

# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Of what use is freedom of thought, if it will not produce freedom of action?"  
—DEAN SWIFT

## SCAPEGOATS OF NOTTING HILL

There is no 'colour problem' in this country. To discuss it endlessly is to discuss nothing endlessly: it does not exist.

What there is is a British problem, and it is a grave one, a very grave one indeed. When a great and apparently prosperous country cannot peacefully absorb some 250,000 people (a mere 0.5 per cent. of its total population), there must be something gravely wrong with that country.

By these sudden disturbances what strange and monstrous manifestations have been churned up from the depths of our society! What hatred, bitterness, and spite is suddenly revealed, what anger and frustration, what boredom and what rootless, aimless hooliganism, what envy, perhaps (yes, envy: are not West Indians envied if they look happy and well dressed?).

There was no 'Jewish problem' in Germany. There was a German problem, however, as we and the world know to our cost.

By the same token, do not look at the coloured people for some explanation of our present discontents: do not peer at them, noting and listing all their faults and inadequacies, their tiresome habits and their crimes (alleged). These people are no more than the chance victims of our own social disorders.

Look rather at ourselves, look long and deep. You may be rather frightened by what you see.

—DAILY TELEGRAPH.

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EVERYBODY knew that, with the long summer evenings, something was going to happen in Notting Hill. And when Kelso Cochrane was stabbed to death on Whit Sunday, no-one believed the police view that the motive was robbery. A white youth told the *Times* reporter:

"One less of the blacks—that's the way I look at it. We've got too many of them about here."

And coloured neighbours of the dead West Indian carpenter said to the *Evening Standard's* correspondent:

"These people should be stopped. We are citizens and the government must stop these people now."

"Which people?" "Them that assassinated him."

"But they don't know who they are yet."

"They gotta be stopped."

The *New Statesman*, true to its faith in governmental solutions, demands a Select Committee to 'advise the government what needs to be done to meet the national responsibility of solving a series of local problems, which experience has shown cannot be effectively tackled at a purely local or voluntary level.'

There ought to be a law, people are saying. A law against racial discrimination. A law against racial propaganda. A law against Fascism. A law against knives. A law to bring back birching. (Or if their point of view is different, a law to stop coloured immigration. Or else they say, like Sir Oswald Mosley, "We are going to send these people back home.") But every time we say "There ought to be a law" or "They ought to do something", are we not simply evading our personal responsibility? Stateways cannot change folkways, an American sociologist once declared, and Thoreau threw out the challenge:

"Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience then? . . . Law never made a man a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice."

### Silence of the good people

This is not one of those countries in which racial injustice is written into the law as well as into the habits of the people. Here we are concerned with people alone. And the question is, not what they do, but what we should do. Mr. Morais, Deputy Commissioner for the West Indies urges his fellow-countrymen, "Be pacifists. Don't be a party to

a new series of racial riots". And the *Kensington Post* reports that the murder of Kelso Cochrane

"has brought to light alleged attacks on coloured people and their property which have been deliberately 'played down' by the victims, because, it is said, they did not wish to attract publicity. It has resulted in what is virtually a self-imposed curfew by the many West Indian families in North Kensington—a precaution which has also been followed by much of the white population in this uneasy half of the Royal Borough".

Mrs. Frances Ezzreco of the Coloured People's Progressive Association says, "We feel helpless. What can we do? A man has been murdered and we wonder where the next

attack will be. Coloured people will soon be too frightened to go out." And she added, "Where are the white people in this area who want to help us? All they did last year was stand on the steps and look to see what would happen next." This appalling silence of the good people as Martin Luther King called the same indifference in America, is perhaps the most dreadful aspect of the situation. Mr. Dan Jacobson, a South African writer, noticed it last year, declaring that "on the part of a great many articulate and liberal-minded people the major response to the riots was one of a studied and deliberate indifference." And a fortnight before the murder of Kelso Cochrane, Mr. Herbert Hill of the American N.A.A.C.P. said, "I was especially struck by the absence of any vigorous and sensitive mobilisation of concern on the part of liberal-minded people about this most urgent contemporary problem." Mr. Jacobson's explanation was that

"the truth is that the English liberals are bored, bored, bored—bored with anger, bored with indignation, bored with compassion; and they didn't want to think about the Notting Hill riots precisely because these were the emotions that the events threatened to rouse."

### Looking for Scapegoats

Perhaps it is this boredom and indifference which leads to the search for scapegoats. Mr. Justice Salmon in sentencing nine youths last year, declared that "It was you men who

started the whole of this violence at Notting Hill", and the 'progressive' world applauded his sentences and turned aside. At the same time, Mr. George Rogers, Labour M.P. for Kensington North was telling the Home Office that "It is wrong to say this trouble has been started by hooligans. It was the reaction of people very sorely tried by some sections of the coloured community". And the police started a blitz on the West Indian clubs which are said to foster prostitution and drug-peddling. But, says Mr. Morais, "The clubs are in many ways a good thing. West Indians can get together, make a noise, and let off steam—for their position is not easy in this country. English people are not extraverts who will make friends quickly. The police have been too tough on these clubs. What will be the result? Coloured folk will be driven on to the streets where they will become a target for incidents."

The nine youths, aged between seventeen and twenty who were sent to prison for terms of up to four years last year, for a series of brutal assaults in what they called a "nigger-hunting" expedition one Saturday night, were given "exceptionally heavy sentences" which were "heartily approved of by practically every section of British public opinion". Very few voices were raised to point out (as *FREEDOM* did\*) that there was not the slightest reason to suppose that the sentences would either

\*"Reflections on an 'Affray,'" *FREEDOM* 4/10/58.

reform the criminals or deter others. (Mr. Fenner Brockway has reported that a petition on behalf of the nine youths was submitted by coloured people). Alone among the 'respectable' papers, the *Spectator* spoke up, and Mr. John Vaizey wrote there:

"The collective conscience is salved by this act of barbaric retribution; and now we can forget the slums in Notting Hill and Shepherd's Bush and go on in our liberal make-belief until the next act of communal violence reminds us that behind the mask of suburban democracy lies a reality of violence and savagery that needs humane understanding, investigation and cure . . . Violence cannot be cured by cruelty; only by understanding and patience. We don't want prison sentences but better houses, better schools, better hospitals and many more middle-class people who are prepared to go and be missionaries to these boys and girls. We live in what posh journals call a 'Welfare State'; but enormous palaces are built for oil companies while our mental-deficiency hospitals are so horrid that they beggar description, and enormous number of our children are in schools that are insanitary, airless and overcrowded. I am surprised that these scenes of violence are so few; I would have expected more."

