

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"... Let God and man decree
Laws for themselves, and not
for me; And if my ways are not
as theirs, Let them mind their
own affairs."
—A. E. HOUSMAN
Last Poems

500 Building Workers Stage Token Strike Against the Bomb RIGHT TACTICS AT STEVENAGE

NEXT week the Queen is to visit Stevenage New Town to officially open a new shopping centre which has already been in use for nearly a year.

It is claimed that this terraced town square, which is for pedestrians only (and we are sure Her Majesty's speech will be as pedestrian as usual) is the largest shopping centre of its kind in Europe. The tradesmen there are doing well, both from the residents of the new town itself (mostly refugees from London) and from the people in the surrounding areas—over a quarter of a million within a radius of ten miles.

The attraction Stevenage holds for shoppers from its environs lies in the ample provision of parking space—unlike older towns such as Luton or St. Albans which have just grown around old market places—and the town planners have every reason to feel that their planning is as commercially successful as they could have hoped.

Encouraging Response

Whether the new towns are as socially successful is another matter. Can sociality, can community, be planned?

One thing, however, does seem to have emerged in the case of Stevenage. Perhaps because its residents are proud of their environment, they don't seem to want to have it destroyed. Perhaps because they are on the whole youngish people with their lives before them, they don't want to die. Perhaps because they are the sort of people who have pulled up their roots from the grimy areas of old towns to find cleaner air and space for their kids they are more concerned about the future than those who apathetically stay put.

Perhaps a lot of things—but the fact is that the Direct Action Committee against Nuclear War has

found encouraging support from the people of Stevenage for its campaign against the missile industry in the town.

Encouraging, that is, within the town's industrial context. About half the workers in Stevenage work in the two missile-producing factories of De Havilland Propellers and English Electric, and a large proportion of the other industries supply these two factories. The economy of the town therefore revolves around the preparation for nuclear war.

War Work Spells Security

In these circumstances one would not expect too much sympathy for a campaign urging interference with this work, this prosperity—for government work, war work, spells security, while a switch to peaceful production places employment at the mercy of a fickle consumer market.

In view of this, the organisers have been encouraged by the response to their two letters, which are the basis of a door-to-door canvass. One calls upon the Development Corporation for alternative constructive and peaceful industry to be brought into Stevenage.

Many canvassers report that one in two residents are signing this letter while support is surprising for the second letter calling for a financial pledge to help any workers who may decide to leave the missile factories on conscience grounds.

By Tuesday of last week well over 400 inhabitants had signed the first leaflet, and over 30 had pledged contributions.

Even more encouraging (and much more to the credit of Stevenage than whatever the Queen is going to say) has been the response

of building workers to the Committee's appeal for a token strike against further construction on missile factories. On Friday, April 10th this strike actually took place and some of the strikers marched into the town centre to attend a protest meeting.

Our comrade J.W.P., of the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, took an active part in organising this strike, attending every building site meeting and acting as a liaison between the Direct Action Committee organiser, Pat Arrowsmith, and the unions in Stevenage.

500 Stop Work

J.W.P. reports on the voting for a strike at four contractors' sites and on the actual strike and march:

Carlton Contractors:

In favour of token strike against bomb 58, against 49; abstentions 11.

Marriot's Contractors: In favour 63; Against 51; Abstentions 16.

Neal's Contractors: In favour 24; Against 3.

Minns Contractors: In favour 20; Against 10.

All of these building sites are well organised and have their own stewards and Federation Stewards.

Building workers also downed tools at Datchworth (6 miles away) and Hitchin (5 miles). These members of Amalgamated Union of Building Workers' and Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers' branches of Stevenage supported the appeal and made their way along to the town centre. 60 men gathered together about 1½ miles from the

Town Centre and marched in, whilst many made their own way by car and cycle. As the men from Neal's Contractors work at the Town Centre they took no part in the actual march. A heavy sweeping shower hit the column as it started marching, this depleted the ranks by about 10. Many of the men at Carlton's Contractors who voted for the strike travel in from London. These men had arranged for their comrades to collect them at the Town Centre after the meeting, but unfortunately, Carlton's Agent cancelled these arrangements, this prevented the men from attending the meeting.

Altogether about 120 men actually attended the meeting. The number of men who downed tools from all the sites was approx. 500. A general appeal had been made to all trade unionists in the town to support the token stoppage. Only building workers came out. The rest of the town's industry is poorly organised. The Amalgamated Engineering Union No. 2 branch did agree to have a speaker from Direct Action, but when he arrived to speak, the members voted against listening. The N.U.F.T.O. branch listened to Pat Arrowsmith and two resolutions were put to the floor in support by the chairman himself! He couldn't get a seconder.

It will be seen from this that while the building workers showed majorities in favour, workers in the missile factories—the engineering workers—would not react favourably at all. The economic argument stifles their social consciences, presumably. This may be countered in future as other industry comes to the town—and it is coming, for a variety of smaller firms are building extensions (in some beyond the sites they had originally reserved for expansion) and new factories are going up. The availability of other work should make it easier for engineering workers to refuse to work in the missile factories.



'You are accused of assaulting a police officer in the course of his duty and of causing grievous bodily harm by violently thrusting your clenched face against his fist raised in self-defence.'

The Separate University Education Bill S. Africa 'Will not be Diverted'

CAPETOWN, APRIL 8.

The South African Minister of Education, Mr. J. Serfontein, moving the second reading of the Separate University Education Bill, told Parliament to-day that the Government would not be diverted from its course by anyone in the world.—*British United Press.*

... BUT ISOLATED

CAPETOWN, APRIL 12.

On the orders of the President of Brazil, a soccer match arranged between a Brazilian team—from which four coloured players had been dropped—and a local team was cancelled yesterday, thus emphasising South Africa's increasing isolation in the sphere of international sport.

The Brazilian team, Portuguesa Da Santos, is to play matches in Portuguese East Africa and, while it was on its way there by sea via Capetown, the Portuguese promoters offered two games to the South African authorities, one at Capetown and one at Johannesburg.

