

# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"To argue against any breach of liberty from the ill use that may be made of it, is to argue against liberty itself, since all is capable of being abused."  
—LORD LYTTLETON.

## Racial Tension in Poplarville and Tallahassee

# WE NEED PRINCIPLES

AT about the same time as the lynchings of the Poplarville Negro, Mack Parker (awaiting trial in prison on a charge of raping a white woman) were dumping his mutilated body in the river, four white youths were being arrested in the State of Florida for the alleged rape of a Negro woman student. As in Mississippi, the maximum penalty for rape is the death sentence, but it is believed that no white man in Florida has been sentenced to death for raping a Negro woman. To stress this discrimination in the application of the law, and to demand "justice", the 600 Negro students at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, at Tallahassee did not attend classes last week as the first stage of a demonstration to be kept up "until justice prevails". Students carried placards and banners reading: "Justice is all we want, silence is not our motto. Remember the golden rule and apply the law equally".

While applauding the courage of these young people in demonstrating we are saddened by their demands which seem to us inspired more by a desire for revenge than to see "justice prevail" and racial antagonism abolished.

One cannot help linking the sentiments of this protest with a statement made last week by a 34-year-old Negro "leader" in North Carolina. According to the *News Chronicle's* New York correspondent, this man, Mr. Robert Williams, "a keen churchman" has told his people that in future they must meet violence with violence. He made the statement reluctantly, he said, "more in defeat than in anger . . . because I now see that the U.S. government will not defend us under the rights of the constitution".

Recently, he said, when a white man was acquitted on a charge of raping a Negro woman in Monroe, many Negroes in the town wanted to lynch the man.

"I dissuaded them, but I know now that I was wrong," said Mr. Williams.

"I misled my people. I now believe that if necessary we should be willing to kill and to die to protect ourselves against the injustices of the whites.

"We have prayed. We have tried to appeal to their consciences. But I now believe they have no consciences. The only law left to us is the law of self-preservation."

## MIGHT IS RIGHT

MIDDELBURG (TRANVAAL),  
APRIL 22.

Three thousand Africans yesterday refused to heed a South African Government warning to leave the two farms they have occupied since 1896 in a Middelburg area which has now been declared "all-white."

At a meeting presided over by the Middelburg magistrate, and attended by officials of the Department of Native Affairs and by African leaders, they were offered compensation of £68,233 for the title-deeds of their farms, and accommodation on farms of similar value in a Native Trust area.

A legal representative for the Africans said they were not prepared to accept compensation nor to co-operate with the Government in any way. They did not want to move from the homes they had known all their lives. The magistrate said he was sorry they had made this decision, as the only alternative now left to the Government was to proceed with the expropriation of the farms.—*Reuter*.

In declaring that what he advocated was more "in defeat than in anger" Mr. Williams recognises that this tactic of an eye for an eye is negative, and though he equates it with "the law of self-preservation" the most simple reasoning should tell him that to seek to counteract one wrong by another can only lead to an extension of the racial conflict; certainly not to its elimination.

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FOR the students of Tallahassee, justice simply means the "application of the law equally" for all sections of the community. But for anarchists and those whose minds are not hypnotised either by the majesty or the sacrosanctity of the law, it is the ethical, the humanistic definition of justice which appeals to us, and is, to our minds, more rewarding, for its application can more surely lead to harmony and understanding between human beings than the application of law, however just. Justice, which is fairness, uprightness, honesty; a just man is a principled man who may well find himself in conflict with the law even if applied justly!

The "rule of law" is in the best possible circumstances a guarantee that no individual shall be punished for an action which does not constitute a crime in law; it guarantees that the judiciary shall be independent of the government and that the prisoner shall be tried by his peers, that is, his equals, his fellow citizens.

It should not be forgotten however, that the lynching of Mack Parker is a case of some members of the (white) public "taking the law

into their own hands"! The indignation which many white people will have felt at this action will surely have been tempered by Mr. Williams' revelation that in Monroe many of his fellow negroes wanted to lynch a white man acquitted on a charge of raping a Negro woman. And his statement that though he dissuaded them "I now know that I was wrong" will undo rather than strengthen the positive achievements by anti-racialists in America towards integration through enlightenment and mutual-respect.

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WE are not pacifists, we do not advocate offering the other cheek. Had the prisoners in the black hole of the detention camp of Hola in Kenya, eliminated the murderers of their eleven companions as a warning to others who might think that they had a free hand with the lives of prisoners, we should have publicly applauded and defended their action, whatever the consequences. Just as the Social Revolutionaries in Russia defended their imprisoned comrades in Tsarist days by making it patently clear to the prison authorities, from Governor to wardens, that ill-treatment and cruelty to those under their charge would result in the physical elimination of those responsible for the ill-treatment. But it is quite another matter to seek to right a wrong by wreaking vengeance on an innocent third party on the grounds that his skin was the colour of that of one's persecutors. Whatever the provocation, a people struggling for their emancipation, for recognition as

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## The Municipal Elections

# Voters Don't Care

ANY student of politics would be unwise to base prophesies about a general election upon local election results.

Nevertheless, the Labour Party has no grounds for optimism in the figures of the returns for last week's council elections. Quite the reverse, for surely after eight years of a Conservative Government there should be enough reaction against it throughout the country to be reflected even in the relatively trivial issues that sway (or are thought to sway) local elections?

Far from losing support, in fact the Tories have made many gains, claiming back the losses they sustained in the council elections of three years ago and winning some more as well.

It is not really surprising that Labour is not making headway, for the general vapidity and emptiness of its present position can make little impression on anybody. But there may be more to it than that. A correspondent suggests to us that neither Labour nor Conservative parties really want to win the next election, in view of the inevitability of a major slump occurring within the next electoral period.

This is certainly a feasible theory and might well explain in part the lack of fire in the Labour approach.

As our correspondent says 'Labour is being so inept that one can only suppose it is intentional'.

## Militancy Don't Pay, Either

But that there are other factors is shown by, for example, the result in St. Pancras, London, where Labour lost control of the council. This is the borough where the local Labour Party had really tried to be militant. Under a Mr. Lawrence the council had made a practice of flying the red flag from the town hall every May Day. Last year it provoked a counter-demonstration by a squalid little fascist organisation which led to some street fighting, questions in the House, and a carpeting for Mr. Lawrence and his entire local party branch. This year the flying of the flag passed off without incident—but within a week the voters had tossed out Mr. Lawrence and installed a Conservative council which will surely fly the Union Jack next May Day(!). A more appropriate flag after all, international labour being what it now is.

