

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"When the State is corrupt then the laws are most multiplied."
 —TACITUS

BERLIN & THE CRISIS GAME

SINCE Mr. Krushchev dropped his tactical verbal missile on Berlin, complete with built-in threat, there has been an atmosphere of rigidly restrained hysteria amongst the U.S., British and French foreign departments. This is not to say that a carefully arranged front of calm determination has not been put up, but behind it all it has been possible to catch glimpses of discord and confusion, futility and fright, and above all an impression of having been caught unawares not knowing what to do next.

Despite this however, the Western Powers have come reeling back into the fight with a great show of firmness, albeit backed-up by an absence of constructive policy which will not for the present be particularly noticeable. In reply to the Soviet proposal to declare West Berlin a "free" city (which is rather like calling Eton a "public" school in the literal sense), the Western Powers have issued an "uncompromising communique" stating their determination not to negotiate under the threat of an ultimatum—which is what the Soviet proposal is.

This is all very fine, but a statement (however uncompromising) which simply declines to discuss anything cannot be said to be constructive in any way. It may be argued of course that there is nothing to discuss within the existing framework of the Soviet threat, and there is some justification for this view, but it is always possible to put up some sort of counter-proposal.

Here is the key to the whole "Berlin affair", though Berlin is only the most obvious expression of the "German affair", and Germany is at the centre of the "European affair", which is one axis about which international tension revolves, all of which axes combined make up the East-West struggle for power and influence—and what is the key? Surely it is that short of war (and maybe not even that), every manoeuvre which may prove embarrass-

ing to the other side may eventually bring forth some political territorial or economic advantages which in themselves will have made the manoeuvre worthwhile. Berlin is one such manoeuvre from which the Soviet Union hopes to derive some benefit. It therefore follows that Berlin, and Formosa, and Quemoy, and the Middle East are all necessary for tactical reasons.

Without tension and threats, without demands and intimidation, there can be no grand strategy in the currently accepted "Big Power" terms. If neither East nor West were to create conflict in Berlin there would be no chance of gain, things would remain settled as they are (however unsatisfactory), or slowly crystallize in one direction or another. This is not satisfactory to either side, for governments must show results quickly, and give an appearance of achievement; a crisis is proven to be the most effective method of creating the necessary illusion.

It is with this background of power politics that we must view the Berlin crisis. We read reports of Western Foreign Ministers meeting in Paris, of the touching little scene when Foster Dulles crossed the floor of the conference room to shake the hand of Herr Willy Brandt, Berlin's new mayor and the West's new star performer, who had just affirmed the willingness of Berliners to undergo more hardships in exchange for the defence of their freedom, of Dr. Adenauer's insistence that Russia should withdraw the threat of action at the end of May before any discussions should take place on other issues, of generalised statements that the West will maintain its position in Berlin as before, in particular the right of free access, of the unacceptability of the Soviet "one-sided repudiation of her obligations to the Western Powers" with regard to Berlin . . . and so forth.

At no stage in the entire performance will any of the Powers concerned make any concessions which are likely to bring about agreement

upon the major issues. In fact the major issues may never be mentioned on this occasion. The Berlin problem cannot in fact be solved except within the context of a settlement on divided Germany; Germany will remain divided until such time as all foreign troops are withdrawn from East and West, and this is probably the greatest unlikelihood of them all within the foreseeable future. Neither the Soviet Union nor the West has the slightest intention of creating a "buffer zone" of Germany until the maximum gain has been extracted from the present situation—if then.

It may be seen from this that it is not in the interests of the Great Powers to suggest methods of procedures which might cause the other side to accept even a limited advantage since there will inevitably be no like concession in return. Any such offer would in any event be regarded with such suspicion, and as a consequence raise so many other related questions, that negotiations would break down from the multiplicity of complications. Hence we see, time after time at international conferences, the proceedings break down through inability to agree even upon an agenda.

The inescapable conclusions which we must draw from the Berlin crisis, and the crises which have preceded it are therefore quite simple:

1. Crises are the means by which quick political and other profits may be made;
 2. Crises are seldom the root of the matter;
 3. Solutions to international problems will not be found until there is a desire on both sides to find them.
- Berliners will presumably suffer their fate until conclusion 1. is fulfilled—for no signs of conclusion 3. are remotely discernable.

Transport Workers Boycott Gets Results

THE recent boycott of ships flying 'flags of convenience' by the International Transport Workers' Federation (see FREEDOM 6/12/58) was only partially effective and only lasted four days.

That, however, was long enough for the owners to see the red light and to recognise that the days when they could get away with their legal fiddle at the expense of their workers were gone for good. According to reports, one hundred such ships will have switched to the Greek flag by the end of the year, and Greek Mercantile Marine Service spokesmen have admitted that the real reason why these decisions are being taken is the threat of further 'labour trouble'.

The four-day token boycott has clearly shaken the owners, and the threat of another boycott by dockers and ship repair workers is too much for them to face. Add to that the fact that the Greek Government has introduced a new tax—and a heavy one—on the profits of all firms in Greece which own ships registered outside the country, and sufficient good reasons for a change of heart are apparent.

Although therefore we saw the boycott, when it was announced, as a fairly feeble effort from our point of view, it becomes clear that the fabulously wealthy Greek (and other) ship owners who have waxed so rich through their ability to evade having to provide good conditions for their crews are not, in fact, in anything like an invulnerable position. Faced with a servile work force they may have been able to ride the Greek Government's new tax, finding the profits to pay it out of their savage exploitation of their workers, but when the workers gang up and find the strength to strike a blow for themselves, the owners have to quickly capitulate.

The changes of registration are being carried out at the soonest possible moments—some ships running up the new flag in mid-ocean as the radio messages inform the captains of the new deal. For some British seamen—mainly radio officers—the change will mean a loss of their jobs, for a ship flying the Greek flag can employ only a Greek crew. This, however, should be a small price to pay for the general improvement

in conditions that will ensue from the new registrations.

Onassis on the Move?

Maybe as a result of the new Greek tax, Aristotle Onassis, biggest of all the Greek shipping bosses, may be moving his headquarters from Monte Carlo to London. Not quite so sunny, and not providing nearly such charming berths for his luxury yacht, the *Christina*, nevertheless London will have advantages for the millionaire in that much of his business is already done from here and much of his social life—an important part of business at his level—is also centred in London. It is said that his telephone calls alone to London cost a fortune, and if he is to have to pay his workers more in future he may be looking for all possible economies in order to defend his standard of living—just like any other worker.

Rumour has it anyway that Mr. Onassis is looking for a luxury block, or at least suite, of offices in London, and also another home for himself and his beautiful wife. We say "another" because he is already the proud owner of a home in New York, another in Buenos Aires and an old chateau of Napoleon's near Paris—quite apart from the *Christina*, on which he spends many happy days.

We do hope Mr. Onassis will be able to get around the thorny question of taxation at the British level. Such a figure would be a distinguished acquisition to our property-owning democracy. And after all he can still fly to Monte Carlo any time he feels like it—he owns an airline as well as all those ships.