According to a spokesman of the Cape Western Football Association, the Portuguese promoters recognised South Africa's Apartheid difficulties and offered the Brazilian team minus its four non-White members, who would be flown from Capetown to Lourenco Marques. The offer was accepted on those conditions and at short notice a match was organised and widely publicised for yesterday afternoon in Capetown. Last-minute visa difficulties were overcome by the Union authorities.

But the Brazilian Government then intervened, and President Kubitschek cabled an instruction to the team to play no matches in South Africa.

Mr. H. M. Hosking, president of the Cape Western Football Association, commented that nothing had been said about White or mixed teams in arranging the fixture. He added: "Of course, if they had fielded a mixed team, we wouldn't have been able to meet them."

The South African Soccer Federation, representing all the 40,000 non-white soccer players in South Africa, sent President Kubitschek a telegram thanking and congratulating him "on your noble Christian stand in calling off the Capetown match as a protest against the colour bar in South African sport."

(*Manchester Guardian*)

... AND CHALLENGED

PRETORIA, APRIL 8.

The Supreme Court here has upheld appeals by 441 African women against sentences imposed on them for taking part in a procession protesting against the issue of reference (identity) books to African women. A Johannesburg magistrate had sentenced each to a fine of £10 or three weeks' imprisonment.

Convictions and sentences were set aside by Mr. Justice W. Dowling, Mr. Justice J. H. Snyman concurring, on the grounds that a warning to disperse given by a police officer during the procession might not have been audible or intelligible to all the women.—*Reuter.*

And Colour-Bar Nearer Home

To the Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*

Sir.—I was recently negotiating to buy a flat in Highgate Village in North London. A 99-year lease was offered, the owner and I had agreed on terms, and all was going smoothly when I found a clause in the lease asking me to promise "not to allow any person or persons of colour to use, occupy, or frequent the flat."

As I had no intention of allowing anyone, coloured or not, to "use" (presumably for business) or "occupy" (presumably on a sub-letting) the flat, I was prepared to accept those parts of the clause. What I could not accept was that I should promise not to let coloured people "frequent" the flat. I asked for a definition of this word "frequent" from the owner's solicitors but they refused to give me one. I could only conclude that it would have been an infringement of the lease for me to have had African friends to dinner two or three nights a week or possibly to stay a few nights. I refused to sign the lease as it stood. They refused to remove the offending word.

The property owner has, I am told, a legal right to impose this sort of condition, but nevertheless it seems iniquitous to me that when one buys a home one should have to accept conditions about the circles from which one may and may not choose one's friends. And it also seems to be pushing racial discrimination to absurd lengths to suppose that people may be offended by the visits of coloured people to neighbouring flats.

—Yours &c.,
ALAN HANKINSON,
22 Hornsey Lane, London N.6.

Right Tactics

All this, however, is a matter of tactics. To our point of view, even though the issue of the H-Bomb and of nuclear weapons and missiles is a limited one with a negative aim, these tactics are right inasmuch as they bring responsibility right down to the individual and thus open the door for more positive aims.

Not only that, but by involving organised workers in a struggle the issue is stepped up from individual protest to social action, and leads to the recognition that people in society have a right to a say in things that affect them instead of leaving them to politicians.

The Direct Action Committee against Nuclear War represents the most constructive and hopeful aspect of the whole Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. It is facing up to the implications of the Campaign far more honestly than those sections who are playing politics and are afraid to upset the Labour Party's chances in the coming election.

**DID YOU FORGET
THAT SUBSCRIPTION
RENEWAL TO
FREEDOM again?**

INTERVIEW WITH HERBERT READ

(This interview between Giovanni Baldelli and Herbert Read was first published in *Volontà*, January 1959).

★

G. BALDELLI: *Which have been the strongest influences in leading you to embrace anarchism?*

H. READ: In my case they were exclusively literary ones; William Morris, Edward Carpenter, Peter Kropotkin and Max Stirner.

You seem to have been successful in happily reconciling social success with the open profession of anarchism. Could you briefly tell me about the difficulties you have encountered, and explain how you have overcome them?

This question raises a problem which anarchists have never discussed adequately, and that is the exact relationship between thought and action, between existence and essence.

We must realise that a complete contradiction exists between our ideals and the "situation" (historical, economic or social) in which we find ourselves. Here lies the problem—how are we to act in such a situation?

If we maintain that in every situation our actions must be consistent with our thinking, then we must follow the example of St. Francis of Assisi, or that of the Doukhobours; that is, we must renounce society as it is, with its material comforts, its political security, and the cultural pleasures which it provides and go away to some ideal paradise (if we can find one) to live a life fully consistent with anarchist principles. That is what Thoreau did, and I admire him for his courage. However, Thoreau's experiment was not a success, because in the end he had

to return to the society which he had renounced. Let us assume however, that like Thoreau and the Doukhobours we renounce the society into which we were born. Can you tell me what benefits it would bring?

Our renunciation of the established social system would not change that system at all, and only a handful of eccentrics would follow us to our ideal retreat. No-one would admire us for our Quixotism, nor would anyone be deeply influenced. People would say we were "wrong in the head" and nobody would bother about us.

We must therefore "do" as others do, and not let ourselves be led by vanity or by a mistaken notion of moral coherence. We must find a place in the structure of existing society, take part in its activities and achieve functional unity in it so as to be able to affirm our ideal aims from that realistic position.

Such a point of view is anti-heroic. When, in Bert Brecht's drama of Galileo, the accuser cries to the famous scientist "Your hands are dirty", Galileo replies: "Better dirty than empty." Galileo would have been able to remain faithful to his principles and perish at the stake. He preferred to live because he knew that he still had an important contribution to make to science. He understood that *ideas* are more important than *actions*.

I have no intention at all of equating myself with Galileo. So far no government has threatened to send me to the stake, or even to prison. On the contrary, I have been allowed to develop my anarchist principles in a society in which I count as a functional unity. I believe that in that way I have influenced a greater number of people towards anarchism than if I had taken on the way of social rejection.

