their failures are front-page news—will press on through failure after failure if need be until success crowns their efforts.

DOCKERS REFUSE TO HANDLE MISSILES

YOKOHAMA, AUGUST 17.

Dockers at Yokohama to-day refused to unload five Swiss Oerliken guided missiles from a Japanese ship after they had been picketed by members of anti-nuclear weapons organisations. The missiles were bought for research.

—British United Press.

Then, when Man finally steps over the threshold of gravity, then he will open the door to a new era of expansion which will make the inventions and discoveries, the voyages and colonisations of the last five hundred years seem like a mere prologue—a curtain-raiser for the real drama of man's destiny, the part he was created to fulfil: conqueror of the universe.

We are quite sure that among the single-minded egg-heads at Cape Canaveral there are plenty who really think in these sort of terms and believe this sort of baloney. Similarly, on the shores of the Caspian Sea the Russian scientists who are preparing for their crack at the moon are no doubt likewise inspired by an awesome sense of destiny.

The Leaders' Motives

But the men behind them all, the statesmen who tax the suckers to raise the ten million dollars that went up in a blue light in the Florida sky last Sunday and their counterparts in the Kremlin who wring the roubles from the Russians, these leaders of men are under no illusions as to the value of space travel and moon conquest for them. Their motive is the conquest of this planet, the Earth and all that there does dwell, and they suspect that whoever is the first to colonise the moon, whoever can establish bases there from which to send rockets back to

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In the H-Bomb Age LOOKING AFTER US

WHILE scientists warn Governments of the dangers to the human race from radiation caused by H-bomb tests, methods which will condition people to the idea of war continue to be pursued. One of the most important forms of war propaganda (apart from the bestial nature of the enemy), is to make people feel that whatever happens the civilian population will be safe. This was a relatively easy task in the last war with the threat of aerial bombing, but in an age of nuclear weapons people will need a lot more convincing.

Undeterred by the facts, and listing his appeal on the Rockefeller Report as "an increasingly important deterrent", the United States Defence and Civilian Mobilisation Director, Leo Hoegh, asked the Senate Appropriations Committee for enough money to start on a fallout shelter project where the U.S. "populace could wait out nuclear attacks".

Time magazine writes:

"Of the funds sought \$1,850,000 would be used to survey existing buildings, tunnels, subways, mines and cyclone cellars. Reason: Nevada and Eniwetok Atoll tests have shown that radiation can be cut to one-five-thousandth of its outside intensity by 3 ft. of soil, 2 ft. of concrete or 2½ inches of steel. Hoegh hopes to find many a shield of that size ready-made. In addition he will finance architectural and engineering research on methods of incorporating more sophisticated shelters into new homes and

buildings. He would also pick an underground garage, school or hospital under construction in each state, put up the extra cost of adding shelter facilities, then urge local governments and industry to emulate the example. All in all, in an age when missiles have become a real threat, Hoegh's plans represented a modest beginning to a national necessity. But they were, at least, a beginning."

Some people might get the idea that this is a considerate Government's precaution (however futile) against an unprovoked attack by the enemy, but this is not the way mighty Governments work 'Defence' measures for the civilian population are usually part of an aggressive war plan and there are many signs that the U.S. is no exception.

Perhaps the most comforting words on this subject, however, were presented to the general public when the *Bath and Wilts Chronicle & Herald* drew attention to what a local doctor had written elsewhere. This doctor may or may not be a military expert. We do hope that he is, for his opinions give us great hope:

Once a nuclear bomb has dropped in your area it is unlikely that there will ever be another in the district, says Dr. G. D. Kersley, consulting physician at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases, Bath.

Writing in this week's *British Medical Journal*, he suggests that this is one 'reassuring' point which might be told the public to reduce panic during a nuclear war.

Legal Dictatorship in France?

(From a French Correspondent)

IN six weeks' time the French people will have to go to the polls and show their acceptance or rejection of the new Constitution drafted by General de Gaulle's government.

What the exact tenets of the constitution will be, no one knows for sure as yet: they are still subject to some small alterations. But two things are certain: (a) whatever its tenets, the new constitution will be "approved" by the bulk of the electorate, and (b) its trends are clearly and unmistakably dictatorial.

Roughly, the aim of the reform is to give the government greater stability by increasing the power of the President of the Republic, who will appoint the Prime Minister and the Cabinet without referring to the Assembly; he will also negotiate treaties, appoint civil servants and generals, etc. The Prime Minister will be answerable to the Assembly for the President's policy, and the deputies' only means of protest will be to overthrow systematically all the Prime Ministers appointed by the President. The latter will in turn be allowed to dissolve the Assembly, and the People will be left to decide... The Parliament will thus be weakened—which is the main object of our reformers—but at the same time, the Executive being divided between the President and the Prime Minister, conflicts are bound to arise between the two. Instead of two forces of contention, as in the former system, there will now be three: the Assembly, the Prime Minister and the President of the Republic! Three horses pulling in different directions won't get the cart much further than it previously was—but is this perhaps the reformers' idea of stability?

Besides, it should be noted that there have been several similar constitutions in French history*, and they have all proved highly unsatisfactory from the strict point of view of governmental stability.

What is much more dangerous, however, is the clause which provides that, in cases of external emergency or internal subversion, the President of the Republic is authorized to take whatever measures he deems fit, without consulting Parliament. This amounts to granting the President dictatorial power, and it is easy to see how a strong anti-governmental campaign, for instance, or a strike-wave, could be considered as producing a state of emergency and calling for fierce repressive measures, all "in the interest of individual freedom", of course: as the present minister of Justice, M. Debré, a staunch Gaullist, said to the independent paper *Le Monde*: "The best defenders of the individual are those who know that there must be a State in order that there should be citizens."

