

## The Tribunal - 'A Victory for Back-Benchers' perhaps, but what of THE WATERS' COURAGEOUS STAND

ON December 7th, 1957 (note 1957, that is nearly 15 months ago) a fifteen year old boy, John Waters, was found beaten up in an alleyway in Thurso. No less than seventeen witnesses have made written statements to the effect that they saw the boy taken into the alleyway by two policemen who left soon afterwards and the boy was found with his face badly bruised. These injuries were also confirmed by the doctor who treated him.

On February 10th, 1959 (note 1959, that is, nearly 15 months after the assault) 80 M.P.s of all parties signed a motion asking for a Select Committee to inquire into the Waters' case, and to "advise the House whether the said John Waters was assaulted by certain police officers as alleged and in what circumstances it was decided that no prosecution should be instituted."

The government, through the Scottish Parliamentary Under-Secretary refused to accept the motion. All he could say was that the Lord Advocate (the Scottish equivalent of the English Attorney-General) who handles these matters in Scotland had decided "there was not enough evidence to warrant an enquiry".

But in the week that followed this blunt refusal the real fun started. And as the Lord Chancellor put it:

"When you have allegations made against the police, when you have a motion with 170 names in the House of Commons, when you have the press campaign, when the potential plaintiff will not bring an action in the court, you are faced with a situation in which you must take some steps to meet what the Prime Minister called 'an arrangement at the Bar of public opinion'."

And last week the Prime Minister himself announced that the government was setting up a Tribunal on the grounds that

it is expedient that a tribunal be established for inquiring into a definite matter of urgent public importance, that is to say the allegation that John Waters was assaulted on December 7, 1957, and the action taken by the Caithness police in connection therewith.

Why, one cannot resist asking, is the John Waters case a matter of "urgent public importance" on February 17th, 1959, when it was not so considered by the government 10 days earlier? And why did it take more than a year for this matter to be given publicity? The answer to the first question is contained perhaps in that word "expedient", the choice of which, the *Manchester Guardian's* Parliamentary correspondents, find "rather odd". It is fairly obvious, we would say that the publicity given to the case was such that the government considered it politically expedient, that is advantageous to them—whether it is also expedient in the public interest as well, is of secondary importance as their attitude all along shows—to sacrifice possibly a few police officers as the best means of reassuring the public of the integrity of the forces of authority as a whole. And at the same time the government, conveniently forgetting its refusal to take any action a week earlier, or the general silence in the House for 12 months before that, was patting itself on the back and posing as the champion of the humble citizen.

It was encouraging—said the Prime Minister replying to the debate—to feel that, at a moment when their minds were

filled with great problems between nations and vast political issues, the House turned to try and do justice to individuals.

Touching isn't it?

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ACCORDING to the Parliamentary correspondent of the *M.G.* (17/2/59), the setting up of a tribunal against the original wishes of the Secretary for Scotland

"must be reckoned—whatever the outcome of the investigation—a victory for backbench tenacity and a sign of the vigilance of a scarred and often sleepy watchdog, public opinion. Indeed, Mr. Macmillan was elaborately respectful to the faithful old hound—the pride, we almost gathered, of the whole kennel."

As a matter of fact most of the

debate in both houses was dominated by the lawyers discussing the complicated legal aspects of these Tribunals. Exception must be made of Sir David Robertson, Ind. Conservative Member for Caithness who has been taking an active interest in the case these past 14 months. No-one, either in the House or in the editorial columns of the papers we see, has mentioned John Waters' mother and father but for whose tenacity in refusing to drop the case, this "matter of urgent public importance" would have been filed away—as if it had never happened. Mr. & Mrs. Waters are exceptional for not only do they, like so many people in this country talk about democracy and justice, but they

have actually done something about it! By refusing to be intimidated by those in authority, or fearful of possible reprisals (rightly or wrongly most people believe that the police make things uncomfortable for "trouble-makers"); by refusing, according to some reports, to accept bribes as an inducement to drop the case, Mr. & Mrs. Waters deserve our respect, admiration and gratitude. We suggest that in the final analysis their courage and tenacity will be judged the most important element in the John Waters case. They have made it clear that they do not seek compensation; their fight has been for justice—or whatever one can call the successful outcome of exposing, and thereby curbing, abuses by those in authority.

If John Waters was beaten up by the police and it is publicly admitted, we are fully aware of the fact that this will not lead to the abolition of the police force! But it will make the police less inclined to exceed their rights in future. Not to expose

excesses by the police and those in authority, either through fear or because "it's too much trouble", is to encourage those in authority to do as they like.

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IN this connection, therefore, the full story of the Waters' fight for "justice" is of perhaps even greater importance than the reasons for the Lord Advocate's decision not to prosecute when the case first came to his notice, for while we are not surprised by the later—after all dog does not eat dog if he can help it!—we should be concerned by the fact that it has taken over a year for this case to be brought to the public notice either through the Press or through Parliament.

It is true that the present hue and cry in the Press is no reflection of its concern for the rights of the citizen nor of its rooted dislike of the police. The Waters case has suddenly become newsworthy at least for some sections of the Press (for instance we

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'I'm sorry, constable, I lost my way looking for the Waters Tribunal.'

### Bread and Circuses Up-to-Date

WITH populations reduced to telly-jelly it is clearly not necessary—if indeed it ever was—for governments to take their relations with their subjects very seriously.

The techniques of mass hypnosis having been worked out by the advertising boys and the cult of the personality a tried friend to rulers, governing the politically-conscious proletariat of the advanced industrial nations is accomplished with such ease today that the Marxists would be wondering what had hit them if they were not themselves victims of the same sort of hypnosis, in their adulation of the big, the centralised, the efficient, the highly organised.

Far from capitalism leading to increased impoverishment for the working class, the very insistence by the socialists on a material yardstick for measuring progress and for reforms by which to demonstrate their superiority to the capitalists has resulted in undeniable advancement in the standards of living of the workers without doing more than scratch the surface of capitalism. With the result that workers are more content, less likely to think in terms of being 'against the system' than of merely wanting the system to operate more efficiently so that a larger cake is there for the dividing.

It's the old story of 'bread and circuses' writ large. The workers, as ever, provide the bread. It's a bigger loaf, and they get a bigger slice, but unfortunately the bread is such flabby, tasteless, refined rubbish that the workers are losing the use of their teeth. Further, the circuses are paid for by the workers themselves (like everything else, for all money, sooner or later, comes down to a basis of some security in terms of property, or somebody's production of real wealth) who flock in their millions to their Saturday afternoon rituals on the football field, watching twenty-two very valuable pieces of property chase a ball about between two slender wooden structures, while the directors sit in the stands and arrange for the exchange of a king's ransom for the services of one of their possessions running about below. (In the cattle market things are much the same except that prices are somewhat lower for a prize bull than for a top-flight centre-forward.)