### Arms of the Law

At the time of Mr. Justice Salmon's sentences, the *New Statesman*, mouthpiece of progressive opinion (which for the rest of the year publishes articles showing that prisons breed criminals), declared that "This is one of those rare instances where exemplary fines and sentences can act as an effective deterrent." Nine months later the same paper tells us that "it was too easily assumed" that peace "would follow Mr. Justice Salmon's exemplary sentences."

The people who think that massive  
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## 'Prosperity' is again just round the Corner! WORKERS, WAKE UP!

"EUROPE recession over" was the verdict of a group of Government economists from all the O.E.E.C. countries, and echoed by the Financial Editor of the *Manchester Guardian* last week. The economists forecast a rise in industrial production of 4½ to 5 per cent. for 1959 as a whole compared with 1958. By 1960 we can expect "a resumption of full-scale economic expansion"; prices will tend to remain stable; the increased demand for raw materials will not mean higher prices "as there is now ample productive capacity in almost all the major raw products".

One signal of recovery is the sudden growth of steel production, which in the six countries of the European Coal and Steel Community rose in April to the highest level for any month since January, 1958. United Kingdom steel output in April was the highest for a year.

We are not in a position to dispute the facts (though we find it strange that only four days after the publication of this news, the Financial editor of the *M.G.* was reporting that "the German steel industry is now complaining about growing French steel exports to Southern Germany!"). But the conclusions seem too rosy to be true.

The recent minor industrial revival in Western Europe has been largely achieved at the expense of the United States where last month an adverse balance of payments was noted—a most unusual occurrence—and which that country can well afford but about which it cannot remain complacent. Any more than

Germany can for long watch its trade surplus decline (£32m. in April, 1959 compared with £48m. in the same month last year) while its French neighbour, following the devaluation of the franc, has increased its exports in the first four months of this year by 43 per cent and its imports by only 16 per cent.

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THE annual increase in the world's working population, the growing industrialisation of the industrial countries as well as the building of industrial plants in the "backward" or primarily agricultural countries; the development of technology and the potentialities of automation,

### TRIBUTE TO DULLES?

1.

TAIPEH, MAY 24.

Chinese Communist guns fired 375 rounds at the off-shore islands of Quemoy and Matsu up to midnight yesterday, the Nationalist Chinese Ministry of Defence said here to-day. *British United Press*.

[NOTE: This is the first shelling in the Formosa Strait for a year. Can we expect another crisis in Formosa later in the year to distract attention from the diplomatic time-wasting in Geneva?]

2.

WASHINGTON, MAY 24.

The conclusion of the Anglo-Soviet trade agreement coincides with increased pressure in Washington to end the total embargo on trade between the United States and Communist China.—*Reuter*.

make it possible to expand industrial and agricultural production by an almost unlimited amount, and within the capitalist economy in excess of demand, that is, the purchasing capacity of the public. For that reason, an increase in world production of goods and services, is not necessarily an indication of expanding markets or of growing prosperity. Indeed expanding production is no longer a guarantee of growing employment any more than balancing the budget is necessarily an indication of general prosperity.

It is possible that the Government's £30 millions subsidy of the cotton industry will improve Lancashire's prospects in world markets. But in terms of production the industry is in fact to be contracted and made more "efficient", that is, productivity will be raised. And for both these reasons fewer people will be employed than at present. So that the government subsidy far from helping to relieve the very high unemployment in the textile industry will actually accentuate it.

Similarly in coal mining, growing mechanisation where conditions lend themselves to its use is increasing both productivity and production in the industry. But increased production of coal has become a liability and not an asset! And the practical *Manchester Guardian* in its editorial (23/5/59) while welcoming Sir James Bowman's report that "productivity in the mines is increasing and that for the first time since nationalisation the Coal Board has been able to achieve a significant re-

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## The Best Possible Way?

Nyasaland

BLANTYRE, MAY 19.

A Government statement to-day said that the leaders of the Nyasaland African National Congress, who were detained at the start of the emergency in March, were going to stay in prison "for a long time until they constitute no threat to the peaceful lives of the inhabitants of this country."

The Government intended to "clean the country of Congress" and to "keep it clean always," the statement went on. There was no need to fear that Congress would become powerful again.

The statement, which was published in the Nyasaland information bulletin, which is circulated among Africans, urged Africans to report on any Congress members living in their area who had not been arrested and who were plotting to cause trouble, so that "the wicked people can be arrested."

The Government was determined that peaceful conditions would be restored as quickly as possible, so that Nyasaland could be developed "in the best way possible."—*Reuter*.

Uganda

KAMPALA, MAY 25.

Sixteen leaders of the proscribed Uganda National Movement have now been served with orders restricting them to their own sub-county areas in Buganda. Leading officials of the banned party, who have announced the formation of a new organisation called the Uganda Freedom Movement, have held lengthy discussions in private again to-day. Police patrolling the main areas of Buganda continues.—*B.U.P.*



## PEOPLE AND IDEAS:

## THE COLLAPSING ENVIRONMENT

"Next to the central business district, and surrounding it, there is to be found an area which is in a state of deterioration. At one time it was occupied by residences, but now, invaded by business and light manufacturing, it is in a state of transition . . . Meanwhile it is neither an adequate housing area nor a business district, and may rightfully be called an 'interstitial' area. The houses, because of the impending changes, are sorely neglected. Here are the slums, the 'blighted areas' of poverty, delinquency, and disease. Coincident with the slums, or overlapping them, are often the clusters of special cultural or racial groups, the Ghetto, 'Little Sicily', 'Greektown', 'Chinatown'. In this vicinity there are also to be found the boarding-houses, occupied largely by poor unmarried men and women, many of whom are without friends or relatives in the city and are therefore very lonely . . . The underworld also makes this area its headquarters; it is easy to drop out of sight in an area so deteriorated in its physical structure and so varied in its human element."