Touchy Turks

TURKEY, another "bulwark against communism", has a government which behaves remarkably like the Russian government when it is publicly criticised. The Premier, Adnan Menderes, reacts to any opposition in a way which we have come to expect from totalitarian governments, East and West.

Last week repressive measures were extended beyond the usual fields when Istanbul top comedians, song writers, cabaret and theatre owners were summoned to the office of the head of police.

The reason being that after the government monopoly raised its prices on a number of State-produced commodities, entertainers were taking a smack at the government through their songs and jokes. Satire, as alert politicians know, can be an effective, critical weapon and the sensitive Turkish government is taking no chances, even with the clowns. Under a police regulation forbidding public utterances "prejudicial to public morale and to the security and policy of the government", the police chief was ordered to issue a warning that any theatre or night-club that permits jokes on the subject of price or government would be closed for three months.

Last Gasp!

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT!

WEEK 50	
Deficit on Freedom	£1000
Contributions received	£775
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Total	6 15 11
Previously acknowledged	768 14 7
1958 TOTAL TO DATE	£775 10 6

*Indicates regular contributor.

Cyprus Inquest

IT was reported in the press on December 10th that British security forces were cleared of charges, by Sir Paget Bourke, that they "wilfully exposed Greek Cypriot prisoners to Turkish savagery in an incident last June in which eight Greeks died". Sir Paget, however, refused to agree with the military authorities that the "security forces' action was reasonable".

After reading what happened on that day last June we are unconvinced of the innocence of the military, but we are used to the finding of these 'inquiries' into allegations of cruelty which generally follow the same pattern in Cyprus.

A brief report on "the incident" reads as follows:

A party of about 35 Greek Cypriots was arrested by security forces as intending attackers on Turks.

The party was disarmed, set down near the Turkish village of Geungyeli and ordered to walk home—about 10 miles.

The Greeks walked into a Turkish ambush. Eight were killed and five severely wounded. Thirteen Turkish Cypriots were later charged with murder, but all

were acquitted for lack of evidence.

Sir Paget said he had no doubt that the killing came with almost as great a shock to the security forces as to the released prisoners.

"I have been invited to find that the military acted in good faith, which I have had no difficulty in doing, but also that the action was reasonable. "I am unable to do so."

Why were the men only disarmed and then allowed to go? Following the usual practise why were they not taken in for "questioning" and then imprisoned as a preventive measure? Are we expected to believe that the military authorities really thought that 35 armed Greeks who were supposed to be planning an attack on Turks would not later find guns with which to carry out their frustrated plans? These are questions which will not be answered by an official inquiry, but we fancy FREEDOM readers can answer them for themselves.

The tragedy is that there are millions of people in Britain who do not care enough about what is being done in Cyprus by their government to ask any questions.

STRIKE REPORT

LONDON AIRPORT DISPUTE

THE report of the commission of inquiry into the recent strike at London Airport was published on Wednesday, December 10th.

Believe it or not, the commission found that the strike was a consequence of "the disruptive actions" of Communist shop stewards, assisted of course by the dilatoriness of the trade union leaders in supporting the employers. "It is far from clear, however, that these officials acted with the vigour which should have been expected of them . . ." Its conclusions—"We have been forced to the view that in the past there has been inadequate responsibility and leadership at various levels on both sides and that this has given scope and encouragement to certain militant elements whose activities have brought discredit to the existing constitutional arrangements. In particular we think it important that the shop stewards and their committees should have their powers more clearly described and circumscribed and that they should be given no encouragement whether by management or the unions . . . to exceed their proper functions."

No wonder that the following day a meeting of about eighteen shop stewards condemned the report as being "biased and one-sided". Their criticisms of it incidentally were noticed by the *Manchester Guardian*, to the extent of nine inches on page 8, just before the sport, although the report itself, the previous day got the front page headline article, a column and a half inside, and an editorial. Who isn't biased?

The report refers frequently to

B.O.A.C. as "the employers", and this term was commonly used during the strike. It seems convenient not to mention too explicitly just who the employers, or should we say "the employer" is. It is of course our old friend the State, looking rather similar whether under the guise of British Railways, London Transport, the National Coal Board, or even B.O.A.C.

It was very convenient though, for the Commission to name the villains outright. They were the Communist shop stewards. It seemed slightly perplexed at the way in which these black-hearted men have gained the support of the workers, who are highly skilled men and not easy dupes.

There were however, at least three other parties to the dispute. The politicians such as Mr. Ian Mikardo who volunteered a statement to the Court, and was severely ticked off for his pains, and Mr. Jim Matthews, a trade union leader in person, had interests at stake; the people who travel by aeroplane, and whose "goodwill" is apparently leaving B.O.A.C.; and the workers themselves, who stubbornly refuse to accept the submerging of their natures into either the Corporation, the Trade Union, or the Shop Stewards' Committee.

The strike lasted eight days, and "cost" over a million pounds. Despite the wages lost in it the workers gained nothing, and the travellers were hindered. The only ones who stood any chance to gain were the unions and the shop stewards, and the prize was not wages or

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BOOK REVIEW

Gandhi: Dream and Reality

"Leave on one side the political aspects of his campaign for the independence of India: consider only its tactics, and we must then admit that the whole conception of power—imperial power, military power, economic power—has been defeated by a man in a loincloth, preaching a gospel of meekness, of non-resistance."

—HERBERT READ.

"... After forty years of self-denial, Gandhi was so preoccupied with sex that he used to go through a rigmarole of sleeping naked with one of his woman disciples, in order to prove that they had both conquered their physical passions. You can draw your own conclusions as to what they proved by this. But one of his closest associates has testified privately that Gandhi was so absorbed in this concern during the last few years of his life that he failed to respond to the Communal antagonisms with his former creativity."

—DAVE DELLINGER.

MANY people in the West remember Gandhi as a rather peculiar little brown man who drank goat's milk and wore a loincloth. Somehow or other he was instrumental in helping to achieve the political independence of India, but just how or why is not their concern. It is enough for the purveyor of ready-made newspaper opinions to mutter something about Gandhi being a 'good man' and then to pass on to other topics.

To the better informed, however, Gandhi represents a challenge to the conventional conception both of the saint and of the politician. Their evaluation of him ranges from that of a machiavellian schemer to that of the greatest man of our time, but all agree that he introduced a disturbing variation of the eternal struggle against imperialism. He was not the originator of non-violent resistance, but he brought it from the status of a comparatively obscure method to the status it enjoys today. For this alone he deserves to be remembered.

This new biography,* by an Indian writer, is a useful summary of Gandhi's life and thought. From it emerges a picture of the 'Mahatma' which fits neither the image of the machiavellian, nor that of the saint. Gandhi is depicted with all his virtues, his inconsistencies and his failings. He does not appear as the 'half-naked fakir' of the imperialist school of thought, nor as the Jesus-like figure envisaged by some pacifist admirers. What we are shown is a human being striving by ascetic self-discipline to live a life of religious dedication and engaging in a series of tragic attempts to reconcile the irreconcilable: to effect a synthesis between political power and ethical principle.