Back home on a Saturday evening the class-conscious proletariat of the advanced capitalist state pores over his pools coupon to see if his moment of emancipation has arrived, and when it hasn't, turns with a sigh to the pride and joy of his sitting-room, the apple (and focus) of the eyes of his wife and teen-age daughter and his own channel (9) of escape

from the boredom of an evening with his family: the telly, the twentieth century circus.

#### The Arena Comes to the Slaves

In ancient Rome the slaves had to go to the arena for their sport. They still do for their football, for the identification with the crowd, the shouting, the swaying, the hypnosis of the mass is probably its greatest attraction. (Certainly, if one listens to the caustic comments afterwards the players are invariably disappointing, so the grim loyalties must arise from some other, unconscious, gratifications). But nowadays, for the really important mass communication, the arena comes to the slaves.

Football, after all, is overwhelmingly a male interest. Probably that is another of the attractions of the game; it remains one of the few male strongholds still holding out against the continuous assault of the self-emancipating female. Those of the species who do follow the game are usually 'good sports' who can drink a pint like a man in the local afterwards.

But those behind the arena which invades the home knows where the power lies in the home and that really means who controls the purse-strings, and who controls the purse-strings controls the bread-winner also.

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### EGYPT:

#### High Hopes and the High Dam

GREAT works of water engineering have more than a technical and economic significance: they become a symbol of man's conquest of his environment and his taming of natural forces, and a testimony to his strength in great communal undertakings. Think of the emotional significance for the Dutch of the enclosing of the former Zuider Zee, or for the Russians of the Dnieper Dam. They can, for this reason also become the focus for national and nationalist sentiment, and can be used by a nation's

rulers to harness the sense of common purpose in their subjects, to reconcile them to sacrifice and hard work, with the promise of good times in an ever-receding future (like the story of the windmill in *Animal Farm*).

The resumption of normal financial relations between Britain and Egypt brings to the fore once again the proposal to build a high dam at Aswan on the River Nile, in which all the overtones which attach themselves to such projects are magnified to an extraordinary degree.

Egypt depends for its existence on the Nile. Even today 99 per cent. of the population of twenty millions live in the river valley which comprises only 4 per cent. of Egypt's territory, and their meagre livelihood depends on the annual rise and fall of its waters, and has done so since Menes built the first river wall 6,000 years ago. Egypt's ancient civilisation was built upon the attempts to utilise the annual flood by trapping the water with mud-retaining walls, leading it off in irrigation ditches to extend the crop-growing season. By the early 19th century when the Albanian soldier Mohamed Aly was the Ottoman Empire's rebellious governor of Egypt, the irrigation works were in a worse state than in the days of the Ptolomies. Cleaning and reopening the disused canals, and beginning the barrage in the Nile delta, south of Cairo, he introduced the cultivation of cotton, but it was not until Lord Cromer's regime as Consul-General at the end of the century, that the barrage was brought into use.

The British engineers who restored and improved Mohamed Aly's barrage turned their attention to the irrigation system of Upper Egypt, and in 1902 the Aswan Dam was completed, providing annual water storage. It was heightened in 1907-10, trebling the cotton crop and doubling the sugar crop by 1912. The Mohamed Aly barrage has since been abandoned in favour of a system of barrages on the branches of the river in the delta region, the whole of which has been converted to perennial cultivation, as has almost all of Middle Egypt (between Assiut and Cairo), but the weakness of the Nile control system as a whole is that it is still dependent on the height of the annual flood in each particular year. Messrs. Hurst, Black and Simiaka proposed a storage system for the river as a

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## BOOK REVIEW

## Who Killed Joe Stalin?

**THE DEATH OF STALIN, an Investigation by "Monitor". Allan Wingate, 13s. 6d.**

FIVE and a half years after Stalin's death, this book appears. It is a detailed investigation into the odd circumstances of that fact. The anonymous author, right at the outset states as his purpose "to discover from the evidence available whether or not Stalin died a natural death".

It may seem for the average westerner a very far-fetched aim. But one only needs to talk to some deserter from the Russian army, to a Bulgarian just arrived from the other side of the Iron Curtain, or to a traveller from the eastern part of Germany and one is struck by the pre-occupation of these people with the mysteries surrounding Stalin's death. And certainly if the truth be known, the character of Stalin's successor in the Kremlin would appear much clearer.

This is what the book maintains:

In the middle of January, 1953, nine physicians were (together with others) arrested as a terrorist group in the pay of the Americans, the Jews, etc. They immediately confessed to causing the death of Zdanov and of shortening the life of a number of Russian politicians and military leaders.

Six weeks later, on March 4th, it was announced, Stalin was ill. One day later, it was stated officially, he was dead.

On April 3rd, barely a month later, the doctors were freed, as innocent victims wrongly arrested "through the use of methods of investigation which are inadmissible and most strictly forbidden by Soviet law."

From these official facts and a lot of small-detail documents the author comes to this conclusion:

Stalin thought the time had come to rid himself of the few old members of the Politburo who were still left, among them Beria, Krushchev, Mikoyan, Voroshilov and a few minor ones.

Poskrebyshev, whom Krushchev tried to make some kind of a joker in his speech to the 20th Congress, got a woman-doctor to denounce the physicians—mostly Jews—in a letter to Stalin as "terrorist plotters". And whilst Stalin

still thought of a way to get the members of the Politburo mixed up with the doctors, these were arrested.

From that moment Krushchev and the others—knowing how Stalin's mind worked—guessed where they themselves stood and knew time was short.

Here the mystery deepens.

Who was in the attack? Not those who stood in Stalin's shadow and wanted to climb into his chair. It seems that Beria, Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov, Shepilov and a few more did not even know where the danger lay, Beria called out his tanks and surrounded Moscow, fearing, it seems, an attack by the army.

With this he made his biggest blunder. The Army-group, Bulganin, Voroshilov, and Zhukov, ready to reach for power, but still biding its time, allied itself with the other group: Krushchev, Mikoyan, Pospelov, Kikoyan, etc., and from there to the ousting of Malenkov and Molotov was just a matter of weeks, a matter of juggling and secret sessions.

Still: who killed Stalin? Or gave the order to kill?

The author thinks it not impossible that Beria had his hand in it in a pact with Krushchev. That Beria staged his demonstration of power to suit his own ends. That Krushchev and his conspirators looked upon Beria as their biggest danger and therefore shot him. That anybody who appeared to wobble in those deciding days was doomed and for that reason Bulganin and Zhukov had to go, after they did their duty.

And that Stalin's name had to be dragged through the mud so that if ever the murderers' names were to become known, their deed would be something to glorify them and not to blacken.