## Joe Soap At Work?

Now clearly Lawrence's provocative behaviour had made the Tories and uncommitted reactionaries come out to vote in strength. But St. Pancras is a working-class area. Where was the working class vote to back

## Catholics & Votes

THE Government's proposal to supply state aid for the building of new Roman Catholic Schools has apparently shocked the Free Churches into opposing the scheme which will "advance the spread of Roman Catholic doctrine" to the tune of £10,000,000 or more.

It is true that better educational facilities will act in favour of Catholic teaching but, is it not rather un-Christian to attempt to deprive "innocent" children of more and better schools because of a doctrinal conflict between two sets of Christians each claiming the monopoly of truth?

It is not even valid to argue that since Protestants in many Catholic countries are imprisoned and discriminated against, the converse should happen here, where, we are told, freedom to hold differing views is encouraged.

One has to acknowledge the difference in practice between treatment of many Protestants in Catholic countries and the mere protest by the Free Churches against the British Government's suggested scheme to support new Catholic schools out of state funds, but the principle of intolerance is not very much different in each case.

We would suggest that logically all minority groups who may wish to start their own schools are entitled to state aid since all people are subject to taxation in one form or another and are expected to play their parts as "full citizens" in peace and war.

Our criticism of the Roman Catholic Church with slight variations applies to all authoritarian institutions, including the Free Churches. It is our contention, however, that the influence of the Catholic Church or any other authoritarian organisation cannot be satisfactorily undermined by using its own methods.

If the Free Churches are so alarmed by the spread of Catholicism it is open to them to show by example that they are prepared to act in accordance with "the spirit of Christ".

up Lawrence's apparent militant, socialist, Labour party?

It stayed at home. Now perhaps this is a continued result of the 'Joe Soap' campaign waged by the anarchists in this area at the last general election. We would like to think that the workers of St. Pancras have adopted a positive anti-parliamentary attitude and have seen through the electoral racket.

Alas, there is no real evidence for that. The only evidence there is shows that the people of St. Pancras are not impressed by Mr. Lawrence's posturings and that the people through the country in general are not impressed by the Labour Party at all and prefer to play safe with the Tories.

The almost surprising thing is that this is happening in the very areas that are suffering most from Tory policies. The Tories have actually made gains in Lancashire, where the cotton industry is up against it and things are stark, and in Ayrshire, where the unemployment percentage stands at 6.5—well above the national average.

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We are sure that the Government would not agree with us on the rights of all minority groups. If Anarchist parents and teachers decided to set up schools "for the spreading of anarchy", not only would we be refused state aid but, snoopers would not take long to prove that we were also spreading immoral ideas because boys and girls might, for example, use the same lavatories! We are not a potential voting group and therefore, do not have to be wooed.

The majority of Catholics, obedient to the end, make up a sizeable voting group which, it is generally accepted, has largely been Labour supporting. The Tories are cunning enough to know that in addition to pleasing many Catholics they will also embarrass a number of Labour M.P.'s of which "the spearhead of Non-conformist opinion in the Commons is the block of Socialist Welsh M.P.'s". The Free Churches have already approached Non-conformist M.P.'s of all parties to oppose the scheme.

Politically, the Government scheme cannot fail to "pay off" even if it never comes to full flower. Failure can always be blamed on the opposition but, meanwhile, the Tories will have won over a number of the Catholic hierarchy who only have to issue directives (in some countries on penalty of excommunication) as to which party it is best for the flock to vote.

Many Catholics, especially the Irish who have settled in this country but who feel the "Irish question" strongly will not forget British rule in Ireland which, even in these days of "bigger" international issues, is still an emotional cause for many Irishmen. They are unlikely to support the Tories, but Labour will have to come forward with fresh bait of which there seems to be plenty at the headquarters of both parties.

## VATICAN

# INSTRUCTS VOTERS

The Holy Office of the Vatican ruled to-day that Catholic voters cannot vote for self-styled Christian politicians who co-operate in practice with the Communists. Roman Catholics see the ruling as a warning to Sicilian voters, who go to the polls in June to elect a regional council.

The Sicilian elections are a battle between the Christian Democrats and a "Christian Social" group who broke away from them last year and formed a regional government with the Communists and the extreme Right. The ruling, which has been approved by Pope John, did not mention Sicily by name. It came in the form of an answer to an unnamed questioner and said:

"In the choice of people's representatives, it is illicit for Catholics to vote for parties or candidates who in actual fact join the Communists and favour them with their action, although they do not profess principles in contrast with Catholic doctrine, or even describe themselves as Christians."

A statement by the Holy Office said the cardinal's decision was taken on the basis of a Holy Office decree of July 1, 1949, which said:

"Communism is materialist and anti-Christian. The leaders of communism sometimes declare that they do not fight religion, but in fact, in theory and by action, they show themselves to be hostile to the true religion and to the Church of Christ."—*British United Press and Reuter*.

## PEOPLE AND IDEAS:

## WOODCOCK IN PERU

USING the means of transport available to the Peruvians themselves, George and Inge Woodcock travelled four thousand miles through the three great geographical regions of Peru, the coastal desert, the Sierra (or the Andes), and the Montaña (the Jungle) and, following his admirable book on Mexico, George has given an account of their journeys through this remoter part of Latin America,\* where they even reached that dwindling people the Uru, who live a precarious but almost totally independent life on their 'floating islands' on Lake Titicaca. Apart from the fish and wildfowl which are their sole means of exchange, the Uru satisfy their needs from the totora reeds, from which they derive their boats, houses, ropes, nets, their meagre furniture, fuel, food (from the pith and roots) and even their tiny farms of rafts onto which a thin layer of soil is spread to grow potatoes. This was very far from the cosmopolitan capital Lima, a place apart from the rest of Peru: an urban metropolis in a country two thirds of whose people live on the land, an ancient university city in a country where 40 per cent. of the people are totally illiterate.

They arrived there shortly after President Manuel Odría, having ruled as a military dictator for eight years had held elections in which his nominee had been defeated. By the time they reached Puno, the commercial centre of the Titicaca basin, for the Independence Day celebrations, Odría had discreetly caught a plane for the United States, and the politicians in their dark suits and sunglasses were giving virtuoso displays of oratory, while the Indians, who form nine-tenths of the population in that region, expressed themselves by their absence.

"To the Indian, from the days of Pizarro, government has represented the interests of conquering aliens, and because of this he sees no reason to cooperate with it; indeed, his chief desire is to avoid as best he can the obligations it seeks to impose on him—conscription and taxes, road work and the census."