—Ogburn and Nimkoff: HANDBOOK OF SOCIOLOGY.

THERE is a school of thought in the study of the urban environment which sees the city, expressed diagrammatically, as a series of five concentric rings, of which the second, where decaying century-old houses are interposed between the railway lines and the factories, is, amongst other things, distinguished by a high rate of crime and delinquency, and a dense population, with a high proportion of immigrants. The description quoted above is of part of Chicago. It might, if we substitute 'Little Ireland' and 'Browntown' for the areas named, describe North Paddington and North Kensington. Here is Mr. Wickenden's description of the area.

"The Notting Hill area of North Kensington is a mixed neighbourhood. Much of it is old property inhabited by respectable residents of long standing. There is a fairly large, shifting, bed-sitter population of students, foreigners, and newcomers to London. The Portobello Road market attracts small traders and customers from a wide area, making it an open-air social centre.

"Below Notting Hill but in the same area lies Notting Dale, consisting of a

triangle, bounded by Latimer Road, and Lancaster Road. Through the centre runs Bramley Road. This area has for many decades contained a fairly large white criminal population, to some extent isolated from the normal life of the responsible districts around it. To the west and within walking distance is the White City estate area of Shepherd's Bush, where there is a smaller criminal element. To the east of Notting Hill lies Paddington, a centre for coloured immigrants where most of the available accommodation had been filled before the peak influx of 1955-6. Notting Hill thus became a logical overspill area."

The area was zoned in the London County Council's Development Plan for industrial use. The Kensington Borough Council objected to this (since it meant that the district would go on deteriorating indefinitely until industrialists decided to buy up property for the building of new factories), and the designation of the northernmost part of the area was changed to 'residential'. The Council are now gradually rebuilding this 21-acre neighbourhood which was originally put up in a hurry in the 1840's to house people displaced by the building of Paddington Station. Here is the architect's matter-of-fact report on the existing buildings:

"The houses are mostly now occupied as tenements, for which they are not suited. There is a general lack of cleanliness and some overcrowding (a density of 236 persons per acre). The existing houses suffer from a general lack of amenities. There are few bathrooms,

and w.c.'s are shared by different families; often the only available sanitary accommodation is in the yard. Gas cookers are sited on landings or in main living rooms, and there is a shortage of fuel and refuse storage facilities. Many old basements are now closed, but remain a general source of nuisance. They are damp and rubbish is deposited there."

## Rackets and Helplessness

When such a district is packed with several thousand newcomers it is difficult to see how resentment and hostility can be avoided. Mr. Wickenden gives this account of the process of cramming the immigrants in:

"As the coloured people began to filter into Notting Hill in increasing numbers, a type of house-letting business was started which was designed specially for their needs. Between forty and seventy companies were set up during a period of about a year to buy property and let rooms without restriction on crowding. By this means, the immigrants found accommodation comparatively easily and the companies received high rents . . . It was known to the authorities that accommodation previously let by some of these companies had been used as brothels. Again most of the property let to the newly-arrived immigrants was in or close to the Notting Dale triangle. Thus the coloured people who now moved into North Kensington came into an area where prostitution was already an organised business and where there was already a criminal community."

Outside the organised housing racket there is the 'Colour Tax', where the price of a room for a coloured man is a rent well above that charged for white people, while you have only to look at the columns of 'rooms and apartments' in the *Kensington Post* to see how the 'better' accommodation is walled off behind the words "No Coloured" or "Europeans Only".

Why do people pay £4, £5 or £6 a week for a share of an insanitary hovel when rent tribunals exist? Dr. Soper gives the answer in a letter to *The Times*: "Intimidation will prevent all but the toughest white or coloured tenants from seeking the help of the rent tribunal. In fact 19 tenants who declared their intention of presenting their case against a particular landlord and his strong arm

agents have in the past few days withdrawn after threats or bribes. They had in my judgment an overwhelming case, but they dare not proceed with it, and I understand their reasons."

North Kensington has 80,000 white inhabitants and about 5,000 coloured people. The Kensington Borough Council's housing list, which was recently 'pruned' has 3,000 families on it—about 10,000 people. The Council's new housing scheme will, when complete, rehouse 2,100 people. The Council are only obliged to rehouse 'statutory tenants' from the demolished buildings—about one-fifth of the actual occupants. It is clear that only a tiny

proportion of the white population, and a still smaller number of the coloured people are going to be rehoused in the area, and that the greater part of the buildings in the district are going to remain occupied for years to come.

The Minister of Housing and Local Government declared last year that "The wonderful fact is that, if we can continue with the present slum clearance drive unchecked for another 20 years, England will be a country where the slum disgrace will be almost unknown".

## Can We Wait?

Can Notting Hill wait for twenty years?

What can we do, as people, without waiting vainly for public authorities to lumber into operation, firstly to help Notting Hill as a place and a community, and secondly to help

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## Theatre

## The World of Paul Slickey

AESOP has a fable of the shepherd boy who kept crying 'Wolf' as a joke, until one day there was a wolf and the boy's cries went unheeded and consequently he and the sheep were devoured.

When the national press utters its war (or peace) scares one does not believe it, as a matter of course, and therefore one may find out that peace (or war) has broken out and one will be taken by surprise. In the same way when one learnt through the press that John Osborne's new play "The World of Paul Slickey" (which attacks, among other institutions, the press) is a bad play, one does not believe it, and so it is rather startling to discover that it is a bad play.