The author deals at great length with the question of poison in Russia's political history of the last forty years. Anybody who knows the names of Yagoda, Lenin, Kazakov, knows about the official Russian story of Gorki's death, read "The Great Conspiracy" by two fellow-travelling American journalists, saw in the papers that on B. & K.'s visit to the Queen, a whole plane brought them their own drinks, so they need not have them brought from outside, will not hesitate to accept the author's theory as quite probable.

A little illustration? Commander Leonard Burt, former Head of Scotland Yard's Special Branch, wrote in the

A CYNICAL friend of mine recently said that the cinema is getting so desperate these days that they're making films for anarchists and pacifists in the hope that they'll at least get them in the cinemas. Another explanation is that the cinema has realized that it has only a minority audience now so it doesn't matter if they make films for a minority.

Whatever the explanation we can congratulate the *Academy Cinema* for putting in a 100 per cent pacifist show "The March to Aldermaston" and "La Grande Illusion" (1937), directed by Lindsay Anderson (and others) and Jean Renoir respectively. There are two sides of the same coin.

To take the Aldermaston film first. There is always a risk in a film about a 'worthy' subject. It may be so obsessed with its 'worthiness' that it quite forgets that it has to be artistically and technically good. Recent examples of peace film about Swaffham and Hiroshima spring to mind.

"The March to Aldermaston" is technically and artistically very good. The photography was excellent (one had the additional thrill of recognizing familiar faces—I even had the thrill of identifying a marcher by his walk—last seen at the Malatesta Club. The faces were selected for their ordinariness and the interviews had the frankness and innocence which carried conviction. The lunatic fringe of the jazz-band and the 'jive' dancing was shown and the commentator said "How can one be against death without being in love with life?" The opposition was given its showing at the meeting at Hyde Park Corner, the church bells that drowned the meeting at Reading and the jeering group at Aldermaston. In addition we see the bystanders who had been provoked into thought by this draggled army with ragged dripping banners marching out of step (in more ways than one) to the ironic strains of "The Saints Go Marching In".

*Evening News* of December 9th, 1958, on the day when Serov's (Beria's successor) fall became known:

"Serov is very cautious. He refused all our drinks at my office but had some brought from the Russian Embassy and we soon had a vodka party going."

Shades of the great master?

M.P.

## CINEMA

## The Great Illusion - Still

This film is an excellent pictorial record and the telling shots across a country church graveyard of the procession marching to the "St. James Infirmary Blues", with its topical parody.

The commentary is unobtrusive, neither too solemn nor facetious, preferring to let events and persons tell their own story whenever possible. The climax of the march (which in actual fact, was an anti-climax), is an ingenious montage of shots of marchers interspersed with shots of the dead, maimed and disfigured of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and finally comes the blooming and terrible flowering of that exotic of the twentieth-century, the H-bomb over the Nevada desert.

If the military expression may be forgiven, the Aldermaston march was the stage one rocket, the Swaffham demonstration was the stage two and the realization of the nature of the conflict between man and the State is stage three. The impact is the realization of the relationship between man and man.

"La Grande Illusion" is a film of stage three and of the impact. It was made in 1937 and was in 1958, in Brussels, declared one of the twelve best films ever made.

It is a film of the 1914-18 war set in a prisoner-of-war camp; it concludes with an escape by two of the prisoners but unlike most p.o.w. films this is not the purpose of the story.

The main characters are Lt. Marechal who was a mechanic in civil life, Captain de Boeldieu who is a French aristocrat, Major von Rauffenstein, the prison-camp commandant, Lt. Rosenthal, a banker's son, and a German woman. There parts are played by Jean Gabin, Pierre Fresnay, Erich von Stroheim, Marcel Dalio, and Dita Parlo.

Major von Rauffenstein sees in Captain de Boeldieu a kindred spirit and is acting under the great illusion that war can still be conducted under the rules of chivalry (even in 1914-18 this was wearing thin). He is also under the illusion that class barriers can override considerations of humanity and refuses to believe that de Boeldieu would help Marechal and Rosenthal to escape.

Marechal and Rosenthal are under the illusion that the German woman with whom they shelter will denounce them. On the contrary, Marechal falls in love with her and almost deserts. (It is a pity

that Renoir couldn't have extended his logic as far as that).

It is said that von Stroheim came into the film at a late stage and his part was almost entirely conceived by von Stroheim himself. The result is a Franco-German collaboration which puts the politicians to shame.

All through the film humanity keeps breaking in, the heart-breaking reception by sex-starved men of the female impersonator; the rather corny defiance of the prisoners; singing "The Marseillaise", and the twist of the cancellation of this "victory" and comment of a Frenchman, "there can't be much left of Douaumont" The fumbling gestures of the over-age guard to comfort the prisoner with a mouth-organ and a cigarette, all this sums up to a pictorial lyricism for which the name of Renoir is truly famed.

J.R.

## A Social Aspect of Work

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lives of people fuller and happier, and that it should be organised and controlled by the workers on the job, acting in response to the needs of the community as a whole, then quite a different set of problems would be posed. For instance it might be asked whether the back and forward shuffle in the tubes were worth the trouble. With the profit motive and government out of the way, the men who dig the tubes, the men and women who maintain and run them, and not least the hundreds of thousands for whom daily transportation from the drab streets of Walthamstow to thoroughfares of Victoria is bound to be a misery however it is accomplished might choose not to bother, and instead to break up the metropolis into a set of working and living communities.

The quotation began above carries on: "And, faced with imminent breakdown as London's transport is in this choked-to-death capital, there can be only one answer to that."

If the idea of service to people can develop so that they demand the service they want, and not that which is handed out to them, and if they realise the power which lies within them to achieve these objects, perhaps another, and even more radical answer could be provided to the questions raised by traffic congestion in our "choked-to-death capital".

P.H.

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## VIEWPOINT

## The Anarchists: A Non-Conformist Sect

I USE the term Non-conformist not in its obvious literal sense, that is referring to those who do not conform to the general rules of our society, but rather in the specialized sense which is associated with the work in Britain. In Britain Non-conformism has come to refer to that type of Protestant divergence from the Anglican form of religion which finds expression in such sects as the Baptists, Methodists, Plymouth Brethren, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Quakers, Peculiar People, Seventh Day Adventists, Unitarians and Jehovah's Witnesses. Such sects differ widely among themselves on points of doctrine, yet they have all a certain common denominator which makes them a part of the religious "left", in contradistinction from the religious "right" which is formed by the Anglicans, Anglo-Catholics and Roman Catholics.

It is this common denominator of the Non-conformist sects which makes it possible to regard the Anarchists of Britain as a Non-conformist sect, and Anarchism in Britain as part and parcel of the true tradition of Non-conformism in Britain. Many people may raise the objection here that anarchists are not a "religious" sect at all: Anarchists in general are atheists and hence have nothing in common with those sects who claim the worship of God to be their principal function. On this point of course, the difference is obvious. But I am talking about fact not fiction. God exists only as a convenient fiction, a rallying point for the various religious sects. The anarchists do not depend upon this particular fiction as a cohesive force. Whether we have any other convenient fictions acting as a cohesive force, may be considered later on.

