

# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"If the State wishes that its citizens respect human life then the State should stop killing."  
 —CLARENCE DARROW

## REFLECTIONS ON CAPITALISM & WAR

ONE of the "positive" by-products of war, and cold war, we are told, is a speeding-up of scientific research in most fields to the material benefit of mankind. One of the benefits of the capitalist economy is that competition for markets results in technological advance with a consequent expansion of production, which not only benefits the industrialists and share-holders, but brings within the financial grasp of large numbers of families the "labour saving" gadgets and the means for "enjoying life to the full", such as motor-cars, T.V. sets and air-travel, which less than fifty years ago were luxuries which only the very rich could afford. It is also argued, and there is plenty of evidence to support the view, that money incentives do encourage people to work harder, to use their brains and skill to work more efficiently and effectively.

All these arguments, however, prove very little beyond the fact that scientific research is speeded up in time of war; that mass production in a capitalist economy requires mass markets for its survival; that money as well as being the "root of all evil" is also the open sesame to the satisfaction of the material luxuries which a growing number of people equate with the pursuit of happiness.

But all this does not prove that war is the *only* method of speeding up scientific research, or that capitalism is the *only* way to mass produce the goods and services mankind needs to maintain life and health, any more than money is the *only* incentive which induces people to work harder or more intelligently. To-day the "good" things that

emerge from the system are almost without exception accidental or incidental. They occur not because the welfare of Mankind is the end in view but, as we said at the beginning, as by-products in the course of maintaining and furthering the health of the System. And the system, in more concrete terms, means the interests—the power and/or economic privileged status—of a small section of society.

(Those of our readers who squirm when we use these terms and mutter: "Nineteenth century clichés. The trouble with the anarchists is that they have not advanced beyond Kropotkin. Times have changed", would be well advised to read the City Notes of their daily papers, or brood on last Sunday's *Observer* with its "Brewery Table Talk" by Pendenis or Alan Day's "Ethics of the Take-Over", to realise that *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. What is no longer the same, is that to-day no radical or revolutionary shares the optimism of our nineteenth century predecessors. A significant fact, for to our minds, it is a clear indication that the "system" is stronger, not weaker, than in Kropotkin's day, *though the material conditions of the "masses"—in the industrial nations of Europe—are incomparably better than they were then.*)

★

WHO was it who said "War is the health of the State"? We think that to-day this simple truth, because the System is stronger, more complex and the power struggle more pathological than it was, needs to be re-worded, expanded.

For the 19th century socialists and anarchists the basis of war was economic not ideological. There were colonial wars, which were straightforward piracy, either between rival exploiters for sources of raw material, or wars of subjugation. Then there were the wars between the great powers which were an "inevitable" aspect of the capitalist system. To-day colonialism by the old methods is financially unprofitable, as well as militarily untenable in the long run (Algeria, Kenya, Central Africa, the Belgian Congo and S. Africa are disgusting examples of old style colonialism which are doomed to failure—a process which can be hastened if only we help the "natives" to help themselves).

War between the powers has also become untenable because, once launched, uncontrollable. For this reason the industrialists, through the politicians seek to resolve the ever-present "contradictions of capitalism" by a permanent war economy (a much more profitable way of dealing with the problem than war which, nowadays, not only destroys the "enemy" but the vital "markets" as well!) But if war has become untenable equally would the power struggle be reduced to an obvious farce if the political stars relied on argument alone, without the backing of force "if necessary".

That there is "no honour among thieves" applies equally to capitalists and politicians. As we have pointed out on other occasions, the capitalist class is united only in defending itself against the working class, but that basically it is monopolistic, which means survival of the richest. Similarly with politicians. Even if they play the game according to the rules; even if on occasion they will agree to compromise, to give pres-

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### The Mrs. Christos Case

## Mutual Aid in Action

MRS. EFTHISHIA CHRISTOS, a widow with four young children, three of whom suffer from tuberculosis, was jailed last week by Mr. Geoffrey Rose, Stipendiary Magistrate at Lambeth Court (who has since died) because she committed the terrible crime of earning by sewing, sums varying from £2 to £3 per week while in receipt of National Assistance, without declaring these massive earnings to the National Assistance Board.

Mrs. Christos used the money to buy special food and clothing for the three tuberculous children, but this did not appear to the magistrate to be a sufficient reason why he should regard the matter with any compassion. He sent her to prison, thus showing himself to be not only harsh and lacking in understanding, but supremely unconscious about the welfare of the four children.

### The Neighbours Care

Luckily some people do care, however. The case received widespread publicity in the Press, who immediately discovered that the children were being well cared for by neighbours, so that they would not have to go into an institution while their mother was away.

Equally heartening, however, has been the response of workers in the area. First to act were the dockers, who raised £100 at a dockgate meeting and sent a deputation to the Home Office with a petition containing over a thousand signatures protesting against the sentence.

The dockers were followed by the firemen. A member of the executive of the Fire Brigades' Union arranged for an appeal for Mrs. Christos and added that she 'need not worry about the cost.' He was not speaking on behalf of the union, however. As in the case of the dockers, the action is quite spontaneous and unofficial, and at a London dock-gate meeting in the Royal group on Monday, Mr. J. Kavanagh, chairman of the dockers' fund for the widow, said that dockers in the group would guarantee any money needed by Mrs. Christos in her legal fight.

### Out on Bail

First result of the rallying round has been that an appeal was lodged on Mrs. Christos' behalf and she was let out on bail after being inside for four days. During that time her children were looked after by her neighbours, particularly by Mrs. Jean Lagey (known to the children

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## 'World Refugee Year'

NOTTING HILL, a tiny area located in the London area, now qualifies for the long list of places associated with hatred and fear, and as we ponder the question "what can we do" to help solve the causes of prejudice and violence new sets of problems engage our attention. Not that human suffering is new but its existence on such a large scale in present day society is due to our indifference and not to lack of material resources.

This week begins "World Refugee Year" a move sponsored by 59 nations to help 30,000,000 homeless and stateless men, women and children who, through the folly and failure of those who "run society", are uprooted and without hope. The words of one refugee—"we don't know what we are living for"—is a shattering charge against "responsible" governments and the people who support them.

To sponsor a fund to materially help the millions of homeless refugees is the least governments can do, and although the British target is £2,000,000 the Government has promised to contribute only £100,000; the remainder, if raised, will come from those ordinary people whose consciences have been awakened sufficiently to part with a few shillings.

When Britain sponsored the resolution passed by the United Nations Assembly in December, 1958 these words were included in the aims of

the Refugee Year:—

"To encourage additional opportunities for permanent refugee solutions, through voluntary repatriation, resettlement or integration, on a purely humanitarian basis . . ."