Yet, in spite of the danger, it is almost certain that the "ayes" (i.e. the government) will win the election by an overwhelming majority. This is partly due to the fact that the Left has up to now proved unable to agree on an alternative project for a new constitution, and thus stands divided in front of the energetic and self-confident Right led by de Gaulle. But in any case, in order to gain the support of all the different shades of Liberals, a counter-proposal would ultimately have to keep the old parliamentary system

*A cartoon by Jean Effel in this week's *L'Express* shows the text of the constitution enforced by Napoleon III after his *coup d'état* and bearing the year 1852; but the 8 has been changed into a 9, and the 2 into 8.

almost intact. And if one thing is obvious, in the present confusion, it is that the majority of French people—even the Liberals—are sick and tired of their old institutions and of the way they worked or failed to work. Any change, in their eyes, is better than the *status quo* which has proved so catastrophic to French economy and prestige.

It will be remembered that Pierre Poujade has already attempted to exploit this anti-parliamentarian feeling, which General de Gaulle, coming at a "riper" moment, is better able to put to profit, by virtue of his glorious past and the mystique that has been built up around his name. It is clear that his promise of revolutionary changes and his haughty authoritarianism appeal to the masses in the same messianic way as Hitler's pledge for the grandeur of the Reich and Eisenhower's promise to bring back the boys from Korea. Meanwhile there are no signs that the Algerian conflict is in any way relenting; prices are steadily rising; press censorship has been theoretically abolished, but Left-wing papers are still regularly seized by the military government in Algeria, and censorship over radio and television is tightening every day.

How much worse France will fare after the *Referendum*, it is difficult to foresee. But it seems that the French are still as far as ever from understanding the dangers of a dictatorship which they seem to accept so readily. It will be much too late when they realize that the alternative to a rotting parliamentary democracy is not a "strong" government—which is bound to bring with it more bureaucracy anyway—but less government, and more individual responsibility.

THE L.A.G. SUMMER SCHOOL LECTURES VIOLENCE & REVOLUTION

(Continued from previous issue)

ONE of the basic philosophical contradictions in the employment of violence as a social weapon is the contradiction between the means used and the ends which it is designed to meet. It is obvious that modern war resorted to as an attempt to solve modern problems between nations is like using a steamhammer to mend a watch. No one, not even the most blatant supporters of the modern set-up think that war is a suitable method of settling disputes.

It is also fairly obvious that the institution of a police state is not the way to create a socialist paradise although it is prophesied in the book of Marx (or was it Engels?) that the State will wither away. It is obvious to all here that these states are self-perpetuating mechanisms and have within themselves the built-in drives that keep them going.

In the free society it is improbable that the workers' militia can be built up without the indoctrination of the military virtues which are not consonant with a free society. The institution of a consuming section of society, the perpetuation of a mentality of fear and the cult of violence together with the temptation for a rise of a new ruling class of technological specialists are the needs of a militia.

Violence is a weapon that can be used by both sides. It has no reference to the justice of the cause. It is purely an application of technical efficiency or

physical preponderancy. It places the victory firmly and squarely on the side of the big battalions.

It obscures the nature of the dispute and substitutes violence for reason, even where reason is possible as a method of settling disputes.

The exercise of superior force may gain a temporary victory but the subdued opponent is not convinced of the injustice of his cause, only in the ineffectiveness of his weapons. He will spend his time after defeat in scheming how to regain his place. The raising of violence to a virtue makes violence the apex of existence and merely gives another twist to the spiral. The display of violence draws to the ranks of the victor those who have an admiration for successful violence. It ensures the necessity of the perpetual display of violence.

These tendencies may be seen on the personal, the political and the national level. The logical development is the mad arms race, the permanent purge and the aggressive personality. These tendencies work against the responsibility and integrity of the individual and the cohesion of society.

The failure of violence can be seen in every instance (except that of the purely temporary personal expedient).

Non-violence is a method of achieving the same social ends eliminating the flaws seen in the method of violence.

If we concede what we desire is the acceptance by people of the necessity of a free society and that the compelling of

people to be free is a contradiction in terms, we have no alternative but non-violent methods. It is possible that such methods may lead to the extermination of its proponents but it is inevitable that the method of violence as a way of life will lead to universal extermination.

The atmosphere in which the violent functions, makes it impossible to consider the opponent as a human being but merely as an object to be exterminated or forcibly converted.

He in turn expects to be answered in his own terms and this is the atmosphere in which he can function.

If you hit him on the head, he hits you on the head and the pattern is set. If on the other hand you do not hit back he is thrown off his balance. The entrenched bureaucracy and military are only used to certain thought-patterns and an unexpected response throws them out of conditioning, like a Pavlovian dog with the bell ringing in a different key the total situation is changed.

We are often assailed with the idea of "lack of courage". Now, if we are to divide qualities into vices and virtues courage is one of the minor "virtues" since it is capable of being harnessed to the most stupid and abhorrent projects. Courageous Nazis and Communists are commonplace and war maintains itself purely on the persistence of this virtue. A few more cowards would be useful.

Courage is a mixture of ignorance and exhibitionism combined with a readiness to sacrifice the individual which makes it a very mixed blessing.

