

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"We can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavouring to stifle is a false opinion; and if we were sure, stifling it would be an evil still."
—JOHN STUART MILL

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Threepence

Reflections on the Blackpool Inquest

VOTES OR SOCIALISM?

ONE of the most often repeated themes at the Labour Party's week-end conference at Blackpool was that in order to attract the young people of to-day the Party needed at New Look. As Mr. Gaitskell put it

We have got to show that we are a modern mid-twentieth-century party, looking to the future and not to the past. We must have, for example, modern-looking party premises situated in the right place. In the main street, newly painted and decorated brightly. Attractive and appealing to the public of 1959. They are not all like that today.

But apart from an attractive shop front to draw them in, Mr. Gaitskell thought they should

put more stress on the issues which specially appeal to younger people. I believe these include the cause of colonial freedom; the protection of the individual against ham-handed and arrogant bureaucracy; resistance to the squalid commercialism which threatens to despoil our countryside and disfigure our cities; a dislike of bumbledom in all forms; a great concern for sport and the arts.

If this is indeed what the younger people are specially interested in today what then is all the pother about?

Mr. Bevan too, winding up the inquest dealt at length with youth. During the past ten years a great number of young people had had their material conditions improved and their status rose in consequence.

"Temporarily, their personalities are satisfied with the framework in which they live. They are not conscious of discontent or frustration or limitations. What is our lesson? We must enlarge and expand these personalities so that they become conscious of limitations and restrictions. The problem is one of education. This affluent society is an ugly society. It is a society in which the priorities are all wrong. The language of priorities is the religion of socialism."

Fine sentiments into which one can read a call to rebellion against the false values of this "vulgar" society. But what then did he mean when later he declared that "the flower of youth goes abroad because there are no opportunities at

home"? The flower of our youth as he called them are the people who go abroad because they can earn more money in Canada, America, Australia, etc. . . than in Britain. Mr. Bevan was surely not suggesting that these societies are any less "vulgar" or "ugly" than the motherland.

Another speaker put the point that by 1964 there would be voters to whom the names of Attlee, Stalin and Churchill will mean little or nothing. Presumably this was an argument in favour of a forward-looking Labour Party and not one living in the past. But while we are not alarmed nor surprised by the prospect of oblivion for the politicians the more serious prospects are that by 1964 socialism will mean little or nothing to the public!

It is utter nonsense to say that the Labour Party is living in the past. Of no party which has come forward with a pension scheme which will reach full maturity in the year 2004 can it be said either that it is living in the past or that it has not a care for the future of the youth of today! An allegedly socialist party which shows such an undying faith in the money system that it can envisage it still flourishing in 2004 has indeed shaken away the cobwebs of a past which envisaged a world freed from capitalism and the coin by which it

maintains the class divided, the privilege ridden, society!

HOW right one of the speakers was who suggested that it would be advisable for the labour movement to do less talking and more thinking. It is clear that whatever else it lacks, and that includes the Tories' money, modern shop-fronts, poster campaigns and such like, the movement has an abundance of soap-box orators who get easily carried away by the fluency of their own tongues. The confusion that ensues can only be gauged by reading what was said. We have already cited one example on youth. But the most glaring case of confusion was the use of terms such as "nationalisation", "public ownership" and "common-ownership" by speaker after speaker in which they were used as synonyms, or as distinct terms to suit each particular speaker's argument. Even Mrs. Castle, who said some interesting things, confused government and community, State and public. Above all she and the other 3,000 delegates whatever their differences of interpretation, of ends and means, were meeting at Blackpool to hold an inquest on the October defeat and to find the formula for victory next time. And from the viewpoint of achieving socialism this unity was much more of a stumbling block

than the divergence of opinions such as it was, which, to our minds, could be considered as the only positive aspect of the conference.

IF, as Mrs. Castle maintained, the Labour Party has "spent 50 years

of political life proving to the people of this country that economic and social morality go hand in hand" it is clear from the results that they have been singularly unsuccessful. As Mr. Gaitskell pointed out, the

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Twilight of a Demi-God

MUCH as one may despise the works of a man like Winston Churchill, it is difficult to so harden one's heart as not to feel the pathos of the decay of the man himself.