Throughout this discursive record of the landscape they travelled through, the

tortuous journeys through Andean passes, the elegant colonial architecture, the desolate mining areas and raw industrial settlements, there are two silent witnesses: the long-dead Incas and the long-suffering Indians.

At Tinga Maria on the jungle frontier, they were reminded of Peru's most urgent problems. Peru is as big as France, Spain and Italy together, and has a population roughly as big as that of Portugal, but it does not grow enough food to sustain its own people adequately.

"Less than 3 per cent. of its area is cultivated, and much of this is devoted to export crops like sugar or cotton, or to cocoa, which serves only as a consolation for hunger. Shortage of water on the coast and climatic difficulties in the Sierra make it unlikely that in these regions there will be any great increase in arable land; the montaña, on the other hand, covers more than half the area of Peru, its land is fertile, its climate is good for such vital Peruvian crops as sugar, maize and rice, and there is no lack of water. Future agricultural development clearly lies in the jungle valley, and successive governments have tried to populate them by building roads and offering free gifts of land."

But there is not yet the popular demand for land which gave rise to the great westward movement in North America. The white Peruvians are not interested in becoming working farmers and even the land-hungry Indians of the Sierra fear the jungle climate and are "so distrustful of the unfamiliar that most of them would prefer poverty in the shelter of their own communities to risking an independent existence in a new environment."

In the Sierra itself the empty market at Puno, brought home to them the chronic insecurity of life and the unfavourable comparison with the civilisation of the Incas, traces of whose empire occurred wherever they went in Peru. The summer rains had failed to fall in the Sierra: the potato crop was one-fifth its normal size and half the pastures were destroyed. Three-quarters of the Indians of the region were desperately short of

food, and would have starved but for the grain sent as relief from the United States.

"Disasters of this kind have recurred periodically in the Andes throughout the last 400 years, and they emphasise, more than anything else, how much was lost to the Indians of the Sierra when the complicated economic system of the Incas was destroyed. . . . What one can condemn is an outlook so much concerned with private profit and so little with public welfare that the caprices of climate are never anticipated and always result in mass distress of a kind which the history of the Incas shows can be averted by intelligent planning."

The nearest comparison in European history with the benevolent despotism of the Incas, would be not modern totalitarianism, but feudalism. It had a carefully defined system of reciprocal obligations between the protector and the protected. For example, if a man stole from hunger, punishment was accorded not to him, but to the official whose negligence had been responsible for the thief's need. Their economy was based on the notion that everyone had a right to subsistence. The lands of each commune were divided in such a way that each family could feed itself in normal times; the remaining lands being divided between the Inca and the Sun God.

"The crops from these latter lands, kept in great storehouses, were used partly to support the Inca's court and to feed his armies, and partly to maintain the official religious cults, but whatever was not needed for these purposes would be kept as a kind of insurance. The Incas recognised that the Sierra was poor land, and their system was based on the rational organisation of its poverty."

"Nowadays the Sierra is intrinsically no poorer than it was in the early 16th century, and it supports a population no larger—and possibly smaller—than that over which the Incas ruled. But its poverty is no longer organised, and the result is a condition of chronic want which every few decades assumes the acute form of famine. Partly this is because in many places the terraces built before the Conquest have fallen into disuse, so that the area of cultivated land has shrunk considerably, and partly it is because whatever extra the land gives in good years is no longer put aside for bad times, but is devoted to the profit of the landowners. Over the four centuries of white rule, there has been no provision for disaster like that instituted by the Incas, and the Indians are never free from the threat of starvation; modern independent Peru is in this respect no better than the Peru of the Viceroy, and it is hardly surprising that now the Indians are suspicious even of the gifts of white men."

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AMONG the Peruvians whom they met on their journeys, those from the educated minority told them of the gloomy commonplaces of dictatorship—the secret police, the terror against critics, the midnight arrests, the banishments and the penal islands. But they found less enthusiasm than they had expected over the fall of the dictator. One of their travelling companions, D. pointed out the terrible inequalities of Peruvian life, not only the obvious ones between landowners and labourers and between mine-owners and miners, but within the classes themselves. "Labourers in Lima got ten times as much as they did in the Sierra. Some Indians were rich, owned land and fleets of lorries, and ground their fellow Indians even more closely than the whites had done. The desire to exploit people less fortunate than oneself had become a Peruvian habit, D. insisted, and the change urgently needed was not the departure of a man like Odría and his replacement by a man like Prado, but a new approach to social relations in general."

## PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT!

## WEEK 19

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Contributions received £423  
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GIFT OF BOOKS: London: J.G.

\*Indicates regular contributor.

## Book Review

The Anarchist  
'Red Cross'

THE political prisoner and the exile have existed since government began. Wherever man has sought to rule over his fellows, there have been the persecuted and the persecutors. And too often, with a kind of macabre irony, the persecutors have arisen from the ranks of the persecuted. Our time is no exception to this sad state of affairs as the history of Soviet Russia and its satellites demonstrates.

By virtue of their beliefs, anarchists have been, and still are, among those who have had to bear the brunt of the organized vengeance of power groups. And for them there does not exist the dubious consolation that one day they may be in a position to retaliate in the same way against their judges and gaolers. In Russia, Spain, Italy, France, Bulgaria, the U.S.A., and other places, anarchists have suffered the weight of official 'justice'. Today, as in the past, to declare oneself an anarchist is, in some countries, tantamount to risking one's life every day.

This book\* is an attempt to describe what has been done to aid those comrades who have been victimized because of their opinions. Its author is the Secretary of the Berkman Aid Fund of Chicago and has been engaged in relief work for nearly fifty years. Under the generic title of the 'Anarchist Red Cross' he gives brief accounts of such mutual aid bodies as the Society to Aid Anarchist Prisoners in Russia, the Political Prisoners' Defence and Relief Committee (formed to assist the victims of the notorious Palmer Raids in the U.S.A.) and the International Anti-Fascist Solidarity (which still functions).

Yelensky is neither a historian nor a journalist, but he has succeeded in writing an informative book about an unpublicised aspect of the anarchist movement which will serve until a more detailed work can be compiled.

S.E.P.

\*IN THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY, by B. Yelensky. The Alexander Berkman Aid Fund. Chicago. 17/6.

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"You have heard all about Odría," he said, "But do you know who the new President Prado is? I will tell you. He is a conservative, and he is one of the great landowners and financiers of Peru."

He was president once before, and he did nothing to attack our real problems. But there is no Peruvian government that has yet dared to curb the power of the hacendados and the foreign mine-owners, because the army is always behind the capitalists. Ten years ago we had a president named Bustamante who tried very timidly to reduce the privileges of the foreign corporations. The army swept him away and put Odría in his place. The same thing would happen again. The generals and the landowners and the capitalists—they all hang together in Peru. And that is why it does not help a great deal if Odría goes and the old attitude remains. For a few years we shall have a little freedom, and that is good, but the inequality will continue, discontent will grow up again, and another general will make it an excuse to take power."