The social awareness aroused in wartime, the sense of companionship, the skills, the—to use a swear-word—"dedication" could be harnessed to a more constructive and socially integrative project. For example, work-projects against the natural disasters, crime and disease which surprisingly enough will still be with us in a free society. In our struggle against these we may be able to mobilise for the 'moral equivalent of war', to use William James's equivocal definition. It is controversial whether groups of non-violent resisters can be organized on para-military lines as is aimed at by certain sections of the peace movement in this country.

The old anarchist concept of 'propaganda by the deed' is capable of other interpretations than that of assassination. Deeds may have many forms which will

fire the imagination. Non-violent resistance will have a significance that a stabbing in a back-alley would never have.

The action of the pilot who stalled his machine instead of flying to Suez, the action of the tube ticket-collector who threw the switches on the tube are more significant socially than all the platitudinous speeches from the Bevens and the Brockways.

Besides the myth of the general strike which would effectively check war there is a surprising variety of strikes. The sit-down strike, the stay-in strike (which could lead to workers' control of industry), "hiccup" strike (which occurs when unexpected, being purely spontaneous), the rolling strike (which is cumulative in its effect and could lead to workers' control of industry). Work-to-rule, the boycott—economic and social, non-payment of taxes (the leading exponents of which are H. D. Thoreau and Ammon Hennacy), mass-emigration; non-co-operation; civil disobedience; parallel government and courts (not recommended for anarchists but adopted by Sinn Fein with some success), sabotage, hunger-strike and one of the newest—the work-strike as practiced by Danilo Dolci in Italy. Not all of these are recommended in all circumstances, there is enough variety in these to satisfy the varying tastes and each one has its own particular advantage.

On the techniques for resistance of invasion and the overthrow of domination much has been written. One can summarise the methods as violence without hatred; non-violence by necessity; non-violent coercion; non-violent direct actions, and non-resistance.

It may be contended that these methods only succeed in exceptional circumstances. Gandhi only took advantage of British embarrassment.

I do not put forward non-violence as a dogma; violence may be useful as a purely temporary personal expedient. All situations are complex. There are no text-book revolutions and it is certain that when the moment of action comes we are not free to theorize. Right theory not only precedes right action but it is also necessary to have a theory which is workable in order to be free to act. The Hamlet-like impotence of the revolutionary left is due in a great measure to the failure to solve this problem of violence. I hope that this paper will help to stimulate discussion if not to clarify this problem.

For myself I can only quote Bart de Ligt: "The more violence, the less revolution." JACK ROBINSON

O Moon of Our Delight

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Earth, will be in a position to wage global war conclusively.

Not only that. The moon may present the only safe funk-hole in the event of nuclear war. We well remember Winston Churchill's frank admission in the dark days of the last war, when he advised every red-blooded Englishman facing death in the defence of his homeland against the threatened Nazi invasion. If you have to die, Churchill warned us (having done his best to arrange it for us), make sure you take a German with you. But what would he be doing? 'If the worst comes to the worst,' said the grand old war-horse, 'I will take the Fleet to Canada and carry on the fight from there.'

But Canada won't be much of a refuge next time. Nikita Krushchev's intercontinental ballistic missiles will reach Winnipeg and Toronto, Vancouver and Quebec more quickly, surely and destructively than Hitler's Stukas could dive-bomb convoys in the North Sea. While Eisenhower's atomic submarines creep under the polar ice-cap to launch missiles that could reach the Urals.

There'll be no place on Earth next time from which the fight can be carried on. Even assuming our leaders survive the initial holocaust—and if anyone survives they will—the planet may be virtually uninhabitable. They'll have to get off the Earth. Hence the hurry to blaze the trail to the moon.

A Grand War Aim

What is going to happen when the first men land. Will they plant the Stars and Stripes or the Hammer and Sickle and claim the moon as the 50th state or the umpteenth Soviet Socialist Republic? Will those who first show the flag there refuse a toe-hold to anybody else? Should we not stop worrying about the partition of Ireland, Cyprus or Germany, forget the Middle East and Formosa? Had we not better realise that the next war will be a war for the moon?

The world has been plunged into war for lesser prizes than this. Earthmen have torn each other to pieces without even knowing why or seeing what they were fighting for. But with the queen of the heavens sailing serenely overhead for all to see, for all to love for her romantic associations and her place in immortal verse—why here indeed is a war-aim to stir the blood of poet and warrior alike. Such a thing of beauty, such a joy for ever, could not possibly be allowed to fall into the hands of the other side.

Meanwhile, back at the farm, not a hundred versts from the shores of the Caspian Sea, Ivan Ivanovitch lights his oil-lamp, pushes the goat aside and sits down to a bowl of good nourishing cabbage borscht. Put a little more water in the soup, Sophie, he says, 'Sacha will be hungry when he comes in, but the commissar from the town wants a hundred more bushel of corn this harvest so we must go easy on the bread.'

And not a hundred miles from Cape Canaveral three white men beat up a negro schoolboy because he had the bloody cheek to want to go to a decent school where the white kids go.

All in the light of the silvery moon.

IT'S A SMALL WORLD

"Making their European debut like the Voodoos, two F-104B Starfighters came from the 83rd Fighter/Interceptor Squadron at Westover A.F.B. . . They carry 908 United States gallons of fuel internally, have V.O.R., and each squadron is supplied by Lockheed with a man only four feet tall to climb into the intakes past the fixed shock cones and inspect the engine face for foreign object damage."

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Flight

Science Fiction

It Might Happen

THE TIDE WENT OUT by Charles Eric Maine. Hodder and Stoughton, 12s. 6d.