Although Gandhi sought consistency all his life, he never managed to achieve it. Nanda writes that "when charged with inconsistency he (Gandhi) retorted that he was consistent with truth not with the past". This is an impressive answer, but it does not alter the fact that Gandhi the apostle of non-violence was continually contradicted by Gandhi the nationalist politician. In reply to an opponent who accused him of being against "any government in any form" he wrote:

*MAHATMA GANDHI: A Biography by B. R. Nanda. George Allen and Unwin, 35s.

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"I am individually working for the self-rule pictured therein (in 'Hind Swaraj', his first book). But today my corporate activity is undoubtedly devoted to the attainment of Parliamentary Swaraj in accordance with the wishes of the people of India. I am not aiming at destroying railways or hospitals, though I would welcome their natural destruction. Nor am I aiming at a permanent destruction of the law courts much as I regard it as a consummation devoutly to be wished for. Still less am I trying to destroy all machinery and mills. It requires a higher simplicity and renunciation than the people are prepared for. The only part of the programme which is now being carried out in its entirety is that of non-violence. But even that is not being carried out in the spirit of the book."

But what are law courts but an embodiment of organized violence and what is parliament but an institution that, by its possession of coercive powers, continually violates individual liberty? This dichotomy of Gandhi's, this failure to see that freedom is an integral principle, is illustrated by his inconsistent position in regard to compulsion and conversion. He believed that one should aim at conversion and not compulsion "so that the opponents of today might become the reformers of tomorrow". This belief did not stop him from welcoming the introduction of prohibition by the Congress ministry of Bombay. His ideal of Indian village life was of a "perfect democracy based on individual freedom", yet in the ideal village there was to be compulsory education for children. Again, he expressed the view that the rule of the majority should replace the rule of the sword. But the rule of the majority, as Benjamin Tucker pointed out, " . . . is a labour-saving device for ascertaining on which side force lies and bowing to the inevitable. The voice of the majority saves bloodshed, but it is no less the arbitrament of force than is the decree of the most absolute of des-

pots backed by the most powerful armies". There is no reason to suppose that the rule of the majority is inherently any less violent than any other form of rule.

Similar contradictions appear in his attitude towards war and militarism. At the 1931 Round Table Conference in London, Nanda states, "he even envisaged the possibility of British troops remaining in India for some time after the grant of independence; he explained that it was for the British to initiate Indians into the mysteries of defence. 'Having clipped our wings it is their duty to give us wings wherewith we can fly.'" It would be interesting to know what kind of wings the British army could have given to an advocate of non-violence!

Gandhi's support for the British government during World War I, and the recruiting campaign he carried out on its behalf, is well known. Nanda writes that "There was something comic in this votary of non-violence touring the villages of Gujerat to secure recruits for the British Indian army to fight in the battlefields of Europe and the Middle East. He went to Kheda district, where a few months earlier he had organized a no-tax campaign". Not surprisingly "He found that it had been easier to persuade the villagers to queue up for prison than for the army".

Gandhi later recognized that his behaviour in World War I was not in keeping with the principles of non-violence, but he argued that in the circumstances "I was forced to adopt the course I did". A few years after making this justification he declared "My marriage to non-violence is such an absolute thing that I would rather commit suicide than be deflected from my position". When World War II broke out it seemed that he would remain faithful to this pledge even though "he could offer to the Allied cause his moral support". He parted company with some of the Congress Party leaders on the war question and urged that non-violent resistance should be offered to any invading army. In 1942, however, according to Nanda, "he agreed to the wholehearted participation of the Congress in the Second World War". Not only this but "He agreed that the Allied troops should remain on Indian soil during the war, and one of the first acts of a National Indian Gov-

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This Desirable Residence

Recollections of a House

I AM a house. I may not look much, but I've seen a few changes.

I remember, I remember, the field where I was born; to paraphrase the poet whose lines once took pride of place in my nursery. There were market gardens sloping down to the river, and I was one of thousands that were built on this site. Our 'conveniences' were, all modern in those days: incandescent gas lighting, inside W.C.s, a bathroom, a bell system for the maid, the Wesleyan church on the corner, steam trains to the City and horse buses to Richmond.

I have had my share of illness. A slight tendency to rising damp, an attack of frostbite in the joints in winter, with burst pipes to follow. And accidents too. A Zeppelin bomb in 1916, an incendiary in the loft in 1941, but I would only bore you with the million and one misfortunes, the replacements of age, the renovations of fashion, and the dilapidation of decay.

My appearance seems always to have been connected with the fortunes of the people who inhabited me. From the beginning I had three coats, grained and varnished in oak, my gutters were black and my interior brown. Flowery wallpaper, lincrusta on the staircase and anaglypta on the ceilings. I wore out sixteen maids and three mistresses on the cleaning, up to nineteen-nineteen. Incidentally I wore out five masters on my upkeep.

I think the rot started setting in about nineteen-sixteen, physically and literally. I don't think there is much point in telling you about the Zeppelin raid. Bomb stories are always boring, especially when they belong to the war before last. The upshot was that I had to have a new roof, and to my horror at the time, it was red tiles instead of blue slates. It was about this time that the maid's bedroom became unoccupied, the bells in the kitchen rusted with disuse, the nursery seemed to get emptier, and many odd jobs were left undone.

Then I had a face lift. Stucco was put on my walls, the paint changed from brown to cream, and cars began to hang around outside me. (I have never succumbed to the craze for garages). Then in nineteen-twenty-seven my most embarrassing moment came. I had the bailiffs in. As human beings they were no different from any others but the other houses down our street realised the awful disgrace and almost shrunk away from me.

After this I was empty for a long time. A 'To Let' board stood in my forecourt and lots of people wandered through my empty rooms. Eventually it was decided that I should be flats. The operation was not so dreadful as I thought it might be. A lot of partitions. A gas fire and ring in every room. Even my loft was let off as a studio.

My decline in the social scale was not so noticeable, as every house in the neighbourhood was suffering from the same thing. The cars outside were replaced by motor-bikes, and my hall was a maze of perambulators and bicycles.

I GOT shabbier and shabbier until everything went blind. One of the habits of houses is to look out on the world and be seen by it, but in nineteen-thirty-nine darkness descended, I couldn't see the other houses and they couldn't see me. At about the same time the perambulators disappeared from my hall.

It was after this that I caught my second packet, setting fire to the loft. After this all the human beings left me and I was empty again. Then another species came in. They painted me a mottled colour. They rigged up bunks and telephone wires all over the place and my uncarpeted rooms were noisy with the thump of boots. Eventually they left, and, battered, scratched and slashed all was peace again. I was empty for years. My garden had grown wild, the mice were fruitful and multiplied, the spiders made a palace of my hall and a bower of my bedrooms.