For years, the only dynamic left-wing group had been Haya de la Torre's APRA or Aprista movement, outlawed by Odría and legalised after his departure, but this too, according to George Woodcock's liberal informants had declined into a cynical opportunism. R., an engineer, explained that

"Today Peru is in the hands of a transitional generation. Many of them have ideals and good intentions, but they are used to doing whatever they can according to the whims of dictators. They have piecemeal minds, with no sense of co-ordination. I will give you an example. You remember the new hospital in Tarma? While you were away last week a whole company of generals and politicians came from Lima to inaugurate it. Now the hospital is open, but it is not ready to receive a single patient. It has no equipment, no beds, no staff, no money. It is a product of men who have not grasped the need for progress to advance on all fronts at once. But that is what we young Peruvians realise. We are not political men. We don't belong to parties or engage in conspiracies, but we have revolutionary ideals just the same. We intend to change society sensibly and peacefully so as to bring good to all the people, and to do that we must co-ordinate and plan."

Woodcock praises his "disinterested realism" but notes that his was an almost technocratic attitude—envisaging an élite of engineers and planners who would create a new Peru very similar to the welfare state of the Incas. He noticed that many white Peruvians are inclined to see in the abstentionism of the Indians from the country's political life, a sign of their unworthiness for a 'democratic' society, and he points out that in fact,

C.W.

## The Story of the Spade

THOSE who go along to the Stockholm auction rooms to look at the odds and ends, will find that for the last few days there's been a spade for sale. It's a good spade, sound and unused. It cost 11s. 4d. I bought it myself at John Wall's some time ago. But it's by no means an ordinary spade. It has a story of its own, different from any other.

There were several of us young people who wanted something. (That isn't usual among young people, it's said.) We met and had discussions. We wanted to do something. There was one thing that we agreed on: that society wasn't much good the way it was. Life was built up on conflicts; weapons were manufactured and used to solve the conflicts. The result was war and even greater divisions and disharmony in the world.

But the world we wanted to live in was quite a different one. We didn't want to use violence against our fellow men. The boys were of military service age, or just over it. Why should people learn to use weapons when they hadn't any enemies? And if they should get any, then why use violence against them. No, we couldn't understand that, and we weren't going to accept it either. Rather be the first to go a peaceful way—unarmed—somebody had to begin, to lay the foundations—those kind of thoughts went on in our minds.

We saw that militarism was dangerous. By means of it all men were taught to be fighters—murderers as we used to say. Militarism is big and strong, has power. It won't let itself be abolished by a few peace-loving youngsters.

And so an idea was born! We had to make a demonstration. Show what we wanted and what we

within their own communities, both the Aymara and the Quechua carry on a great deal of practical democracy in their method of regulating the division of community lands.

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WHEN they were at the beginning of their journey in the Sierra, they learned at the fair at Huancayo that many of the mountain Indians

"were members of villages organised on the ayllu system which was already old when the Inca dynasty began. Under this system the land belongs to the commune (or ayllu), and it is re-divided regularly so that each adult in the village gets his fair portion, while many tasks like house-building for newly-married couples are shared by the group. The ayllus are mostly self-supporting; they grow food primarily for their own consumption, with the potato as the basis for their farming, and they weave the cloth from wool produced by their own sheep. In the markets they sell only the scanty surplus of subsistence farming, and buy such useful or colourful objects as they themselves cannot make. There are nearly five thousand such communities in Peru alone, and many in Bolivia."

The Indians of the Sierra were not silent. They danced at the fair with their burdens still on their backs. As the Woodcocks turned the corner into the main square at Huancayo, they found one pavement entirely occupied by the makers of musical instruments, the one Indian craft that still flourishes without diminution, for it is in their music more than anything else, that the vitality of the Indians still expresses itself:

"In one group sat the men and women from the hill villages which specialise in drum-making; softly and in curious little rhythms they beat their instruments of llama skin, listening intently and carefully adjusting the strings whose tightness determined the pitch. Beyond them sat the makers of the queenas, the short cane flutes whose shrill notes add the eerie background quality to the Sierra dances. And finally, flourishing their great instruments over the heads of the other musicians, there were the men who had brought from the jungle villages along the Ucayali the larger bassoon-like queenas, at least ten feet long, which need strength to hold and skill to play; we saw many men lay them down with disgust after producing no sound worth the name of music, but in the hands of experts they gave a deep sound like that of a long Tibetan trumpet, so rich and at the same time so dolorous that it seemed to express more effectively than any other music the feeling of melancholy which accompanied one's delight at all the colourful gaiety of the sunlit Andean world."

C.W.

AINA LARSSON.  
(Translated for FREEDOM by P.H.  
from the anarchist journal BRAND  
Stockholm, April 1959).

## We need Principles

Continued from p. 1

equals, cannot, must not, stoop to the level of those who deny them that equality. If their reactions to the case of a coloured girl raped by a white man are different from the reactions they would have if the aggressor were a coloured man, then they are no more enlightened than the whites who see red when a coloured man rapes a white girl. They are, Negroes and whites alike, racists. It is true that the Negro is made more colour conscious by his treatment at the hands of the white ruling class but on the other hand the very fact of his treatment as an inferior, because of the colour of his skin, should make him more aware than anybody of the false bases, biological and social, of racial discrimination.

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LEGALLY the American Negro now has equality with his white counterparts. But as we were trying to point out last week in these columns, human rights are not just a matter of legislation. There can be more solidarity and communal feeling in a concentration camp whose occupants are denied so-called civil rights, than in a society neatly legislated for from the womb to the tomb. Whilst we are not surprised when Mr. Williams declares that he has had no response to his prayers from the Almighty, we are surprised that he should be so naive as to believe that the U.S. government would actively defend his people "under the rights of the constitution" or that the implementation of these rights by the use of force would in fact radically change the social status of the American Negro.

We are the last to underestimate the magnitude of the problem, but we are firmly convinced that "progressive" legislation is not a case of government leading opinion but more often the result of legalising a *fait accompli* or at least of forestalling what might be a *fait accompli* thus permitting the government to take full credit for itself. (A glaring example of this was the granting of independence to India by the Labour government. In a recent interview, Earl Attlee when asked by what action he would be remembered by history, said that he thought it would be the granting of Indian independence!)