According to *The Observer* (Sunday, May 31st), it is political gain which sometimes governs the choice of refugees to be aided. We quote:

It is, nevertheless, a melancholy fact that there are large groups of refugees of which the United Nations takes no official cognisance—for instance, the Algerian refugees in North Africa, whose sufferings last winter were very severe.

There is also a tendency for most aid to flow to those refugees from whom immediate political capital can be made. Aid for the Algerians has come from behind the Iron Curtain; the West made a stirring effort for the Hungarians.

Resettlement or integration on a "purely humanitarian" basis?

We hope that the money can be raised, for it cannot materially help refugees in camps if we merely point our fingers at the guilty people who are largely responsible for their condition. But as we dip our hands into our pockets in this Refugee Year and congratulate ourselves on having contributed to a "good cause", maybe we can also give a constructive thought to the reasons why millions of people are rotting in camps in Europe or dying in the streets of Asia.

R.

### THE HERRENVOLK

WINDHOEK (S. W. AFRICA), MAY 27.

Two white policemen who gave each member of an African football team four cuts with their sjamboks (hide whips) have been convicted on fourteen charges of assault and fined £70 between them at Otjivarongo Magistrates' Court north of here.

The Court heard yesterday that after a car belonging to the footballers had broken down they attempted to stop passing motorists. Complaints were made to the police and Johan Thomas Brits, aged 29, and Claud Diedrick Venter, aged 21, went to the scene. After an argument they decided arbitrarily to inflict corporal punishment rather than lay charges. The footballers laid complaints.

—Reuter.

### PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 22

Deficit on Freedom £440  
 Contributions received £447  
 SURPLUS £7

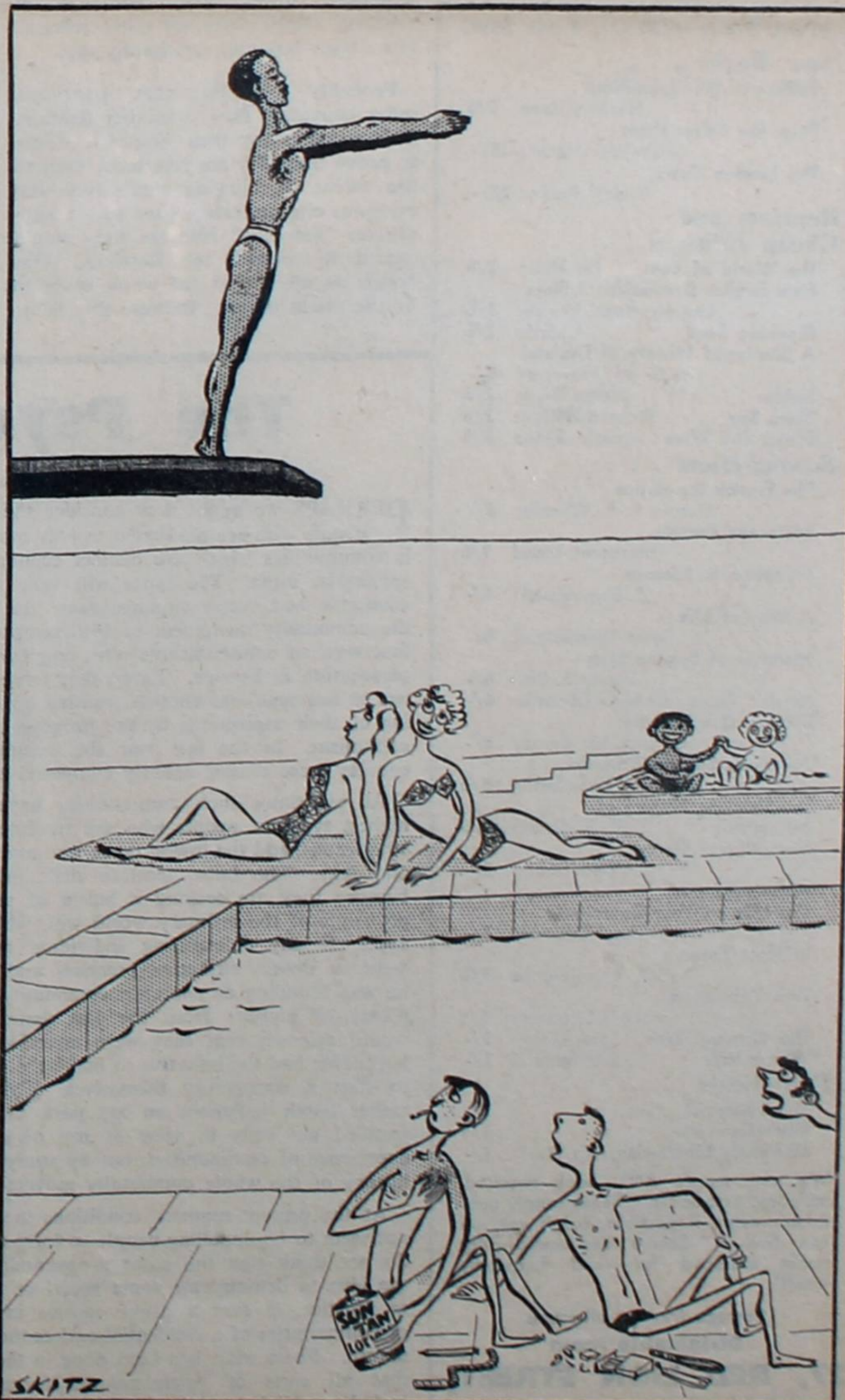
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Denver: A.E.J. 10/6; Greenford: Anon. 7/8; Wolverhampton: J.G.L.\* 2/6; Los Angeles: M.B. 14/-; London: Anon. 4/6; London: O.H. 2/3; London: J.S.\* 3/-; Tampa: K.C. 14/-; London: J.S. 2/6.

Total ... 3 0 9  
 Previously acknowledged ... 444 0 3  
 1959 TOTAL TO DATE ... £447 1 0

GIFT OF BOOKS: London: Anon.

\*Indicates regular contributor.



'Yeah, yer can tell they're inferior by the colour of their skin!'

## BOOK REVIEWS

## IS AMERICA A MATRIARCHY

**THE AMERICAN WOMAN**, by E. J. Dingwall, Signet Books, 4s.

"SEX-HUNGRY, spoiled, self-centred, aggressive, clothes-happy, frustrated, neurotic... this is how a British anthropologist sees the typical American girl... cries the blurb, underneath a drawing of a typical Thurber wife and husband. "What's wrong with American women?" it shouts in block capitals, on the back cover, "America is a woman's world, a world in which... women have succeeded in everything except the art of being truly feminine."

No doubt all this will ensure the work a ready sale, particularly among American women, whose conduct however is not likely to be much changed by the reading.

