

# Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Crime is the violence of the individual, law is the violence of government."

—EDDIE SHAW

## The Street Offences Act 1959 Takes its Bow PROSTITUTION & HYPOCRISY

PROSTITUTION is usually referred to as the 'second oldest profession'. What is thought as the oldest, we are not quite sure, but presumably it is that of the priest, for clearly there can be no sale until there is a demand and no demand for the satisfactions of the bought woman until those freely given had been withdrawn.

Prostitution, therefore, must have been preceded by sexually repressive religions or at least social patterns of some kind. The prostitute must have been preceded by functionaries whose aim was the subjection of their fellows and who recognised instinctively what we know more scientifically today: that sexual suppression is a vital aspect of the subjection of the whole person. Pre-occupy a person with problems of a sexual nature and he is too concerned to pay attention to less personal affairs—social or economic affairs, for example.

Nor could prostitution exist in a society other than one in which people were commodities, to be bought and sold like any other market produce. The amusing thing is that it is quite openly accepted that 'every man has his price'; it is not regarded as necessary that a worker should like his job nor is there any scruple in business about tempting a useful employee away from a firm by offers of more money—or cutting down or sacking one who is 'not worth his money'.

People are assessed in cash terms. What you have to offer the buyer of your body or your brain is worked out to the last farthing per hour. Vast, powerful and respectable organisations have been built up for no other purpose than to bargain in such terms. The dignity of a man in selling his skill and his strength at the bench or desk does not enter into the negotiations. Ethics would only confuse the issue.

In the case of the woman selling her skill and her strength on the bed, morality confuses the issue. This sale is regarded as immoral, for the whole field of sexual behaviour is regarded by the religious and the moralists as their particular field of operation, and such is the importance of sexuality that they have found it easy to surround it with irrationalities, fears and taboos which reap such a grand harvest in misery, frustration and bitterness.

### The Rare Ideal

This is not to say that we equate sexual activity precisely with any other. The sex act in its ideal context is an act of love. It is a climax of loving which is unique among all our activities—which is why it is so important and becomes surrounded by such clouds of mysticism.

Unfortunately the ideal situation is as rare in this as in all others—perhaps rarer—but still needs must be satisfied, even if on a less exalted level. Because of the mysticism with which the moralists have in-

vested sexuality, however, the satisfaction of those needs as a strictly commercial transaction, untrammelled with emotional pretences, is regarded as completely against the moral law.

If the emotional pretences do exist in the form of marriage, however, then the transaction can be as commercial as you please. This is just one more of the hypocrisies of this business. Although the moralists protest that it is the inner light with which they are concerned, it is really the outer superficial appearances that matter.

And the Government's action on the Wolfenden proposals, codified in the new Street Offences Act, 1959, which came into effect last Saturday night, is a perfect example of the humbug surrounding sex in our

commercially materialistic, pseudo Christian society.

### Head in the Sand

Prostitution itself (like homosexuality) is not an offence. *Soliciting* is the offence. The object of the new law, therefore, is simply to stop prostitutes openly soliciting in the streets for as long as the moralists can't see what's going on, they can bury their heads in the sands of their ethical desert and pretend it doesn't exist.

Perhaps it is to the Government's credit that it is realistic enough to know that it is impossible to suppress prostitution. While our marriage laws are based on monogamy, while divorce is restricted, while it is materially difficult for the young to marry and often socially difficult

for them to live together, while the economy demands mobility of labour, while sexual appetites are titillated by advertising but repressed by guilty morality, the sale of satisfaction—vicarious and dubious and depressing as it may be—will continue to operate under the sacred laws of supply and demand.

If penalties against prostitutes raise the occupational hazards of their job—they will raise their prices, as any workers will demand danger money. If they are driven from the streets, they will organise other means of making themselves known.

That is, they or their 'protectors' will do so. For like any other lucrative business, prostitution has attracted its organisers, its beginners, its delineators of territory, its 10 per centers (or more!)—in brief, its employers and exploiters.