Surveyors came and looked at me and shook their heads, town-planners came and talked about what they called comprehensive redevelopment, but nothing happened, people came and camped in me, but no-one seemed to want to live in me. So I was grateful to learn through the grape-vine (which by now had grown out of the broken roof of my conservatory and was creeping in the attic windows), that I was "derequisitioned" which meant that people could live in me again.

IT was then that I got the reputation, I don't know why, of being a house of ill-repute. A disorderly house, was the phrase my neighbours used. I don't know why this was. My behaviour has always been exemplary, though I don't think that I have been fairly treated. The people who inhabited me at this time didn't seem to me to be very different from the others. But this reputation was something that I have never been able to live down, and about two years ago I became empty again.

I don't pretend to be the "desirable residence" that I was when young. I don't hanker after the old days, but we houses do like to be lived in. People are the blood pulsing through us. Without them we are desiccated skeletons. If the blood is healthy we flourish. If we satisfy the wants of our occupants we are not just a "machine for living in" but a home. I got this idea from a magazine someone shoved in to keep my front door shut.

Then last year I was sold and things began to brighten up. My new tenants are very numerous and I understand they are referred to as coloured. This must be because they have painted me in such vivid colours. My appearance has changed considerably. There is music and singing and children all day long.

I was a house, now I am a home.
J. SPRATT.

UNIVERSITY LIBERTARIAN

DEAR COMRADES,

Although the response to my letter, which you were kind enough to print, appealing for help with the chores and finance of the *University Libertarian* consisted of only one letter, a Sales Manager has nonetheless been found in the person of John Upton, to whom I am very grateful. If I can now collect some guarantors to guarantee specified individual sums towards the deficit of each issue, then *U.L.* can continue publication. If guarantees totalling £20 per issue (for 3 issues a year) could be found I could continue to meet the remainder of the deficit, which would be about £20 to begin with but which looks as if it might drop a little with vigorous promotion. Guarantors would be asked for what they could afford, to a maximum of £2 each, so that a minimum of 10 people is asked for. The guarantors would have to cough up on the appearance of each issue, the printing bill being due a week or two later!

Any volunteers?

Yours fraternally,
VIC MAYES.

5, Hitchin Road, Stevenage, Herts.
December 8th.

PROTEST

The Funeral Fancy

IT was my sad duty recently to have to make arrangements for the funeral of an old friend. He proved to be even poorer than I thought, and, when the undertaker's account came in, we were all horrified by the amount. There was nothing to be done about it except pay, for in the moment of grief there had been no bargaining, no sharp limit settled. Yet I felt that something ought to be done, if only as a warning to others, and I asked one of my deceased friend's friends for ideas.

"Ideas indeed!" he said. "I have some ideas but they are nearly all unprintable. However, I'll write to you one of these days when I can find time."

He was as good as his word and sent me a long letter, nine-tenths of which would be unsuitable for publication because of some lack of moderation in his language. As it was too interesting to file and he forgot, I decided to take out every word which might be called immoderate or unfair to the Funeral Fancy, eliminated unworthy remarks, toned down some of the vituperation, and typed out what is a weak reflection of my friend's commentary on this undertaker in particular and undertaking in general. For what it is worth, here is what remains of the letter:

"In such a letter as this," he writes, "one must not be too personal or show bias; objectivity should be the key-note. Yet it is a social duty for me to add my own experience to yours, and in so doing mention at least one metropolitan undertaker with whom I had to transact business on behalf of the family. It was a matter of arranging a quiet, modest funeral, the cost of which must come from a very modest estate.

I am unlikely ever to forget the inci-

dent or the undertaker. For years afterwards, every time I saw a funeral pass I thought of that money-grabbing reptile who concealed his fangs and intentions behind a melancholic little smile and had a soft, bleating voice like a friendly goat, an oleaginous manner and a well-acted sympathetic demeanour; and my rage would rise about him and his verminous breed. When I conjure up his face I fall into a great calm of loathing as I see reflected in the mirror of my mind his sad drinker's eyes, puffy red cheeks and squat, obese figure with rounded paunch in formal black suit, relieved by a gold albert and white linen collar: those soft episcopal hands and thick unworked fingers adorned with a couple of diamond rings worth at least £500 setting off his dirty nails; those shining chins in series rolling down over one another and spilling over a black made-up tie; the half-red, half-grey drooping moustache and the near-white tongue sticking out of one side of the wet-lipped, drooling mouth as if thereby to help in mental concentration—on the actuarial effort of taking down in writing what I afterwards realized to be details indicative of the surviving financial resources of the dead person, as well as certain particulars demanded by local bumbledom.

Memory produces a shudder of horror that such necrophagous creatures are permitted to flourish in a civilized society with a Welfare State. One marvels that these soft-footed monsters, dog-faced and shameless, with their sickening slobber of fake consolation and their parrot-phrases of disingenuous commiseration can ever be allowed to get away with it all: even allowing for the grief-numbed, sorrow-bewildered state of mind of their victims. It is the living, not the dead, who are the victims. And their pride helps in their victimization.

It is amazing that Britain, whose sturdy people command the respect and often the admiration of the whole world, should continue to suffer such instances of obscene depravity as that corpse-collecting, blood-sucking vampire, that

crapulent kite of carrion outlook, woe-begone eye and heavy heart who regards us all as ultimate and certain prey for him and his kind; who speculates with meditative greed upon grief-shattered next-of-kin or delegated friends who enter his den to make arrangements for last rites, the bigger the better, to be accorded to the departed. This man, venal and corrupt from serfulous pate to his flat feet, employing the wiles of a white slave trafficker with the duplicity of a three-card trickster, fixed upon his adjustable face when he saw me a specious expression of sorrow for the painful occasion and the corpulent scoundrel did his lightning calculations in psychology and mental arithmetic as he weighed me and the financial circumstances behind the bereavement.

As I discovered later, all this was to mount up as long an account as possible for the putting away decently of some poor old skin and bones. My humour was not for haggling and my only wish was to get the simple business settled and be out of his presence with as little delay as possible. But no. That was not his idea, and he must have worked on the motto 'Hasten slowly'. Before I could collect my senses I was hustled into a showroom behind his office and there, neatly displayed in artifact, photograph and device, was a whole panoply of Funeral Upholding, the art as developed here in Britain in the year 1958. There were first, second and third class coffins, to which he referred with the American word 'caskets'—a sure sign of culture and advancement in this vocation. There were plaques, wreaths in plastics to illustrate designs, and a vast miscellanea of ancillaries and strange extras such as I had never seen or conceived to be possible, my common sense telling me that they were catchpenny absurdities.

Proudly he began systematically to demonstrate the use or advantage of this, that and the other thing: each being, to be sure, a means of 'showing additional respect for the dead', each with its price, no doubt, though this was not the moment to mention prices, but the time

Reflections on Rights & Duties

AT the first special conference since its inception 60 years ago, the Miners' International Federation, meeting in London last week, to consider the coal industry's overstocking problem, announced its programme which, apart from the one proposal that miners should have a shorter working day without loss of pay, consisted of suggestions for increasing the demand for coal both by "attempts to stimulate coal sales", by "greater use of coal derivatives" and the "regulation" of "energy imports".