I want to make it clear that I do not refer to the Non-conformist tradition in Britain in any derogatory sense whatsoever. I myself as an Anarchist, am part of that tradition. I must acknowledge that I cannot help feeling a sort of irritable contempt for those of the opposing tradition. Thinking quite randomly, I cannot help respecting Oliver Cromwell more than Charles I, H. G. Wells more than G. K. Chesterton, Lloyd George more than Winston Churchill. This respect is largely independent of their relative merits and demerits, but stems, I suppose, from my possessing what has been aptly termed a "Non-conformist conscience". I do not hold up such differential respect, or lack of respect, for certain figures, historical or contemporary, as a necessary criterion of the Non-conformist outlook. It depends, of course, how you view these figures in their general setting. While admitting to my own dose of the Non-

conformist conscience, I see it manifest to a greater or lesser extent in all the anarchists I have ever come across in the British movement.

The Non-conformist conscience has no necessary connection with disapproval of drink, sex and so-called frivolous pleasures. I know that the various Non-conformist sects have in fact got a name for such disapproval, and we even find it among a certain section of Anarchists. The Non-conformist conscience, however, has more important attributes. Basically it refers to the search for objective truth, and the finding of justification through acts rather than by faith. The antithesis of the Non-conformist outlook is that exemplified by the Roman Catholic Church. With the latter, objective truth is deliberately rejected in favour of mystical revelation and justification can be found by faith alone. Religion based on faith, assures man of peace of mind if he will only relinquish the independent strivings of his own mind and, have faith, faith in the benevolence of an authority which he can neither comprehend or ever hope to comprehend. Such a religious attitude enthrones magic; the rational idea of cause-and-effect is regarded as an illusion. Man must do wrong, that is "sin", and sin again and again because he is human; but his sinful acts do not matter if he will have faith and be prepared always to admit his fault, his imperfection, his subservience to the divine unknowable will.

The Non-conformist outlook repudiates magic, and wrestles with problems of cause and effect. If the Non-conformist is using God as a hypothetical construct, then he creates God in his own image. He is a rational God, a God who may go in for double-entry book-keeping in which a man's good and bad acts are all entered in the ledger (and the Devil help those who end up in the "red"), but nevertheless a just God who is not to be bamboozled by the smell of incense, elaborate rituals or soft-hearted intercessions by the Virgin Mary. The Non-conformist must therefore justify himself to his God, or in plainer terms, come to terms with himself through his acts, and he cannot rely on any magical ritual to undo the natural consequences of his acts. He finds it difficult to conceal from his left hand what his right is doing.

I am not suggesting that there are fewer hypocrites among Non-conformists than among those whose religion is ritualistic and mystical. What I am suggesting, however, is that Non-conformist hypocrites are less

happy than others. Their perpetual need to justify themselves to themselves does not permit them to shrug off glaring inconsistencies between their principles and their practice as a matter for the priest to reconcile for them by magic. The endless debates that we hear among Anarchists about how and to what extent they are compromising their principles by allowing themselves to be conscripted into the army or holy matrimony, or making money in capitalist society, or accepting knighthoods, or sending their children to state schools, or not sitting down when God Save the Queen is played—all these debates give full play to the workings of the Non-conformist conscience. I will even go further and point out that among a few (and it is happily a few) comrades who feel themselves to be hopelessly trapped between the clash of the inconsistencies of their principles and practice, we find the most extreme examples of the "holier-than-thou" attitude in their condemnation of all other Anarchists.

It may seem that I am being a little captious in my constant switching from references to religious opinions. This brings me back to the existence of God as a convenient fiction, a hypothetical construct which religious sects use. Let us consider what religious people actually do, particularly those who belong to minority Non-conformist religious sects.

Much of the time they live like other people. One would not know from a superficial knowledge of their everyday lives that they belonged to any particular sect. Yet there are differences; they tend to foregather socially at the houses of others belonging to the same religious sect; in their business dealings both as producers and consumers they like to follow up contacts among their brethren. Non-conformist people are traditionally independent in their economic life; they tend to favour independent craftsmanship, shop-keeping, running small businesses and professional occupations, rather than working as the employees of large firms. A Marxist would argue that small producers, independent craftsmen and professional workers became Non-conformist in their attitude by virtue of the nature of their occupation. I have followed up this line of reasoning fairly carefully, for it has a lot to recommend it, but on the whole I think the bulk of the evidence points to the Non-conformist attitude giving rise to more or less independent, decentralized economic institutions rather than the other way round.

G.

(To be concluded)



## The Waters' Courageous Stand

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found no reference to the Tribunal in either the *Sunday Times* or the *News of the World* last Sunday) and "news" sells the newspapers. The Press Lords' first loyalty being to business, they quite often embarrass their political friends and serve the public interest in splashing the "News". However it would be quite wrong on such occasions to look upon the gutter Press as the "Friend of the People". After all for a whole year the Waters case did not exist for them! Nor did it exist for the House, yet Sir David Robertson who according to Press reports "started it all" has been closely connected with the case from the start. Why did it take so long to rouse Members of Parliament to demand an enquiry?

These are, to our minds, important questions, for it is obviously in the public interest that abuses by the authorities should be given wide publicity *quickly*, not more than a year after, and then only because a particular Member of Parliament has succeeded in interesting a sufficient number of his colleagues in the particular case, and the Press finds the item newsworthy.

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WHAT redress, other than hoping that the Press or an M.P. will take up the case, has the citizen of exposing an abuse by the police? The Waters' first step was to walk into the lion's den: they reported their boy's case to the Caithness police! In spite of the 17 witnesses they produced the Crown Counsel decided that criminal proceedings would not be justified (one has to read the *News of the World* to see how many people are remanded in custody every week on the evidence of the alleged "victim" without the corroborating word of a single witness, to realise how extraordinary is the Waters case!) and in his turn the Lord Advocate "had come to the same conclusion".

From then on the Waters' only hope of getting "justice" was to convince some influential person or fire the imagination of a newspaper editor. Even assuming that they could afford a private prosecution against the police the fact that they lived in Scotland made it necessary for them first to obtain the Lord Advocate's permission! The Lord Chancellor recognised the "problems" involved when he replied to the debate

As for a private prosecution, this was open to any citizen in England, except in a very limited number of cases. "In Scotland, in order for a prosecution to be commenced by someone other than the Lord Advocate or his officers, it is still necessary, as I understand it, to get the permission of the Lord Advocate. So the same problem comes back to the Lord Advocate for him to decide whether it is a proper case to come to the court." A civil action could be brought for assault, but "the trouble is that you cannot compel anyone to take a civil action."