Do you think that there is in modern art anything which is more or less a reflection, or a prophecy of the breaking up of the traditional values of western civilisation; and if you do, could you indicate something in this art which has a positive significance for anarchists?

There is undoubtedly a direct relationship between the growth of modern art and the collapse in ruins of the traditional values of our civilisation. Art has in fact been one of the principal agents of

destruction of these values. We must not however confuse the existential situation with the aesthetic essence. Aesthetic values are eternal and universal. Anarchists must acclaim modern art with open arms because it is an art of social protest. The artist, such as Picasso for instance, is a political being, constantly conscious of what is going on in the world, and cannot fail to be influenced by it. Painting is an instrument of struggle. So also is poetry. My poems, if you like, are my acts of anarchism; and they are much more effective than bombs.

What, to your mind, are the signs and tendencies in the world of today which seem to indicate an improvement in the possibilities of anarchism?

Only the propagation of anarchist ideas can increase the possibilities of anarchism. There are great numbers of people just now who are anarchists without knowing it. There are millions and millions of people without any illusions at all about the State and everything that the State represents. One by one these people are beginning to call themselves anarchists.

Which thinkers, in your opinion, have contributed most towards reinforcing the anarchist point of view during the last forty years?

Gandhi, Camillo Berneri, Friedrich Georg Jünger, Silone, Albert Camus, Vinoba and Pasternak.

What kind of activities do you think that anarchists of today should preferably cultivate, so as to best promote their ideals?

A great deal of thought and research is necessary to bring anarchist ideals truly "up to date". Anthropology, social psychology, communitarian experiences in various parts of the world, the rotten bankruptcy of totalitarian systems of government, are all material waiting to be proved in the light of anarchist principles. We also need literary works in which imagination plays a part (drama novels and short stories), works which illuminate the values sustaining the libertarian conception of life in a spirit of humanity, but not of propaganda. The field here is rich, but we lack the artists and thinkers capable of working in it.

Frank Lloyd Wright

Continued from p. 3

Perhaps too, they were the inevitable accompaniments of his pioneering and innovating role. That same Larkin building was the first air-conditioned building, the first to incorporate magnesite as a building material, the first to use all-metal office furniture and metal-bound plate glass doors. His famous Imperial Hotel in Tokio was almost the only building to survive the earthquake because it was designed on the 'nonsensical' principle of yielding to the earth tremors instead of resisting them. And how beautiful the best of his houses are, and how well-learned the lesson of Japanese architecture—the elimination of the superfluous. Apart from his structural and technical innovations, his more important contributions are in domestic design—his feeling for space, for place and for materials; the informal open plan of his prairie houses, the merging of house and garden, the feeling that a building should grow out of its surroundings to meet, in Thoreau's phrase, "the expectation of the land", and the importance he placed on the inherent character and texture of his materials, timber, stone, brick, glass, steel and concrete. It is a pity that he only once had the opportunity to build a school, the Hillside Home School II of 1902, where he applied the free-flowing open plan to school architecture for the first time.

★

WRIGHT was of course, faced with the same paradox as William Morris: he could build only for the rich, and his one working-class housing block, dating from the beginning of the century, is grim, far below the standard of the London County Council's work of that period. Lewis Mumford comments on this aspect of Wright:

"When he approached the problem of urban building, he does so contemptuously, and instead of inventing new forms he lowers his sights to the real-estate operator's level. One of Wright's unbuilt projects (Lexington Terrace, Chicago, 1909) would have created what one can only describe as an urban ghetto of back-to-back apartment houses, and his 1940 plan for the Crystal Heights apartments in Washington would have produced just another collective barracks, indistinguishable in the large from other monstrous urban agglomerations."

In fact Wright was not an urban architect. His buildings have to be seen in isolation. They could never successfully form part of a street. His architectural utopia Broadacre City is not a city at all, but a plan for dispersal, for decentralisation by abandoning the centre. All he has to say about the city is Clear Out.

The idea of Broadacre City which Wright set out in his book *The Disappearing City* in 1929, the year of the Wall Street crash, is a completely dispersed society made possible by electricity and the automobile, permitting everyone

to have an acre of land for subsistence cultivation, while decentralised industries are scattered amongst small farms. Similar ideas are put over more persuasively in Kropotkin's *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, in Gutkind's *The Expanding Environment* and in the works of Ralph Borsodi, than in Wright's rather breathless prose-poems. A kind of caricature of his utopia is of course being built in America to-day—the ranch-style houses scattered in a universal suburbia connected by super-highways to the out-of-town supermarket. The reality is probably less intoxicating than the dream.

Used to the wide open spaces of Wisconsin and Arizona, Wright never really thought about the planning problems of densely populated countries. During his 1950 visit to London he was manoeuvred in front of the big wall map of London at County Hall. He put his hand to his head. "My God", he said, "my God. What a Morass!"

In his social ideas, Wright was a democrat in the sense in which Whitman used that overworked word, and the other main influences on him were writers like Emerson and Thoreau, Henry George and his followers, and Kropotkin, whose lectures in Chicago he attended in 1901. Robert Furneaux Jordan wrote of Wright's allegiances,

"He looks back to Carlyle's *Past and Present* with its emphasis on the efficient communal life rather than on the mysticism or art of a medieval abbey, to Walt Whitman and Ruskin for their adoration of nature, to Shelley or Samuel Butler or Kropotkin for their personal revolt in the cause of freedom, and to Morris and Lethaby for their aesthetic socialism and honest craftsmanship."

If Frank Lloyd Wright failed to present a coherent solution of the planning problems of a decentralised society, he at least grasped the necessity for decentralisation and realised the obsolescence of the big city in its present form. As a person he was the last of the big optimistic American individualists of the nineteenth century; as an architect he was the first of the great innovators of the twentieth.

C.W.

NO COVERING UP

Mr. W. Campbell, Kenya Assistant Commissioner of Prisons, today told a Mombasa coroner inquiring into the deaths of eleven "hard core" Mau Mau detainees at Hola detention camp on March 3 that there was no intention of covering up events there.