Had the delegates at the Conference pressed for the shorter working week without loss of pay, and adequate compensation for miners whose jobs become redundant as a result of pits closing down, they would have been serving the best interests of their members. To demand that alternative sources of power and fuel which are not only more efficient than coal, but are also obtained without subjecting human being "to strenuous and unhealthy working conditions" should be "regulated" so as to give coal priority, is just the kind of argument one expects from officials who have become so regimented in their thinking that they have lost sight of the most important objective they should have before them, if they really have the interests of their members at heart, which is to hasten the day when coal-mining will cease to be a vital necessity in the life of the community!

It seems fairly obvious that for political, military and even financial reasons coal-mining in Western Europe will continue for some years to come, but it is equally obvious that oil has come to stay. In spite of the "explosive" political situation in the Middle East; in spite of the fact that at present there is an excess supply of crude oil in every important producing area throughout the world, oil operations in the Middle East are increasing all the time. Oil production in Kuwait and Iran is being stepped up; Japanese and Italian companies are now among the concessionaires in these areas (with Americans selling them the technical know-how!); meanwhile production from existing sources is being increased by new terminals and pipelines (\$70 million is being spent in Iran to make available, initially, a further 350,000 barrels a day for world markets; in Kuwait new pipe-lines and a terminal will give an additional capacity of 750,000 barrels a day; in Iraq the Iraq Petroleum Company is planning the construction of an off-shore island terminal at the mouth of the Shatt Al Arab River at a cost of \$50 million which will, initially, handle some 250,000 barrels of oil a day and accommodate tankers of 100,000 tons or more. It is interesting to note that the design of the terminal allows for its capacity to be increased at a later date). Not only are we living in the "oil age" but it is also clear that big business has decided that there is a future for their money in oil. Coal has had its day—but a very profitable day it was for some people's great-grandfathers!—and we say, the more pits that are closed the better. We will defend the miners in spite of themselves!

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WE know only too well that the closing of the coal pits means that large numbers of men are thrown out of work. But it is only in a capitalist society that such a situation inevitably means that the families concerned must go short.

IN the "thaw" which followed the Poznan riots in Poland two years ago Mr. Isaac Deutscher contributed an article to a Polish magazine advising the Poles not to throw out the Marxist baby with the Stalinist bath-water. "It reminds me," commented the editor, "of the man who went to the rabbi and said, 'Tell me. Is it possible to have socialism in one country?' 'Yes, it's possible,' the rabbi replied, 'Provided you live in another one!'"

It is this thought that makes one hesitant to describe the "tribal anarchies" discussed in the last two issues of FREEDOM as "anarchist societies". They probably don't look like that from the inside. The team of anthropologists who wrote *Tribes Without Rulers* are not of the Coming of Age in Samoa variety; they are concerned with an analysis of the structure of the societies they have studied, and not with what it feels like to be a member of them. Only in the

They go short not because as a result of not producing coal (which in any case was tipped into quarries) there was less food and services to go round, but simply because by not producing this . . . jettisoned coal, they are not entitled to a pay packet at the end of the week. In a capitalist society it is the *pay packet* which gives them access to the food stores and the public services! We anarchists maintain that there is neither justice nor common sense in such a system and believe, that until workers are courageous enough to demand and fight for the right to have the necessities of life for themselves and their dependents, *not as a privilege, not in return for money or labour coupons, but as a right to which every human being is entitled*, there can be no material security, no peace of mind for any man or woman however willing they may be to work for their bread.

For until they are they will accept society as it is, in spite of the fact that it seems to discriminate against the likes of them. They are resigned to such a role; and their only hopes for escaping from their fate are concentrated upon Mr. Littlewood's "Penny Pools".

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TO our minds the gullibility of the masses, crushed, humiliated, badgered and bamboozled from the womb to the tomb, in this golden age of science, cannot be explained away by declaring that the majority of mankind is by nature gullible and stupid. Why are the masses still the masses, the rabble, not only in the underdeveloped countries but in the highly industrialised, highly developed countries of the Western world? Why, indeed, do even intelligent people live the superficial lives they do and say and write the nonsense we read and hear (and this is not only our assessment of their way of life but one which they are the first to recognise in private conversation).

We are born, *without* our consent, into someone else's world, in which customs, values have been hardened into law. We are denied the means of existence as of a right and are assumed to acquiesce in the established values of society. Only a crank does not respect the Queen and Royalty, and while every healthy person thrives on competition, only a coward and traitor will refuse to shoulder a rifle to defend his country. . . .

Much harm, we believe, has been done by the progressive Left in confusing *rights* with *duties*. (As much harm and misunderstanding as the Church has been responsible for in confusing *love-making* with *procreation*). Reactionaries believe the "masses" have duties but no rights. In their society it is as much a crime to attempt to commit suicide as it is to steal a loaf of bread. The Reformist, and even some sections of the Revolutionary, Left offers the "masses" their rights, as a privilege, once they accept their duties to society. They fail to understand that men will only feel a duty to society when they are *free men*.

PEOPLE AND IDEAS:

Harmony Through Complexity

case of the Dinka we are given the information that they distinguish between what they recognise as the usual or common situation in their society and what they regard as desirable. It is thus impossible to gauge either the extent to which personal autonomy is felt or the fields in which it is expressed.

These African tribes are on the other hand certainly examples of societies without governments, and their problems of social organisation are thus of interest for anarchists. But it is very hard to draw analogies from them because of the importance in all of them of real or fictional kinship as a means of establishing social cohesion, and because several of them rely on the worship of ancestors, a god or gods, fetishes, or totemic or rain cults as a means of securing socially-acceptable behaviour from their members. "In a group that is culturally homogeneous, sharing common values," write the editors of *Tribes Without Rulers*, "social relations can adequately be controlled by the operation of universally accepted obligations and religious sanctions; when these prove inadequate then resort may be made to self-help, and the feud or warfare are found". In fact, in all but two of these six societies, the feud, or do-it-yourself method of law-enforcement is found, and none of them has succeeded in avoiding warfare—any more than your own society has.

In his study of Kropotkin's ideas, *Mutual Aid and Social Evolution*, John Hewison cites instances of several primitive societies, like that of the Kalahari Bushmen as "innocent of tribal organisation, chieftainship or central authority as of criminality in their deeds, and he declares that

"If authority and restraint are necessary, how are we to explain that in the primitive societies which exist to-day without recourse to authority of government, 'freedom but not licence is the principle of the group and the characteristic of the individual'? How explain that 'public opinion and tradition are the sole and sufficient sanctions of conduct' in these societies? This history of governmental and class society is at most only 7,000 years old, whereas the primitive communist society has existed since modern man himself appeared on the earth—at the very lowest estimate, for 70,000 years."