Twice the Lord Chancellor, in our opinion, *openly*, blamed the Waters for not bringing a civil action against the police: "the trouble is that you cannot compel anyone to take a civil action" and "when the potential plaintiff will not bring an action in the court you are faced with a situation . . ." (our italics).

It would seem that when a girl is attacked by a man in an alleyway she is considered by the police as the "victim" and they prosecute her attacker on her behalf (and in the interests of society!), but when the police are alleged to have assaulted

Continued from p. 1

whole based on the flow from the great lakes Victoria and Albert, storing the excess water of a high system to supplement the short fall of a low season. An agreement was reached in 1949 between Egypt, Britain, the Sudan, Uganda and Ethiopia, and the Owen Falls dam was built below the exit from Lake Victoria.

But the scheme would take very many years to complete, and from the point of view of Egyptian nationalism had the disadvantage that the main storage area would be outside its control, while the growth of population would have outstripped the extension of cultivation. With the coming of the Nasser regime, the Egyptian government ordered the study of another project for a High Dam south of Assam, to provide a reservoir for multi-year storage, bringing another two million acres into cultivation, extending perennial cultivation to the basin lands of Upper Egypt, and providing all Egypt's requirements for electric power. After much dispute over its location and on the nature of the floor of the proposed lake, the scheme was approved by international experts and Mr. H. E. Hurst, the hydrologist, agreed that it could be executed with detriment to the Sudan. All the same, the lake, which would extend 344 miles upstream and would extend 124 miles into the Sudan and would engulf the Sudanese town of Wadi Halfa. Apart from the question of compensation for the 50,000 displaced Sudanese, and of the division of the extra water and electric power, there were technical questions of silting and evaporation, which have not been settled. The Sudanese authorities think that, instead of being concentrated at Aswan, there should be a series of smaller dams, enabling them to generate power in Sudan itself.

Obviously the Nile valley should be developed as a "hydrological unity" without regard to national frontiers. As it is, while Egypt is seeking financial aid for the High Dam, the other countries through which the Nile flows are going ahead with their own projects. In Ethiopia a dam is planned at the outlet of Lake Tana into the Blue Nile, and one has been begun on the Awash River, in Uganda the Nile waters are already passing through the turbines of the giant power station at Jinja, and the Sudanese are planning a dam at Roseires near the Ethiopian frontier.

★

NASSER'S first Minister of Finance, Abdel Gelil el-Emary sought a long period of enforced economic austerity since the dam was so vital for the interests of Egypt, but after he left the Ministry, Nasser's expensive Czech arms deal mortgaged the future of the country's chief export asset, the cotton crop. It was rumoured that Russia had agreed to

a boy in an alleyway he is not the "victim" but at most the "potential plaintiff" and he must make his own arrangements at his expense and cannot expect to have police assistance in his efforts to protect society from violent policemen!

The Prime Minister in justifying his refusal to reverse the Lord Advocate's decision not to prosecute in the Waters' case relied on the "established principle of government in this country"

that the decision as to whether any citizen should be prosecuted, or whether any prosecution should be discontinued, should be a matter, where a public as opposed to a private prosecution is concerned, for the prosecuting authorities to decide on the merits of the case, without political or other pressure.

And in quoting Lord Simon that any Lord Advocate or Attorney-General

should absolutely decline to receive orders from the Prime Minister or Cabinet or anybody else that he should prosecute.

he was on solid ground (apart from the fact that these gentlemen, the Lord Advocate and Attorney-General are political appointments!)

But for the same reasons it is obvious that when a private citizen wishes to prosecute the prosecutors he should not have to first obtain permission from the prosecutors nor rely on the charity of a Tribunal by the prosecutors' employers! So-called "civil action" is not the answer.

## Egypt: High Hopes and High Dams

finance the foreign currency requirements of the dam project. Armed with this rumour, the Egyptian government sought the aid of the International Bank, and late in 1955 the British and American governments tentatively offered to support the proposal of the Bank president, Mr. Eugene Black. In the negotiations Britain and America had offered to give between them 17 million dollars for the first stage of the dam, and the International Bank offered to lend 200 million dollars, the three contributions to be interdependent and subject to agreement with the Sudan. Mr. Tom Little in his recent book on Egypt points out that:

"It was a political move, for neither in Britain nor in the United States was the climate of opinion suitable for costly features on behalf of the Egyptians . . . The offer could, nevertheless, be justified by the need to prop the Western position in Egypt, which was rapidly declining as Russia's grew."

In the following summer America withdrew its support, either because Mr. John Foster Dulles had one of his turns, or purely as a matter of domestic politics as the American elections were approaching. Britain's offer, and that of the International Bank were thus automatically cancelled. On July 24th, 1956, speaking to a huge crowd in Alexandria, on the fourth anniversary of the abdication of King Farouk, Gamal Abdel Nasser said:

"In the negotiations concerning aid for the High Dam, I hear again the voice of de Lesseps, negotiating the Suez Canal concession . . . The Suez Canal in Egypt's canal; it was built by the Egyptians, it was built on the skulls of the 10,000 Egyptian victims who died as they laboured on it. Yet year by year the shareholders take their millions of profits, and have been doing so for decades. Well, no longer! Listen to the decree—the Suez Canal Company is nationalised! The High Dam will be built with its profits!"

★

IN the events which followed, the duplicity and folly of the British and French governments becomes more and more apparent as their history comes to be written. The financial cost alone of the invasion of Egypt in 1956 was estimated by the *New Statesman* (24/1/59) as about £780 million. The total cost of the complete High Dam project, power station, compensation and all, was estimated by the World Bank in 1956 to be £460 million. Nasser emerged from the Suez adventure as the actual and moral victor. Meanwhile a British firm of consulting engineers was quietly getting on with the plans for the dam under a contract signed just before the Suez crisis.

On October 23rd last, Mr. Krushchev announced that his government would give Egypt credit for 400 million roubles (something like £35 million) for Soviet equipment, materials and machinery for the first stage of the High Dam, entailing the construction of two cofferdams and seven diversionary tunnels. The agreement was signed in December, providing for interest at 2½ per cent., and repayment in the almost invisible future. Simultaneously Mr. Black of the World Bank was making preliminary negotiations for the resumption of financial relations with Britain, while the French were arranging their £2 million agreement with the United Arab Republic.

Simultaneously too, such as the competition for influence in Cairo, a West German Group was offering £15 million for the first stage for the dam on a strictly commercial basis, the reason being (according to the *Observer* 28/12/58) that there have been mounting West German fears that President Nasser might decide to recognise East Germany.