The procurers and the pimps are held in contempt by respectable society because respectable society

Continued on p. 4



### The Nyasaland Emergency

## The Workings of a Police State

THE Emergency Regulations which the Governor of Nyasaland made last March are, as the Devlin Commission put it, "an elaborate code giving him extensive control over persons and property in the Protectorate. Even without the Emergency Regulations the Governor, as we attempted to show last week (FREEDOM 15/8/59, "A Police State?") already had extensive powers, for, as the Devlin Report points out,

The Governor in Council has power under the ordinary law (Penal Code, sections 70 and 72) to declare a society to be dangerous to the good government of the Protectorate and thereupon it becomes unlawful. He did so in the case of Congress on the morning of 3rd March and thereafter any person who was a member of it was liable to imprisonment for up to seven years.

fact that they can defend a brother worker shows that the power exists, but the union control of the strike indicates that it will not readily be used in a liberative way. Any worker threatened with the sack should be defended vigorously just because he is a human being in need of livelihood. At the same time it must be realised that at the moment the shop stewards' movement is not functioning in such a way as to threaten the capitalists or to free the workers; not because there is anything wrong with its structure, but because libertarian ideas are not yet sufficiently widespread among industrial workers. P.H.

The additional powers conferred on the governor permit him in effect to by-pass the normal processes of the law, and legalize his illegal actions. He no longer needs proof to secure conviction; suspicion, a name on the "Governor's list" are the grounds, under the Emergency, for the arrest and indefinite detention without trial of any person in Nyasaland. Since the Governor is under no obligation to charge detainees with any crime in order to keep them in prison, there can be no machinery for the detainee to appeal against wrongful detention. The only hope he has, and what a slender hope in the circumstances, is that at the end of every six months the Governor is obliged to consider "having regard to all the circumstances of the case" whether it [the detention] should remain in force and if so to what extent.

Thus the Governor besides being the only person empowered to order the indefinite detention of a citizen (an "authorised officer" may make a 28-day order "provided that he has reason to believe that there are grounds for a governor's order" and any police officer or soldier "or anyone else authorised for the purpose" may detain a person for anything from 24 hours to seven days, depending on "the status of the person arresting") is at the same time alone empowered to review his own decisions every six months! Surely not even the most atrophied mind

could consider such a state of affairs as anything but a dictatorship maintained and bolstered by naked force.

The Governor's list contained 208 names of "hard-core detainees" and Operation "Sunrise" was planned as a security measure irrespective of the political activities of those concerned at the time of their arrest. The Governor was anxious to be one move ahead of the citizens, and the Emergency Regulations conferred on him the arbitrary power of arrest, even though no crime had been committed, required to achieve that end. The Devlin Commission concludes from the evidence before it that "it is quite evident that unnecessary and therefore illegal force was used in making a number of these arrests" adding:

"Illegal measures of restraint were also employed. Apart from those instances which may not be defensible judged by any standards, you may think that the incidents show generally a freer use of the baton than would be tolerated in this country."

Having rounded up the "hard-core" the Governor was then faced with the problem of dealing with popular reaction to these arbitrary arrests. At a meeting of the Operations Committee the same day it was decided that there should next be a "vigorous policy of harrassing and breaking up Congress organisers, supports and hoodlums at a

Continued on p. 3

### The Motor Industry Dispute

ANOTHER strike has taken place in the motor car industry, with the usual compromise settlement. The workers in ten of the unions involved at the Cowley Motor Works came out in defence of a shop steward who had been sacked because of his militancy. After a fortnight the steward was offered an equivalent job in another factory.

The Amalgamated Engineering Union did not support the strike, and its members carried on working despite pickets. After the resumption, bad feelings were reported between workers who had been on strike and the A.E.U. men.

This divergence pin-points more sharply than in any recent dispute the criminality of division on the factory floor. All the workers at a particular point of production need an organisation which is their own, to decide on and carry out the fight against the bosses effectively. In this case they were fighting for an important principle; that of defending one of their fellow workers. It is greatly to the credit of the majority of the men that they were ready to come out, after a long period in which the employers have been on the offensive, taking advantage of the effects of the recent trade recession on the production of motor cars. It is equally to the shame of the A.E.U. men who black-legged.