THIS is a story about people and their personal behaviour in the face of a catastrophe which is killing off most of the earth's population. The same basic theme has been used twice by John Wyndham, in *Day of the Triffids* and in *The Kraken Wakes*, but here is an entirely new treatment of it: a different kind of catastrophe, a different kind of behaviour, a new kind of horror. For Wyndham's tales of perambulating plants and alien invasions depend for their hor-

ror on his skill as a writer and the 'voluntary suspension of disbelief', but *The Tide Went Out* leaves one with the uncomfortable feeling that the catastrophe described may well take place within a month or two.

It will spoil none of the reader's enjoyment to summarize the broad historical events which form a backcloth to the personal action of this novel. A large Anglo-American hydrogen bomb is exploded well below the surface of the Pacific, more as a boost to Anglo-American prestige than as the test of a weapon. The shock wave causes a rift in the seabed and exposes a large cavity (the least likely part of the story) caused by the cooling and contraction of the molten centre of the earth, and the sea pours into it. This causes more rapid cooling and further cavities, and the entire sea, the ultimate source of all rainfall, begins to drain away. As soon as the governments of the world understand what is happening, they unite against the common disaster. For the first time in history, they pool their technological and scientific resources, for the purpose of evacuating themselves—the statesmen and high-ranking officials—together with their families and cronies, and sufficient technicians, to the polar ice packs which will soon be the world's only water supplies; and through the United Nations they set up an International Bureau of Information, for the purpose of controlling the vast majority of ordinary people until the evacuation is complete.

In the film *Destination Moon*, the first man on the moon declaims, in a voice shaking with emotion, "In the name o' the whole o' Hoomanity, I annex this planet, on behalf o' the United States of America." It provokes derisive laughter in any respectable cinema audience, but one must agree that the first man in the moon will probably make precisely that pompous declaration, or much the same thing in Russian. So with the uniting of the world's statesmen in *The Tide Went Out*; if governments ever combined their resources, and made a real effort to co-operate together, it would probably be for the purpose of defending themselves against their several populations.

Whether the statesmen succeed, whether Charles Eric Maine approves of their endeavours, and whether the characters in the story are of the privileged class or the abandoned class, I leave the reader to find out. Mr. Maine is not such a literary craftsman as John Wyndham or Eric Frank Russell, and the first couple of chapters of this book are padded out a bit with sentences like "Wade sipped his drink and they both lit cigarettes. Putting the cigarette-lighter back in his trousers pocket, he looked at her and said . . ." etc., etc. But the speed and excitement which develop fairly early, and are sustained right to the end of the story, are well worth a little patience at the beginning.

D.R.

Reflections on the Report on Obscene Publications Saving us from Ourselves

THE Report from the Select Committee on Obscene Publications* recently published suffers from the same limitations of all such documents and Inquiries in that the terms of reference were concerned only with how the existing law works and in what ways it might be modified so as to function more efficiently and effectively. No-one either on the Committee or among the witnesses questioned by it even whispered a suggestion that the whole business of legislation, the cure, apart from being ineffective in stopping the flow of "pornography" was as nauseating as the disease it sought to wipe out!

It is not surprising therefore that the Committee heard evidence from, or on behalf of, the Home Secretary, the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Commissioners of Customs & Excise, the Commissioner of Police, as well as the Society of Authors, the Publishers' Association and the British Federation of Master Printers, but conspicuously absent from this list was the public. The Public Morality Council was prominent in its outspoken criticism of the inadequacy of existing legislation to protect the public, but the public was excluded from this gathering of moral saviours, these do-gooders by hook-or-by-crook, these self-appointed defenders of public modesty and the purity of our minds. The reason for the omission of what one could call the "key witness" is obvious. The Committee was examining ways and means of "saving" the public in spite of itself, and to have called on

it to make suggestions as to how best it can be deprived of something which it undoubtedly enjoys would indeed have been asking the public to cut its nose to spite its face!

But how refreshing it would nevertheless have been if for once the small voice of a "vicious" yet naive member of the public could have been heard declaring: "Yes, I enjoy seeing some of these magazines with naked women and/or men in which nothing is hidden; yes, I enjoy seeing a good strip-tease beyond the limits of the G-string; yes, I am excited by a well-written piece of 'pornography' in which no detail is left out!"

Such a declaration might well have shocked a few old ladies of both sexes and raised howls of dismay from the Public Morality Council but it would have put this business of "obscene publications", etc. in its proper perspective. Indeed it would have revealed the chasm that divides the intimate human attitude to sex from the outward; it would also have revealed the inadequacy of definitions, and thereby of legislation, in matters concerning the relationship of behaviour and morals.

THE Courts are still applying the Hinkley Test in cases concerning obscene publications which come before them. In that case, heard by Chief Justice Cockburn in 1868 the test of obscenity was whether the tendency of the matter charged as obscenity is to deprave and corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influences and into whose hands a publication of this sort may fall. And "obscene" is defined by the Oxford Concise Dictionary as

* Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence and Appendices (H.M.S.O., 2 volumes: Report 3s. 6d., Minutes 8s.).

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Saving us from Ourselves

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"offensive to modesty, expressing or suggesting unchaste or lustful ideas, impure, indecent, lewd". It would need the wisdom of a Solomon to find a path through this maze of words each charged with religious and social prejudices with which, we imagine, a large body of opinion would not be in agreement.

In fact, even those whose task it is to root out obscenity and corruption wherever it raises its ugly head themselves hesitate to define these terms, though this does not prevent them from seizing publications or from prosecuting publishers of this material. In his evidence, Sir Theobald Mathew, Director of Public Prosecutions, admitted

"No, I cannot give a definition in terms as to what is 'corrupt'. I find it difficult. It may be a fault on my part, but I cannot put exactly into words what I think is corrupting. But if I look at material or if I read a book, then I know. . ."