Evidence has been given by a Kenya police pathologist that his impression from post-mortem examination was that "a general beating-up" had taken place.

Mr. Campbell said he visited the camp after ten of the men had died. After his report had been discussed at Government House, Nairobi, it was stated that the detainees died after drinking water. This did not mean that they died because of drinking water.

Manchester Guardian, 1/4/59

No indeed. We may however be sure that if it transpires that the men *did* die from drinking water and not from being beaten up, then there will be no covering up of that event.

No doubt in a utopia there would be central heating in all the rooms. In present conditions expense rules this out. When a group set up a community there is not usually much money behind them. This also handicaps them in dealing with the other problems mentioned above. Ideally the first thing to do, on taking over a house for a community, would be to tear down the interior walls, as far as safety would permit, and re-design the entire layout.

It is important to realise, before generalising about human nature and its failings, how much we are creatures of our environment. A bourgeois house creates bourgeois attitudes in those who inhabit it. A house, whose design centred round a common room where most of the important business of the house was carried on, would produce a different feeling about life in general in those who lived in it.

ARTHUR W. ULOTH.

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The Community House

THE following reflections have been prompted by some experiences of communal life.

One does not need to be an architect to realise that the way we live is to a large extent conditioned by the kind of houses we live in. And the kind of houses we live in is a product of the form of our society. A circle of cause and effect.

The average house is built to be inhabited by one family. This family is expected to form a separate unit. If more than one family attempt to share the house, without making any structural alterations beforehand, they find themselves up against a number of problems.

Although the days of servants are over, the modern house is still conditioned by the servant mentality. The kitchen is still a relatively humble room, always at the back of the house, smaller than the front rooms, smaller sometimes than the bedrooms. The reason is that designers still think in terms of inferior beings slaving away in the back regions, amid clouds of steam, while their employers bask at their ease in the rooms in the front. (This pattern is, or was, repeated even in houses specially constructed for the working class, where the kitchens are, or were, extremely dark and poky, although these houses were to be inhabited by people who obviously had no servants).

Of course many houses, perhaps the majority, still inhabited today, were built before the servant era came to an end. But the old pattern still seems to be repeated.

So the kitchen, which often is, as it should be, the centre of the house, is relegated to the back. The house is built as if it had no centre at all. (The hall is a place where you hang your hat. It too is utterly unsuitable to be the centre of anything, and is often as poky and inconvenient as the kitchen, or more so). The various rooms open off landings and passages. Those rooms which are least used are the most honoured. Bedrooms are often extremely large. Sometimes they have two large windows, or more, they let in a lot of light and air, yet these rooms are unoccupied during most of the day.

I do not think it is far-fetched to say that this arrangement reflects the tendency in society to isolate the individual. It is impossible for a community, comprising several families, to live conveniently in such a house. What generally happens is that everyone tends to congregate in the kitchen, which becomes overcrowded.

It seems to me that a free society would do things differently. What is needed is a combination of group life and privacy, neither excluding the other. Our whole concept of house design needs to be revised. To begin with, a house

should not have a "front" and a "back". This smacks of snobbery and false pride. A house is a unit in itself, like a ship, or an aeroplane for that matter. From whatever direction you look at a ship or an aeroplane it is equally beautiful and graceful. It has to be, otherwise it would not function. A house should look equally attractive from whatever direction you approach it. It is supposed to be a shelter and a refuge, not a means of impressing visitors.

The largest room in the house should be the one most in use. It should be a sort of combined kitchen, dining-room and living-room. It should have the most light and air. The other rooms should be smaller. There is no sense in having vast bedrooms, which are barely visited during the day. In many houses the allotting of space is quite mad, and with a more reasonable arrangement one could fit in twice the number of people, without overcrowding.

I am not here contemplating any revolutionary changes of shape, glass domes, oblong boxes and whatnot, though many of these new designs are attractive. However, the main thing is to give people a sense of belonging together, not isolated and in competition with their fellows.

One could write an article on the heating, or lack of heating, of English houses. One reason why the kitchen becomes overcrowded is the fact that it is often the only room which is warm.

CAPITALISM —or Survival of the Richest

ONE may doubt whether the age of long-distance travel in which we live contributes very much to "better understanding" between the peoples of the world (actually we doubt whether there has ever been any misunderstanding) but it is certain, however, that travel is one of the biggest and most lucrative industries in the world today. Although the final profits of the shipping companies and air-lines are small in relation to other comparable business enterprises (indeed most national air lines receive government subsidies, and do not always manage to show a profit at the end of the year), the turnover is huge and it is obvious that the actual operation costs of the services absorb only a part of the revenue. An army of executives, agents, advertising geniuses and other parasites on the industry account for the rest. In London one has only to walk down Regent Street, through Lower Regent Street to Trafalgar Square (exploring the side turnings as well), to be aware of the prosperity of the industry. In Paris, around the Opera and the Madeleine it is the same, as it is of course for every capital city in the world. These luxurious, spacious premises, with the fabulous rents and their comfortable armchairs for the prospective client, their sleek-haired receptionists (one per client and no waiting) and their expensive brochures, all have to be paid for by somebody; and that somebody, of course, is the public.

We cannot refer to concrete figures but a pointer to how large these "overheads" are is surely revealed by the fact that three of the larger Independent Air Companies are seeking permission to operate services from this country to the Colonies "at fares around half the present tourist levels—in several cases even below the minimum sea fare" and still reckon to make a profit out of it!

According to the *Observer's* Transport Correspondent (12/4/59) The independent operators believe that they could make a profit with the new cheap services, if they were allowed to operate them, because they do not have the heavy overheads of the nationalised corporations. They also argue that the present monopoly position of the corporations on the colonial routes makes it easy for them to make abnormally large profits with which to subsidise less profitable routes.