Nevertheless, Fleet Street has attacked it for the wrong reasons. Its errors are those of form rather than of content; of sound rather than of taste.

John Osborne suffers as do several writers today from mental indigestion, he has more ideas about the world today than he can assimilate and all the closed systems of the world (Communism, Catholicism, etc.) are rejected as a unifying form so he has nothing to exhibit but a parade of anger, but one cannot live in a state of protest, to quote Dostoevsky, and one has to exhibit in operation the values by which one lives.

This play is a series of numbers, some good, some indifferent. The chief draw-

back is the inability of some of the actors, the worst offender being Denis Lotis, to make themselves heard clearly in the vocal numbers. Since the point of the play, if any can be made, is in the lyrics this is clearly wasted. It cannot just be the effect of a large theatre, for every word and line of Marie Lohr came over clearly and distinctly.

The one point of the play which emerges is the undying triviality of Fleet Street and in their reception of this play they have endorsed its ideas. However confused and badly John Osborne has put over his idea, Fleet Street has dotted his 'i's', and crossed his 't's' for him.

For example, last week the B.B.C. started its morning review of the newspapers. To its great chagrin the *Daily Mirror* was not mentioned. In a fearful tizzy it rushes out a front page "SH-SH-SH", implying that the D.M. is not to be mentioned on the B.B.C. On the next day the B.B.C. summary of the D.M.'s main news was "The *Daily Mirror* declares itself in favour of love."

True, "The World of Paul Slickey" is a bad play. But that never stopped a play being a West End success yet. The fact that some of the scenes (a jazz funeral, and a change of sex) may be thought to be bad taste does not ring true from those who glorify the obscenities of war and official violence. J.R.

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## The Psychology of Community Relations—2

(Continued from previous issue)

IN general, the more eccentric you are the closer will be the feeling of community with the few others who share your particular eccentricity. If you belong to a tiny sect like the Peculiar People, the anarchists or the esperantists, you can pretty well claim a night's lodging in any strange city where you find yourself if you can get the addresses of other members of your community. The same hardly goes if you are simply a member of the Methodists, the Labour Party or the Freemasons.

I have referred to the real purpose of many clubs and other associations as being other than what is the ostensible purpose for their existence. I have suggested that the principal purpose is to provide an islet of community in an ocean of anonymity, but that is not to say that the ostensible purpose is entirely artificial. People may join the Peace Pledge Union, for instance, out of a genuine initial indignation against conscription and a horror of war. But they may carry on as active campaigning members largely because of the communal satisfactions which contact with other members offers. I accidentally found myself a member of a most interesting loosely-organized club during the war. The "conchie's club". Being a conchie gave one a card of introduction to the homes of like-minded people in every part of the country. As during most of the war I was living in London, and in a self-styled Pacifist Community, naturally I experienced the "club" chiefly in the capacity of host. Many deserters, scroungers and petty crooks also considered themselves to be honorary members of the "conchie's club". I well remember two philosophical anarchists who proudly claimed that they had not worked for two years as an expression of their principled objection to the capitalist system. They protested loudly when they found someone paying the community milk bill. ("Fancy giving money to the Co-op Dairy—that capitalist racket!")

The Pacifist Community to which I have referred arose out of the feeling of comradeship which I and one or two other pacifists had. It had its advantages. With the world going stark staring mad all round us, we gave one another moral support. Otherwise, you see, we might have begun to suspect that we were the loonies, and those who believed in the extermination of the Germans and Japanese were the sane ones. Oddly enough we gradually began to practise a sort of anarchist-communism merely because it appeared to be the most convenient thing to do in the circumstances. The sort of things which one might have expected to irk such as

the communal chores and the pooling of incomes did not really become a major source of friction over the few years in which the community persisted.

There is a certain satisfaction in giving up the ownership of property, of changing from regarding a thing as "mine" to regarding it as "ours", providing one can wholeheartedly respect the communal unit in whose favour one is abdicating control. The moment one feels that the other members of the community do not appreciate or will mis-use either material objects, or one's own time, then a sense of personal possessiveness is aroused. As long as all is going well there is greater satisfaction in working for a communal end than simply for one's own end. We can regard it as the fulfilment of individual egoism by the creation of something which is socially enjoyed. Here we have the paradox of egoism and altruism. The individual expands his ego by extending it over a greater and greater part of his environment—the environment includes, of course, other people. Every creator is dependent on the appreciation of other people to make his creation worthwhile. The musician needs listeners, the writer needs readers, the creator of any product needs consumers of that product, otherwise the act of creation is meaningless.

As long as the participant in a community has no illusions about the purpose of his socially directed activity—the fulfilment of himself—then he can be happy in community life. If the community eventually breaks up there is no need for bitter regrets; it was worthwhile while it lasted. But if he has a distorted image of himself—working his fingers to the bone out of sheer altruism, trying to set an example to his selfish fellow members—then if the community breaks up, the disappointed altruist will feel that he has been martyred and that there is something rotten in the crowd of people he tried to live with.

If we enter into some form of work-sharing or income-pooling with others, we do so because we intend to use one another, each for his own ends. But there is nothing strange in this; after all, we like being used by other people in certain ways, for otherwise we feel useless. But it is as well to consider just how we intend to use one another before we take the step of banding all together under one roof. Does X want to join the community principally because he wants people to talk at? Living alone he tends to find himself with too few listeners at café tables, so is it really the captive audience at the community breakfast table which he is after? And Y, is her main reason for wanting to

join the community that she will have other people to help look after her children? And Z, is he mainly attracted to community life because he wants to try out a few experiments in polygamy? I am not suggesting that these are discreditable motives; all that I am suggesting is that prospective recruits to a community should be frank about their highly personal motives rather than take refuge in a lot of blah about higher idealism. The highest ideal is that we should like our fellow men and like to foregather with them, sharing our work and its results. What higher compliment can we pay to humanity?