Similarly in the Memorandum submitted by the Commissioners of Customs and Excise one reads in paragraph 8 that

The officers have not been given any definition of obscenity—like the elephant, it is left to be recognised rather than defined.

The following extracts from the evidence given by the Solicitor to the Board of Customs & Excise, Mr. Whittome, tempt one to demand that Customs officers should be taken to the Zoo and asked in fact to recognise an elephant, for we are not convinced by their evidence on obscenity, that they would not point to a zebra or an ostrich.

Mr. Robinson for the Committee asked Mr. Whittome

what principles you adopt in connection with nudist publications that come into this country. Some of us have had communications from these associations, and we are told that you do not allow in what are known as un-retouched photographs?—(Mr. Whittome) a nudist photograph showing the whole human body is regarded as covered by the prohibition, even if there is no erotic or other detail. . . The human body taken from behind very often would not be obscene in any way. But, Sir, I think the intention of some of the nudist magazines is to demonstrate by showing all the sexual organs fully exposed that nudity and nudism is a desirable thing, and for that purpose they do show those parts of the human body which ought not to be shown in an artistic photograph.

When the Chairman pressed Mr. Whittome to say whether the *ratio decidendi* of this question of the nude human body was "the sexual organs, the object that is being portrayed or is it the naked body, Mr. Whittome replied:

It is the portrayal of the sexual organs, Sir, and even that might be possible if they were blurred or distant; but if they were shown in full, very close up, the photographs would be regarded as obscene.

Puzzled, Viscount Lambton then asked:

How could you possibly show a nude without showing the sexual organs?

And the official answer is "from the back or side view". With respect, as they say in the legal jargon, Mr. Whittome ought really to have a look at himself sideways in the mirror next time he takes a bath! It's surprising how much one sees of the male sexual organs!

★

FROM the foregoing it is clear that to the official mind, since the portrayal of the sexual organs is obscene and obscene is that which

tends "to corrupt and deprave" etc. it is from the corrupting influence of our sexual organs that we must be saved! Perhaps even the Public Morality Council would not support a demand that all men should have their visible sex organs removed at birth and that women should have a fig-leaf grafted on theirs, but since the sight of sexual organs in a photograph is obscene and subject to the full force of the law, why not ban all full-length mirrors in bathrooms and bedrooms so that no man or woman may be subjected to the corrupting influence of the sight of the reflection of his or her own sexual organs?

Not a voice was raised drawing the logical conclusions of this, in effect, anti-sex attitude. Publishers, printers and writers were too anxious to protect their narrow economic interests, to speak up for freedom. The printers far from protesting at being forced into acting as censors of literature, as a result of the law on obscenity as it stands, are only anxious to remain within the Law and to look upon their trade as just another business and not a vital service to the public and to the cause of freedom. In their Memorandum they wrote:

Some concern has been expressed in regard to this so-called "censorship" by printers. We do not accept that the exercise by the printer of his right to decide whether or not he shall accept or refuse an order is properly described as "censorship", and it would be regrettable if the use of that term led to some wrong impression being given about an elementary right of any person or firm engaged in business.

And in their evidence to the Committee the following exchange took place:

When you decline to print a book you do so not because you regard yourselves as guardians of public morality but because you wish to keep clear of the law? (Mr. Steele): Yes. (Mr. Penney): I would not say so entirely. I think we do regard ourselves as being responsible citizens. We would not in any case wish to break the law.

Obviously nobody wishes to break the law. Is your chief worry whether you should break the law or whether you should publish something which it might be undesirable to publish?—I think our main concern clearly is to keep within the law.

The authors too were less interested in the principle of free expression—free from moral strictures and conventions—than with seeing the law so modified that the respectable writing and publishing industries would be outside its scope. In his interesting Memorandum on Obscenity in England submitted on behalf of the Society of Authors, Sir Alan Herbert points out that

the conclusion to be drawn from this survey is that the paramount need is to distinguish pornography from literature.

We find it difficult to understand why "articles such as photographs of the grossest character dealing with sexual relationships which are intended merely to gratify the passions of depraved persons or to spread corruption amongst others especially young men and women" are reprehensible, whereas a description of those same relationships by a D. H. Lawrence is only great literature. Let's be honest about these matters: How many young people reading the unexpurgated edition of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* have not been sexually excited by what they have read? But we would add "And why not, and what harm is done if they are?"

★

IT is all a question of one's approach to sex. We live in a world which approves of people being excited by the sight of a thick under-done steak, by horror films or a blood-bath in a boxing ring, etc. but not of those who declare that the sight of the human body, unclothed, "un-retouched" and un-emasculated is an exciting experience which "gives us ideas", as they say! And the sex act can be as much an aesthetic act as the description of it can be a great piece of literature.

Reports from the I.A.C.

Condition of the Anarchist Movement

THE delegates at the International Anarchist Congress held in London last month presented reports on the state of the anarchist movements in their countries. They did not add up to a very encouraging prospect for anarchism in the near future, but then few of us have any illusions on that score anyway.

The circumstances of the existence of anarchist movements throughout the world falls into three main categories: within democracies, under totalitarian régimes and in exile. None of these are actually favourable to the general acceptance of anarchist ideas and indeed it is difficult to think of any governmental society which could provide favourable circumstances.