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BUT the societies we have been looking at are not primitive—the very complexity of their social organisations quite defeats my efforts to summarise the description of them. This complexity is in fact the condition of their successful functioning, and the lesson which they have for anarchists is in this. The editors of *Tribes Without Rulers* summarise it in these terms:

"In societies lacking ranked and specialized holders of political authority the relations of local groups to one another are seen as a balance of power, maintained by competition between them. Corporate groups may be arranged hierarchically in a series of levels; each group is significant in different circumstances and in connection with different

social activities—economic, ritual and governmental. Relations at one level are competitive in one situation, but in another the formerly competitive groups merge in mutual alliance against an outside group. A group at any level has competitive relations with others to ensure the maintenance of its own identity and the rights that belong to it as a corporation, and it may have internal administrative relations that ensure cohesion of its constituent elements. The aggregates that emerge as units in one context are merged into larger aggregates in others, so that a segment that in one situation is independent finds that it and its former competitors are merged together as subordinate segments in the internal administrative organisation of a wider overall segment that includes them both."

The 'balance of power' is in fact the method by which social equilibrium is maintained in such societies. The nearest thing to this concept in anarchist theory is in Kropotkin's notion of the equilibrium of forces, borrowed from the physical sciences. Harmony, he writes (in *Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal*)

"appears as a temporary adjustment established among all forces acting upon a given spot—a provisory adaptation. And that adjustment will only last under one condition: that of being continually modified; of representing every moment the resultant of all conflicting actions . . ."

"Under the name of anarchism, a new interpretation of the past and present life of society arises . . . It comprises in its midst an infinite variety of capacities, temperaments and individual energies: it excludes none. It even calls for struggles and contentions; because we know that periods of contests, so long as they were freely fought out without the weight of constituted authority being thrown on one side of the balance, were periods when human genius took its mightiest flights and achieved the greatest aims . . ."

"It seeks the most complete development of individuality combined with the highest development of voluntary association in all its aspects, in all possible degrees, for all imaginable aims; ever changing, ever modified associations which carry in themselves the elements of their durability and constantly assume new forms which answer best to the multiple aspirations of all. A society to which pre-established forms, crystallised by law, are repugnant; which looks for harmony in an ever-changing and fugitive equilibrium between a multitude of varied forces and influences of every kind, following their own course . . ."

The equilibrium of forces which Kropotkin sees as the agent of social harmony in an anarchists' society is sought in the segmented tribal societies we have examined not only by their complex lineage systems but by other co-existent groupings. "These may be," explain the editors, "age-sets and age-classes, ritual congregations, village councils and associations, secret societies and other selective associations. All these may be found in conjunction with lineage structures."

In his radio talk, "How to Live in Anarchy", which we quoted last week, Ernest Gellner commented on the view that "the situation in anarchic contexts would be improved if only the partici-

pants could overcome their clan or bloc loyalty" and declared that "It seems to me, on the contrary, that unless and until there is genuine enforcement, only blocs or clans can make an anarchic system work". He is arguing, of course, by analogy from tribal to international affairs, and by genuine enforcement, he means a supra-national authority. But for people who don't think a supra-national authority possible or desirable, blocs or clans, the balance of power is the only way towards the harmonious resolution of forces. This applies to the balance of power as conceived by old-fashioned international diplomacy, but it applies also to the balance of power as conceived by Kropotkin in the passage quoted, and as observed by the anthropologists wondering how on earth those African societies functioned.

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IF all this is the case, a lot of questions spring to mind. Why did the balance of power theory break down in international politics? Why has the balance of power theory not worked more satisfactorily among the tribes without rulers? One answer, given by Leopold Kohr in his book, *The Breakdown of Nations* is the disparity of the component units. Any federation containing one unit much larger than the others is bound to be dominated by it. And from the point of view of his theory of cellular subdivision, what sagacity is shown by the Dinka who divide their sub-tribes when they grow large. "It became too big so it separated," was the Dinka explanation to Godfrey Lienhardt.

In so far as these tribal societies function successfully, they function because the individuals and their social groups are linked with each other in what the editors call "an elaborate network of interlocking ties". As Laura Bohannon puts it in her study of the Tiv:

"Only the intricate interrelations of interests and loyalties through the interconnection of cultural ideology, systems of social grouping, and organisation of institutions and the consequent moral enforcement of each by the other, enables the society to work."

This supports Kropotkin's contention that in a society without government, harmony would result from "an ever-changing adjustment and readjustment of equilibrium between the multitudes of forces and influences" expressed in

"an interwoven network, composed of an infinite variety of groups and federations of all sizes and degrees, local, regional, national and international—temporary or more or less permanent—for all possible purposes: production, consumption and exchange, communications, sanitary arrangements, education, mutual protection, defence of the territory, and so on; and on the other side, for the satisfaction of an ever-increasing number of scientific, artistic, literary and social needs."

Successful anarchy, we may conclude, is a function, not of a society's simplicity and lack of social organisation, but of its complexity and multiplicity of social organisations. C.W.

Pius XII's Doctor Struck Off

THE late Pope Pius XII's personal physician who published details of the Pope's last hours in the Italian press (as well as in the *Sunday Pictorial*) has, as far as we know, not been excommunicated, but he may have to spend the rest of his life doing penance for the grave error he has committed. His disclosures to the press may not have been very ethical but they hardly justify the decision made by the Italian Medical Association to strike him off the medical register which means that he will not be able to practise medicine in Italy. We do not know if he was motivated by financial gain or simply by the desire to disclose intimate details of the Pope's death to millions of interested Catholics, but whatever the reason the authoritarian influence of the church can be taken to be behind the Medical Association's decision.

Millions of Catholics are expected to obey without question the edicts of the Church, but they are not permitted to know all that goes on behind the Vatican doors—even the "democratic" procedure in the election of a new Pope is barred to the devout.

Few Catholics of course, care, or dare, to ask why. If they did start to ask questions they might be less inclined to support the Church. Of this, Church leaders must be aware. In retaining the mystery which surrounds the Church, it makes the job of commanding obedience much easier.

The Funeral Fancy

Continued from p. 2

for emphasizing that everything was 'reasonable', indeed 'very reasonable'. Inwardly I cursed his basket and his store, his kail and potatoes. I freed myself from his parlour; and fled. I was a quarter of a mile down the street before I could convince myself that I had not been inspecting a chamber of horrors; or had I?

We got the funeral over, and immediately afterwards he presented me with the account and said it would be convenient if I paid there and then. It was not for me to pay but I told him I would see to his bill. On inspection it amounted to at least six times the amount I had estimated as reasonable for work done and services rendered. I am not vindictive by nature, but when I contemplated the account that the next of kin would pay, I devoutly hoped that, if not already dead, that undertaker would die above his means, and that some brother undertaker would skin the estate. And, finally, that an awkward squad of militia with blunderbusses attend at his graveside and fire three rounds in salute to his lowering coffin, but aiming so that those who mourned or pretended to mourn over that horrid miscreant would not go unscathed.