Nineteen years ago, after an already chequered career in and out of office and the political doghouse, Churchill became the Man of Destiny in Britain's Finest Hour—the later phrase his own assesment of the situation. It has always been a bit difficult for some of us to understand why getting bashed as never before owing to the shortsightedness, stupidity and cupidity of our politicians added up to our finest hour, but presumably something had to be said to make us believe it was wonderful and Churchill's sonorous phrases did the trick for most of the population.

After all, the old war horse's main task in 1940 was to keep our peckers up and try as hard as he could to get America into the war on our side. In this task of gathering allies he was ably assisted by President Roosevelt, who provoked Japan into bombing Pearl Harbour, much to everybody's relief, and by Adolf Hitler who brought Russia in on our side by his own colossal blunder of attacking her while still at war with Britain.

For the rest, Churchills' own telling phrase (uttered some ten years after the war was over) summed it up. He said "The British people supplied the Lion's strength. I only supplied the roar!"

But he roared to such good effect that he became thought of as the greatest man of the century—if not of all time. In 1945 however, the British people showed their Lion's strength at the ballot box and demonstrated that they thought they could dispense with Churchill's vocalising. The old man was never the same again.

And now? Now he celebrates his

eighty-fifth birthday with a fourteen-word speech in Parliament. He totters to his seat, has to pull himself up to struggle to his feet, his rich, fruity tones have dwindled to quavering uncertainties, his eyes dulled by the glaze which tells of purpose gone out of life.

Churchill rode high on the tide of this country's affairs, achieving god-like stature, but unlike real gods (eh?) he is not at all immortal. The Press have been kind to him once again this week, but they must have had his obituaries written for a long time now. For the post war generation he is already only a name.

Churchill is waiting to die. As an influence in his own chosen world he is already dead, his place taken by smoother operators. With him will die a whole way of life—or more accurately, of death. For there can never again be any war leaders of that kind. Snarling insults at your enemy over the radio, would seem to be somewhat ineffectual in the context of what the next war may bring. Bulldogged imperialism, an exalted harrovian attitude towards the workers, the traditions of the House of Marlborough—all these are dying hard, but dying nevertheless. In their place in the establishment come the welfare torism of the Butskills and the soft-flyaway diplomacy of Macwonder and Bevan—even though with H-bombs in the background.

Suez was really the last shot of Churchillism in this country. It did for Churchill's chosen successor, Sir Anthony Eden. The old man himself hangs on, a senile has-been living on past glories. The military leaders who shared his hours of triumph have denounced each other in their memoirs. It seems we must wait until Churchill is really buried before we get the truth of the part he played in the war.

Justice for Africans is Not 'Practical'

THE Colonial Secretary, Mr. I. McLeod, was asked in the Commons on November 24th whether "he was aware" that the right to trial by jury in Kenya was confined to Europeans.

In reply Mr. McLeod said that the Kenya Government

"recently considered the possibility of extending the right to trial by jury to all races, but decided that at present practical considerations make such an extension impossible."

If Africans and Asians in Kenya were granted the same legal treatment reserved for Europeans who have broken the law, it is expected that an additional 52,000 Supreme Court trials would have to take place each year.

Two questions arise out of McLeod's excuse; what are the offences committed by Africans and Asians and how can the Government expect "respect for the law" when it applies its jury system to white offenders only; if the law is supposed to be just in that it provides equal treatment for all citizens regardless of race or colour, should it not make serious attempts to overcome practical difficulties? If there is no time or personnel to cope speedily with all offenders on what basis (if not prejudice) are white law breakers granted trial by jury?

These are questions which can only be answered truthfully by the Government in one way.

Many prisoners are detained for political offences which if tried in open court in front of a jury (which might have the additional disadvantage for the white authorities of consisting partly of Africans) would not present such a pleasant picture of British justice to the rest of the

world as the hypocritical utterances in Parliament would have us believe it is.