We have the advantage of the experience of others. Two weeks ago Philip Holgate gave a lecture on Some Communities of the Past, based on Mark Holloway's book *Heavens on Earth*. Certainly almost every form of communal organization has been tried at one time or another. During the 1939-45 war there were a number of communities going in this country. A contemporary periodical called *The Community Broadsheet* gave details of many of them from time to time. I visited some of these communities and found that in practice they were often rather different from what one might have expected from the write-ups in *The Community Broadsheet*. But then, when I tried to write up the community in which I lived I found it very difficult to convey any honest and adequate picture of it in print.

First, why did we live in a community at all? Well, as I pointed out earlier on, it was convenient both psychologically and economically in the wartime circumstances.

It was interesting and quite fun. As soon as a number of people in a small community get bored with the idea, or embrace a somewhat different idea, or simply quarrel, then that community breaks up. The same goes for really large communities as the history of the community movement shows. Indeed, I think that a precondition for a really healthy community, as for a healthy sexual partnership, is that it can break up if the contracting partners desire, without any gross hardship to anyone. I think that communities like the Bruderhof, where the members are dedicated for life and know that they will be penniless if they leave, are essentially unhealthy. When continued association is the result of economic duress, it ceases to be a free association if individuals would like to leave but simply cannot afford to do so. G.

(To be continued)



## WORKERS, WAKE UP!

Continued from p. 1

duction in costs", deplures the N.C.B.'s decision to put off making any more decisions about pit closures for the rest of this year because "of the serious social consequences involved", and refers to this attitude as one of the penalties of being a nationalised industry. When motor manufacturers ran into severe trading difficulties two years ago, they had to work short time, and that was that". It may be politically expedient for the government to keep redundant miners at work in order to keep down the unemployment figures, but, asks the the voice of (business) liberalism,

how can the coal industry ever find its financial feet again if it is to be forced to go on paying wages for coal that nobody wants? An efficient, slightly smaller coal industry would make coal once more the strength of the whole British economy. Left as it is, the industry will become a wasting disease of national life.

We cannot see how a smaller coal industry can become "once more the strength of the whole British economy" if Mr. D. D. Evans, Secretary of the South Wales area of the N.U.M. had his figures right when he told delegates at the resumed annual conference that "demand for coal is falling now at the rate of 36 million tons a year" (*M.G.*, 22/5/59), for in a matter of five years the industry will cease to exist! But, apart from that, how fundamentally sterile are these financial arguments in the mid-twentieth century, in this age of scientific knowledge and social consciousness!

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THE only "practical" argument for reducing coal output that makes sense is that of reduced need. And in a society based on the supremacy of the individual the only overriding argument against satisfying those needs would be that the price, in human not financial terms, was too great for the community to expect from some of its members. (Incidentally, how different would have been the development of industry and of scientific research in a society in which no-one had the power to oblige others, either by the use of force or the equally powerful weapon of hunger, to engage in dangerous, unhealthy or physically debilitating occupations? Has the *Manchester Guardian*, when it talks of the coal industry being "once more" the "strength of the whole British economy" forgotten that it was never more financially prosperous than when it employed child labour?)

What we think makes sense is need, and need has nothing to do with "demand", a capitalist term which only has meaning in an economy based on production for profit. When the *Manchester Guardian* writes about the coal industry finding its "financial feet" it is thinking of the law of "supply and demand". If, for instance, Mr. Onassis, instead of paying high prices for Picassos became an equally determined collector of coal dumps, the fact that he was prepared to pay for coal to be dumped would make the mining of more coal a "financial proposition" especially if Mr. Nakarios tried to outbid Mr. Onassis as a collector of coal dumps, in the same way as he now seeks to outbid him for Picassos!). In other words, what will put the mining industry on its feet is determined by markets not needs, by demand, not efficiency. Where de-

mand exceeds supply, efficiency (which in capitalist terms means selling price) matters little.

★

IT is not surprising that workers should see the end-product of their work as a pay packet and be uninterested in the social value of the work they do. Thus, miners protest at the closing of pits, and demand that they should be allowed to go on mining coal, even though they must know that one ton out of every ten is now being dumped. (And how much of what is sold is dissipated in inefficient fire grates, or produces the power which drives the machines which produce bombing planes, and other weapons of destruction, or useless articles and gadgets?). Yet if one is to realise the deeper meaning of "full-employment", the main objective will be the abolition of the pay-packet.

"He who does not work neither shall he eat" which is one of those slogans all workers are expected to hang over their beds is not even a truism though it seems to be widely accepted as such. In our society those whose material standards of life are the highest more often than not have never worked in their lives. But for a worker, willingness to work is not enough. If there are more willing workers than there are jobs, then what? If the worker thinks in terms of pay-packets then he can even understand that such a situation may arise. But if he thinks of work as the means by which Man produces the necessities of life, then, it seems to us, his approach to the economic and social structure of society will be more positive and less accommodating than it is at present.

At the S. Wales miners' conference referred to earlier, on the one hand the miners endorsed a motion urging the national executive "to oppose further closures which form part of a policy of cutting back production and manpower", on the other, Mr. Williams, acting President said

it was no good saying there must be no more pit closures. They were inevitable. Delegates seemed to forget that there was too much coal. If there was an expanding economy, all the coal and oil would be needed, but that is not the case. "We have to be realistic about it" he added.

Yet neither the miners nor their president were in fact being realistic: the miners because their pay packet mentality prevents them from seeing the revolutionary potentialities that have been placed in their hands by the growth of science and technology, but instead seek to keep their jobs by opposing their present industrial weakness to the power of the state. The President, because instead of explaining to the miners the basis of capitalism and its indifference to human needs, like a little capitalist (or a Labour Party stooge making political capital) spouts about "expanding economy" solving all their problems. (If suddenly the government doubled its armaments programme, and factories had to work three shifts to complete it in time, it is obvious that more coal would be required. That's "expanding economy", with a vengeance!)

★

WHEN will the working people stop being stupid and supine? The growth of mass production and mass communications has made the capitalist class more vulnerable to attack than at any time in history. And what may have been dismissed as the Utopian dreams of socialists and anarchists less than a century ago, are now in the realms of reality, thanks to technology and science.