True, the democracies enable propaganda to be carried on more or less openly (more in Britain, somewhat less in the United States, where public opinion is pretty slavishly conformist), but this brings with its particular problems in that in a democratic country the people have an illusion of freedom and are therefore not so susceptible to a philosophy which is based on a demand for freedom.

There is no doubt that the British really do think of themselves as a free people, because they can propagate any ideas they may have, however revolutionary, as long as they stay within the laws of obscenity and sedition (and the Official Secrets Act). Since most people believe it to be wrong to be obscene or seditious or to give away State secrets, the British can be said to have as much freedom as they want, and anarchist propaganda can safely be allowed.

Similarly, in the economic sphere, the British have enjoyed a high standard of living for a long time now. Since the war only twice have there been any scares of unemployment or depression and the bulk of the workers have had full employment and prosperity. Since their slice of the cake has been bigger than before the war they have not bothered to note the gargantuan size of the cake as a whole which they now produce. 'Exploitation' is an ugly word and they would rather forget.

Thinking of themselves, therefore, as both free and secure—the ideal situation—the British people on the whole have no time for disruptive ideas. And what applies to them applies fairly well to all the industrial countries of the democratic West.

The reports from our comrades of Germany, France, Holland, Belgium, Sweden, America, therefore bore great similarity. The movements in these countries consist of small numbers of groups and individuals, usually existing round a paper or magazine, trying to keep alive a vital philosophy among

philistine populations where the working class think more about imitation of the bourgeoisie than emancipation from them.

This is a condition the anarchists share with all groupings pretending to be revolutionary. In all the countries mentioned the Communists are either discredited or in decline or have never been significant anyway, Trotskyists or revolutionary socialism has never got anywhere and pacifism is very much a minority movement. The allegiance of the masses has been to the Social or Christian (?) Democrats who have fixed capitalism on their necks more firmly than ever before by making it more attractive than before.

In these circumstances the anarchists have freedom to express themselves but nobody is very much concerned. In countries where people are more likely to be concerned, the anarchists have little or no freedom of expression. Under the dictatorships of Salazar in Portugal, Franco in Spain, the Communists in Bulgaria, the various despots of South America, our comrades are or have been imprisoned and murdered, their journals banned, their presses destroyed, their meetings forbidden, their militants driven into exile in order to survive.

Thus, where the masses groan under tyranny and have their dreams of freedom, the ability of the anarchists to reach them is made possible at all only through considerable courage and determination in the use of clandestine, illegal methods—inevitably restrictive in effect.

Similarly those movements in exile from dictatorships, which can exist in democracies, are restricted in their influence on the people of their home countries by the sheer physical difficulties of contact. Under no circumstances therefore is it easy for anarchists to widen their influence. Where they are free to propagate, the apathy and smugness of the people is the barrier; where propaganda might be effective the gov-

WE ARE NOT AMUSED

BERLIN, AUGUST 1.

A law requiring all entertainers to be licensed by the Ministry of Culture went into effect in East Germany to-day. It applies to comedians, jugglers, vaudeville, revue, and circus performers, singers, lion tamers, acrobats, and ventriloquists. The second article of the law says that all entertainers must combine art and politics so that their acts "correspond to the cultural and political demands of our workers' and farmers' state." The aim is to stamp out jokes against the Government.—*British United Press.*

An Anarchist View on Why People Vote

A VERY interesting job of motivational research was carried out by the American Heritage Foundation and The Advertising Council prior to the 1956 presidential campaign to find out just why people do and do not vote. Their findings are as follows (not necessarily in order of importance):

WHY PEOPLE DON'T VOTE

- 1.—My one vote won't count.
- 2.—Personal laziness.
- 3.—Fear of social pressures—voting involves discussion, argument. It may endanger my family relations, group position, even my occupation.
- 4.—Distrust of political and governmental forces.
- 5.—The 'protest' of not voting.
- 6.—Fear of making decisions, and assuming responsibility for them.
- 7.—Emotionally worn out by the long campaign period.
- 8.—Apathy based on cynicism or on native confidence in the basic stability of society.
- 9.—Disfranchised (prisoners, ex-convicts, migrants, moved too recently).

Why then should its portrayal by the artist or the photographer be attacked even by those who defend its description by the printed word?

Once again we come back to the basic principles of freedom, which can only exist and flourish when it is defended and advocated without *ifs* and *buts*. For if one tries to legislate against bad taste one invariably places good taste in jeopardy as well.

WHY PEOPLE DO VOTE

- 1.—Sense of patriotic duty.
- 2.—Sense of participation, of belonging.
- 3.—Sense of power and self-importance.
- 4.—Strong personal feelings for or against candidates or issues.
- 5.—Response to excitement of campaign.
- 6.—First-time voters to whom voting symbolizes coming of age.
- 7.—New citizens to whom voting symbolizes their hard-won citizenship.
- 8.—The discovery of a champion who will represent the voters.
- 9.—The desire to conform to the group.

Thus the two organizations who sponsored this study developed their propaganda in accord with the motives of participation in a group activity, performance of a socially-accepted act and maintaining a desired status in the eyes of family and community. From this came their slogan, "See You at the Polls!"

Surely a revealing glimpse into the mechanics of the fine art of manipulating human beings like pieces of putty! But fortunately motivational research can be a two-edged weapon, and in this case can be used to turn the tables on these stout defenders of capitalism. In our propaganda, both written and oral, we must emphasize, in the first category, points one, four and five, and in the second category, we must counteract all of the points possible and provide compensating motives for not voting.

That is, we must show that not only the individual vote but the collective vote as well doesn't count, since the elections are farces acted out by two parties in complete agreement on the main point: the conservation of an unjust social sys-

tem ruthlessly represses them.