It is not the petty thieves and drunkards, etc., who worry the Government, but the hard core of "fanatics" and their supporters whose methods of defence sometimes may admittedly not be "civilized" but whom we cannot expect to improve by the kind of treatment practised in the detention camps, the

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GENERALS DIE IN BED

NEW YORK, SUNDAY.

Three leading generals of World War II admitted today that they were put off by the sight of blood.

"In the war I never visited a hospital or a forward dressing station when the battle was on," Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery told a nation-wide U.S. television audience.

The reason, he said, was that he didn't want to have his nerve weakened "by seeing those poor men all wounded and mangled."

The Field-Marshal, with the U.S. General Mark Clark and the former Wehrmacht General Fridolin von Senger, was being interviewed by Edward R. Murrow in one of his "Small World" discussion programmes.

Asked when he visited his wounded men, Lord Montgomery stated frankly: "I always used to go and visit them when the battle was over."

General von Senger agreed: "It was too much of a strain for a leader to give battle orders while thinking at the same time of the lasting impressions of the wounded he had seen in hospital."

General Mark Clark recalled that at the time of heavy Fifth Army casualties in Italy, he did visit front-line hospitals daily. "But," he told Lord Montgomery, "I expect you had the right approach because I always came out very depressed."

News Chronicle 23/11/59.



CENTENARY

FRANCISCO FERRER

FRANCISCO FERRER was born 100 years ago in the little Catalan village of Alella, four miles outside Barcelona, on January 10th, 1859.

His first job was in a shop, assisting in selling drapery. The proprietor of the shop was a free-thinker, and it was with his inspiration that Francisco began to examine critically the Catholic faith.

In 1886, September 19th, the republicans attempted a rising. The setting for this was the return of conscripts from colonial war in North Africa, and several barracks rose.

While in Spain Ferrer had been active in organising anarchist and anarcho-sindicalist periodicals, and on arrival in Paris he soon became a friend of the anarchist thinkers there.

relate their anarchism to the science, whose popularisation seemed to promise such great progress. Ferrer had profound intellectual resources, which he devoted to this task of learning and digesting knowledge, and seeking ways to use his knowledge for the libertarian cause.

The field which he found was that of education. An idea of the state of education in Spain at that time is given by a few extracts from a speech made by the then Minister of Education, Meño:

"Several rural schools have been closed, because the one window, the only opening to the blue sky and the green fields, through which fresh air necessary to the lungs of the children had to come, was insufficient.

Francisco Ferrer had no need for statistics to tell him of this state of affairs, as he had himself experienced it. Archer, one of his biographers described the school at Alella as "little better than a stable".

Like all potential educational reformers, Ferrer lacked money. However, a friend, Mlle. Meunier, died, and left £30,000 to Ferrer, to help him in his work, and with this he returned to Barcelona in 1900, determined to proceed with the establishment of the Modern School.

Ferrer showed a remarkable, clear grasp of the factors involved in attempting to reform education. He considered the proposition that reform should take place from within, and although he remarks that that is in conformity with evolutionary ideals, he cannot see it working in practice.

Ferrer also saw that if the internal régime of discipline and submission were preserved, all the material and pedagogical improvements in the world would

only make the school a more efficient instrument of the state. On these two points, which lie in the realm of educational sociology rather than that of pedagogy, Ferrer is distinguished by his anarchistic approach, and his contribution is of far greater value than that of the more respectable advanced educationists whose words make temporary fashion in the great educational pastime of sugaring the pill.

The Modern School suffered the hardships of any such venture. It was often difficult to find suitable staff, although a satisfactory group was soon gathered; and the school suffered from vicious attacks in the press, initiated by the clergy.

Ferrer's theories on education were based on his studies of science, but it is clear that his real practice grew from an intuitive appreciation of the emotional needs of children. He swept away punishments and rewards, the examination system, and the authoritarian relationship between teacher and children.

In comparison with progressive ideas in education today, it seems that Ferrer puts a little too much faith in the beneficial potentialities of scientific education. He was a little too sure of the moral codes which he prescribed to take the place of religion.