At the same time, the conduct of the dispute was an object lesson in how the lack of militant ideas leads to failure. The emphasis of the national press was on the silliness, rather than the viciousness of industrial action. It was implied that the principle being fought over was just a clash brought about by stubbornness on both sides, and not worth either the loss in production or the loss of wages incurred. When the result was announced, and the compromise seems much more favourable to the employers and Trade Union leaders than it does to the shop stewards or workers, the Union officials and stewards' committees

decided on a return to work, and the men obeyed immediately. Certainly, the lack of really clear principles makes strike action look weak, but a strike serves a good purpose in itself if it is only to remind the world—workers, employers and general public—that it is the workers who create the wealth of a country, and not a coalition based on compromise. However, if the workers are ever going to make headway some widespread changes of attitude will be necessary.

At the moment, defence of a shop steward is a cause which most unionists will support, and so it should be. Are the workers equally concerned about the operation of the shop stewards' movement as they are about its defence? An editorial comment in the *Manchester Guardian* suggests that stewards are often of assistance to the management in running a shop efficiently, and hints that they could be adjusted into the system even more smoothly. Mr. Horsman, the worker in question, pointed out after the settlement that he had played a great part in improving relations between workers and management. What it really boils down to is that shop stewards are occupying a position pretty close to that taken by the ordinary branch officials during the early fighting days of trade unionism. They can take decisions on the spot, negotiate with the local manager on small matters, and if necessary call out a factory to press home a point or two. There is, however, no general desire to get rid of the bosses and take over the factories; and what is more important in the context of day-to-day activities, the idea that the workers should discuss problems together on the job and decide collectively what to do, is hardly apparent. The stewards, however sincere and militant many of them are, are no substitute for widespread consciousness on the part of workers of the role they play in society and the role they could play if they were to exercise their power. The





## S. RHODESIA

## Avoiding Antagonism between Workers

THE notion that a breakdown in working conditions will inevitably lead to a revolutionary change consciously executed by the working class is not one which is held by many anarchists to-day, although socialists of all varieties hide-bound by theory still believe in an almost automatic change (merely accelerated by consciousness).

With this theory goes a kind of faith in the revolutionary nature of the working class—just waiting for the historic moment to show itself—in spite of evidence that a breakdown in an existing social order may lead to dictatorship or merely a change in rule. If the latter is what is meant by "revolution" then there is some evidence of "inevitability", but we mean by revolution a complete change, with the intention of establishing an equalitarian society.

The desire for a more just form of society may be expressed by individuals who have widely differing backgrounds, but in analysing the role of the various groups in society, anarchists conclude that the "working class" is in the weakest position economically (subject as it is to the effects of adverse economic change) but strongest by virtue of numbers and occupation. This strength, however, can only be exercised if organised workers understand their position in society and have a desire to alter its structure basically. Nowhere can such a movement of workers be found in any effective numbers.

Generally workers organised into trade unions are only concerned with defending their immediate sectional interests, and although we come across isolated expressions of genuine solidarity, the motives for "sympathetic strikes" for instance are usually unconnected with principles of brotherhood. It is often a question of time and circumstances, a combination which in itself cannot form a sound basis from which the ideas of equality and justice can grow.

The relationship between workers in different industries in this country is generally a good one, although when one section of them strikes there is not much sympathetic action among fellow trade unionists. This may be due to the policy of their leaders but it also indicates a lack of solidarity at this level among workers.

Where we find a greater gulf between workers is in the relationship between black and white; not very noticeable in this country where the "black" worker constitutes a tiny

minority, but in territories where the coloured labour potential is very high compared to white labour, antagonism is at its lowest level.

At the moment in Southern Rhodesia where the Federal Government cannot be said to be pro-black it has made a proposal for the "advancement of Africans into traditionally European jobs on the state-owned railways". Make no mistake about the reasons why the Government is willing to "advance" Africans; these are economic, and the *Manchester Guardian* Central African Correspondent writes that jobs are being offered at such a low rate of pay that "they will attract only African recruits to these jobs, which have until now been reserved for Europeans."

The African Railway Workers' Union is apparently prepared to consider the offer only as a basis for negotiation, but the European Railway Workers' Union has threatened to strike if the Government goes ahead with its proposal.