And yet the ideas cannot be killed nor the movements disappear entirely. Our comrades in Germany are tough and experienced men who—somehow—survived the Nazis and re-emerged after the war to begin again patiently to build up groups in the towns where they live. In them the work of Landauer and Muehsam and all those comrades slaughtered by the Nazis lives on. While in Spain there still remains the most vital movement of all, with no less than six papers being produced illegally—though irregularly, certainly—under the very noses of the Falangist police, quite apart from the many Spanish-language papers produced in France and Mexico by the movements in exile.

For the various reasons which have been mentioned, therefore, the anarchist movement does not add up to any great influence among the peoples of the world. What it does provide is the only genuinely international alternative to the nationalisms and statisms which bedevil the world. From Sweden to Japan, from Bulgaria to Peru, small numbers of enlightened individuals have lifted themselves out of the sickness of our age and tried to spread sanity across the frontiers. It is from this position, with no illusions, that we must make our attempts to strengthen our bonds of friendship, to undermine the power of the lunatics to destroy us and lay the foundations of a future liberty while living as satisfactory lives as we possibly can here and now.

LET'S REJOIN THE HUMAN RACE

William Schulz, aged 52, a former U-boat commander, yesterday met Captain Howard Baker for the first time since saving his life seventeen years ago, when the two were serving in the war. In 1941 Captain Baker was Third Officer of the British freighter "Tweed", torpedoed and sunk by Commander Schulz off West Africa.

Commander Schulz surfaced and took on board Captain Baker and nine others clinging to an overturned lifeboat. He treated the wounded, had the lifeboat repaired, supplied provisions, and put them on course for Africa.

Yesterday Captain Baker, now retired from the sea and licensee of the Poole Arms, Dorset, thanked Herr Schulz at a quayside reunion at Poole, saying: "To me that day you were the perfect gentleman and naval officer." Herr Schulz replied: "The brotherhood of the sea is greater than the enmity of war."

Manchester Guardian 15/7/58.

tem. The already existing healthy distrust of political and government forces must be nurtured and given a solid basis by showing the people just what the real role is of these groups in our society. And most important of all, people must be made to see the potential importance of mass no-voting protests. These mass protests can also give people the feeling of group activity which apparently causes many of them now to go to the polls.

As for the sense of patriotic duty, it can easily be shown that the true path for a person who loves his country is that of doing something to better the country, and that this cannot be accomplished by voting; to the contrary, that voting actually harms his country. Those with strong personal feelings for certain politicians or for the "issues" at stake must be clearly shown the sordid role of the politicians in society, and that their "issues" are simply smoke-screens thrown up to gain votes and obscure their real reasons for wanting power. The excitement of the campaign can be counteracted by the equally or more intense excitement of an intensive non-voting campaign. And last but perhaps most important of all, the drive towards conformity must be fought at every turn by showing the cowardly nature of a person who votes (or does anything else) merely in order to conform to the group, like a cow blindly following the herd over a precipice.

In short, the above list suggests these and a wealth of other ideas for counteracting the powerful pressures being exerted on the people of the United States for the purpose of making them trot to the polls in order to give them a sense of participation in a system which is actually oppressing them. It's our job to make the people see that every step toward those polls is another step toward totalitarianism.

(Views & Comments, Feb. 1958).

G.W.R.

Keen Type

Salesman Ralph Roberts wanted to do big business selling sun-beds to the nudists.

He asked if he could go along to demonstrate them to 300 people attending the Sixth World Nudist Congress which started yesterday on the Duke of Bedford's Woburn Abbey estate in Bedfordshire.

The organisers told Mr. Roberts: "You can attend as long as you obey Camp Rule No. 1." And that, briefly, is **NO CLOTHES**.

So yesterday 33-year-old Mr. Roberts took off his clothes and joined the congress. So did his 35-year-old wife, Hilda.

She said: "We have both done a certain amount of sun-bathing. But I've never worn less than a bikini."

Did she feel embarrassed at the thought of wearing no clothes in the camp? "Not at all," said Mrs. Roberts. "I'm just here to help my husband."

He was preparing a sun-bed for display in the exhibition marquee.

He explained: "This is strictly a business trip. My presence here gives my firm a clear advantage over our competitors in the sun-bathing business."

He pointed to a neighbouring exhibition stand for sun-ray lamps. "No demonstrator, you see. They couldn't get any of their salesmen to do business in the nude."

Sunday Express, 17/8/58.

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

Questions, Discussion and Admission all free.
No Meetings in August.

CROYDON AREA

Will all comrades and sympathisers interested in libertarian activity in the Croydon area please communicate with:
S. E. PARKER,
228, Holmesdale Road, London, S.E.25

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32 PERCY STREET,
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Jordan, Immorality and Revolution

A REPORT in *Manchester Guardian* (Monday, August 18th) by James Morris, suggests that Jordan is in a state of suspended revolution, temporary held in check by force of arms. The rôle of the British soldier as part of the repressive machinery is underplayed, and relief is expressed that the policemen at any rate are "not ours" although the guns used are supplied "by us".

It is stated that Jordan is a tommy-gun state, restrained by arms and the power of the secret police. But by a curious process of reasoning Mr. Morris concludes that "this is not so shocking as it may appear to maidenly readers in the Lake District". Why should Jordan's police state, equipped with British guns, manned by British soldiers, not shock maidenly readers? Because, our correspondent says, every other Middle East Arab State is in more or less the same condition. This form of logic reminds us of the lady who after being raped was expected to find comfort in the thought that she wasn't the only one!