Nevertheless, in times such as ours when allegedly advanced ideas are given the "progressive muddle" treatment and used by the most reactionary elements in society, particularly in education and psychology, it is both salutary and inspiring to remember Ferrer's achievements as a radical and an atheist, in the face of unscrupulous and vicious clerical opposition.

On May 31st, 1906, an attempt was made to assassinate the king, Alphonso XIII, by a young man who had once been a worker at the Modern School. On this pretext the police arrested Ferrer and other teachers, closed the school, and declared him the instigator of the plot.

FREEDOM

BOOK REVIEW

The Hungarian Secret Police

A STUDY IN INFAMY: The Hungarian Secret Police, by George Mikes. Published by Andre Deutsch, London. 15s.

IF anything in this country ought to be made compulsory, it is the reading of this excellent book by Mr. Mikes; especially for the people who complain in newspapers and Parliament against the British police.

Mr. Mikes, who has a reputation in English literature as a satirist, and who has written a number of books which have amused English-speaking readers, has turned, for the second time, to the country of his origin, Hungary.

The clergy openly petitioned the authorities, declaring that the Modern School was the root of all disturbances in Barcelona. They attained their object, when, after a perversion of a trial, Ferrer was sentenced to death.

Ferrer's short work "The Origin and Ideals of the Modern School" is still available in its English translation, and gives a very good, concise idea of his thought. His daughter, Sol Ferrer, has written his biography "Le véritable Ferrer".

Spain today is as much of a prison of the body and mind as it was fifty or sixty years ago. Co-education is illegal, the church holds complete sway, and the level of education is probably among the lowest in Europe.

ence, in exile? How does a form of life unacceptable to the majority of the electorate emerge and persist, with a self-elected, all-powerful minority at the wheel? What turns the tide, and makes a hopeless, despairing, compliant people start to hate, despise and dream of revenge?

This is indeed a serious book; and the author might well be excused a degree of emotion. In fact the approach is detached, without intrusion of personal hatred, contempt or desire for revenge. It is a book written with sincerity, with a firm and free hand.

As Mr. Mikes puts it, the history of the AVH—Hungarian Secret Police—is the history of Hungary herself, since the political structure of that unfortunate Mid-European country is inseparable from the intrigues of communist Mustapha fighting for control of the omnipotent Secret Police.

The book comprises an introduction, two main parts, and a well-considered epilogue. The first main part deals with the history of the communist secret police, from 1944, when Hungary was still involved in World War II, to the revolution of 1956; its disbandment after the revolution, and reorganisation and rehabilitation under Kadar.

The second main part deals with the filthy, treacherous, inhuman contents of the captured documents. With the methods used in Hungary—as in Russia—of organising informers among the workers and intelligentsia to obtain information from detained persons—political criminals whose "crime" may be nothing more than telling a joke about Rakosi, Stalin, Krushchev or Mr. Kadar himself, in bus, train, or coffee house, to a "friend" who has been organised as an informer. The

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CASANOVA'S ERROR

PARIS, NOVEMBER 12.

The Communist newspaper L'Humanité to-day devotes two pages of self-criticism by Laurent Casanova, a member of the political bureau of the French Communist party. He follows the example of Maurice Thorez, his leader, and confesses having fallen into the error of denouncing Gen. de Gaulle's offer of self-determination to the Algerian people.

The offer was described by the French Communists as a trick until Mr. Khrushchev welcomed it at the Supreme Soviet, a meeting at which M. Thorez was present.

His speech was interpreted here as designed to improve the Paris atmosphere before his visit, and French Communists had no choice but to fall into line. M. Casanova is said to have criticised the French party's Central Committee at a meeting last Tuesday week for an "error" in attacking Gen. de Gaulle's offer.

This does not mean that French Communists approve of the de Gaulle plan as a whole. They now accept the principle of self-determination, but want immediate peace negotiations with the rebels.

In Algiers to-day, various extremist European movements, such as the French National Front, the Popular Movement of May 13 and the Movement for a Corporative State, have set up a joint committee to "resist all attempts to break up the nation."