It is unlikely that the Minister of Transport will allow the Independent Companies to operate on these routes for, under present legislation, the applications must be rejected if the new services would cause a "material diversion" of traffic from B.O.A.C. and B.E.A. And there can be no doubt that such would be the effect.

★

IT might seem on the face of it, then, that fares are high because there is a monopoly and that "free competition" among the operators might well encourage low fares. Not being airplane enthusiasts we are not well-informed as to whether the services to the colonies are a monopoly of the nationalised British airlines; one would expect it to be so. And as monopolists, they can, as the Independent claim, charge whatever fare they choose to.

But assume that the Monopolists did allow the three Independent companies to operate on these routes. The immediate result would

be a drop in fares by B.O.A.C., an increase in air travel to the Colonies at the expense of the long-established shipping lines (but we will come back to that sore point later), and encouraged by the demand and this freedom-of-the-air, more Independent airlines would start up services on these routes. Result? Every operator would in a short time realise that to get his share of the "market" he must spend more money on advertising, he must find a niche in Regent Street or in a turning off it; and because they will all think of the same gimmick at the same time, the effect will be to mutually neutralise their efforts. The respective executives then decide to meet for lunch down the road at Scotts and whilst expressing their firm belief in the principle of free enterprise, decide that fares must be increased. They may, if they fear each other sufficiently, agree to a minimum fare. And when they get back to their offices the game is resumed from this new minimum level. More advertising, more prestige offices, larger and faster airplanes, lunches and agreement about higher minimum fares. Perhaps at the second lunch one or two operators are missing, casualties of free enterprise! Eventually, at the third or fourth lunch the two or three executives present will be agreeing that while retaining their respective identities (and organisations) they should share the "market", ticket holders being free to travel on either service . . . And the fares, you can be quite sure, will be back to normal!

★

THE "free competition" line of Capitalism is a myth. Genuine cut-throat competition must invariably lead to monopoly, for what is the point of competition if in the end you do not eliminate your rivals? Under capitalism the idea of "live and let live" only applies when a seller's market operates and the industrial or business protagonists cannot in any case satisfy demand. But in times of recession no holds are barred, and where you cannot squeeze-out your competitors on price, you seek to buy them out. It's a simple question of the survival of the richest!

In recent months we have seen this principle at work in Fleet Street. First the *Mirror-Pictorial* group (the white hope of the Labour Party at the next elections?) beat Odhams (the former white hope of the L.P.!) in a take-over bid for Amalgamated Press as part of the current struggle for the periodical press (A.P. controls 50 publications). Odhams has had to content itself with gobbling up Hultons, a mere lilliput compared with A.P. but nevertheless a serious contender in the field of children's magazines . . . so now there are only two!

Why did Hulton sell out (quite profitably, incidentally, as it appears that he got more than £1 million for his shares which were quoted on the Stock Exchange at only £300,000)? As Francis Williams put in in the *New Statesman* (21/3/59):

The group was in a position to pay its way—so long as it could be assured of a quiet life. What it could not face was the possibility that in a battle between Odhams and AP it might have to defend the markets it at present enjoys.

The struggle between these two giants will be interesting to observe because at this stage the periodicals market is far from being an expanding one. Both contenders have thrown overboard what Francis Williams most aptly describes as "the less profitable cargo". (Apparently in this field "nothing much short of a 2,000,000 circulation is now worth thinking about seriously"). What will happen if and when neither of the giants can maintain the 2 million minimum circulation or when only one of them fails? Does one have to wait until it happens before draw-

ing the conclusions about capitalism and monopoly?

★

TO return to the subject of monopoly of air travel. We were saying that perhaps on the Colonial air services the Nationalised B.O.A.C. has a monopoly. But so far as services to the rest of the world are concerned it has not, for obvious reasons. Yet in spite of (we would add "and because of") competition, prices are high (higher if one bears in mind that most national airlines are subsidised indirectly).

The rôle of governments, the interest shown by them in the economic problems connected with the development of the different means of transport are interesting. Only last week the question of growing competition to British interests on the Atlantic sea routes in the next three years as a result of a new American, Dutch and French generation of government-subsidised liners, coupled with the fact that last year, for the first time more people crossed the Atlantic by air than by boat (1,193,000 as against 958,000) was promised sympathetic consideration by the Government, which means that the British taxpayer will be made to subsidise the building of two ships to replace the

"Queens" when they become "too old to compete" with its government subsidised rivals. We are asked to believe that other governments subsidise their ships for "prestige reasons" and that this as a good reason for this country doing likewise. (France is also developing her H-bombs for "prestige" reasons. Where does one stop doing things for "prestige"?).

The interest shown by governments in keeping-up-with-the-world's Joneses in transport is not as straight-forward as might appear "Invisible exports" may be a consideration. But to be considering subsidising two liners which will cost more than £20 million each to build when the N. Atlantic sea traffic is being forced out of business by air travel is so unbusinesslike as to be suspicious!

It is clear that the continuous (financially uneconomical) development of commercial aviation* is

*There is no end to the development of aircraft as witness the following report in last week's *Manchester Guardian*: A revolutionary "pick-a-back" aircraft, capable of carrying 130 passengers nearly 8,000 miles without stopping, and with "reasonable operating costs," was described as a possibility for the future yesterday, when 95 aircraft and ballistics scientists met at Bristol.

PEOPLE AND IDEAS:

Frank Lloyd Wright

NOTHING about Frank Lloyd Wright, who died last week a few months short of his ninetieth birthday, was on a small scale. In his architectural practice, extending over more than seventy years, he could (and did) claim to have originated almost all the commonplaces and clichés of modern architecture.

Wright was born in Wisconsin, the son of a Unitarian minister. His mother, a woman of great character, saw Froebel's Kindergarten toys displayed at the Centennial Exposition and immediately resolved to go to Boston to learn the Froebel method and get Froebel's "gifts" for her own children. These materials—wood blocks, coloured paper for plaiting and folding—exercised a profound influence on the shapes and surface patterns used in Wright's early work. His own

educational ideas were unorthodox: "To each child, early in life, I gave a musical instrument. To learn to play it was all I asked of their education".