On December 23rd ('Victory Day'—the second anniversary of the withdrawal of foreign troops after Suez), Nasser made his most forthright attack on the Communists in the Arab world since the early days of his regime. The press of the Soviet Empire was quick to retaliate with attacks on Nasser, for, writes Victor Zorza (*M.G.* 22/1/59):

"In exchange for supporting Nasser against the West and for building the Aswan Dam for him Moscow expected him to leave the Communists free to make their bid for power in the other Arab countries. Nasser, however, seems to have realised now that if he allows the Communists to share in the government of the other Arab countries they would gradually take over these Governments and then the whole Arab world, including his United Republic."

In a speech in Cairo last Saturday, Nasser told an audience of half a million who included Tito, that "we shall not take orders from Washington, London or Moscow," and he quoted from a letter

he had received from Krushchev saying that "the Soviet Union does not wish to interfere in the internal affairs of the United Arab Republic."

Nasser has found, like Tito, that he can win the greatest advantage for his country by playing one of the world power blocs against the other. The revolution in Egyptian affairs which his regime has brought about has done much to restore Egyptian self-respect and self-confidence, but the force which is carrying him along is not solely the constructive effort to attack the problems of over-population and under-employment. As Paul Mattick writes in *Liberation*:

"The meagreness and the slowness in the improvement of socio-economic conditions in the Arab nations forces national-revolutionary governments to emphasise political changes in order to make their own existence secure. Hardly is one nationalist goal reached than another must be tried for. The end of the British occupation of Egypt led to demands for the evacuation of the Suez Canal zone; the evacuation of the zone, to its nationalisation; the nationalisation of the canal, to the 'Egyptianisation' of foreign holdings and enterprises. And thus it goes on in the general direction of complete independence and control over all national resources. In this general direction lies also the re-incorporation of Palestine in a projected Arab bloc of nations and the transformation of these nations into a unified Arab state, even though both projects involve revolutions in and war between, Arab countries as well as war against Israel."

★

THE High Dam has become more than the cornerstone of Egyptian economic policy, it has become "a symbol for the Arab and African world of the casting off of imperial chains," and Mr. A. Noyes Thomas writes in the *News of the World* that

"By now, few people outside Egypt and the Arab world, through which I toured recently, can have any lingering illusions that the scheme is more than a delectable carrot to be dangled before the bitterly poor Egyptian peasantry."

This thought may give a sense of smiling superiority to Mr. Thomas's eight million readers, who don't think much of Nasser anyway, and it may be that the prospective financiers of the High Dam are equally cynical: they merely want to bribe Nasser into their camp. But to the Egyptians, the project is less of a dangling carrot than a last hope. The expectation of life at birth in Egypt is less than twenty years. A quarter of the

children die before the age of one year. The development in health services under the present regime, and the use of the new anti-biotics have, however, reduced the death rate from 22 per thousand in 1951 to 17 per thousand in 1958. But with the usual Malthusian paradox, the reduction in the death rate has aggravated the problem of poverty. For the people of Egypt have been getting poorer.

"Dr. Meurnier of Alexandria University calculated in 1951 that the *per capita* income was in real terms 39 per cent. less than in 1913. The extension of agriculture has not kept pace with the growth of population. In 1957 there were 10 million more Egyptians than there were in 1922, and it is calculated that the population is now increasing at a rate of between 400,000 and 500,000 every year. This decline in the real wealth of the Egyptian has taken place during the half a century which saw the greatest advance in control of the Nile. Only for a short period immediately after the building of the Aswan Dam in 1902 did the expansion of agriculture keep pace with the then slower rate of population growth."

That is how Tom Little puts their problem. Abdel Gelil el-Emary in his economic programme saw in the immediate construction of the High Dam the only way out of this bondage to increasing poverty which condemns most Egyptians to a lifetime on the verge of starvation. If within a decade the extension of cultivation could keep pace with the growth of population, the growth of industry would raise the standard of living, and the overall increase in the country's purchasing power would then stimulate further industrial development. We would feel more confident in the chance of this coming about if anything had been heard of agreement with the Sudanese, and if any of the factories promised by the 1957 Soviet loan to Egypt has been built. However, Egypt's successful operation of the Suez Canal has silenced the Western gibes about Egyptian technical ability, and if the Anglo-French exploitation of Egypt for almost a century does not convince us that we have some moral obligation to help solve the problems involved in more effectively harnessing the Nile, the fact that the British and French governments squandered more than the total cost of the High Dam in their 1956 invasion of Egypt may lead us to reflect that irrigation schemes are cheaper than politicians. C.W.

## A Social Aspect of Work

THE attitude of anarchists towards industrial production has been elaborated in different ways and from different aspects. Syndicalists have fought for control of industry by the men on the job, and have taken an active part in day-to-day struggles for higher wages and better working conditions. Those influenced by Stirner have simply got out of wage-slavery as quickly as they could and found a more congenial way of life. However, if there is a common thread running through the several attitudes, which springs from the very basis of anarchism, it is that all work and production should be undertaken and carried out from a spirit of enjoyment and satisfaction, free from arbitrary direction and compulsion. Further, the ends of industrial production should be determined by usefulness and satisfaction of real needs, as opposed for instance to those created by convention, advertising and social unhappiness, and not be determined by profit making or political considerations.

These ideas have not been entirely limited to anarchists. Socialists were equally eloquent in stating them before they drew near to political power, and the obvious failure of nationalisation has produced an insistent questioning of the purposes of industrial concentration among the thinking (and powerless) sections of the socialist movement. FREEDOM has quoted examples where workers and union officials concerned with public transport have urged that the whole idea of fares be scrapped, and transport treated as a service provided by the community to be used freely by anyone who wishes to. The fact that these people usually think in terms of the need for a radical change of opinion, leading to the State taking over and providing such a communal service, shows a certain internal contradiction in their own opinions, and emphasises again the need for specific anarchism.

Now the editorial writer of *The Star* has joined in. In the Feb. 6th edition,

referring to the proposals for building a new tube line from Victoria to Walthamstow, *The Star* said that the plan should go ahead despite its cost of 55 millions and the fact that it will always be run at a loss. It put the point of view that:

" . . . the return must always lie in the service given to individuals and to industry. And that will of course be incalculable. If the test is 'Does it pay?' you could find a good reason for shutting down Tubes altogether; also nationalised airlines, railways and coal mines. The test should be: 'Is it necessary?'"