"DO you mind?" said the newspaper man as I took the paper from his box and was about to insert twopence-halfpenny in the slot, "That's yesterday's paper."

"But I want today's." "Well I suggest you go elsewhere. I've run out."

"When will the next edition come along?"

"I don't know. I'm not having them. I've got to keep my overheads down."

"What do you mean?" A man sidled up to the news-vendor and put something into his hand. He nodded.

"What do you take me for. A newspaper-seller?"

Another man came up and put something in his hand. He nodded.

I said that he gave a reasonably good impersonation. He agreed and held out his hand to a girl who put a small package into it.

"Who do you think makes money out of newspapers? How many do you think you have to sell before you make the price of a bed? How long do you think it takes to sell them?"

I avoided answers to these questions which fortunately seemed to be rhetorical, punctuated as they were by further furtive visitations.

"And as if that wasn't enough we have this new thing to take the bread and butter out of our mouths."

Reminded by this he stuffed his mouth with an enormous ham roll and deftly held out his hand to a young man passing by.

"What new thing?" I asked.

He digested this crass piece of ignorance and the ham roll at the same time, and speechless with indignation (and ham roll) handed me a fortnight old newspaper. There it was, "Butler's Betting

Topical Tips

RUNNERS AND FORM

Shops". I had thought at the time it was a piece of class-distinction amongst servants or the tendency of servants to wager with premises but I remembered a man called Butler in the Government. Came the dawn, as the film subtitles once said, and I recognised that the "news-vendor" was an agent for a bookmaker. I studied the nonchalant side of some of the backers, and the underhand effusiveness of others.

"Won't it be better if it's made legal?" I asked.

He choked on a crumb of crust, turned purple and then, his natural redness returning said: "It's just playing into the hands of the big bookies. You won't get the same service from the betting shops. The government'll get all the tax and what happens if you fill in a slip wrong, the betting shop won't tell you. I had somebody the other day, Firefly in the first, Hopeless in the second at Kempton Park and Rio Kid in the third. You know what's wrong with that, of course . . . ?" I nodded, as was expected of me.

"Rio Kid was running in the fourth. When I saw what was wrong I altered the slip accordingly and as you know they all came up. Now if it had been a betting shop do you think they'd have altered the slip? Not they, you can't trust them. Take a complicated bet for instance. Threepence each way any to come for a place at starting odds with a double up on the handicap stakes at seventy-four to nine. Do you know what that works out at?"

I shyly suggested that the betting shop might have an electronic brain in its equipment, but he told me the answer and defied any brain not to twist on behalf of the betting shop.

"Stands to reason you'll get a better deal from the street runner. Another

thing. They'll be just like post-offices and you know what post offices are like. Do you know what Benjamin Tucker said about post offices?" . . .

"I didn't, but he didn't either, apparently, and so he went on."

"They're inhuman. With me now, you can have a little chat or pass the time of day. But there, you won't be able to sit down. Just like a snack-bar. It's like making brothels legal providing there's no bed in the rooms. They don't want you to be comfortable in case you stay to bet. It's inhuman, that's what it is."

Up to now he had taken about thirty bets and obviously the deadline was some way ahead and he was just warming-up.

"And another thing. Last month we all backed our fancy."

I am ignorant of the classics (of the turf) and said so.

"You know. The Grand National Handicap . . . the Election Stakes. Plenty of us backed what we thought was the favourite, as it happened . . . it lost. The outsider made a good showing but even that was beaten by Joe Soap."

"Now when it comes to this Betting and Gaming Bill when our interest is at stake, half the field refuses the fences or scratches. What is worse, some of the runners agree between themselves to throw the race. Ruddy corruption, that's what that is. When it comes to an issue that concerns the life and death of the community which I represent, they're non-starters. I'm backing Joe Soap next time."

At this point a well-dressed young man crossed the street towards us. There was a piercing whistle and I saw why my friend was called a bookie's runner. The plain-clothes man found no betting slips on me. J.R.

VOTES OR SOCIALISM?