In spite of this sensationalism the book is a serious study of one of the causes of neurosis in America. E. J. Dingwall believes that the trouble with American society is that the woman is raised into a position of dominance unsuited to her character. This has the effect of making the men unsure of their masculinity and the women into power-hungry creatures.

To a certain extent this is no doubt true. Dingwall's position is a Freudian one, sometimes almost a Strindbergian one. He believes that the mentality of the sexes is very different, and that they cannot play each other's rôles without harm. However there are an enormous number of activities in the modern world that are neither specifically masculine nor specifically feminine, and there seems no harm in both sexes going in for these. The trouble with America is that while the woman engages in cultural pursuits the man is reduced to a money-making machine. Consequently the women have some justification for regarding themselves as members of a superior sex.

G. Legman, in his survey of American popular literature "Love and Death",

considered that America was a society in which the female was totally subjected to male values. He covered much the same ground as Dingwall, but came to what appears to be a totally opposite conclusion. J. B. Priestley, in "Journey Down a Rainbow", says that American women are "bewildered" when they are told they are living in a matriarchy.

It seems to me that both Dingwall and Legman are right. It depends on which way you look at it. The situation is one for which both sexes are equally responsible. The women are oppressive in the demands they make on their men, but it was the men who put them on their pedestal in the first place.

Dingwall cites innumerable examples of the way American women dominate American men, but one can counter them with accounts of the way women who fall from their pedestal are treated. I was sent a book for review concerning the treatment of American prostitutes and female drug addicts, and I was compelled to return it unreviewed and mostly unread. A couple of chapters had described such horrors of brutality that I felt I could not bear to read any more. One would have to go to an account of the Nazi treatment of the Jews for anything comparable.

Dingwall seems to make the usual Anglo-Saxon mistake of idealising the Latin peoples, and the European attitude to women generally is too kindly treated by him. I have never read a book about life in the United States without feeling glad I don't have to live there, but the truth is that, after all, the American sexual taboos are taken lock stock and barrel from Europe, and I doubt whether they are really any severer than those of the Old World. I think a very good case could be made out that no American civilisation, either ancient or modern, has ever produced anything original. All the cultural elements being introduced from the Old World and developed, usually in a rather exaggerated form. Even jazz is derived from African music. One has only to go to the provincial parts of Europe, Northern and Southern, to see puritanism at its worst. In most European countries there is not the same acquisitive fever that there is in America. Both sexes are more relaxed. More than this one can hardly say.

Probably it is true that Americans suffer extremely from a mother fixation. This accounts for their desperate desire to prove that they are real men, even to the extent of blowing themselves and everyone else up, rather than play a submissive "feminine" rôle (as they would regard it) towards the Russians. This brings us up against the whole question of the incest taboo. Because this taboo

is nearly universal it is taken for granted, just as at one time the earth's obvious flatness was. Yet there can be little doubt that if "kin that are closest shall couple, and care not" a great deal of senseless idealising of parental figures would cease. If mother were a legitimate sexual object much of the unwholesome mystery and exaggerated idealism surrounding her would disappear. Yet such a reform would be too radical for our age.

The only solution for the Americans seems to be that both sexes should come to respect each other as human beings, leaving the question of who was superior to whom in the air and not bothering about it. Surely this is what the phrase "equality of the sexes" should mean. No doubt the male would lead in some situations, the female in others.

There seems to be some evidence that in the earliest civilised societies the men held sway outside the settlement, where they hunted, did the heavy agricultural work and fought when necessary. The women ruled the settlement, whether town or village. The women did not dominate the men in their own sphere, but as time went on the men came to dominate the women's world in every way, till, theoretically at least, even in her own home the woman was no longer mistress. Such a situation is bound to produce a reaction. An easy companionship is now possible between men and women. Let us hope that this develops rather than a swing from male to female domination and back again forever.

ARTHUR W. ULOTH.

## CINEMA

## Jack the Ripper

THERE is a streak of chauvinism, even in the very worst of us, that finds its manifestation in the pride we all feel when one of our native sons is the recipient of international acclaim. Murder is, unfortunately, no longer accepted as an art form so it is fitting that the year that marks the centenary of the birth of the creator of Sherlock Holmes should also pay tribute to that master craftsman of the black art, Jack the Ripper. The art of murder reached its zenith in the gas-lit reign of Victoria and found its finest practitioners among the middle classes, for it was an art peculiar to those peculiar people.

Though practised by other classes it easily lost its finesse, for the working classes coarsened it and the upper classes merely used it as a messy means of achieving a political end.

But for the Victorian middle class it was truly a labour of love. They slaughtered parents, children, lovers and neighbours with a care and a tenderness that the world will never see again. Pale white hands held the poison glass, bearded lips whispered words of love before the trigger was pulled and the bloody footprints of tiny children pattered from the scene of the crime. It was an age when Queen's Counsel lost their case and their clients' lives in an orgy of Churchillian prose, and patriarchal solicitors carefully put their forged wills in order before accepting the gyves. In the last few years murder has become a commonplace yet there is little that one can say in its favour. The object of governmental bureaucratic meddling in Germany and vulgar commercialism in

America it can no longer, I feel, be regarded as an art in its own right. The work of a few Kings Road dilettantes is felt to be worthy of mention but I feel that it is mere pastiche and not worthy of attention.

The supreme master of this intimate and personal art was Jack the Ripper, modest, retiring and a dedicated craftsman who eschewed financial reward and personal honour rather than pervert the furtherance of his dedicated mission. He had nothing in common with the crass commercialism and vulgar headline seeking of the modern practitioner of his art, so Mid-Century Films are to be commended in that seventy-one years after Jack ceased to practise he should be honoured by this film of his major formative years. While one must regret that Mid-Century have chosen to embroider the action and bend the facts one is consoled that there is no repetition of that ghastly occasion when Ivor "pyjamas" Novello in the rôle of Mrs. Belloc Lowndes' "Lodger" slapped his audience across the face with a wet fish by coyly informing the heroine, in the final reel, that he was not really Jack but his frightfully decent brother. Truly a case of good luck Jack I'm all right. Who was this sad little, mad little man that some unknown labelled Jack the Ripper?

Nobody knows. A satanic surgeon avenging his deflowered son? One of the crazy students from the London Hospital? A mad member of one of our cracked and ancient families? I doubt it. In all probability a lonely product of the East End slum who in three months slaughtered six pathetic poverty-ridden women and then having lost his nerve sank back into the swirling slum life never to kill again.

That is my guess. Now all the actors of this shabby farce are dead.

In marble vault and Potter's Field they lie dust among dust.