In America the attitude to integration varies from State to State and explains why the law regarding integration in the schools confirmed by the Supreme Court, has been applied or openly defied. What is significant is that nowhere has the government led: integration has proceeded smoothly where segregation was not a burning issue, but the government has been openly defied where it was (as at Little Rock), with the Federal Court finding legal arguments to postpone the implementation of the law!

Integration, equality between members of a community, is not a question of law but of fellow-feeling. Mr. Williams has come to the conclusion that the whites "have no consciences". Whatever may be his conclusions the fact remains that unless he can stir or create social consciences in these people the Negro will be where he now is in a hundred years hence.

Basically the hostility is not over the pigmentation of the other man's skin. Consider, for instance the following news item from last Saturday's *News Chronicle*:

Unemployed Rhodesian, South African and British workers plan a hunger march

through Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, tomorrow to the office of the Federal Premier, Sir Roy Welensky.

They claim their families are on the brink of starvation and living off fish and chips.

They are angry over the number of jobs in the Central African Federation held by Italians and Portuguese who, they say, are keeping them idle by working at cut rates.

The hunger marchers will carry placards saying: "Out with Wops" and "Rhodesia for the Rhodesians."

According to the organisers of the march, 3,000 Italians and Portuguese are working in the Federation while between 700 and 1,000 artisans of British stock are without jobs.

There is no question about the "wops" being white-skinned; and they were "civilised" at a time when the inhabitants of Britain were still wearing bear-skins! One might even expect that as a minority in a country of black-skinned these self-styled "Rhodesians" would make common cause with other whites against the back majority. But the feeling of insecurity is so strong that "wops" and "wogs" are all the same for them: rivals in the labour market (and, who knows, perhaps in the sex market as well).

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WE are being continually told that principles are a luxury in a world of realities. Let's first solve this and that practical problem (by putting the right men in power) and then we can start thinking about principles. But the curious thing is that if one pauses to think about the problems and their causes one finds that they are insoluble unless one brings principles or principled behaviour to bear on them. Even those people who assure us that only by changing the government will things improve are in fact saying that government will represent the people's wishes when it is composed of people with principles

The white 'Rhodesians' who are protesting against the "wops" are accepting the situation that there are not enough jobs for everybody, but believe that it's the "wops" who should be unemployed and starving on "fish and chips" and not them. That is surely not a solution to the problem of unemployment! If on the other hand they firmly believed that all men are entitled to the necessities of life they would not fight the "wops" or the Africans but those in power who operate a system which benefits a minority of society at the expense of the toiling majority.

The Negroes in America who demand "justice" are asking that whites as well as Negroes guilty of rape should be sentenced to death. If they succeed what will they have achieved? A sordid justice, a curious equality. For it is certain that the white "ultras" would be prepared to concede *even* that rather than recognise free sexual relations between Negro men and white women. A principled approach, to our minds, would not be a demand for the application of the law equally, but a campaign against the death penalty for rape on the grounds that legalised murder is as debasing and as nauseating as any "crime" for which it is used as a punishment.

As for lynching, Mr. Williams, "keen churchman" though he is, feels he was wrong to dissuade fellow Negroes from resorting to such measures in the circumstances. Supposing Negroes do imitate the white fanatics. Far from preventing white lynching parties they will encourage them besides destroying the moral force of any protest against such outrages. (One has a recent example in Algeria where the "rebel" F.L.N. murdered three French civilians including a woman and child. The French Press headlined the outrage and worked up public indignation. The Algerian Nationalists' more recent charge that the French Army had trapped 112 Moslem civilians in a cave and suffocated them with smoke grenades, has been virtually ignored.)

## CASTRO'S PROGRESS—CONTINUED

I WAS thinking last week that much of Castro's horse-ing around while he was visiting here could be explained by supposing that a Public Relations Man was watching his dream come true. Once in a while it comes to light that a government employs para-diplomatic personnel to represent it in a foreign country. For instance two years ago the investigation which followed (none too intensively it seemed) the abduction from the streets of New York and disappearance of Professor Galindez, a prominent opponent of the dictator of the Dominican Republic, was followed by the dictator's Public Relations firm in New York conducting their own investigation. A mock-investigation of selected witnesses, the ignoring of distortion of unfavourable elements in the case, buying the good name of a famous "liberal lawyer", the usual manipulation of documents, the release from time to time of bulletins stating the progress made in the investigation, the press conferences when the fore-concluded results came out in White (Blue) Paper format—technically the operation was a masterly parody of the investigation by one civilized government of another's barbarous crime. It showed that where business is concerned all clients will find their visiting cards equally accepted.

I do not know who is representing Fidel Castro and I have not telephoned the Cuban Embassy to find out. However it was reported that the moment it was safe to fly to Havana four P.R. firms were out there bidding for Castro's account, and the tang of Castro's recent visit to New York savoured so strongly of Public Relations that I find it difficult to imagine that one of the firms was not engaged. Castro had an important job to carry out. To the public he had to show that being a revolutionary is really just a joke. Americans need not be frightened. Just a kid, kidding around, the papers gave you the feeling. Look at his beard, just a beatnik, Cuban style, he's OK. One day he goes to a hospital and a little girl is photographed stroking the beatnik's beard. Cute huh? The director of the Bronx zoo is conferring over matters zoological when the prof's conference is broken up by Fidel's arrival. He vaults over the barrier and thrusts his hand between the bars to pat the tiger's head, commenting about tigers, "They don't bite." And the cops—New York's Finest as they're called. Well the cops had a real run-around trying to keep up with Fidel, who just wouldn't do what he was told but kept on leaving his place to shake hands with people in the crowd. Then the big gimmick:

## Unity and Personality

THE desire for unity seems to be deeply rooted in human nature. It is often expressed in ideas of integration or in universal principles.

Thus the artist explores form whilst the Christian worships an ever-loving but omnipresent and omnipotent God. The materialist believes in all-pervading matter and the humanist advocates humanity or reason. The conservative may believe in tradition or nation whilst socialism concerns social wealth and ethics. The philosopher, however, may place his faith in nature, mind, logic or system.

But one factor unifying all our experience is the mental process itself. This philosophical aspect of mental activity was of course explored by such philosophers as Berkeley, Kant and Hume, the last-named being sceptical of any mental conclusion. Whether or not the process always, never or only sometimes correctly present reality, it is seldom denied that our verified experiences are mental. Conscious thought however is only part of our personality. In consciously

To achieve that dignity and equality which Negroes rightly demand, they must refuse to have recourse to the actions which they condemn in their persecutors. Justice, in its narrowest sense is only a matter of law; in its broader sense it is "the body of principles by which actions are determined as right or wrong". A persecuted, a wronged, people should know by experience what is wrong. Their actions should be guided only by what is right if their aim is to right those wrongs.