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Welfare State, and the planning of the economy, even by the free enterprise Tories, which ensured full-employment ("Minor recessions we shall have—yes"), were the work of the 1945 Labour Government*. Yet in spite of the fact that Labour's election programme sought to extend what it had started in 1945, the electorate voted Tory. And he concluded: "Unfortunately, gratitude is not a reliable political asset"—a conclusion Churchill reached in 1945 when though proclaimed the architect of victory he was ignominiously thrown out at the elections. Which all goes to "prove" that unthinking sheep are most unreliable and unpredictable when you suddenly appeal to them to be rational or logical! For three weeks in every five years the public is urged to show an interest in political and social problems, to know where its true interest lies as well as that of the community. And where the latter clashes with the former to opt for the common good. For the other four years 49 weeks it's jungle warfare aided and abetted by whatever government is in power.

★

SOCIALISM—any more than anarchism—hasn't a chance of winning an election. For when socialists will be in a majority the electoral system will have long since been dispensed with. That is surely obvious. Socialism is individual responsibility, is social and political awareness, is class consciousness (yes, but not in the sense of wanting to perpetuate classes, but the consciousness of their existence, an understanding of why they exist, and a determination, informed by knowledge and militancy, to abolish them). Government however benevolent is the denial of individual responsibility, the opium of social and political awareness and the perpetuator—and creator (*vide* Russia)—of classes and class distinction. The Labour movement (by which we mean the rank and file—the leaders don't interest us) must choose between winning elections and furthering the cause of socialism. As a professional politician Bevan is surprisingly naive if he really believes that the "lesson" to be learned from the reactions of the young voter is that "we must enlarge and expand these personalities so that they become conscious of limitations and restrictions. The problem is one of education". That is the lesson for socialists, but surely not for political office-hunters. You only expand personalities etc., through education, at the expense of the voting booths.

If the Labour movement believes that only in occupying the government benches can it "serve the public interest" then it should cut out any ideological cackle and concentrate on raising vast sums of money and think up more popular gimmicks than the Tories or liberals in time for the next elections. If on the other hand it believes in socialism, in Mrs. Castle's economic and social morality, or even in Gaitskell's social and racial equality, social justice, and a classless society,† then only by education and example on

*A view with which we disagree. As we attempted to demonstrate in last week's editorial on "More Parasites than Workers", capitalism can no longer afford mass unemployment in an age of super technology and increasing industrialisation, and this consideration and not the Labour Government account for high employment.

CERTAINLY this question will be an irrelevancy for some, and a contradiction of terms or even nonsense for others. But before an operation we must sterilize the instruments, and so here we clarify the terms, and then see what the results of analysis will be.

Let us assume that anarchism is the negation of authority and the affirmation of liberty; as Bakunin said, "Not that political, bourgeois liberty . . . but the great human liberty, destroying all the dogmatic, metaphysical, political and juridical fetters by which everybody today is loaded down, will give everybody—collectivities as well as individuals—full autonomy in their activities and their development, delivered once and for all from all inspectors, directors, and guardians." But deification of freedom is not enough, and is not a proof of the existence of freedom. Even in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights it is stated "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person" (Art. 3) and "No-one shall be subjected to torture, to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment" (Art. 4). I have taken these two quotations at random to show that the definition of freedom or liberty does not necessarily imply the libertarian way of life as against the authoritarian one.

By definition, anarchy is the absence of government, which implies the rejection of state, law, power, domination, exploitation, moral conventionalism, and indeed, any kind of authority—all of which means unlimited individual freedom.

It is not an accident that in their

the one hand, and by attacking capitalism remorselessly at its weakest points, and by withdrawing power from government by starving it of social initiative, on the other, can socialists at the same time weaken the class society and build the free, socialist, world of to-morrow.

★

"WE are told"—declared Mrs. Castle—"that we have succeeded so well in reforming capitalism that we have made it, not only civilised but practically indestructible." That summing up gives too much credit to the influence of the Labour movement even as a force of reaction but there is no denying that social democracy throughout the world has acted as the indispensable agent of capitalism if only by its betrayal of the workers. And at Blackpool nothing that was said convinces us that the "rethinking" in the past two months will induce the Labour movement as constituted to venture along the road of socialism, if only because the leadership has a stake in the "ugly", "vulgar" society of the present.