Sir Charles Warren, the "Keystone" Commissioner of Police who resigned in a huff the day before the last murder, the balmy police bloodhounds who only succeeded in losing themselves (lit.), John "leather apron" Pizer the gabby Pole who succeeded for a time in becoming the chief suspect, Louis Diemshutz the steward of the International Working Men's Club who found immortality by finding the murdered body of the fourth victim and Martha Turner, Mary Ann Nicholls, Annie Chapman, Elizabeth Stride, Catherine Eddowes and Marie Jeannette Kelly the unfortunate women who were the victims of this ghastly joke. Dust among dust.

The film? So, so.

ARTHUR MOYSE.

## How Not to Become an M.P.

**HOW TO BECOME AN M.P.**  
By Gerald Sparrow. (Illustrations by Cummings. Blond).

MR. SPARROW'S book is disappointing. The promise of satirical writing suggested by its title and illustrations is not fulfilled within its pages. It is possible that we no longer find the political farce funny, consequently we may have lost our sense of humour and that is why this reviewer found the biggest laugh in the foreword written by the author.

Taking himself rather more seriously than his ex-colleagues, Mr. Sparrow tells us why he resigned as a Prospective Labour Parliamentary Candidate for Exeter.

"After two years of very hard work," he writes, "I became increasingly aware that the local Labour Party (who were

my supporters) were being infiltrated by people who though they denied they were Communists advocated policies indistinguishable from Communist doctrine. I was unwilling to accept the *Red Flag* as a substitute for *God Save The Queen*, and I resigned."

Mr. Sparrow occasionally comes off his perch to peck at all the political parties but his claim that the Labour Party is no longer Socialist, that it is "ultra-Conservative" and "that they don't really want to change anything at all, not basically", suggests that there was no necessity to resign for the reasons he had given.

The author may think of himself as a gentle satirist, but basically he loves the British Parliamentary System, the Monarchy and all that; when introducing an occasional serious note on these subjects he only succeeds in being pompous.

R.

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## The Psychology of Community Relations—3

(Continued from previous issue)

PERHAPS we might now consider the main types of people who are motivated to join communities—that is communities which are distinct economic, social and residential units. The types will vary with prevailing economic and social circumstances. In the heyday of the community movement in 19th century America, the first wave of communicants were religious refugees from persecution in Europe. Later, they tended to be socialists of one type and another reacting against the thwarting of their aspirations by the progress of 19th century capitalism. In the last war the communities in this country were almost entirely composed of war-resisters.

At all times such communities have attracted the highest types of people who are resolute, energetic and courageous, and the lowest types who are confused, timid and lazy. The latter tend to drift into communities because they are seeking a haven of refuge from the problems of the ordinary world with which they cannot cope. If any enterprising individual at this moment were to obtain attractive premises and announce that he was founding an anarchist community, he would find plenty of recruits from the less desirable types who would discover that they were anarchists, people who had never had the initiative to make the slightest attempt to start a community themselves. This may seem a rather harsh judgment on my part, but I think it is justified not only in view of my own rather limited experience of communities, but by study of the detailed history of the whole community movement.

At the present moment conditions in this country do not seem to be impelling people to form communities. I do not think that the sheer propagandist urge, that is the idea to demonstrate some social or religious theory in practice, is ever a prime motive in the formation of communities of a residential and economically unitary nature. From what has been done in the past we know that all sorts of organizational forms are feasible, including religious authoritarianism, anarchist communism, polygamy, complete sexual communism, complete celibacy. Almost any theory can be made to work in

practice in certain special conditions. The question of the relations between the sexes raises some interesting problems for community organization. Some have held that monogamy or in fact any sexual attachment would act against community solidarity, and hence as in the Shaker communities they practised complete abstinence from sexual intercourse. To some extent they were following the same line of reasoning as Freud who held that the taboos which our society puts upon the expression of sexuality led to aim-inhibited love relationships. He held that sociality was obtained at the expense of sexuality. Men and women would work for the common good because their upbringing had canalized a lot of their energy away from specifically sexual manifestations and towards socially orientated work. One may feel an analogy here between the sexually inactive worker bees who spend all their lives working for the good of the hive, and the Shakers, who holding that sexuality was "an abomination", spent all their lives working for the good of their communities.

But although the Shakers' communities worked in practice, theirs was not the only way. Another method of countering the anti-communal side effects of the pairing together of men and women is complete sexual communism, such as was practised by the Oneida Community. Here there was no marriage and sexual relations were promiscuous, with some conscious attempt to encourage an attitude of "fair shares for all". The system appears to have worked perfectly well, and it was abandoned eventually only through pressures from outside the community.

Perhaps therefore Freud's simple model of energy being directed either to a genital expression of sexuality or to communal work, needs some modification. It is more likely that it is the procreative aspects of sex which tend to disrupt communality. Women are naturally anxious to secure a stable source of sustenance for their children. The most usual way this is done in our society is through the institution of marriage and the family. A woman with children naturally wants her husband to work for the good of the family and not for a bunch of people calling themselves a community, hence

marriage tends to create a conflicting loyalty between family and community. If, however, the community is so organized that everyone regards it as the source of all security and children are regarded as children of the community, as would be the case in sexual communism, then this tendency to fragment into exclusive families is minimal. There are of course stable communities in which the members live in monogamous or polygamous families with a balance maintained between the interests of the individual families and the interests of the community. The Bruderhof Communities are of this character, and perhaps some of the institutions which strike the observer as odd and unnecessary, like the discouragement of conversation at communal meals and the long periods spent in bruderschaft meetings, serve to combat the tendency to fragment into families.

By pointing out that various very different forms of community organization will work in practice, in certain circumstances, I am not saying that I regard all as equally desirable. If I had to choose between living in a community founded on Shaker principles and one founded on the principles of the Oneida community, I would have no hesitation in making my choice. The propagandist effect of showing that a certain type of organization works in practice is therefore small. An anarchist-communist community works in practice—so what? So does a Benedictine monastery; so does the Bruderhof. The only possible propagandist side is to show that people are happier under one form of organization than under another, and this is rather difficult to demonstrate.

In conclusion therefore, I would say that communities exist and will continue to exist as an expression of the needs of those who participate in them, and it is the conditions which prevail in the larger society which chiefly determine the formation of communities. I have tried to show that we all participate in some sort of community anyway, and that the residential economic unit which we call a Community is by no means a different sort of association from many others which are not founded ostensibly for community purposes.

G.