## New York Letter

They're out to kill him. PLOT TO KILL CASTRO, the papers lapped it up, and on what evidence? An anonymous note, a watchman who saw two men running out of the building where Castro was expected the next day; gunmen were supposed to be closing in on New York to assassinate him, obliging enough to send out bulletins of their progress. In the face of this supposed danger we were shown the hero beatnik, refusing to go along with the jittery police, laughing at fate. "I shall not live one day after I did." He must have been laughing all right.

Then the publicity men had a break. At Castro's big meeting in Central Park a home-made bomb was found by the jittery Finest. I was there for a few minutes and saw Fidel, flanked by his ministers, speak from the platform to the crowd who appeared, in the section where I found myself at any rate, to be almost entirely Spanish-speaking. He spoke in Spanish to the dispossessed Puerto Ricans and Cubans of the New York slums, and what he said I could not with accuracy report because my Spanish was insufficient to catch much of his rapid speech; I can report only that the crowd was unusually still and attentive in listening to him. The bomb was found to belong to a man, since removed to the psychiatric wards of Bellevue, who had made a bomb and had taken it to the Hudson River to watch it explode. Then he thought it would be more fun to take it along to Castro's meeting in Central Park. It was no coincidence that a man with a bomb should turn up. Probably there were several more in the crowd. It is well known that if you create a role but omit to choose an actor to fill it, from among the unstable and psychotic of a city population there will voluntarily come forward many to involuntarily fill the role you have chosen for them. Only the most superficial newspaper readers could have believed the piece about the gunmen travelling up by car to assassinate, but it was good technique even though risky to the life of their employer when the P.R. men (if my thesis is correct) decided to dramatize the lovable tom-boy courage of the host by inviting assassins to the party.

This part of Castro's visit went off well. Before he came his image was ambiguous; now, for the time being at any rate, his image is good. The success of the other, and more important, reason for his visit remains unseen and will not be known before the effects of American government policies in Cuba are apparent. Cuba to the business man means the sugar cube, and more important than

the public's acceptance of the figure of Castro is private enterprise's acceptance of his sugar trade. Nothing could be more ludicrous than to compare Castro's early pronouncements just after his victory in Cuba over the despotism of Batista with the statements he has been making recently in the light of political reality. For the American business community, Castro must soon have realized, it was conducive to better business with Batista in power than with himself. Batista could guarantee a fair return for investment. How much could Castro guarantee? This is one of the determinants of foreign policy. So while Castro was entertaining the public on the streets his ministers were conferring in private with their trading counterparts.

Whatever Castro once was, and to be generous let us assume that he was at one time thinking about the phase following the defeat of Batista's gluttonous sadists and what changes in the direction of liberty could be made, it is plain that he is now politically orientated. Once he may have (even if vaguely) meant what he said by permitting the break-up of large estates into smaller areas for the peasantry to cultivate. Now he just talks about one day resuming the redistribution of land that shortly after the revolution he had himself blessed, as a priest will bless the harvest. Now he talks about "building the purest form of democracy", an authoritarian mode of thought which implies that happiness can be worked out on paper. Once there was talk of aiding revolutions in neighbouring Caribbean countries; now, politically illumined, he has to restrain the invaders of Panama. We are told that citizens of Cuba who are found to be assisting the rebels in Panama will be brought before Cuba's military courts.

Unhappily one foresees the emergence of yet another military dictator, authoritarian and puritan, believing that his people owe him grateful allegiance, on the look-out for traitors working against his plans (shortly to come into fruition) for the blessed happiness of the people, enemies working against that purest form of democracy he has cooked up and has planned to serve in the shape of laws and edicts, ever ready to detect deviation from the path that he has himself declared to be the best and most perfect, and righteously ready to employ police, secret and otherwise, suppress the deviationists, traitors to the ideal, enemies of the people of Cuba. It is very disturbing to note that Castro is so ready to turn himself into a clown to suit the emotional needs of the North Americans; one feels sure he is anything but a clown when he is home from the circus. It is disturbing to note the cleft that is still developing between the two Castro brothers, with Raoul reported to be supporting the men in Panama. I foresee as the first move of the new dictator the arrest and imprisonment of his brother for treason, followed by a plan for an enlightened constitution. It may be that the purest democracies begin with elections eighteen months hence. J.B.

## Information Wanted DUMFRIES GUILD OF PLAYERS

A SMALL news item told us last week that:

The Theatre Royal in Dumfries, first opened in 1792, has been bought by the Dumfries Guild of Players for £1,700. The building has been closed for more than four years. Restoration work will start almost at once, and the first production is expected to take place in December.

It would appear from this that a group of actors and actresses are in fact taking the kind of action which FREEDOM was looking for as an alternative to the "shilling-in-the-slot" schemes of Equity, the actors' trade union. (See FREEDOM 11/4/59).

We are interested in this venture and would like to have more information about it. Will any reader in the Dumfries area oblige?

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The article by Norman Thomas di Giovanni on Sacco and Vanzetti published in FREEDOM, May 22, was originally published in the April 18 issue of the American journal *The Nation*. We regret that through an oversight, we omitted to acknowledge the original source.

P.G.F.

## Constructive Achievements of the Spanish Revolution—2

## WORKERS TAKE OVER

(Continued from previous issue)

THE most profound and lasting impression which the Spanish people have had of the Revolution of 1936 is the collectivisation of the land and industry which took place in the first months which followed the fascist rising.

The experiences of street fighting, church burning, militia life, bombing and food shortage will all have left their traces, but the taking over of the factories the work in common, free from the interference of the bosses, and from degrading exploitation, must have left a far more lasting impression. Too much importance cannot be attached to this aspect of the revolution both because workers in other countries can benefit from the experiences of the Spanish workers and because when the Spanish workers rise again they are likely to adopt the same form of economic organisation.

The word collectivisation being often used nowadays in connection with the economic system of Russia, it is necessary to indicate that the collectivisation of the land and industry in revolutionary Spain was of a completely different nature from that carried out by Stalin. Factories, fields, vineyards and olive groves were not collectivised by order of the Government. Workers and peasants were not faced with the prospect of joining a collective, going to prison or being shot. The collectivisation movement was a spontaneous one and for the first few months of the revolution it developed with very little interference from the State which merely contented itself with ratifying the action taken by the workers.