When the Rhodesian Railways were nationalised in 1947, the Prime Minister of the time in a letter to the European Union assured them the conditions for the employment of Europeans would continue under nationalisation. This presumably meant that no black workers would be employed in "traditionally European" jobs on the railways. This assurance was underlined in 1953 when the letter appeared as an appendix to the White Paper on the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland "as part of the price the Prime Minister (Sir Godfrey Huggins) paid for the vote of white railwaymen in the referendum on Federation in March, 1953". Now that the more

pressing issue appears to be reduction of costs on the railways through lower wage rates the Government will no doubt interpret the 1947 assurance in a way which will allow it to proceed with the proposals for the employment of African labour. This, however, is an issue which can be left to two groups of white men who were prepared to deprive the Africans of jobs while safeguarding their own particular interests

What we care about is the antagonism which exists between the two sets of unions—one white, one black—for the issue is a moral one involving the concept of superiority on the part of white workers. We know it will be argued that the European Railway Workers' Union is really only interested in defending the economic well-being of its members threatened by cheap African

## The Deficit!

## PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT!

## WEEK 33

Deficit on Freedom	£660
Contributions received	£552
DEFICIT	£108

## August 7 to August 13

London: Anon* 2/3; Enfield: J.S.* 3/-;	
Solihull: K.P.D. 3/-; London: J.S.* 3/-;	
Cheam: J.B. 7/-; Blackpool: R.B.B. 10/-;	
Northwood: E.H. £1/10/0; Wolverhampton:	
J.G.L.* 2/6; Paris: C. per R.M. 7/-; Los	
Angeles: Part proceeds picnic, July 26,	
per J.D. £8/15/0; Enfield: J.S.* 3/6.	
Total	12 6 3
Previously acknowledged	540 11 10

## 1959 TOTAL TO DATE

£552 18 1

GIFT OF BOOKS: London: E.G.

\*Indicates regular contributor.

Communist Economics & Workers' Control Continued from p. 3

competing Ministries, duplicating each other, transporting commodities thousands of unnecessary miles, producing obsolete and unwanted products. There is now no need to labour this point, since Krushchev dwelt on it at length in his 'Decentralisation Decree' (N. S. Krushchev: *Improvement of Industrial Management in the U.S.S.R.*, Soviet News Booklet No. 10, 1957). Statistics were falsified and made meaningless (see Naum Jasny: *Interpreting Soviet Statistics* (Soviet Survey No. 26, Oct. 1958), and to make the system work at all, there ran from Ministry to Ministry in Moscow, what Edward Crankshaws calls

"the shadowy figure of the Fixer, the *Tolkach*, a sort of glorified contact man and plan evader, who drew salary and commission from the various trusts and Ministries and individual plants, justifying his existence by short-circuiting Moscow at all desired points, making sure through quite wonderfully complicated unofficial deals that, no matter what happened to the economy as a whole, his own 'clients' would be supplied with all they needed for the fulfilment of their own plans."

When in 1957 a long list of Ministries were closed down and a series of National Economic Councils set up, it seemed likely that "regional empires would be substituted for centralised ones, horizontal empires for vertical ones, and the Fixers would transfer their attention to new fields". This, according to the students of Soviet affairs is what has happened.

Professor Polanyi has concluded that the Soviet economic system is in practice "a camouflaged market economy and not the centrally directed fully planned economic system which it pretends to be and which Western literature rashly accepts it to be" while Professor Edward Shils goes so far as to say that "It is a tribute to the great genius of the Russian people, their perseverance and their exceptional gifts of improvisation that they can accomplish so much despite the rigid and doctrinaire outlook of their rulers in matters of economic organisation." (*The Soviet Economy: A Discussion*). One may doubt whether the "anarchy" which would result from workers' control of individual enterprises

would be worse than the chaos of central planning.

BUT the assumption behind these criticisms of Communist planning is that the object of planning is the satisfaction of consumer needs. In fact, as the Russians know to their cost, it is not. The priorities of investment policy enforced upon the rival ministries is certainly planned, and needless to say, war potential has come first and consumer goods last. The Soviet people have been continually told that they must tighten their belts now for the sake of a wonderful time in an ever-receding future, and all the talk about the rate of economic growth that matters is the growth in the average consumption of say sugar, butter, meat, clothing and shelter. Over a century ago Herzen asked:

"Do you really wish to condemn human beings alive today to the mere sad role of carayats supporting a floor for others to dance upon? Of wretched galley slaves who, up to their knees in mud, drag a barge with the humble words 'Future Progress' on its flag? A goal which is infinitely remote is not a goal at all, it is a deception."