## Reflections on Capitalism and War

Continued from p. 1

tige to the game of diplomacy in the eyes of the people, basically it is a struggle between ambitious, power hungry, mentally sick, men, from which each of them desires to satisfy his lust for the limelight. Among such creatures there can be no honour, no certainty that they will not press the button which will launch mankind into disaster. Each trades on the hope that his opposite number will believe him capable of such an action even though personally he might never be prepared to go so far. But it is obvious that he will not be in a position to create this doubt if in fact there is no button to press! Hence Bevan's famous Brighton remark that to remove the H-bomb from Britain's armoury was the same as sending her Foreign Minister "naked into the conference chamber". And speaking as a politician he was right. (We only publicised his statement at the time because he also posed as being a socialist).

★  
TODAY the vast expenditure on armaments and research is made to (a) appease the industrialists and save the system; (b) to maintain almost-full-employment (for a number of reasons, the least important of which is the belief that workers have a right to live) and (c) to keep-up-with-the-Eisenhowers and the Khrushchevs (De Gaulle has made it quite clear, for instance, that for France to be a Big Power she must possess her home-produced H-bomb. Her possession of The Bomb does not in fact change the East-West power set-up. But from the point of view of *The Game*, the blackmail, France will have status the moment she can demonstrate to the other powers that she too has a button to press).

But though possession of a stock of H-bombs is enough to ensure the destruction of mankind—oneself as well as the "enemy"—the Powers continue their researches on weapons of destruction as if those they already possess are not "ultimate" enough.

In America, for instance, the *News Chronicle's* correspondent, Bruth Rothwell reported recently on the "Think Factory", a "casual place beside the sea in sunny California" where:

physicists, engineers, philosophers and anthropologists sit around in open sports shirts—thinking.

The Rand Corporation, as it is more politely called, is a non-profit company with no shareholders and no dividends and no product—only ideas on the development of more effective ways to kill people.

The palm-shaded Santa Monica beach is only a stone's throw away. Yet the 800 Thinkers (141 of them Ph.D.s, pay rates from 5,000 to 25,000 dollars a year) are too busy thinking to relax.

Their world is at least five years ahead of the rest of us and when they dream, it is of ion rays and space ships far closer than the comic strips.

Rand—the name comes from Research and Development—was formed just after World War II by the U.S. Air Force to work, as the late General "Hap" Arnold put it in his founding memo, on "next-war research."

Only for politicians playing a game of make-believe is it possible to conceive of more "effective" ways to destroy mankind than are available at present.

So to-day instead of "war is the health of the State" we would say "A War Economy is the health of Capitalism; cold war the basis of power politics. But war is universal death."

## PEOPLE AND IDEAS:

# THE CULTURE OF THE GANG

"If we take, for instance, the children of a poor neighbourhood who play in a street or a churchyard, or on a green, we notice at once that a close union exists among them, notwithstanding the temporary fight, and that a union protects them from all kinds of misfortunes."

—PETER KROPOTKIN: "Mutual Aid".

"Gangs represent the spontaneous effort of boys to create a society for themselves where none adequate to their needs exists."

F. N. THRASHER: "The Gang".

"... about the gang protest in mass society. Is it possible that this desire to belong to small groups is an important protest against the mass organisations, the big unions, and so on, the rebellious beginning of the old doctrine of the withering away of the State?"

V. S. PRITCHETT.

★  
ALTHOUGH gang violence in Notting Hill is inevitably interpreted in terms of colour conflict, the view is frequently expressed that this is incidental, and certainly the amount of gang violence which has not involved coloured people tends to confirm this. *The Times* (19/5/59) reported that

"The general impression gained throughout this area is that the trouble is mostly caused by clashes between gangs of young 'toughs' aged between 15 and 18. Their motives are rarely racial hatred and if the coloured people were not in the area the white youths would fight among themselves."

This is in line with the observation from New York that

"usually the ethnic or race factor arises from the accident of segregated housing, low-income migration or population displacement. For the most part white gang boys fight Negro gang boys not because their skin is coloured black but because they live 'in the Project' or on the other side of some real or imaginary line. . . .

"Bedford-Stuyvesant gangs are all Negro. There are no other ethnic groups on which to draw. Here Negro gang boys fight Negro gang. Here is a laboratory demonstration that geography and propinquity—not racial differences—lie at the heart of street combat."

We cannot afford to wait ten years—for the coloured children of Notting Hill to become teen-agers—for a 'laboratory demonstration' here. It is more useful to try to understand the nature of the gang.

The teen-age gang as a social institution is almost universal in Western urban society. We have

no reason to suppose that gangs as such are anti-social simply because the only ones we hear about are the delinquent or criminal ones. Dr. Spinley reports from a working-class district in North-West London the evolution of a boy's social relations outside the family: "As he grows older he joins successively play groups composed of all the children in his street, the boys in his street, and when he goes to work, the gang of the street and closest neighbouring district", and Dr. J. M. Robb remarks of an East London borough:

"As the boy grows older the chief change in his way of life is his gradual transfer after he begins school from the group of children of mixed ages to a unisex gang of boys of his own age. This gang becomes one of the most important influences in his life. Outside school hours he spends most of his time with his friends and, to the extent that his home is unsatisfactory, the gang is likely to provide some degree of compensation for lack of support and security. It is, of course, true that even in districts where it is customary for boys to spend much more time within the home, the local group of age-mates plays an important part, especially in providing support in conflicts, whether open or suppressed, with parents."

Little work seems to have been done to find out why boys form gangs and girls don't, why 'delinquent' acts are so much more common amongst boys than girls, and why the delinquent acts of girls tend to be performed singly while the anti-social activities of boys tend to be performed in groups. Drs. Bowlby and Stott and many others

have indicated that deprivation plays a part in creating a disposition towards anti-social behaviour, and if it is true that the gang provides a degree of compensation in the lives of those who are emotionally or socially deprived, it is not difficult to see that while the potential delinquents may influence the gang towards delinquency, the gang may also, in filling a gap in the child's life, exercise a socialising effect on him and his behaviour.

It is a commonplace that the adolescent tends to derive his ideas and attitudes from his contemporaries rather than from parents and teachers, and that it is easier to change the attitudes of the group as a whole than to create a divergent attitude in one member of the group. Thus "the natural gangs, cliques, societies and other adolescent groups represent one of the ideal units for effective education".

### Punishment is pointless

This makes it a pity that all society can think of doing about teen-age gangs is to try and break them up. "Punitive or repressive methods are no more than a misunderstanding of the social psychology of the gang, and because of this they can have little permanent or constructive effect", declare M. L. Turner and J. C. Spencer in their contribution to the symposium *Spontaneous Youth Groups*, and experience in New York seems to bear them out. Those who think that we can end gang violence in Notting Hill by filling the streets with policemen should note Mr. Harrison Salisbury's observation that "Nowhere will you find a heavier concentration of police than in Bedford-Stuyvesant. Nowhere are the police quicker to wield their night-sticks on street-corner youngsters. Nowhere are more youngsters jailed for 'unlawful assembly'. And nowhere is there more gang activity."