After studying engineering at Madison, Wisconsin, he went to work for the Chicago architect Louis Sullivan, whose dictum "form follows function" Wright modified to the notion that form and function are indivisible. Sullivan influenced him in more than architecture; they would sit through the night with John Edelmans discussing Whitman, Thoreau, Wagner and Lao-Tse. In the eighteen-nineties he began building the kind of houses that made him famous—Long, low, informally-planned structures, clinging to the earth and following the contours. In 1909 when the issue, as he put it, of "freedom versus marital

slavery" had come to a head, he suddenly abandoned his wife, his family and his practice, and left for Europe, and on his return built the first of those colonies under the Welsh name Taliesin, which embodied his idea of how life should be lived—an extended household of family, apprentices and admirers, occupied in music, architecture and agricultural self-sufficiency.

His life at this time was darkened by domestic tragedies, matrimonial and legal tangles, which at one stage landed him in the County jail, reflecting that a similar experience would be salutary for "the good, the obedient and the wary-wise". Of his struggle against the restrictions of social convention, he declared, "I faced the hazards of chance and objective ruin inevitably involved with our society in every inner struggle for freedom. I have since learned that objective struggle for inner freedom is a far deeper and more serious matter never finished with on this earth".

Like other intensely individualistic architects given to philosophising about architecture, his actual work often contradicted the principles he laid down. Wright declared that "Human use and comfort should not be taxed to pay dividends for any designer's idiosyncrasy", but with many of his houses, designed by him down to the last stick of furniture, you get the feeling that his client was merely a guest in the architect's own house. Both in his buildings and his social prophesies there is an element of technocracy—the dictatorship of the designer—which belies his 'organic' vision and the almost mystical belief in a 'natural' architecture which he expressed in these words:

"Conceive now that an entire building might grow up out of conditions as a plant grows up out of soil, and yet be free to be itself, to live its own life according to Man's nature. Dignified as a tree in the midst of nature, but a child of the spirit of Man."

★

THERE is indeed a feeling of overstatement about much of Wright's work, as though, denied the opportunity of working on the big public buildings which were done instead by correct and academic architects, he would throw too much of his exuberant creativeness into the jobs that did come his way. Take the famous Larkin building of 1905, which Henry Russell Hitchcock describes as expressing "the innate monumentality of an industrial building". But it wasn't an industrial building, it was merely an office for a lot of girls sorting soap coupons. The same kind of over-statement frequently recurs—his obsessional repetition of hexagons in every detail of a building simply because he had hit upon a hexagonal plan, or his recent project for a One Mile High building in Chicago. Perhaps these are aspects of Wright's character which were nourished by the hostility of his detractors and the idolatry of his disciples.

Continued on p. 2

Theatre

The Slavery of the Ideal

BRAND, by HENRIK IBSEN. (Lyric Hammersmith).

BRAND is an idealist. He happens to be a priest of God, but as Ibsen remarked in a letter, he could just as well have been a politician or a sculptor. His idealism grows in strength as the play progresses. To begin with his icy preaching separates a happy couple of lovers. He preaches the demands of a hard, unforgiving God, and is not drawn aside from his path even when his mother asks for him to tend her on her death-bed without asking her to surrender all her beloved possessions. Temptations arise which are hard to resist. After having given his life to the work in an unhealthy fjord parish, he is told by a doctor that it means illness and death to his baby child. Although almost persuaded to desert his calling and move southwards, Brand fights off the temptation and the child dies. His wife's health sinks rapidly and her only solace lies in remembering, but Brand is "strong" towards her and forces her to give away the treasures of her memories. To realise his work in the parish he has the old tradition-hallowed church pulled down, and builds a new one twice as big, but with wife now dead, and the threat of acclamation and honour near him, a voice from the past warns him of the spiritual danger of succumbing, and he renounces his new church, and calls the people to follow him into the wilderness, rejecting homes and families for a life-long struggle, the only reward of which is a pure and clean will.

After a short distance, the followers turn against Brand. His enemies, the local officials, incite feeling against him by accusations: "He is not Christian! He refused forgiveness to his own mother! He almost murdered his child, and his wife! He is a terrible character!" At this point, if not before, one

begins to feel that they are perfectly right, and that Brand really is a monstrous character. How surprising it is that this dramatic poem, written in 1865, was not popular in Victorian England, where sacrifice of human pleasure in the name of duty was widely acclaimed as a virtue. This was of course one side of a dilemma over which Ibsen was divided. In other plays he showed concealed admiration for the easy-going attitude to life, and pointed clearly to the destruction which could be wrought by militant idealism. Nevertheless, the dilemma remains with us today. Many people who would themselves never stir from the fireside, are mentally captivated by the figure of the all-sacrificing missionary or political leader, and would be shocked by the idea that enjoyment is worth more than heroic virtue. The dilemma even persists in the anarchist movement, where it is still possible to read obituaries praising comrades for having given their entire lives to the service of the cause, expecting and getting no thanks except the knowledge that they were working for the final liberation of humanity, etc., etc. Perhaps it will never be solved, for as long as there are injustices in society, and people's minds are limited and oppressed, the attempts to overcome them are capable of bringing out as much sickness as attempts to keep them intact.

An Ibsen play gains a great deal if thought about in terms of his entire work. It is a good thing that such a variety of it has been available lately. Although not a conventional evening's entertainment, *Brand* is well worth seeing for a serious consideration of drama. The acting by the 59 Stage Company is variable, and on occasions Brand seems a bit of a bore rather than a man with a sacred calling. However, the whole effect is of quite a high standard. It is certainly not an easy play for a company to tackle.

P.H.

The Horrors of Non-Conformism

DEAR COMRADES,

For about twelve years I imagined I had firmly rejected non-conformism, and rid myself of all the attitudes I had learned at Sunday School and in the bosom of my family. Then suddenly, hearing G's lecture on anarchists and non-conformists, I realised that the writings of Max Stirner, Tony Gibson and the other brilliant rebels whose work I had admired all that time were perhaps the most extreme expression of non-conformism, that I am probably more of a non-conformist now than I was when I collected for the Methodist Missionary Society at the age of ten. It was rather a shock.