Only a month before the Election Mr. Gaitskell bought £6,000 worth of shares in a finance outfit called "Invest for Success"; only recently in the Commons "row" over the £4,000 per annum pension to the former Speaker of the House in view of his appointment as Governor General of Australia at £10,000 p.a., Mr. Gaitskell was reported as saying that he did not think the ex-Speaker's pension was excessive. Obviously for Mr. Gaitskell "some are more equal than others". But we do not wish to "pick on" Mr. Gaitskell for, apart from a few honourable exceptions, all the leadership, and sponsors of the Labour movement are doing very nicely in spite of the "ugliness" and "vulgarity" of existing society. And so long as they live on the fat of the land there is no reason why anyone should listen to them. Mr. Bevan said it was a question of education (in socialism and revolt presumably). The first lesson in that education is *example by the teacher*. And until that is realised Mr. Bevan can go on spouting socialism until his cows come home!

†These were among Mr. Gaitskell's "basic first principles" as expressed at Blackpool.

VIEWPOINT ON ANARCHISM

IS ANARCHISM AUTHORITARIAN?

endeavour to outline the history of anarchism, some anarchist writers often go as far back as the fifth century B.C. and some argue that the Sophists were the first ones to have some anarchistic approach and this is so. According to the Sophists, my own "I" is the centre of the Universe. To them, the natural law was true, just and equal for all, as opposed to the so-called social or political law, which to them appeared arbitrary, conventional, relating only to the norm, and an artificial limitation of individual liberty. Certainly they opposed the state as a force based upon the tyranny of the law.

Now it is easy to explain two principal particulars: firstly, the violent authoritarian reaction of Plato against this restrictive individualism (the language often used by the anarchist when criticising anarcho-individualism), and secondly the anarchist attempt to represent Protagoras and others as the first anarchists.

The concept of unlimited freedom is equated to what the anarchists call irresponsible individualism, and in opposition to that they elaborate the so-called concept of organisations. They are anxious to frame individuals into different patterns of organised activity; for the anarchist as for the socialist, freedom is but an idealistic concept unrelated to reality. By reality, they mean the economic structure and its manifestation.

Very often the commitment of an anarchist can be noticed in an argument with a socialist; they become socialistic realists—that is to say, they speak in terms of the future, or some "final analysis" at which they are aiming. Or they are for a classless society where there will be no contradictions, no history, and philosophy will give place to the Garden of Eden. "We are fighting for the gates of heaven", cried Liebknecht a few decades ago. Christians, anarchists, socialists, all of them are fighting for the gates of heaven, and when they enter, the beautiful and so attractive Utopia will be realized. They will build a temple of universal harmony. There are no saints, no gods, no devils or angels, or even virgins—if there are saints they will

be anarchist, socialist or perhaps libertarian.

In contemplating such perfect beauty, we cannot but admire it. But then, what about the individual? Well, in the temple of perfect harmony he is changed into inanimate matter, or expressed in terms of bricks or materials. According to G. Petrov the nature of politics is of high ideas, and politicians must possess superior ability and qualities to be able to unify the vibrations of an individual soul with the rest, at the same time preserving individual independence.

As we can see, there are many claimants to the kingdom of Heaven. The anarchists are not alone. However, the gate of Heaven is the gate of power, of authority. Utopia is monistic, never pluralistic. Albert Camus, in his book *The Rebel*, says, "A draft drawn on confidence in the future, it allows the master to have a clear conscience. The slave and those whose present life is miserable, and who can find no consolation in the heavens are assured that at least the future belongs to them. The future is the only kind of property that the masters willingly concede to the slave". The reaction against a Utopia and living for the future is to affirm life here and now. The affirmation of life is identical with the permanent protest which represents the antagonism between the individual and Utopia, between life and death—that is, between life and the future.