Many people concerned with "the service of youth" see the gang and the club as two cultural antitheses. The gang element has to be excluded

from the club, and at the same time the club has to wean away or rescue the gang member from his gang.

"I asked the leader where the room was where the youngster could just sit and jaw; he told me that there was now no such room as he had no need for it. As we walked round I began to notice one significant difference and I asked the leader about it.

"Oh yes," he said, "Most of the layabouts just left. I have a much better type of youngster in the club today."

In North Kensington Mrs. Mary Stocks is a little more perceptive, saying in her report to the Kensington Council of Social Service, that the "perennial" problem in their Community Centre's Youth Club is: Should the disorderly members be turned out, or should they be regarded as the club's most vital responsibility? Both policies have at times been pursued. At the moment the policy is to keep out the "disorderly elements" who make life "intolerable" for those who wanted to pursue constructive activities.

In this light we may define the gang as the club of the "unclubbables", and in this connection we may regret that Barbara Wootton, who in a new book has cast a critical searchlight on theories on the origins of delinquency, has not examined prevailing ideas about gangs. In her discussion of the belief that membership of a social club or organisation for the constructive use of leisure militates against delinquency, she concludes, after examining 21 studies that

"such evidence as we have of a tendency for club members to be less delinquent than non-members is so slight as to be insignificant."

One of the more interesting American theories on why gangs should undertake anti-social activities is that of Albert K. Cohen, whose *Delinquent Boys, the Culture of the Gang* (1955) explains the existence of "delinquent sub-cultures" in working-class districts as one of "status-frustration".

"The working-class boy is thrust into the competitive system where achievement is judged by middle-class standards of behaviour and performance. Ill-prepared and poorly-motivated, the working-class boy is frustrated in his status aspirations by middle-class society. The delinquent sub-culture represents a solution to the working-class boy's problem for it enables him to 'break clean' with the middle-class morality and legitimises hostility and aggression 'without moral inhibitions on the free expression of aggression against the sources of his frustrations.' Thus the delinquent sub-culture is characterised by non-utilitarian, malicious, and negativistic values as 'an attack on the middle-class where their egos are most vulnerable. . . . It expresses contempt for a way of life by making its opposite a criterion of status.'

Continued on p. 4

## VIEWPOINT

# A Tolstoyan Principle

BEFORE the days of technology and mass communication, the qualities of the good life were somewhat snobbishly thought to be private excellences. They could be enjoyed, that is, without much intrusion of vulgarity. The classes were stratified, learning belonged to the few (it still does, of course, but not so noticeably), and standards were set by persons of recognized authority.

This cloistered serenity is gone. We have had an industrial revolution, a democratic revolution, and along with these developments what Ortega y Gasset called the "revolt of the masses." Vulgarity has been armed. Acquisitive aggression, which used to spread over a county, now spreads around the world. Gresham's law applied to the negotiable element in culture has driven delicacy and sensibility into the interstices of society. Various narcotic preparations (not only the alcoholic kind, as Niccolò Tucci points out) are now vended with full respectability.

Those who deplore this trend—it is much more than a "trend"; it is a far-reaching transformation of our lives—don't quite know what to do about it, how to deal with it. Some of them, like Albert Jay Nock, freely admit that the change has made them into "superfluous men." Others, with a deeper complaint, join the ranks of the Existentialists, charging that Nature has played a ghastly joke on our will to know, our hunger to understand. Then there are those who try to make peace with what they recognize as revolutionary changes in the affairs and relationships of human beings—a good illustration of this attitude being found in Lyman Bryson's *The Next America*. A later book that ought to be read along with the Bryson volume is *The Waist-high Culture* by Thomas Griffith (Harcourt, Brace).

The problem is not just that mass production and mass communications have diluted the values of a politer epoch. New issues are emerging—issues which cannot be defined according to past canons of manners, aesthetics, and morality. Without meaning to suggest that it brought a great light, we might say that some attempt at redefinition of values took place in James Jones' *From Here to Eternity*, which may help to account for the extraordinary popularity of this book. The issue, for Jones' characters, is personal integrity in a mass situation. Army life is itself the prototype of the mass situation, so that the author sets the story up for a drama of personal defeat, yet out of it comes an intensely human, twentieth-century version of William of Orange's great utterance—"It is not necessary to hope in order to undertake; it is not necessary to succeed in order to persevere."

A similar feeling arises from Tom Chamales' *Never So Few*. The point is that we are beginning to get books and writing which struggle to break through the dead weight of the mass culture and to illumine the decisions of individual man. When you can find work like Tucci's *Paris Review* article [Notes on Drunkenness], and keep on finding material which cuts through conventional assumptions and categories to look at the actual human situation in a mass society, you know that good men are working on this question and that they are going to find something out—probably enough to save both our hides and our souls.

The problem of individual human decision is the bedrock foundation of philosophy. Once the question of what to do about the mass society is reduced to this issue, we can get somewhere with our thinking.

Meanwhile, the thing that seems im-

portant is to keep alive the idea of really clean alternatives. Sure, you can do some good working for the mass media. Sure, there is a good movie now and then, and there are some "fine dramas" on television. A man with taste and time on his hands can worm his way around in our society and see and hear some things worth his attention.

But we must never forget, when we see an Arthur Miller play like *A View from the Bridge*, that Miller has a movie that he can't get anyone to produce, and what is to be done about that?

In any culture in transition, there have to be people unwilling to settle for half. If a mass society is bound to have diluted values anyway, somebody has to supply it with something really good, that can stand a little dilution, and maybe a lot.

Somebody has to feed the culture unadulterated materials. Somebody has to work for something beside money and somebody has to revolt without getting drunk to get away from it all. A principle is involved—a Tolstoyan principle, although others have practised it, too. The principle is to do what you think is right and good, regardless of what other people are willing to do, and if conditions won't let you do what you think is right and good, then start out by creating the conditions that will let you. Every man can do this in his own way. It is not possible to stop him. Nobody can stop him, but himself. Human beings are able to do what they are determined to do. They always have been and they always will be. This is why human beings have a history. They are not animals, which always do things the same way. A human life is the track of a unique individuality, but a man has to find his track before he becomes an individual—find it by making it.

(From MANAS, Los Angeles 1/4/59)

## Price of Progress

(From the correspondence columns of the "Manchester Guardian")

Sir,—Your article of May 10th "Facing Up To Noise From The Air" may mislead some people about the noise from big jet aircraft.