But now that I have gathered my wits again, I wonder whether the undoubted truth that anarchists have non-conformist consciences like other non-conformists is very important, compared with the more obvious truth that non-conformists differ in their opinions. G mentioned some instances in which he felt more respect for non-conformists than for conformists, but he can probably think of as many instances in which he feels the other way. I doubt if, for instance, he feels more respect for the conscience-guided non-conformist pastors in the South African government than he feels for Father Trevor Huddleston, who has taken a vow of obedience to the conformist Community of the Resurrection. Huddleston is better respected among anarchists than the non-conformist Boers because, whatever his style of conscience, his opinions are nearer to those of the anarchists.

I once suggested to a street evangelist, after a vigorous platform argument, that we should "respect each other's sincerity". "No," said the bible-puncher, "I appreciate that you are sincere, but I cannot respect your sincerity because you are wrong." Shaken in my non-conformist soul, I started another argument about the meaning of the phrase "you are wrong"; I said it was equal to "I emphatically disagree with you", and this surely did not preclude respect.

Years later a girl of my acquaintance got into difficulties trying to abort herself, and had to be taken off in an ambulance. The only bed available was in an establishment called a Mission Hospital, where all the doctors, nurses and orderlies were militant Christians. They gave her pills which they said would stimulate the movements of her womb, and assured her kindly that if the pills did not work, they would use surgery the following day; next day they revealed that the pills had relaxed her womb, and that they would not condone the termination of a pregnancy in any circumstances. From then on, nurses doctors and visiting ministers took turns sitting by her bed and nagging her to forsake her friends and go to a hostel for unmarried mothers; and when, after five days of this torment, she left the hospital without permission, they reported her to the police.

Then I knew what the bible-puncher had meant. I appreciated that the hospital missionaries acted from motives of conscience, but I could not respect their consciences, because they were wrong. D.R.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Aldermaston Impressions

To J.R.'s panoramic view of the great Easter Parade I would add only two items of interest to anarchists. First, by far the most exhilarating message was inscribed on a placard held by Alex Comfort: FIT ALL M.P.'s WITH ELECTOR SEATS. Secondly, one must record the agony each morning of the "organiser of international contingents" trying vainly to persuade the Germans to assemble voluntarily beneath their own banner: she was lucky if she found two willing to carry the banner. Like the anarchists they preferred to distribute themselves haphazardly throughout the column, an irresponsible attitude frowned upon by the more nationally conscious French and Scandinavians.

Your correspondent is unfair to poor P.F. He walked all the way from Chiswick, which at least puts the Theatre one up on the Unions. F.C. went all the way from Hyde Park Corner, and I wonder what distance R.W. staggered under the weight of his homburg before manoeuvring himself into a suitable position to climb (puffing) onto the bandwagon?

Best Wishes,
London, April 11. S.W.T.

WHICH ROAD FROM ALDERMASTON?

DEAR EDITORS,
I am in complete agreement with your editorial (Which Road from Aldermaston?) in the current issue of FREEDOM—March 28th. The futility of the efforts made by the well-meaning Nuclear Disarmament Campaign protagonists is

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*Indicates regular contributor.

Anarchism & Lib. Communism

DEAR EDITORS,

Replying to the article by S. E. Parker on Anarchism and Libertarian Communism in FREEDOM (April 4th), it can be conceded that anyone renouncing Authority and the use of Force can correctly be described as an Anarchist, but this does not necessarily mean that nebulous thought will be helpful in changing Society. The obvious thing is to get as many people as possible interested in the principles of anarchism, and I do not see how this can be helped by abstract theorising as to the form which libertarianism may or may not take, which can only lead to confusion, and which will, in any event, be settled only by the economic structure of Society. The really important objective—the one on which all anarchists are agreed—is to get rid of government and authority, and this can happen only when all things are held in common.

We are often warned that human nature is selfish, or that it is splendid, but

clear. As you so well emphasise, there are no short cuts to peace—no compromise solutions between rulers and ruled. It is very true that "the day we are in a position to influence governments we shall also have the strength to dispense with governments."

I am particularly gratified by your assertion that the existing economic system creates and perpetuates social injustice, as well as slumps and unemployment, and that the only practical action is that which attempts to remove the causes of war. I believe that the existing economic system is the cause not only of war, but of all social disorders which afflict Society today. I further believe that common ownership, with consequent identity of interest—in contrast to the conflict of interest which is inseparable from private and state ownership of property—is the only solution to these evils.

I care not whether the efforts made to rid the world of private or state capitalism are called Anarchist, Socialist or Communist, neither am I concerned if they are inspired by Godwin, Marx, Bakunin or other eminent thinkers. Probably all have contributed, and all have made grievous mistakes. The only essential thing is that we attain to a condition of liberty, and there can be no possibility of this outside of the complete economic freedom which common ownership alone can bring. When the interests of all are identical, there can be no reason remaining for unsocial acts. This to me is Anarchism. Freedom through Anarchism.

Yours sincerely,
Woldingham, Mar. 28. F.B.

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whatever the truth may be regarding this, it is certain that discord will be present all the time that individual interests conflict, as they must do with private and State ownership. Governments exist only to protect property rights, and to regulate the inevitable clash of interests which arise, none the less so because at times legislation must be introduced to curb the worst excesses which occur. The fact that law is necessary is sufficient proof that order is absent, and the contradictory "Law and Order" phrase should really be "Law or Order". Identity of interest alone can make possible harmony in Society, and this can be realised only through common ownership. When the interests of all are the same, order is the natural outcome, and law will no longer be required.