It is difficult to quote from newspapers without wanting to improve the grammar of their contributors, but the above extract is interesting insofar as it is leading away from the profit motive. Expressed at greater length, the argument is that if it is important that 500,000 people per day should be shifted between Victoria and Walthamstow, then provision should be made for such an operation, and not necessarily paid for directly by those benefiting. However, the kind of service they are proposing, and their motives are a little suspect. There is nothing wrong with an underground transport system when it is being used rationally, as a convenient means of providing people with a good way of extending and developing their work and pleasure. This unfortunately is the last thing that could be said about the morning and evening crushes on the existing tube services. The problems facing capitalists are presumably how to invest their capital to produce the largest profits; which line of production will raise the best turnover; which markets will provide the readiest buyers. The state, as a provider or subsidiser of services must think in terms of efficiency, productivity, the export market and financial strength. But if the principle were accepted that work and production should have only one final object, to make the

Continued on p. 2



# Bread and Circuses Up to Date

Continued from p. 1

Unlike the slaves of ancient Rome, the slaves of the telly voluntarily put themselves in hock to bring the circus to them. And unlike the circuses of ancient Rome, the function of the idiot's lantern is not merely to provide entertainment and relaxation to refresh up the worker for another day's, another week's, work it is, quite simply, to get at him.

## It Fills the Gap

Not merely to sell him the products advertised—but to sell him the whole set-up. Television is the means by which the conditioning process of infant and adolescent years is continued in adult life. It fills the gap between the establishment and the individual which was left after children left school before the advent of broadcasting. Then they escaped from direct government inculcation, and in club and pub could pick up all sorts of unwelcome ideas. Today in club and pub the focus of attention is the same little screen as in the home (well, usually a bigger screen, even more demanding, with louder sound, since the pub needs and can afford a bigger set).

This means of mass communication is softening the tone of our culture. The Quiz sets the measure of our education. The man is brilliant who accumulates masses of little bits of unconnected information and wins a massive prize, with or without the help of the high priest—the Quizmaster. By catchy little jingles,

which would at one time have been regarded as fit only for the nursery, seeds are planted in the minds of adults to buy somebody's unnecessary products. Behind it all goes the unquestioning acceptance of the *status quo*, the establishment.

The advent of commercial television has made no difference in this respect. One expects nothing more from the B.B.C. than that it is the mouthpiece of the government—but how can the I.T.A. be any different when it is financed by the capitalism which is the commercial wing of the establishment?

## 'They Match'

The heads of B.B.C. and I.T.A., Sir Ian Jacob and Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick respectively, are both ex-government officers. The latter was chief of the permanent staff at the Foreign office and is a Catholic to boot. Under such guidance clearly nothing but establishment interests are likely to be expressed.

As one non-conformist who has had inside experience, Malcolm Muggeridge writes in the *New Statesman* (14/2/59):

'Anything, it seemed to me, which broke the Corporation's monopoly would be to the good; and anyway its lesser employees (many of whom were extremely capable, enterprising and sympathetic) would at least have a possibility of alternative employment instead of being irretrievably subjected, as they were, to the parsimony and paternalism of Broadcasting House. The latter advantage has accrued: the monopoly remains. It is simply that two BBCs have been made to grow where there was only one before.

Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick is to Sir Ian Jacob what Bulganin used to be to Krushchev. They match. Any hope that the BBC, confronted with competition, would lose some of its pomposity and unctiousness has been disappointed, as has any hope that the commercial networks would prove less essentially conformist in temper.'

Nor of course, does anything different obtain in America, where dozens of television companies and hundreds of stations compete—commercially in the interests of their sponsors and patriotically to prove that the American way of life is the tops.

One can laugh at the commercial jingles, the brash and open salesmanship which one can easily see for what it is. But far more insidious and all-pervading is the conformism which lies behind the unctuous pomposity and the go-ahead gimmickry alike.

We are being got at all the time. The irony of it (as in the anxiety some socialists express at the growing power of the State) is that the very progress of which we are asked to be proud has paved the way for the mental slavery of the people. Compulsory education for all has enabled all to read—the daily press. Material prosperity has opened the way for all to become financially committed, financially dependent, and wide open for the reception of the conditioning and inculcation from the establishment.

It's bread and circuses bang up to date—but with the same old purpose.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

### Flying Saucers: Evidence or ...

SIRS,

Your recent notes on this subject prompts this, my third letter on the topic:

In (1) you ask who the writers are—they are well enough known to all who are sufficiently interested to read about it; one is George Adamski whose two books "Flying Saucers have Landed" and "Inside the Spaceships" are found on the non-fiction shelves of many libraries. He states that he himself does not know the identity of his would-be bribers but infers that they may have been sent by the U.S. Government.

I don't know about penalties in the U.S.A.F. but in the R.A.F. it is forbidden to divulge information on the sighting or radar tracking of U.F.O.'s. This order was announced following the leak of such information after a U.F.O. incident.

Your analogy in (2) is hardly fair. Flying saucers, unlike God and spirits are tangible things which have been seen, tracked by radar, photographed in monochrome and colour, still and movie. Even Jung can't explain these facts with his psychological theory. On examining the originals of some of the still photographs a famous Hollywood film effects expert declared that they were not fakes. The 'foo fighters' or flying saucer observation discs seen by airmen of both warring factions in the last war were believed by them to be secret weapons belonging to the enemy—until after the war!

In (3) you state that it is a waste of time for us to speculate as to whether we can hope for reinforcements from outer space. The fact is that in all their communications so far these beings reveal a striking sympathy in many respects with our aspirations—the brotherhood of man (they never 'take sides' between races or nations)—the danger of atomic explosions (more dangerous apparently than any of our scientists realize)—their contempt for organized religion, particularly in its condoning of war.

Far from being a menace, they have a deep feeling for struggling humanity but are not permitted to intervene directly except in the event of the planet itself being on the brink of complete destruction through nuclear fission. They do, however, observe us closely and are prepared to offer advice if we are sufficiently receptive. For instance, in one book practical hints are given for utilizing the energy of a marine nuclear power unit in a more efficient way. In another book the principles of the flying saucer are described. Our puny aircraft pale into insignificance beside these perfect aerofoms with their colossal aerodynamic lift—obtained by creating a vacuum on the upper surface electrically, air pressure on the undersurface does the rest. (There are other methods of propulsion for use in 'empty' space). What a boon to humanity that would be if we could develop it! For instance, weight-saving, the bane of the aircraft industry, would become relatively insignificant.

The spacemen insist that our science and its teaching is so diverse, so divided into its various departments that a broad grasp of the subject is lacking and is seriously hindering development.

Your parting shot is rather weak; the fact is, that the spacemen are making their presence felt in what would appear to be a planned manner (surveying the past twelve years) and probably to a

## FIRST REACTIONS

GENTLEMEN,

As I am a recent subscriber of your paper FREEDOM my first impression of your articles was shock. Now I look forward to your paper's arrival a bit more comfortably and I wanted you to know that your philosophy has provoked me into thoughtful research. I'm not yet qualified to debate the pros or cons of Anarchy—here in my part of North America the word itself connotes violent lawlessness; but I for one will not reject your reporting and editorials as "crackpot" until I have researched. But there is an American proverb I'm reminded of by some of your articles and it goes: "The hungry are always envious of the well fed."