I have the misfortune to live about a mile from the edge of London Airport and, my wife being much afflicted by the noise of the Boeing 707, we have measured this sound. Between May 2 and May 8, a Dawe sound level meter Type 1400 D recorded the sound level in my garden on each daylight occasion, seven in all, that the Boeing 707 took off westwards over us, as 117, 100, 117, 114, 117, 116 and 117 decibels respectively. Such levels are not far short of the 120 decibels given by most authorities as the threshold of tolerance, and they are quite enough to cause symptoms of panic fear in my children when they hear the aeroplane approaching.

S. T. DAVID.

Stanwell Moor.

## The National Union of Public Employees Conference

# WORK OR EMPLOYMENT?

AT the conference of the National Union of Public Employees last week, the general secretary Mr. Bryn Roberts deplored the lack of power of the T.U.C. General Council. He is reported (*Manchester Guardian* 25/5/59) as having said that "in the absence of a national wage policy, wage negotiations were becoming more and more unreal, and the unions were having less and less say in what wage settlements should be." It was regrettable that the General Council did not concern itself with that; "but we must be charitable: at present the General Council has no more power than the Mothers' Union."

The report does not mention Mr. Roberts' arguments in favour of the National Wage Policy, and the benefits to be expected from it; nor does it make clear over whom he wishes the T.U.C. Council to exercise power. However, as he emphasises the decline in the rôle of unions, there was presumably a time not so long ago when the negotiating set-up was more or less to his agreement. The issue seems to lie in the nature of the power wielded, or not wielded, by the Council. It is, like the House of Commons, a representative body, and apart from minor electoral injustices, it reflects, whether we like and approve of it or not, the predominant attitudes of workers. It can only exert power because it is a fairly representative body. The Mothers' Union quoted by Mr. Roberts has a certain power among middle-class ladies because it expresses in an organised form the prejudices which are widespread among them, but only enthusiastically believed in by a minority, and thereby gives the rest a concrete expression of a standard to keep to. In the same way, there seems to be a wide acceptance among trade unionists of the fundamental rightness of the system of bosses, workers, and wage slavery, and while and as long as this persists, the T.U.C. Council will succeed or fail in its "settlements", cold business deals conducted by well-paid officials which involve the living standards of working people and their families, and the results will be accepted.

Here and there, voices are raised which point to a slow awakening to the fact that despite the technical and scientific advances of the last fifty years, which have lifted poverty from the face of England, the productive worker is still at the bottom of the social structure, and particularly so if he is a producer of useful commodities.

Continuing his speech introducing the executive report to the conference of the N.U.P.E. mentioned above, Mr. Roberts said that "although man could travel faster than sound, make H-bombs, and hurl missiles from one continent to another, it was an almost impossible task for public employees to balance their

### Mutual Aid in Action

Continued from p. 1

as 'Auntie Jean' and Mr. John Lagey, her husband, who is a professional wrestler, and another neighbour who sleeps with the children at night and gets them off to school in the mornings.

Mrs. Lagey said: "We were shocked when Mrs. Christos was sent to prison. She had to work to get enough money for proper nourishment for the three young children, who all have tuberculosis.

"She worked hard, sometimes until two in the morning, and she only got about 2½d. a skirt, for sewing on hooks and eyes."

And her husband added: "We won't let the children go into a home. We will do everything to look after them until their mother comes back."

Now Mrs. Christos is back with her children, awaiting her appeal, and there can hardly be any doubt that the sentence will be quashed. The splendid example of mutual aid provided by her neighbours and by the dockers and firemen is most heartwarming indeed.

Of course Mrs. Christos' economic problems—in the Welfare State and all—will still have to be solved.

weekly family budgets. Automation in factory and office, instead of enhancing the workers' standard of living was producing redundancy and unemployment, and the workers remaining in employment were no better off. However, investors were certainly better off."

He might of course have taken a broader view of the parasites who are flourishing during this period of unemployment and hardship, and denounced not only the investors, but the myriads of advertising operatives, labour relations experts, and technical bureaucrats who by doing nothing useful, and by belonging to the right set (which reads the *Observer* and *New Statesman!*), manage to obtain salaries up to three times as high as those of many useful workers.

At another point in the proceedings, the conference president, Mr. H. R. Groves asked "whether any sensible person believed that full employment, in the sense that a job was always available for every person who wanted it, was a position which could be assured in the future. He thought not, and believed that the approach to the problem must be on quite different lines from those which have been adopted in the past. Unemployment, stripped of such fears as loss of income and insecurity, would lose its terrors, and the union needed to adopt an entirely different attitude of mind to the problem."

These comments fail to distinguish clearly between *work* and *employment*. The former involves recognizing something which needs to be done, and setting about doing it, either individually, in collaboration with a group of like-minded people, or through the channels of an appropriate organisation. Employment implies being forced to place one's

life in the hands of a boss, often the State, and to perform the tasks which it regards as useful and necessary, in return for permission to enjoy a small proportion of the fruits of production. It is inconceivable that there should ever be a lack of work; that anyone should be unable to find any opportunity to use his physical or mental energy in making life richer or more interesting for himself and for people around him. If this aspect of work were the predominating one there would be no fears of automation, which could only increase its

potentialities. However, for most people the overshadowing question is employment or unemployment. Access to the satisfaction of human needs is only possible, under capitalism, for the vast majority of people if they can find, and are prepared to accept some such employment. The current myth is that this situation results in a satisfactory and economic distribution of labour, and a production geared to satisfying needs is so clearly false that its acceptance can only be regarded as evidence of the psychological *force majeure* of that part of society which stands behind capitalism and government. Besides the well-known examples of grain burnt in America during the 'thirties, the payments currently made to American farmers to keep land out of cultivation, the dumps of unwanted coal lying about England now, the latest issue of *Reynolds News* (31/5/59) reports a problem in Lancashire where cotton mills had been stepping up production on the strength of a boom, only to find themselves frustrated by a lack of weavers, who had left the industry as a result of the contraction over the last five years. The work done by those who remain in employment is illuminated by the comments on "Business Efficiency" made in connection with the exhibition. The *Guardian* (25/5/59) shows a picture illustrating the introduction of clocking-on among office workers, and ends its discussion of this with the hope that the increase in comfort and cleanliness of conditions for these workers will compensate them for their loss of dignity, while the *Observer* (24/5/59) asks in a headline "Is your journey really necessary?" and discusses the removal of offices from central London to the suburbs. It could have asked, "Is your job

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## The Culture of the Gang

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Cohen maintains that far from being mentally ill, the delinquent appears to have adjusted himself to an otherwise intolerable situation precisely through his participation in a delinquent gang, but his critics point out that there is ample evidence that American middle-class adolescents are engaged in the kinds of activities which he uses to support his description of the working-class delinquent sub-culture.