As liberty can exist only in the absence of law, and as law must remain all the time that Society is divided by private interests, it seems futile to confuse the approach to Anarchism by vague concepts of future organisation. The one basic factor is common ownership, the one essential thing for libertarian thought and action. This I believe that Anarchists should strive for to the exclusion of everything, in order that full advantage may be taken of the change in Society which is surely approaching through scientific research and the development of economic forces. It is reasonable to anticipate that greater progress will be made in wealth production within the next fifty years (provided we are not eliminated in the interval by lethal weapons) than was made in the preceding five hundred. It is likely that within the foreseeable future men and women will at last be released from degrading toil and will be free to minister to Society in their own chosen way—but only if wealth is common to all. Then—and only then—will freedom be possible. Freedom through Anarchism.

Yours sincerely,
Woldingham, April 9. F.B.

Enjoying Anarchism Here & Now

DEAR COMRADES,

There is some discussion amongst anarchists upon how to enjoy the benefits of anarchism here and now: also how to bring new blood into the movement. These two problems are linked together because unless we have something to offer we are not likely to attract new adherents.

Psychologically, of course, we have much to offer individuals which will free them from authoritarian mental fetters and increase their self-respect. Economically and sociologically, however, apart from piecemeal activities and an analysis of society, we provide very little. There are plenty of theories and very little practice.

The idea of communities has been put forward as an attempt to rectify this deficiency. These communal propositions vary from the simple residential type to residential work communities. There are however snags. Firstly there is the danger of isolation from society. Then there is the difficulty of giving up one way of life for something unknown with comparative strangers and risking financial disaster. Also there is the necessity of accumulating a working capital.

Another suggested approach is the individualistic idea of craftsmen's and tradesmen's association whose members supply each other with the necessities of

life. The problem here is to obtain sufficient diversity of occupation in order to make these work. Some anarchists would gladly learn a different trade but this is often economically unfeasible.

It seems to me, therefore, that what we need is some form of association encouraging mutual aid and individual freedom; an association which might avoid the aforementioned snags and might provide an alternative to, perhaps a starting point for, the communities or work groups.

I suggest that the following might possibly provide this alternative. There might be an association of individuals, some perhaps living together, who would undertake to provide each other with such necessities as food, clothing and shelter. One or more individuals would be responsible for supplying the remainder of the group with say rent, clothes, utensils, furniture, etc. This could be done by means of cash, guaranteed credit, stocking the required items or actually manufacturing them.

Such a group would encourage individual freedom and responsibility. There would be a protection against unemployment or sickness. (Other group members might make up the deficiency caused by temporary incapacity). Certain benefits could be derived from bulk purchase, either at reduced rates or by judicious buying.

There would of course be certain safeguards, such as a probationary period for new members. Such a group would be limited in size in order to avoid unwieldy centralisation and, should sufficient people be interested, to provide alternative groups suitable for different personalities.

Having got the group under way some individuals might want to specialise in work such as baking, grocery, tailoring, carpentry, etc. The group would then act as a temporary economic buffer against the outside world. Craftsmen might use other group members to distribute their products.

Letting one's imagination fly, one can see the possibility of groups forming communities, or several groups running a store jointly. There might be specialised craftsmen, such as tool-makers, from different groups associating co-operatively. Perhaps even a free school might be subsidised by a loose federation of groups.

Should the idea catch on, one can dream of the possibility of a holiday, travelling free by anarchist transport and staying at anarchist homes throughout Europe.

However, this is perhaps going too far. If one group only could function it would be worthwhile in my opinion. I would like to hear from anybody who might be interested in this idea.

Yours fraternally,
London, April 6. PETER G. FEEK.
c/o Freedom Bookshop.

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BOOK REVIEW

VILLAGE CHRONICLE

A TRUCE TO OBEDIENCE by Charles Jacobs. Collins, 15s.

THIS new novel by Charles Jacobs (known to our readers as Charles Humana), is really a chronicle of what happened at a certain time and to certain people in a village he calls Pescario.

Pescario is a half-forgotten place situated on the Italian side of a lake linking Italy with Switzerland. It has no police force, no priest, no taxes and even the trolley route from the nearby tourist resort of Fornace avoids making any direct contact with it. Most of its inhabitants belong to the 'despised and disregarded' and live the life of monotonous insecurity that is the lot of the poor everywhere. There are only two things to remind them continually of the seemingly prosperous world outside: the building of a new block of apartments and the television set in the village's largest trattoria.

One day a young woman named Grazia comes to settle there, bringing with her the child born of her free union with an artist turned social idealist. From that day onwards a different spirit begins to make itself felt in the village. Among the first to be affected is Emilio

Lombardi, secretary to the Town Surveyor, who falls in love with Grazia and is inspired by her to lead a passive resistance campaign against a local building firm who are attempting to cheat the prospective tenants of the new apartments. Beneath his cynicism and his weary acceptance of the grind of regular employment, he discovers his authentic self and starts to clarify his hitherto aimless protest at a society of status worship and indifference. But Lombardi is not the only one to become aware of himself. Others of Pescario become conscious of being faceless units of a submissive herd. They experience a liberation from helplessness and learn to depend upon their own direct action. The end of the book finds them building a new, different way of living based on trust and sincerity.

With "A Truce to Obedience" Charles Jacobs has taken a significant step forward in his maturing as a creative writer. His characters are more rounded and have a greater depth than those of his previous works. His style is much improved and has both lucidity and strength. "A Truce to Obedience" is a well-conceived addition to the body of contemporary responsible writing.

S.E.P.

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.

APRIL 19.—To be arranged

APRIL 26.—Bonar Thompson on FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY (Benefit meeting)

NEW YORK

Speakers: David Atkins—"News and Letters" Group. M. Reese—Revolutionary Workers' League. Sam Weiner—Libertarian League.

APR. 24.—William Rose on IS INDUSTRIALISM COMPATIBLE WITH FREEDOM?

MAY 1.—SPECIAL MAY DAY MEETING

MAY 8.—Sam Weiner on THE GROWTH OF THE MILITARY CASTE IN THE U.S.

MAY 15.—Vince Hickey on YOUTH AND SOCIAL CHANGE

MAY 22.—David Atkins of the "News and Letters" Group on ART AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

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