But I do enjoy your weekly and wanted you to know. In the way of an ironic anecdote; I stopped in Knock's and Brentano's, a Chicago book-store that modestly calls itself, "the world's largest book-store". They have NO books about Mahatma Gandhi. And they do not plan to stock either. *C'est tout. C'est la vie!*

Sincerely,  
An American Painter,

Chicago, Feb. 3. E.V.B.  
[\*Of course we don't accept our correspondent's analogy for we don't consider ourselves the "hungry" ones in any sense of the word!—EDS.]

wider public than FREEDOM can command. There are at least fifty books on flying saucers in the English language, many of them available, and obviously widely read, through municipal libraries.

The spacemen claim that they have contacted the major governments of the world, with little success and it is widely believed that the R.A.F. and U.S.A.F. have large dossiers on U.F.O. sightings which are kept secret.

If FREEDOM is waiting for the astronomer royal to acknowledge flying saucers you will be last in the line—too many established institutions and personal reputations are at stake even though, on the count of number of witnesses alone, there is sufficient evidence to convince any court of law—where witnesses count for everything.

I accept most of the views published in FREEDOM. What I don't like is the 'we've seen it all; we know all the answers' attitude of contributors; also the note of despair occasionally manifested in certain articles. For an anarchist paper too, readers' letters are remarkably few; indeed there is a feeling sometimes of being 'talked down to' by an authority! And how about some publicity for orgonomic functionalism?

Yours faithfully,  
KENNETH P. WOODWARD.

Isleworth, Feb. 18.  
P.S.—Recommended reading for those with open minds:

*Flying Saucers and Commonsense*, by Waveney Girvan. Muller 1955.  
*The U.F.O. Annual, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958*. M. K. Jessup. Citadel 1956.  
*Report on U.F.O.s*. Ruppelt. Doubleday 1956.  
*The Inexplicable Sky*. Arthur Constance. W. Laurie 1956.  
*Inside the Space Ships*. G. Adamski. 1958.

## ... Or Wheels in the Head?

[Surely it's a case of the pot calling the kettle black. Far be it from us "talking down" to our readers. We would never subject them to the unsubstantiated nonsense our correspondent expects us to swallow about flying saucers! We do not wish to prolong this correspondence on a subject which as we wrote in our notes, in our opinion gets us nowhere. But we cannot refrain from commenting that we are surprised that these "anarchist" spacemen should be contacting governments who are out of sympathy with all the ideas they apparent stand for and yet have so far not been in touch with FREEDOM! Are we perhaps tuned to the wrong wavelength?

There may be 50 books on flying saucers. There are probably 5,000 about God and his works. Does Mr. Woodward, on the strength of this believe in God? We don't! It must be something to do with wavelengths—or is there perhaps some connection between hearing the voice of God and receiving messages from spacemen?—EDS.]

## 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.

MAR. 1.—John Cooper on COMMUNITY: THE EXPERIMENTAL APPROACH

MAR 8—Alan Albon on SUBSISTENCE FARMING

MAR. 15.—Speaker from the Bruderhof speaking on THE BRUDERHOF COMMUNITY

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## Land Notes

THIS is the time of year when a new enthusiasm takes hold of those who have to do with growing things. The air is filled with the hum of machinery, and the smell of newly turned earth fills the nostrils. It is a time when the farmer takes an anxious look at his hay and silage and wonders whether to get a little more to see him through to hay time.

In the towns men get busy on their gardens and allotments with an enthusiasm no less than that of their country neighbours. Here is an age-old art that is not phoney, and gives unequalled satisfaction and gives results, in terms that cannot be judged by present standards and values. In the industrial areas men try with great success to cultivate their small patches of soil. Many plants however do not respond readily to a smoke-laden atmosphere that tends to choke the pores of the leaves. Plants which retain their foliage are therefore best omitted as those that die down and come up when the spring winds have blown away

the soot that lies heavily in the damp winter atmosphere, do better.

While the young man sowing wild oats on good agricultural land would be regarded as a menace, the turning thoughts of love are intimately bound up with the natural forces of which man is part. Part of the satisfaction that 'growing things' give one I am sure is in the sense that one is an active part of those forces. The growing sense of impotence is in the feeling of being dragged along willy-nilly without being a co-operative partner in the forces that are a part of living.

Sometimes people dig their heels in, resist the stream of human flow and are pushed on one side to climb the bank and look and see whether the main force of human events are taking them in the right direction. This type of person is generally feared by the rest of the people who are afraid that he may have some truths that will shake their foundations. They are known as idealist cranks, etc., and authority, in the forms of experts in this or that, are particularly scathing about their activities. An expert has only validity as far as I can see if his techniques work in the long and short term view. The doctor who has chronic ill-health has techniques which are suspect, the psychologist unable to adjust himself, the anarchist acting in an authoritarian manner are all suspect. In agriculture we bear a great burden of authoritative advice, unfortunately mostly prejudiced, but twenty years ago a handful of people appalled at the growing sub-health of a growing sub-topia started an experiment in agriculture, which was also carried on in the social field in the Peckham experiment. It is interesting to note that the doctors associated with that experiment were also interested in the experiment at Haughley Research Farm, and indeed men like Lewis Mumford take the view that the attitudes that are reflected in the suicidal and anti-social behaviour of modern man are reflected throughout his activities. The man who attributes the ills of the world to some particular cause is obviously a bit cranky but it is better to have half a head out of the sand than the lot buried. The main thing is to bring home to people that social changes are fundamental to changes in their own spheres of interest.

During the war an attempt was made to close the Haughley experiment but today even orthodox men have realised its value. The farm was divided into three sections.

1. Farmed with muck, stock and no chemicals.
2. Farmed in an orthodox way with stock, muck and chemicals.
3. Farmed without muck or stock, ploughing in green crops and fertilisers.

The results after twenty years show little difference in yield between the first two but analysis reveals a tendency for the crops grown without chemicals to have less water more dry matter and sometimes more protein.

The chemical section shows steady deterioration of the soil and the experiment has shown without doubt that stockless chemical fertilisation is bad farming.

The main purpose of the experiment was to find out if there is a connection between animal health and soil fertility and farming technique. Therefore about halfway through the experiment herds were established on the two sections. This was not such a simple matter, as the cattle had to have as identical hereditary background as possible and anybody associated with scientific enquiry must realise the difficulties involved. So far the dairy herd on the section where no chemicals are used consistently yielded more and have shown a higher solids content. It may be contended that to farm organically is more costly and to point to the failure of some organic farms, many orthodox farms fail also probably for the same reason. However, putting it at its low financial level, with doctors in America worried about the various troubles caused, they believe, by the ever-increasing body of substances used in the growing and processing of food and the cost of ill-health in this country at about £1,000 million per year, any clue would be worth following except of course to those who are making their pile out of the substances in question.

ALAN ALBON.

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