The fact is that "sound" excuses have to be made (which will theoretically keep the democratic myth intact) for the presence of British soldiers on foreign soil who are in Jordan to bolster up a blatantly repressive régime.

With misuse of words and dishonest argument, journalists have a special place beside politicians in confusing the public. Jordan is one example of this dishonesty, although the pattern is familiar as it has been woven before in other countries. The unseemly haste with which the West acknowledged the new Government of Iraq, although the methods which accompanied the coup were far from democratic, is proof enough that the "democracies" have no real objections to horrific tactics as long as the money continues to roll in. With few exceptions political commentators have failed even to suggest that there is anything immoral in such opportunism. That is of course unless the same methods are used by govern-

ments not allied to the West, then these are loudly and piously condemned.

Armed Uprisings Provide Experience?

Some revolutionaries hold that popular uprisings with a limited aim provide experience which will be useful when the "real revolution" takes place. Most anarchists maintain that a revolution which merely aims at a change of rule from one group to another cannot educate people to the idea of a complete social revolution which demands individual responsibility usually lacking in mob violence, and which has certainly not been noticeable in the recent Middle East uprisings. It may be possible to gain experience in the use of firearms and street fighting, and to learn something of police tactics, but such knowledge would be useless if there is no chance of establishing the kind of

society envisaged by anarchists.

Many people who do not support the state but believe that armed revolution is the only answer to the existing social forms often fail to take into account the apparent (if history is any guide) inability of large numbers of people to sustain their "revolutionary fervour" without giving in sooner or later to some form of government. The defeat may be due to superior force of arms, but the fire once put out is rarely rekindled.

Patterns in Jordan

To some extent this has happened in Jordan although it is too soon to say whether after the withdrawal of British troops the people will continue to support the present rulers. What is of particular interest are some of the reasons given for a revival of support for the King and his Ministers.

It is reported that immediately

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Through Democracy to Freedom

I HAVE been reading FREEDOM for quite a long time now and have always considered its point of view to be reasonable and fair. Its criticisms of Russian communism, dictatorships and certain aspects of democracy are invariably correct, but in my opinion not always. I realise that the practice of choosing between the lesser of two evils can often lead nowhere, or worse still into an impossible situation, but it is by no means inevitable in all circumstances.

Occasionally I have had arguments with liberal-minded friends who think that anarchism is a wonderful ideology but much too utopian under present conditions. In general I agree with them in terms of many international problems, which are invariably very complex and not necessarily based on any logical political outlook; this is particularly the case, for example, in the Middle East where so many power groups with different motivations and interests are concerned. It is hard not to take sides with the unfortunate and oppressed people of the Middle East, who have been used and abused by all the countries with oil interests in that area. One can understand their present urge towards nationalism even though it may not give them all they want. At least they may eventually achieve a form of government which although corrupt will give them the feeling of being masters of their own

fate to some extent.

Conversely, I myself, as a member of the British race, have a good deal in common with those who say that it is better to live under British democracy, in Britain than under any of the Communist forms of government. This is not to say that everything is by any means perfect, or that terrible injustices do not exist here—but there is a good deal of freedom and life itself is still regarded as relatively sacred.

If one could imagine a situation in which real democracy became worldwide, would this not be a practical solution to nearly all the problems which face mankind? Naturally this would involve radical changes to the system of capitalism, but as the anarchists say—if enough responsible anarchists existed then a responsible society would come into being—would this not be equally true if there were enough responsible democrats?

The point of this is to suggest some means of achieving a far better society, based on reasonable principles, by a method which most people can understand, and which does not sound too much like a utopian pipe-dream. Who knows, it might eventually evolve from a true democratic society into a free one?

London.

J.A.I.

Anarchism & Communism

DEAR COMRADES,

In the extract by Suigi Fabbri entitled "Anarchism and the State" (FREEDOM 2/8/58) there appears the following statement:

"If one has to speak of a contradiction in terms, it does not lie between Communism and Anarchy, which are so closely bound together that one is inconceivable without the other, but rather between Communism and the State." (My emphasis—S.E.P.)

It seems to me that to claim that communism (albeit 'free') is identical with anarchism, as Fabbri does, is not only historically incorrect, but is tantamount to an attempt to shape any future free society to one economic pattern. The essence of anarchism, however, is surely the demand for individual sovereignty, which carries with it the right of each person to determine into which type of economic relationship he or she will enter. This was well put by David Wieck in an essay written some years ago. He wrote:

"... a priori, we would rule out neither the syndicalist idea nor the individualist idea of money exchange; as long as it is merely a question of form, the test would be workability. Given the fundamental principle of the freedom of each person, group and community to associate and dissociate voluntarily with others, we would simply put a sort of confidence in the future, aware that live people meeting immediate problems in a real situation, and not theoretic planning, is the crucible of social forms. We think of experimentation, flexibility, many possibilities, and emphasize attitudes rather than social forms: within limits, that is, people determined to be free will not tolerate restrictive arrangements; or, if not so determined, will not long tolerate freedom." ('Resistance' March, 1950).

It will be apparent that any economic system which involves monopoly, exploitation and privilege is incompatible with anarchism, since these evils are rooted in the domination of man by man. But a system which does not violate the sovereignty of the individual cannot, in principle, be excluded from a libertarian way of life. Thus, if integral freedom is ever realized, it may well contain a plurality of differing economic arrangements: co-operative, communistic, mutualistic, individualistic and so on—provided the possibility for free experiment and choice is always maintained.

Yours fraternally,

London, Aug. 6.

S. E. PARKER.

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