There is little doubt that in the 'anarchy' of workers' control there would be an emphasis in investment policy on the satisfaction of immediate consumer needs. It is surely a very curious view of human life which sees something reprehensible or improvident in this. The attraction of the Yugoslav "socialist market economy" is precisely because, more than any other Communist economy, it gives some degree of attention to consumer preferences, Tito having made the highly popular pronouncement that those who won socialism should enjoy at least some of its fruits.

Mr. Peter Wiles emphasises that "It is astonishing that people with an intimate and accurate knowledge of how the Soviet system works should consider the possibility of operating on the assumption that planners' preferences are in fact rational in a Communist economy", and Mr. Naum Jasny (*Soviet Survey*, Jan.-March, 1959) in a study of the (now abandoned) sixth Five Year Plan, gives some examples of the irrationality of Soviet 'planning'.

"The sixth FYP was based on the con-

labour, but surely if this is only an economic question all the Unions have to do is to insist that all employees—black and white—are paid the same rate for whatever job they undertake. An agreement to this effect could be made with the African Union and if it refused and its members agreed to work for lower wages than paid to white workers, there would be genuine cause for grievance within the European Unions.

The final decision, assuming the Government intends to carry out its decision without regard to the

European Union, rests with the African Railway Workers' Union which should wisely negotiate the scale of wages for its members paid to white workers. This will not bring about a revolution but it will remove the reasons for economic antagonism between white and black; it will show the Federal Government that it cannot employ cheap labour just when it decides on an "advancement" policy for Africans, and it might even help to weaken the bad feeling which exists between the two racial groups of workers.

R.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

## On C.O. Tribunals

DEAR FRIENDS,

I was the objector referred to a fortnight ago by J.R. in his survey of C.O. tribunals, as the one who 'tends towards anarchism' (misquoted as 'anarchy' in the ex-Kemsley press). Going through the process of objection has certainly filled out my education. The first lesson is that I shouldn't have attempted to justify my objection before five people, who assume the mantle of wisdom and discernment, but who are humanly biased.

That's the second thing to be realised. The panel was biased politically, and it was audacity on their part to claim an impartial approach. The chairman had been a Tory candidate on at least one occasion. When the word anarchy was first mentioned, one of the members, a J.P., visibly started, and stated indignantly that I wanted to do just as I pleased. Little though I knew of anarchist theory, it was obvious that she knew less, as I found out in trying to explain in simpler language what I had already been through one at length.

That is the third lesson—the members of tribunals can be either incredibly stupid, or cunning in their efforts to lead one into making a slip. After I had explained fully my opposition to State authority and my hopes of helping

to establish co-operative settlement, the chairman asked 'like the State farms in Russia?'

Perhaps it was then that I rather gave up, and realised the final lesson. Conscience for these people comes exclusively out of a bible—a 'social' conscience is not within the body of rules of their game. They are there not to test your sincerity, but to separate those religious eccentrics, who are politically harmless from those 'fanatics' who dare to poke their tongues at the Establishment.

For the record, both this tribunal and the Appellate Tribunal rejected my objection as not being conscientious. Subsequently, I was surprisingly fined rather lightly by a Cardiff magistrate for refusing to submit to a medical. Because the sentence was light, the Ministry of National Service are doing the same thing again, and I am soon to appear once more before a magistrate.

Yours,

Rhondda, Aug. 16.

H.D.

## MAJORITY CONTROL

DEAR EDITORS,

I will not venture to tread on Mr. Parker's ground, but it is obvious that P.G.F. does not sufficiently take into account changes which must arise out of a new economy.

His drunks, mental defectives and criminals (how can crime remain without a criminal code?) are largely, if not wholly, products of a Society based on private property. To the extent that such perversions persist, a free Society will assuredly be able to protect itself, either by individual action or by general agreement. In the absence of authority though, who can control? In any event, with freedom in economic and sexual matters, it is difficult to see what remains which cannot be settled by consent.

Yours sincerely,

F.B.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS  
LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP

London Anarchist Group meetings are suspended for the Summer. They will be resumed at new premises in the Autumn.

Date and place to be announced.

## NEW YORK LIBERTARIAN FORUM MEETINGS

Held every Friday night at 12 St. Mark's Place (between 2nd and 3rd Avenues), 3rd floor, N.Y.C., 8.30 p.m.

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