Materially, socialism or anarchism, is within the reach of the "toiling masses" . . . if they so wish.

The problem now is to make them want to be anything but contented, unthinking, pay-packet slaves!

## BOOK REVIEW - EXHIBITIONS

# THE LAST VICTORIAN

THE greatest curiosity about Fleur Cowles' book on Dali\* is how little she tells us about this sad-eyed little Spanish clown.

That she takes 359 pages to suppress whatever information she has gleaned is in itself no mean achievement. For having read her book from arty cover to arty cover I find that I am not one wit the wiser regarding Dali than when I first eagerly opened this book. Miss Cowles subtitled her book, "The biography of a great eccentric" and sister how wrong can you be, for "Avida Dollars" is no eccentric but a doe-eyed, hard headed little man who has managed to make a fortune from the clever exploitation of a limited artistic talent. Far be it for me to sneer or deride Dali for I have derived too many happy moments from his paintings but it is equally wrong to over-rate him.

Dali was extremely fortunate in that when he arrived in Paris in 1929 his friend Joan Miró was there to welcome him and to give him entry into one of the most exciting art movements of the twentieth century. For the surrealist movement was in full flower and Dali sipped eagerly and knowingly from its strange nectar. We owe a great debt to the early surrealists for it was they who conscientiously explored the dark jungles of the mind and brought back its beautiful rotting flowers and Dali was there to record it at second hand with a slickness and a precision that twenty years earlier would have been used to portray Spanish bishops, for Dali is the eternal "bright" boy who takes from all movements only what he needs to help himself and in doing so unwittingly perverts that movement. Dali gave to the surrealists only one thing and that was his soft and slipping universe and after that nothing. Each and every canvas of his had been a simple repetition of this one statement. His rocks and clocks and pore-less fish flow from canvas to canvas like an old man's vomit, wave after wave of pink and yellow paint slip down the canvases

\*"The Case of Salvador Dali", by Fleur Cowles, (Heinemann, 42s.).

beneath the flat and shining varnish and the sum total of all his output could be swapped for a hundred yards of Liberty's linoleum. It is in his portraiture that his incompetence becomes really apparent for his paintings of Lady Mountbatten and Jack Warner should not even warrant a second glance not even if they were used to advertise beer. Yet what I really love about Dali's paintings is their Victorian nostalgia. They contain echoes of titled R.A.'s flushing their id by painting undraped Caucasian slave girls, faded residential squares with the beribboned domestics huddled in tiny groups on the side of huge marble stairs and those yellowing pornographic post-cards wherein soft-faced women in high black stockings and nothing else did odd things in unidentifiable shrubberies.

His canvases possess that air of Victorian naughtiness that knew not evil. Medieval kings had their court jesters and in our share-owning democratic age we had our corporate clowns. We pay and they dance and beat their heads upon the ground for our delight. The Chaplins and the Churchills the Gennets and the G.I. generals amuse us and take their pay and when we no longer wish to be amused they strip their pantaloons from off their persons and mingle with the crowd, but never Dali. At 55 years of age he must still play the fool and never can he take off his pantaloons for he long ago, for easy laughs, rolled naked in the mud and when the moustache droops beneath the weight of Hungarian wax and the hair becomes a shade to awry, he receives our pity for his is then that most pathetic of all people, the ageing hanger-on desperately trying not to slip off the tailboard of the band-waggon. The pioneers of the surrealist movement have long ago disbanded. René Crevel found an uneasy peace in a suicide's grave, Aragon and Eluard an artistic death in the Communist Party, while Duchamp fled to the chessboard. As for the sad sacks of the English branch, they poor sweet and timid souls barricaded themselves behind the doors of the Arts Council chamber or among the tinkling wire and plaster in the I.C.A.

where in bum-fitting chairs and across tiny coffee tables they analyse their reasons for non-commitment as they polish their state honours. One of the minor attractions of the old-time fair-ground was the Geek. He was a man who for the horrific amusement of a paying audience would bite off the head of a living rat or chicken. Dali, is café societies' geek. A sorry little poseur who pretends to a hundred disgusting actions to sell his amusing paintings. They laugh at his pretensions and buy his paintings and Gala his wife records it dollar by dollar in their bank-book.

Dali surely wrote his own epitaph in two of his own recorded statements. Speaking of Millais's "Ophelia" he told Sir John Rothenstein that, "In comparison with such a picture, how crude, how wanting in imagination and skill a Léger, for example, or almost any painting of today, will seem in forty years' time", while to Theodore Rousseau he truthfully remarked that, "I say to myself, 'Dali, how lucky you are to have been born in the twentieth century. Had you been born in any other period, no one would have ever heard of you'."

As a painter of posies Fleur Cowles is herself exhibiting at the Arthur Jeffers gallery.† Her tinted pen and ink drawings of twigs and flowers are mildly competent and in the mass, form a pleasant harmony. It is the background in her paintings that gave me the most pleasure, their flat bright colour without depth or perspective add a gay charm to grey old London and you can't be friendlier than that.

Yet at the Lefevre Gallery‡ the greatest of the English surrealist painters is also exhibiting his latest works and, whisper it softly lest the public should hear, for Edward Burra this quiet, shy man working in that most English of the arts gave to the English section of the surrealist movement its only genuine native artist. One of our finest artists he enhances any movement fortunate enough to claim his allegiance. He has left the world of his enchanted fantasy to record for us that which lies at our own feet yet his is the gift of being able to transform even these mundane objects into a personal vision. Dali has stated on numerous occasions that the cabbage is the beginning or the end of all art, I forget which, and it is not really important for like most of Dali's statements it is complete rubbish, yet while Dali could only succeed in turning a cabbage into a lump of wrinkled, green and sticky plasticine Burra can make it crawl across his canvas with a new and added life for he is the only living painter who can make a cabbage look decadent. Crippled with rheumatism, this fine artist still turns out his magnificent water-colour paintings. Though painting his flowers and pots larger than life they never become monumental and flowering within their frigid frames they are the loveliest things that the galleries have to offer us. If I had a Dali painting I should be genuinely pleased, but if I had a painting by Edward Burra I should be honoured.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

†Arthur Jeffers (Pictures), 28 Davies Street, W.1. Fleur Cowles, May 13—June 5.