To me and my friends who dealt with his two-page account, he is an atrocity in living form, a robber of widows and orphans, a high-hatted, squalid pimp of cemeteries and crematoriums, of dead-houses, mortuaries and bone-yards. What a hole he and his minions made in the poor widow's estate! It is only my in-born respect for the better type of

undertakers and sympathy for their difficult job, as well as my responsibilities as a law-abiding citizen of this realm, which prevent me from using unkind language (that I might afterwards regret) about this opulently excrementitious boulder.

So it is that I must needs dismiss him with the above-recorded restrained and entirely inadequate remarks: realizing, as we all must, that one swallow does not make a summer. And that such a man is no more honour to his calling than he can have been a joy to his parents or a pride to his unfortunate but heavily-jewelled wife. You emphasized in your requests for ideas that the subject is one which demands sober and serious treatment. This I have given it. It is just as well that you did not ask me to let myself go and say all I could about it. Had this happened, I might willy-nilly have called into action certain gifts for vituperation and doubtful language which my dear mother used to say I had inherited from my father.

I have tried to be objective and impersonal, and to repress unnecessary indignation about a matter of great public interest: the racket in funerals. Use this letter as you think fit, and I hope that something may come of it."

Such is my friend's letter, well shorn of offensive asperities. I hope that, in virtually castrating it, I have left enough of my friend's feelings (which are my own) to make them clear.

HILARY H. BRIMACOMBE.

Building Workers Seek Collective Contracts

FACED with finding ways and means by which workers could move towards workers' control of industry even within a capitalist society, many people sympathetic to the idea have advocated the forming of co-operatives for the purpose of working through collective contracts.

Many are the arguments against such means, and examples that we have already, like the shoemakers' co-operatives in Northampton and Kettering spring to mind as demonstrating that workers in enterprises like these are not necessarily more revolutionary than those working in capitalist factories as wage slaves and they seem to do nothing to spread their ideas or ways of working among their industry as a whole. Indeed it may be said that since they have something more than their chains to lose they do in fact become more satisfied with existing society and therefore less likely to press for change.

Another line of argument is that the capitalists themselves would gang up to attack workers' co-operatives by all sorts of economic pressures seeing in them a threat to their own control of industry.

This is a cogent argument, in my opinion, but does not go nearly far enough. It is strictly along the lines of thought of those who see society in black and white terms—bosses versus workers—and who take no account of the many shades of grey that have been introduced into our social and economic life since capitalism ceased to be the crude system of exploitation it was in Marx's time and became the much more subtle system of exploitation it is to-day.

One of the greyest of the shadows that fall between the pure white of the workers and the black black of the bosses to-day is the trade union movement, which as we have so often demonstrated is a bastion of present-day society that might never have heard of workers' control, and is indeed getting blacker every year.

So much so that in the latest instance of workers getting together to form co-operatives and work for themselves, it is the trade unions which are attacking them, not the bosses! This instance comes from Blyth, Northumberland, where, as the *News Chronicle* (15/12/58) reports:

Off-duty building workers have formed contracting teams and built four houses in a town at slashed prices. Now they will be warned to stop or face action by the unions.

A meeting between employers and union representatives in the area—at Blyth, Northumberland—has condemned the hush-hush builders' night work. They say it is likely to cause unemployment.

A spokesman of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers said yesterday: "It is not unusual for tradesmen to do spare-time work. But when they form themselves into contracting gangs and build complete houses we take a very serious view of it."

If they persist, action may be taken against them under union rules, he said.

"This type of thing could mean employers might find difficulty in getting work and cause redundancy among our members," the spokesman added.

The teams have been working for a year on four houses and a garage in Blyth after finishing their full-time work with contractors and local authorities.

Said Mr. Peter Kinnair, secretary of the local building employers' association: "In some cases the men are asked to do the work. But others are deliberately going out looking for it. At the same time, there are trade union people unemployed."

A builder said the joint meeting between the unions and contractors felt strongly that the practice should be stamped out.

"It has even been suggested that one man engaged on it is an official of one of the unions connected with the building trade," he said.

Now it is not to be denied that one of the prime duties of a trade union is to defend the standards of living, the jobs, of its members. But there is no better way for the workers to defend their standards or secure their jobs than for them to escape from wage slavery and become controllers of their trade or industry themselves. Short of the whole industry being taken over by the whole of the workers therein, what is the impatient worker to do? Wait for a millennium that may never come? Certainly if he waits for the trade union movement to usher in even workers' control, let alone a free society, he may wait for ever.

But the attitude of the union spokesmen in this instance is really quite fantastic in its servility and reactionary thinking. They take 'a serious view' of workers going out to get work and becoming contrac-

tors themselves! They accuse the workers of doing 'cut price' work, but this is clearly possible for the co-operators to do since they are not paying profits to bosses or dividends to shareholders. They most probably do not have to pay any overheads since they don't need offices or office staff.

They are benefiting and the buyers of the houses they are building are benefiting. The ones who tend to lose are the existing capitalist builders—employers and exploiters of labour—who are the ones in whose interests the trade union officials are complaining!

Does it not strike these officials that what these 'part time' contractors are doing all workers could do? And that if any tradesmen become out of work because their employers have been undercut by the co-operative (and as good businessmen and capitalists they should welcome competition wherever it comes from) they should join the co-operative and help to make it possible to work full time in their own interests and dispense with the employer altogether.

Perhaps it does strike the officials. They probably see the danger of that happening more clearly than the slower of the workers. And the TU officials do see it as a danger—to them. To their jobs, to their functions as perpetual wage bargainers on behalf of the perpetual wage slaves. This is why we hear nothing about Workers' Control—by any means—from the trades unions today. The jobs are more important than the emancipation of the workers. P.S.

London Airport Dispute

Continued from p. 1

conditions for the workers—but power over them. It were as if the Court of Inquiry was a biased referee, and after pronouncing the stewards winners of the first bout, are busy trying to fix the next one in favour of the unions.

It is quite clear however, that what the Court was up against was not the absence of leadership, but the fact that the leadership game works both ways. The workers had estimated that their interests would be better served by "following" Mr. Maitland and the shop stewards, than by "following" the good old firm, Sir Gerald d'Erlanger, old uncle Jim Matthews and all.

The result was that they gained nothing at all, a not infrequent occurrence when strikes are led by Communists. (They were orthodox Communists this time, the Red Club and the *News Chronicle* can't have got to London Airport yet.)

A few points are brought out by this dispute. Firstly that despite the confusion of the press, an 8-day strike costing a million pounds is a drop in the ocean to a national airline corporation. In terms of effectiveness, although the technical dislocation of traffic was perhaps greater than that of the London Bus strike, the air men were less effective in forcing their point. Thirdly, although

they look militant from the legal seats of Westminster, the Communists, two years after the loss of membership during the Hungarian rising, are still ensconced in Shop Steward committees, and are just as ready to lead workers into strikes without clearly defined aims, and call them off without winning anything. The workers are equally ready to accept this leadership. Lastly, Courts of Inquiry are biased!