Augustin Souchy describes in his book *Collectivization* how the workers of Catalonia and other parts of Spain took control of the industries. When the fascist rising took place a great number of industrialists took refuge abroad or went into hiding. The workers had declared a general strike as a means to counteract the fascist offensive and it lasted for the eight days which followed the 19th July, 1936. Those days were occupied with street fighting, the clearing out of fascist elements hidden in the towns and villages and the sending of militia columns to the front lines. The revolutionary forces were victorious in about half of Spain and the workers' organisations decided to end the general strike. The workers went back to the shops, factories, garages which had been deserted by their owners who had either gone away or perished in the struggle,

## Voters Don't Care

(Continued from p. 1)

In industrial working class areas, therefore, where Labour expected to show improvements, they have made losses.

It seems therefore that the old political adage—that in time of slump the electorate turn right—is running true to form. When things look uncertain, voters turn away from anything which professes change and stick to what appears to be a safe bet.

## Swinging and Floating

However feeble the Labour Party appears to us, there are some who think it stands for radical change and some of these solid citizens might conceivably have a flutter on a bit of social progress when things are obviously going to run in a prosperous fashion for a time (as after the war) but who put their money on what appears to be a no-nonsense cert with a policy of conservatism when the going looks rough. (Even though this party represents the ones who make the going so rough!)

These are the people who swing elections. The floating voters who choose our local and national government according to all sorts of trivial impressions and misconceptions. It's true that among them there may be a few who make a sincere attempt to choose the party who should get their vote according to record, or principle, or some fairly worthy or intelligent criterion. The great majority, however, are more likely to be affected by the label on the majority the year the Council wouldn't allow Uncle John to build a chicken-house in the garden.

and found that they had a splendid opportunity to put into practice the principle of common ownership which they had been advocating and fighting for for many years.

This is how Souchy describes the movement:

"The collectivisation must not be understood as the realisation of a pre-conceived programme. It was spontaneous. However, one cannot deny the influence of anarchist ideas on this event. For many decades the Spanish anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists had considered the social transformation of Spain as their most important aim. In the meetings of the syndicates and groups, in newspapers and pamphlets the problem of the social revolution was continually discussed in a systematic way. What was to be done on the day following the victory of the proletariat? The apparatus of State power had to be abolished. The workers had to take charge themselves of the direction and administration of the enterprises; the syndicates had to control the economic life of the country. The federations of industry should direct production while the local federations should direct consumption. These were the ideas of the anarcho-syndicalists."

The anarchist syndicates and groups did not lose time in putting these principles into practice, particularly where their influence was strongest—in Catalonia. The National Confederation of Labour (C.N.T.) started by organising the production and distribution of food. The people had to be fed first, and popular restaurants were opened in every district where all those needing a meal could get one free.

## The First Stage of Collectivisation

Meanwhile in factories, workshops and stores the workers began to take control. They elected delegates who took charge of the administration. Though these men had often little theoretical knowledge they did their jobs and proved efficient organisers. Production was improved and wages went up. But soon the workers became aware that the mere seizing and running of the factories and the elimination of the capitalists was not enough, that more equality among the workers themselves had to be created. This is how Souchy describes the situation existing at the time:

"In the first phase of collectivisation the wages of the workers varied even within the same industry. As the collectivisation limited itself to abolishing the privileges of the capitalists or to eliminating the capitalist profit in a joint stock company, the workers became the exploiters themselves, replacing in fact the previous owners. The change produced a more just situation than before because the workers were able to get the fruit of their labour. But this system was neither socialist nor communist. Instead of one capitalist there was a kind of collective capitalism. While before there was only one owner of a factory or a café, the collective proprietors were now the workers of the factory or the employers of the café. The employees in a prosperous café got better wages than those in a less prosperous one."

It was obvious to everyone that collectivisation could not stop in this phase, which had given rise to new injustices. The workers went a step forward. The syndicates began to control the industries as a whole. For example the builders' syndicate in Barcelona put itself in charge of all the building jobs in the city. This was followed by a levelling of salaries in the building industry. But even this was unsatisfactory as workers in the richer industries still received better wages than workers in less prosperous industries.

The Spanish workers realised that they had to co-ordinate the various industries so that the more flourishing industries could help the others. All the incomes of the various syndicates should be concentrated in a single pool which would distribute the funds equally amongst the various syndicates. This co-ordination was never completely achieved partly because the tasks of the war prevented the syndicates from devoting all their energies to the task of reconstruction and partly because the government soon began to tie the hands of the workers.

Co-ordination was however achieved between various syndicates and Souchy gives the example of the transport industry. The Bus Company in Barcelona which had been taken under the workers' control had an excess of funds. With it they helped the Tramway Company which was not doing so well. Also when 4,000 taxi drivers were left without work through lack of petrol the Transport Syndicate went on paying their wages.

## The Peasants Seize the Land

While the workers took possession of the factories the peasants collectivised

the land. The Spanish peasants have for centuries tried to expropriate the landowners and to get back the land which, in many parts, they used to till in common in the past. Every time a revolt took place the peasants would seize the estates of the landowners and revive communal institutions for the organisation in common of the life of the village. The anarchist movement tried to give a more definite shape to the aspirations of the Spanish peasantry. At the Congress of the C.N.T. in Madrid in June 1931, the collectivisation of the land was put forward as one of the most important aims of the rural workers. When the revolution took place these resolutions were carried out and not only was the land collectivised in most places, but also the industries attached to it.

We shall not deal with the peasants' collectives (which have been described in a pamphlet issued during the revolution, by Freedom Press, Gaston Leval's *Social Reconstruction in Spain*), except to mention Kaminski's observation that "each village is autonomous and organises itself according to its own wishes. One searches in vain for a single solution or general rules". Even bourgeois and Marxist writers willingly admit that the agricultural collectives were a great success but they hasten to assert that this proves that anarchism is only practicable in an agricultural, poorly developed country and that it would be a mistake to believe that the same results could be achieved in a modern, industrialised country.

Unhappily for them, facts don't at all back up their argument. Of all the provinces of Spain, Catalonia is the most industrialised; it contains varied and up-to-date factories which employ a large part of the population. Catalonia can stand comparison with the most industrialised parts of France, Italy or England and yet it was in Catalonia that collectivisation was most successful. Furthermore it achieved its best results, not in agriculture, where the existence of small-holdings was not particularly favourable to collectivisation, but in industry.

## The Workers Run the Country

There was hardly any industry in Catalonia which was not collectivised. The transport industry including railways, buses, tramways and the port of Barcelona; the textile industry; the engineering factories producing cars, planes and war material; the food industry; the public services such as electricity, power and water, were all taken under workers' control.