‡Lefevre Gallery, 30 Bruton Street, W.1. Watercolours by Edward Burra. To May 30.

## HOW TO ABOLISH THE POLICE FORCE

PORT MORESBY, MAY 19.

A group of hillmen yesterday descended on Maturai village in the Upper Purari area of Papua, and killed and ate the village policeman. They then chased the remaining villagers to the Australasian Petroleum Company's camp at Bwata before returning to the hills, according to Brigadier D. M. Cleland, the Administrator of Papua and New Guinea.

The brigadier said that a police hunt would be made for the murderers. The senior Native Affairs official for the area said that this was the first reported case of cannibalism in Papua for almost three years.—*Reuter*.

## HOW TO ABOLISH POLITICAL GULLIBILITY

Introduce **FREEDOM** to your friends

## The Collapsing Environment

Continued from p. 2

coloured people, in their peculiarly difficult and vulnerable situation to solve their housing problems?

In the second of these tasks a means exists which needs expansion and support. *Aggrey Housing Limited*, a non-profit-making housing society began work in Leeds in 1955. It buys property spread out in normal residential areas and converts them into flats in which it houses white and coloured families under the same roof. There are other societies in Nottingham, Sheffield, Bath, and in Birmingham, where a hotel was bought and adapted to house about fifty people with a communal kitchen and many successful social activities.

In London the *Metropolitan Coloured People's Housing Association Ltd.* was formed last year "to provide reasonable housing facilities for coloured people and their families who otherwise would have no hope of obtaining such accommodation". Its policy is to avoid overcrowding and "to help disperse coloured people so that no all-coloured districts will grow up". The Association urgently needs short-term and long-term loans which should be sent to its Hon. Secretary at University House, Victoria Park Square, E.2.

The *National Federation of Housing Societies*, which has done so much to advise and encourage Tenant-Co-operatives and Self-Building Groups, is at 12 Suffolk Street, S.W.1.

### 'Change the Street'

There remains Notting Hill, which, if no coloured man had ever trodden its dingy streets, would be a challenge to people whose idea of citizenship does not begin and end with a cross on a voting paper. Seventy years ago, Patrick Geddes in Edinburgh settled in a "vicious" area of the city and "carried out, with borrowed funds and the sweat of his and his neighbours' brows, a clearance and rehabilitation programme that

would have done credit to a small burgh.‡ In America in 1932, Clifford Shaw began the Chicago Area Project under the slogan 'Change the Street'. The aim in the first place was "to provide a check to juvenile delinquency, the argument being that the neighbourhood sets the tone and that it is no use removing a delinquent from a neighbourhood whose standards are undesirable and then plunging him back again after 'treatment' in prison or at some other penal institution."§ The project aims to

"aid the development of independent, indigenous groups of local residents to take the leadership and assume the responsibility in managing, financing, and promoting welfare programmes in their neighbourhood."

This is the aim of Dr. Richard Hauser and his wife Hephzibah Menuhin, whose *Institute for Group and Social Development* is at work in Notting Hill to-day. Dr. Hauser's approach is far from that of the patronising 'do-gooder'. He believes that the solutions of the district's problems can only be found "with the participation of everyone living in the area—outsiders can only assist indirectly". The Institute has been training voluntary community workers, mainly from the West Indies, now living in Notting Hill, and welcomes help in other projects from people who want to approach the problem "constructively and not emotionally".

To people who believe that "experience has shown" that the series of local problems "cannot be effectively tackled at a purely local or voluntary level", the answer is surely that not enough people have tried them, and that experience shows in fact that they cannot be effectively tackled any other way.

C.W.

\*J. Wickenden: *Colour in Britain* (1958).  
†*Housing Review*, Sept. 1958.  
‡P. Mairet: *Pioneer of Sociology* (1957).  
§W. J. H. Sprott: *Human Groups* (1958).



## SCAPEGOATS OF NOTTING HILL

Continued from p. 1  
retaliation by the law is going to be effective, also call for a strengthening of the police. But Mr. Hill says that

"I was told of West Indians who claim to have been severely beaten in police stations, of others who have been 'roughed up' on the streets—several informants said that they had been told by policemen: 'Niggers must keep off the streets at night'—and almost every Negro I spoke to reported some harassment by policemen. There were, too, complaints that if there is trouble between a white man and a Negro, it is the coloured man who is usually arrested."

The opposite view was given by white youths to Mr. John Gale of the *Observer*: "Coloured people and the police are just as bad . . . The coppers cause half the trouble . . . Ten to one a coloured bloke in the West London Court will get away with it. A white bloke won't." But a white resident of Notting Hill writes in a letter to the *New Statesman* (16/5/59) that

"No one who has seen the police force in action over the last two years can fail to be concerned about their methods. A friend of mine left Paddington police largely because he was constantly urged to make trouble for the 'niggers'. It is no earthly good complaining on an official level, the public conditioning of the infallible majesty of the 'law' is so complete that a dissenting voice can always be disregarded".

### Peddlers of Hate

Some people, like Mr. Peter Fryer of the Socialist Labour League, think that in view of the "impotence" of the police, we should form "strong-arm squads" of white and coloured trade unionists to "sweep the fascists off the streets". He also demanded mass demonstrations in the area. One can certainly imagine situations in which such activities would be a desirable and appropriate answer to racial violence. The fate of Germany was determined when the public first saw Nazi gangs breaking Jewish shop windows and did nothing about it. Dachau was reflected in the broken glass. But in the context of Notting Hill it is hard to see Mr. Fryer's squads as anything more than a provocation. (Cynics will remember that Mr. Douglas Hyde, the former news editor of the *Daily Worker* has described how, looking for something new for his paper to campaign about, he built up a new "anti-fascist" campaign which simply caused a revival of fascist activity. Mr. Fryer too, learned his trade on the *Daily Worker*).