There is nothing that can be done here and now to put these things right. In the first place the situation of a national undertaking is such that small unofficial strikes cannot be successful. The taking over of industry by the State makes the struggle of independent-minded workers more difficult. Again, the machinery for direct action in such cases does not exist. As against the leadership of the union careerists, the only opposition comes from the equally politically dependent Shop Stewards. The only effective organisation for carrying on day to day struggles would be one which has different final aims for society, including the disappearance of monolithic corporations such as B.O.A.C. P.H.

Gandhi

Continued from p. 2

ernment should be to enter into a treaty with the United Nations for defensive operations against the Axis powers". Nanda might well comment that "This was a striking departure from the position Gandhi had consistently held since September 1939". The politician had again overcome the *satyagrahi*.

It is instances of this kind which undermine the image of Gandhi as a consistent pacifist. They do not detract, however, from the value of the contributions he made towards the development of new methods of resistance to government. He brought to the attention of modern radicals the profound conception of such writers as La Boetie and Tolstoy that the oppressed remain oppressed because they are prepared to co-operate with their oppressors. He demonstrated that non-violent direct action is an effective means of combatting injustice. His refusal of government office when India achieved statehood was a wonderful gesture in view of the power he could have wielded had he accepted. And his view of the ideal society was not all that far from that of the anarchist. These are things which save him from dismissal as a bourgeois nationalist,

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS MARX & ANARCHISM

DEAR EDITORS,

THE revolutionary movement in this country is represented by two groups—the Marxist socialist (I ignore the so-called communists) and anarchists.

The former group have two fundamentals—one economic and the other political. The first is concisely stated by Joseph Manlet in his letter "Pink Spectacles" (*FREEDOM*, October 25th), that "the nature of the state, as well as all other social institutions, depended upon the mode of production as varied historically during evolutionary development". Like you, I am unable to accept his final contention that the increase in power of the workers is decreasing the power of the state. There is no evidence that state power is decreasing—the contrary is the case—and economic power has not passed to the workers. Political power has proved to be Dead Sea fruit and has been exploited by the political parties irrespective of party labels in the struggle to maintain power, and in this the workers—hopelessly bewildered and without knowledge of the class division in Society—have concurred. The second fundamental of the Marxists—the emancipation of the workers through the capture of political power—is patently inconsistent with the first, and the logic of the Marxists in this respect is very hard to follow, since they—rightly—insist that the political factor, as with all others, is determined by the economic factor.

Anarchists have one fundamental—the absence of government. All agree on this, but to quote Joseph Manlet once more, much of the criticism of the state is abstract, and if the private property basis of the state is not altogether ignored, too little criticism is directed to this—the foundation on which the state rests. Governments exist primarily for one purpose—the protection of private property. All governmental activities are subsidiary to this one end—even when, in order to preserve it, action becomes necessary to curb some excesses. Only

with complete communal ownership can Society exist without some form of government or dictatorship, and a necessary condition of this is that the identity of interest will take the place of the conflict of interest—class, sectional and individual—common to all other epochs. Only common ownership, where the interests of all are obviously identical, can fulfil this condition and thus render government superfluous, and it manifestly should be a fundamental for anarchists to make this appeal for common ownership the focus of all activity. Not to do so is illogical and to follow the Marxists in inconsistency, as damaging to anarchism as the political mirage is to the socialists.

Economic determinism is a Marxian doctrine, and the name "Marx" is anathema to many anarchists because of his political activities. Tony Gibson warns us against quoting Marx unless we have given previous study to all the sources on which Marx drew, and we are further warned that if we have the temerity to do so, we will become "vulgar Marxists" whatever that unpleasant sounding thing may be. Rather condescendingly, he allows a place amongst the sociologists to Marx, but "he is not so very important". With all due respect to your able contributor, I suggest that on this occasion he has allowed his dislike to outrun his judgment. Marx, in spite of his political record, was more than just a sociologist. From the standpoint of anarchism, he was THE sociologist. Anarchism must be more than a vague aspiration, it must be in accord with science and firmly based on the rock of economic supremacy. A vital truth is no less basic because we do not like the teacher, even though we prove that teacher to be wrong in other ways.

Because of the rigidity of socialists, particularly with regard to the dogma of "the capture of political power", it is unlikely that they and anarchists can ever work in harmony. Ironically, neither can actually create the conditions which will make the stateless Society of the future possible. This is being brought about by people who in the main, probably have neither knowledge or interest in such a Society—scientists and technicians exploring the yet unknown possibilities of nuclear power and new methods of soil cultivation. The only certain forecast in this field is that it will lead to practically unlimited sources of production with the minimum of effort. The task of guiding these energies in order that they may be used for the common good will remain that of anarchists and socialists. In this task prejudice must have no place.

Sincerely yours,

Surrey.

F.B.

Cheaper by the Dozen

IN the social hiatus caused among the London anarchists by the closure of the Malatesta Club several comrades have recognised the value (at its lowest level, economic) of doing things in groups.

Theatre Parties

Two attempts to organise group initiatives are on the go at the moment. One is to make up theatre parties to visit selected plays of particular interest, and the economic factor here is that several of the London managements will allow fairly generous reductions in prices for parties of ten or more. We are also investigating possibilities of group membership of theatre clubs, enabling us to see plays not on show to the general, corruptible, public.

Readers interested in joining such parties are invited to write to Philip Sansom c/o Freedom Press.

Winter Sports

The second group social activity is the organisation of a winter sports holiday in Austria just after Christmas.

The organiser writes as follows:

SKI TRIP

A party of congenial types is off to Austria to ski immediately after Xmas. We leave for Innsbruck on Saturday, 27th December for 12 days, arriving back in London on Wednesday, 7th January.

The total cost, including fare, food and accommodation at a good hotel in the centre of town is £31 8s. 6d. This will come down to £27 17s. 0d. if we have a party of ten people.

Anyone who would like further details is invited to get in touch with: Bob Green, 14 Clifton Gdns, N.W.11. Phone: MEA 2783.

(continued from previous column)

or condemnation as a mere political schemer. These are things which, had he been less obsessed with his puritanical inhibition and free from the virus of politics, might have made him an outstanding pioneer of the libertarian way. But his contradictions crippled him and made his voice ambiguous.

Mr. Nanda has written what is, on the whole, a well-balanced biography. It would be to the benefit of historical accuracy, however, if in future editions he would not continue to identify nationalist terrorists with the anarchists. At least one of the terrorists he names, Bhagat Singh, considered himself a socialist republican and is now claimed by the Communist Party of India as a spiritual brother. Individual terrorism is no more a monopoly of anarchists than goodness is of Christians, and it is doubtful whether many anarchists today would support or justify it.

S. E. PARKER.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

Regular Sunday meetings now held at "Marquis of Granby" Public House, Rathbone Street (corner of Percy Street, Rathbone Place and Charlotte Street), 7.30 p.m.

DEC. 21.—Philip Holgate on EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE

JAN. 4.—To be announced.

JAN. 11.—Tony Gibson on

ANARCHISM—A NON-CONFORMIST SECT

JAN. 18.—Vic Mayes on WHO ARE THE ANARCHISTS?

JAN. 25.—Charles Humana Subject to be announced.

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