The collectivisation decree issued by the Government on the 24th October, 1936 only declared obligatory the collectivisation of industrial and commercial

## Letter

## Do they want to Win?

MANY of your readers will have noted the various campaigns of big business in the political field, culminating in the present ones of the NUM and the Institute of Directors. Some will be asking why big business is coming back into political prominence when in recent elections—save for Messrs. Tate & Lyle—they had dropped into the background.

If I may suggest an answer, just to start a discussion on the subject, there would appear to be a division in the hidden coalition that governs us as to which half shall take public responsibility for the next few years, since it is obvious that there will be a major slump during those years and that public opinion will swing against the nominal government of the day. Thus neither side welcomes the idea of victory at the next election.

The last slump and the war equated—in the public mind—large-scale capitalism with the ills of society, and in 1945 the Tory Party's open connection with this proved its undoing. The Labour Party, which has always professed to oppose big business, reaped the rewards. In the next three elections the Tories did everything in their power to dissociate themselves from their traditional ally, and got back into power. Now it would appear there is to be a reconciliation—but Labour is being so inept that one can only suppose it is intentional.

So one must suspect that the parties are playing 'Last man home wins'. Perhaps FREEDOM could open a book on the result?

London.

LAURENS OTTER.

enterprises which, on the 30th June, 1936, employed more than 100 workers (as well as those which had been owned by fascists). But when the decree was published the collectivisation had already been carried out much further than this. Cafés and hotels, though employing a relatively small number of workers had been collectivised; street vendors, hairdressers and barbers, shop assistants and actors had all joined a syndicate and were administering in common the industry to which they belonged.

The two unions, the C.N.T. (anarcho-syndicalist) and the U.G.T. (socialist) acted in common, but as the anarcho-syndicalists were, in Catalonia, far more powerful than the socialists, and since they attached more importance to the revolutionary conquests of the revolution, it was generally on the initiative of the C.N.T. that collectivisations were carried out.

## Workers' Committees are Formed

The collectivisation of the Catalan railways was carried out a few days after the insurrection in a swift and efficient manner. On the 24th July the railway syndicates, belonging, one to the U.G.T. and the other to the C.N.T., met and decided unanimously to carry out the collectivisation of all the services of the Catalan General Railway Company, and to assume complete responsibility for its administration. Two kinds of workers' committees were set up. The Station Revolutionary Committees dealt with problems arising out of the civil war. They placed guards to defend the stations against any fascist attack, they carried out a check on all passengers, they prepared armoured trains which took the militiamen to the front line, they organised hospital trains for the wounded. These and many other immediate and vital tasks were carried out by the Station Committees with great enthusiasm and efficiency.

Other committees were formed to deal with the more permanent and technical aspects of the railways. Committees were set up to look after the workshops, the rolling stock, the permanent way, the welfare of the workers, etc. Though it cannot be claimed that trains ran to time, a feat that even the revolution could not achieve, they did run very efficiently under great difficulties.

The textile industry, comprising 230,000 workers, of whom 170,000 belonged to the C.N.T. was also collectivised. The organisation of the textile industry under workers' control has been described in

## The Majority is Always Wrong

AS a form of intellectual gymnastics the English universities are given to debating. It was a debate that gave forth to the world (and we are assured, the listening Hitler) the news that the Oxford University Students would not fight for King and Country. This it appeared, was an intellectual exercise of the highest order, having no relation to life whatsoever.

These feasts of reason and flows of soul are the logical and logomachic successors of the mediaeval discussions, as to how many angels can balance on the point of a pin and the more interesting (though Jesuitical) mediaeval disquisitions. It was fitting that *University Settlement* at Bethnal Green should sponsor a contest for a debating championship but it is ironical that the Malatesta Club (anarchist to the core) Debating Society should have won the trophy for three years in succession. They had a victory over the City Literary Debating Society on the turgid motion "That the challenge of the modern age is not met by present Western values", which was debated on Friday, May 8th. True to form the motion was lost, but on form the Malatesta Club was held to be the better debaters.

It is possible that the combination of sincerity, oratory and personality was irresistible. Oratory, it is said, is a dying art, the lack of sincerity in its practitioners is obvious, and it is said that television has dealt it the death-blow for, in what sounds like a scientific superstition "you can tell if a man's sincere or not on television".

However high the standard was on the platform the debate from the floor was marked on one side, at least, by wild feats of unreason. As a training ground for anarchist speakers (who as distinct from anarchist conversationalists or monologists, are rare), this contest is valuable—and who knows what small candle would be lit from the momentous decision of last year that this house prefers Cleopatra to Caesar—or was it the other way round? J.R.

detail in Gaston Leval's *Social Reconstruction in Spain*. In the engineering industry, we can mention the Hispano-Suiza factory, employing 1,400 workers, which was collectivised by the C.N.T. and which immediately began to produce the material most needed for the revolutionary forces.

## Success and Limitations

All the documents relating to the collectivisation both of the land and industry in Spain prove without the slightest doubt that the workers are entirely competent to run the economic life of a country. Wherever the workers took over, they eliminated inefficiency and waste, profiteering and parasitism, for their own benefit and that of the whole country.

Unfortunately the Spanish workers were not able to achieve the complete collectivisation of the country. They allowed the small capitalists to carry on, and these latter proved to be a dangerous reactionary force. But it was the Government whom the workers failed to overthrow, which put the greatest obstacles in the way of the complete collectivisation of the country, and which later, under the influence of the Communists, went so far as suppressing collectives and re-introducing competition and private capitalism.

The first step against the collectives was taken by the Catalan Government (the *Generalidad*) in the middle of December, 1936. The food industry, which had been so efficiently organised by the C.N.T. was put into the hands of the Communist Comoreja, who called back the small business men who sent the prices up and brought in the black market and waste.

If the Government had been abolished, the Spanish workers would have been able rapidly to collectivise the whole country and abolish the wage system, and all the inequalities attached to it. The power of reaction overcame them instead. But their attempts to build a society where workers would control the means of production and the good for consumption, will serve as an example not only to the working class of Spain but to the whole world.

We cannot repair the sacrifices of life which the Spanish comrades have paid. What we can do is to learn the lessons of their struggle, so that they will not have made their sacrifices wholly in vain.

M. L. BERNERI.

(This account has been compiled from articles by Marie Louise Berneri which appeared in *Spain & The World*, War Commentary, Now and Freedom between 1937 and 1946).

## 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.

MAY 17.—No Meeting

MAY 24.—"Frankly speaking":

RITA MILTON interviewed

by JACK ROBINSON

## NEW YORK

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

All Meetings will be held at THE LIBERTARIAN CENTER, 86 East 10th Street, New York City, U.S.A.

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