On the last occasion when fascist movements crept out of their obscurity, in the disturbances at Ridley Road, Hackney in 1947,

"these meetings dwindled to negligible size and importance when the publicity associated with attempts to disrupt them and to start rival meetings came to an end."

Mr. James Wickenden, in his study of last year's riots at Notting Hill says that, "There had also been anti-coloured slogans such as 'Keep Britain White'; there had been anti-coloured pamphlets and meetings in the area. But none of this semi-political agitation had had much influence on the events that followed." The first and "only effective fascist meeting" in the area occurred on the evening of September 1st, after the morning's papers had been full of distorted and misleading reports of violence.

There are, of course, fundamental objections to legislation against provocative propaganda. Prof. Gordon Allport in his *The Nature of Prejudice* points out that "if the police were given more latitude they might, under cover of a broad anti-hate law, suppress criticisms that were ungenial to them". Think, for example, of the uses to which the Suppression of Communism Act has been put in South Africa.

Moreover, whoever was prosecuted under such legislation, it would not be Sir Oswald Mosley and his Union Movement, nor the organisers of the League of Empire Loyalists, the 'National Labour Party', or the White Defence League, who have all sanctimoniously deprecated the use of violence, and assured us that they "feel sorry" for the West Indians. But only people who think in purely

†Robb: *Working-Class Anti-Semite* 1954.

## Miners to Open Up Old Mine?

### An Answer to Unemployment

IN these columns we have several times in the past suggested that one answer to the closure of pits as 'uneconomic' by the Coal Board would be for the miners to take over the control and working of those mines themselves.

In suggesting this we have been confident that the workers would be able to find means to operate efficiently and economically but we have not overlooked the fact that capital is an important factor. Our reply to its lack was to point to the vast sums in the coffers of the

National Union of Mineworkers and to suggest that there was no better use for union funds than to set up union members in the business of running their own industry.

Against this, however, one has to recognise the bitter hostility and fear on the part of union officials to anything in the nature of the ideas of workers' control. They hate them as much as the bosses, and much prefer their members to remain the paid servants of employers, subject to all the indignity and insecurity that entails, than to become their own masters, independent of employer and union spokesman alike.

We therefore watch with interest the possibilities of miners taking over a pit near Berwick-on-Tweed in an attempt to solve their unemployment problems following closures by the National Coal Board.

### Pit Closed

Last February the N.C.B. shut down Blackhill Colliery, a couple of miles from the village of Scremerston, south of Berwick. 200 men were put out of work by that piece of economic planning, out of which 100 are still unemployed. Those who have found work have had to go out of the district to find it on the other side of the county and come home to their families at week-ends. 45 men were kept on at Blackhill on temporary salvage work which may soon come to an end.

It is not Blackhill, however, that they have thought of taking over, but an old drift mine that has not been worked since 1907!

It is thought that it was flooded then, and given up because existing means of pumping were insufficient to keep it workable. Now, the men of Scremerston think that, with modern pumps, they could drain the mine and get at what is reputed to be a 3ft. 7ins. seam of good coal.

This optimism and initiative is coming from the men themselves. When the threat to close Blackhill first arose, there was set up a 'Blackhill Colliery Defence Committee' under the acting chairmanship of the Mayor of Berwick, and now this committee has applied to the Coal Board for a licence, in the name of the local branch of the N.U.M. (Oh yes—a licence to run a mine and sell the coal in competition with the National Coal Board has to be granted by the National Coal Board! Among the conditions are that no more than thirty men are employed underground and that the licensee complies with 'any reasonable direction concerning working methods, price and destination of the coal!')

### No Cash From Union

Capital is the snag. It is estimated that it might cost £10,000 to get the Allerdean drift mine going—though this could be cut if the Coal Board would sell salvaged equipment from Blackhill at scrap prices.

But the figure might not be unattainable. A builder from nearby Morpeth has offered to put up £1,000 if the miners will do the same between them (and one has offered

his savings of £200). The interesting thing is that the miners' union has not offered any money—only the name for licensing purposes.

Another factor is that a private mining company is also putting in an application for a licence, and has in fact already acquired a lease on the land where Allerdean goes underground. And far from resenting a private company moving in, the union seems relieved at the possibility of its members remaining wage-slaves.

The local NUM secretary said; If the company offered to put up the money and guaranteed to employ local men, we would certainly give very careful consideration indeed to the question of withdrawing our own application.

### What are They Afraid of?

Needless to say, the men would rather go ahead with their own scheme, if the money can be found. But they are not without opposition locally. For instance the vicar of Scremerston, the Rev. R. B. Chell, is opposed to their scheme. He argues that such a small enterprise would only scratch the surface of the area's unemployment problem and that what is wanted is the establishment of light industry in Scremerston to bring alternative employment.

Which shows how much he understands of the miners' mentality, and also shows that like the miners' own union officials, he would rather see the men remaining wage-slaves than seeking the dignity of working for themselves as a co-operative.

We say that the miners of Scremerston should be given every encouragement to go ahead. They should be financed, or at least their investors guaranteed, by their union. If they lose—well, its only money, which could easily be made up by a levy on all the working miners, after all. If they win, they prove again the ability of workers to organise their work themselves and set a great example to other unemployed throughout the country.

But perhaps that's just what the NUM (and the Rev. Chell) are afraid of.

## MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

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## DEPARTMENT OF ANTI-CLIMAXES

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., Feb. 25.

The Air Force announced today that it has a machine that can receive instructions in English, figure out how to make whatever is wanted, and teach other machines how to make it.

An Air Force general said it will enable the United States to "build a war machine that nobody would want to tackle."

Today it made an ashtray.  
*San Francisco Chronicle.*

## A Deficit on the Horizon?

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