Another view is that of A. S. Neill who declares that "I feel sure that most hateful coshings and stabbings are the result of un-lived-out play". Support for this comes from an observation by Mr. John Beavan:

"I know one or two young people equipped with modern psychological skills who have patiently made relations with small gangs of Teds and won a little of their confidence. They say that these teenagers are like disturbed little children. They will be playing happily one moment and beating one another up and breaking up the joint the next. When the storm is over, they are peaceful again and seem to be unaware that they have behaved outrageously. Their relations with parents and home are fragmentary. Indeed, they seem never to have been able to make a real relationship with any adult. None of the traditional lads' club methods is of the slightest use with this majority. It is just possible that a person of infinite patience and tolerance who is willing to abandon a censorious attitude to their behaviour without sacrificing his own values might become a point of stability for their lives; but so far nobody I know of has succeeded in this task."

### Socialising the gang

This of course brings us straight back to the teen-age gangs of Notting Hill, North Kensington, Shepherd's Bush, and Paddington, and to the need for what are known in America as "street club workers", undertaking the task of socialising the anti-social gang. We have a small reservoir of knowledge on the techniques and difficulties of this work. Mr. M. L. Turner's account of the Barge Boys' Club in Wapping<sup>4</sup> revealed that "the group held within itself the means of its own salvation", as well as the fact that "the worker who removes the 'troublesome gang leader' in order to control the gang is courting disaster", while in his contribution

to *Spontaneous Youth Groups*, he emphasises that

"whereas the spontaneous youth group, in general, makes a positive contribution to the social and emotional development of its members, the gang on the other hand has the disadvantage that it frequently constitutes a nuisance to the community. It is clear . . . that no policy of simple repression can hope to succeed. Such a policy rests on a false diagnosis. Society can only use and help the gang by building on such cohesion and spontaneity as already exists and assisting in the development of more constructive behaviour."<sup>5</sup>

and he goes on to describe with reference to an unsuccessful attempt of his in Hoxton, the enormous difficulties of making a real contact with the gang on a basis of confidence.

In the context of race relations, interesting work of exactly this kind was undertaken by an American group, the Commission on Community Relations in a town known as "Seaside" with a population of Jewish, Italian and Negro origins. A young, tough and non-censorious member of the group "hung around" and was eventually accepted by a gang which had engaged in racial violence. His assumptions were those of Clifford Shaw's Chicago Area Project, that

"Destructive behaviour and hostility are reactions to frustration. They provide a means of gaining attention, releasing tension and a vicarious means of overcoming the poverty of the neighbourhood . . . The prestige needs of the gang can be satisfied if community members will give recognition to the constructive activities of the gang. Responsibility and maturity of judgment can be developed through group ownership of property and through democratic discussion and group decision of problems involving all group members."

The questions which were asked at the beginning of his activities were: Can the gang's behaviour be made more acceptable to the community? Can their energies be diverted into constructive activities? Can their negative attitudes and behaviour be changed? After a year's work (in which the gang built a club), it was concluded that "The evidence indicates that the answer to the first two questions is yes. The

third question cannot be answered so unequivocally." The concluding observations in the report were that

"The gang's relations with the adult world had vastly improved. They were reluctant to antagonise adults because they knew it would be bad for the club. There was even an active desire to please adults to whom they looked for recognition. Within a period of nine months fighting had dropped off sharply, with energies directed into constructive channels. Though there had been no conspicuous change in attitudes toward the Negro and Jewish groups (the gang's attitudes were still paralleling those of their prejudiced parents), but behaviour toward these groups had improved. Street fights with them became almost non-existent."<sup>6</sup>

Another interesting example of the socialisation of gangs was in the growth of the 'Steel Band' movement in the John-John district of Port of Spain, Trinidad. Imaginative social welfare and the probation service canalised gang rivalries which had previously involved pitched battles and murder charges, into musical rivalries. (The original Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra which came to London in 1951 was the fruit of this enthusiasm). "Groups which had formerly seen themselves as 'so-and-so's boys' now thought of themselves primarily as a *band* in rivalry with other bands."

### People doing things

People interested in an approach to "youth work" in Notting Hill which does not involve the usual patronising assumptions may care to get in touch with Alex Jacobs of the *ULR Club* (7 Carlisle Street, W.1.).

Approaching the subject from a different age level, the *Friends Work Camp Committee* (Friends House, Euston Road, N.W.1.) is working out, with local residents a scheme to start an adventure playground on a derelict site. (An article in *FREEDOM* for 6/9/58 discussed some of the interesting lessons of the adventure playground movement, which has often—as at Grimsby and Lambeth—not only retained the interest of older children but has enabled them 'willingly and eagerly to serve the community in which they live'—something which must sound utopian in the context of Notting Hill).

really necessary?", for most office work is only relevant to production for profit, to social services paid for by taxes, and for ensuring that no-one slips through the net of arrangement which the State prescribes for each individual.

Whether he knew or intended it or not, Mr. Groves' challenge to his fellow delegates ideas on full employment contains the seed of an idea which could lead to a revolution in social values. The proposal of a rota of employment by means of which people took turns at being unemployed on full pay is so impractical in capitalism as to make anarchist utopianism seem like a policy for tomorrow. However, it lifts a corner of the blanket which social democracy has laid over the ideals of English workers with the suggestion that it is right that a man should be able to enjoy access to his needs independently of the work he is doing or not doing. Perhaps the seed will be smothered among the unthinking majority, or by the trade union officials, who have their jobs to think of too. Anti-socialists often point to the relative prosperity of workers today, as compared with fifty years ago, and certainly the material living standards of a worker in N.W. Europe would seem very high compared with fifty years ago, or even when compared to parts of southern Europe and certainly Asia today. Yet the British workers are still demanding wage increases, and if these produce results, so they should be! It is an example from the social field of a change in standards, and in what people expect from life. Is it not then at least conceivable that standards and demands can be changed in other ways so that people will break loose from the mental chains of acceptance of wage-slavery to capitalism and the State, of employment in jobs which are not productive, satisfying or useful? What a variety of prejudices, and organised vested interests will have to be overcome if that is to be achieved.

P.H.

Endeavours to reach what *The Times* calls "the wild young men who actually cause violent out-breaks" are being made by the *Institute for Group and Social Development* (15 North Side, S.W.4.)

- <sup>1</sup>H. E. Salisbury: *The Shook-Up Generation* (1958).
- <sup>2</sup>D. Ford: *The Delinquent Child* (1957).
- <sup>3</sup>B. Wootton: *Social Science & Social Pathology* (1959).
- <sup>4</sup>M. L. Turner: *Ship Without Sails* (1953).
- <sup>5</sup>P. Kuenstler (ed.): *Spontaneous Youth Groups* (1955).
- <sup>6</sup>R. Hogreve & J. Harding: unpublished reports summarised in A. Marrow: *Living Without Hate* (1951).

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