And here is the crux of the problem, the source of the antagonism between the organised anarchist and the anarcho-individualist, which in one way or another I claim to be. I think E. Armand is right in saying "In the first place, then, the anarchist is one who negates; anarchism is an individualistic concept and a product of individuals. The anarchist is naturally an individual." Organisation, and its purest manifestation, regimentation, is out of his scope, which is extending his or her freedom.

And Malatesta is right when in his *Anarchy* he says: "There is a disease of the human mind called the metaphysical tendency, which causes man after he has by a logical process abstracted the quality from an object, to be subject to a kind of hallucination which makes him take the abstraction for the real thing. This metaphysical tendency, in spite of the blows of positive science, has still strong roots in the minds of the majority of our contemporary fellow-men. It has such an influence that many consider government to be an actual entity, with certain given attributes of reason, justice, equity, etc., quite independent of the people who compose the government." The same applies to any other kind of organisation, society even community. In this sense the individual is the only tangible reality.

Instead of trying to get rid of the all-pervading organising spirit, the anarchists are anxious to defend and justify the

organisation as a means of efficiency. On this point, there is not much to be said against that view, but there is a logical contradiction, namely, the distrust of individual efficiency. The weakness and inefficiency of the individual is compensated for by the organisation. The idea that the individual is the very builder of a free society is annihilated by the theological assumption that the individual is weak, and unable to do this. There is no redemption without God, religion, or organisation!

Efficiency we may identify with the sea. Many rivers form a sea, but in the sea the river has no place, it is lost, diffused. To change the figure, in the efficiency machine, the individual is but a cog, and his activity is to further the ideas of the organisation or society, as a cog keeps a machine turning. The anarchists give us a very beautiful picture of their Utopia: "The free federation of individuals into communes, of communes into provinces, of provinces into nations, and finally of these into the confederation of Europe, and later, of the whole world . . . To organise society in such a fashion that every individual, man, woman or child shall find in life as nearly as possible equal opportunity for the development of his or her different faculties and talents, and for their utilization by his or her labour."

This may sound well in the realms of thought about an ideal future. But ideals are not more important than the individual. Anyone who tries to develop an ideal at the expense of individuals is authoritarian in spirit. The question, "Is anarchism authoritarian?" can be answered in two ways. By assuming his authoritarian character, we put the anarchist in a very embarrassing position. But the fact remains that the average person criticises anarchists as preaching one thing and practising its opposite. Many anarchists realize this difficulty, and to defend themselves they put the emphasis on the future—the classless society—and escape the question of their behaviour in the here and now. That reminds me of a description of soviet workers given by the Bulgarian professor A. Zlataroff in his book *In the Land of the Soviets*. The workers justified their present conditions by saying that they were "working and building for the future generation".

I do not wish to build for the future generations. I rather like to affirm myself here and now. This affirmation we achieve through what the Spanish libertarians call "permanent protest". This anti-authoritarian trend in anarchism is expressed in what is known as anarcho-individualism. J.G.

*When the Spanish anarchists left the attitude of protest they became involved in Government and politics.

(To be continued)

The Hungarian Secret Police

Continued from p. 2

secret police have the right, not only to arrest anyone at will, innocent or guilty, without formal charge; but also to appropriate his wealth and possessions, and imprison him and his family in concentration camps, in many respects worse than Hitler's. The Russian Security Officers instruct their Hungarian colleagues how to shadow a man without his knowledge, how to search a house and leave no trace. Perhaps the Russians learned these things from the dark pages of Roman history, from Tiberius and Caligula. Lenin and Stalin were very learned men.

But there are no grimly realistic descriptions of physical violence or inhuman methods of interrogation. Who among the AVH or their Russian mentors would keep such records? There are no harrowing tales of torture. Just facts. And this is what makes this record of evil both readable and authoritative. But the shadow of fear and the monster of anxiety are plainly revealed; and in the mind of the reader there is left little doubt of their origin. Behind the smiling facade of Comrade Krushchev, Bulganin and Mikoyan, in London, New York, or Paris, the Russian Landlords of Hungary plan and instigate its destruction—towns, houses, lives. The "best men" are recruited to despatch various but equally filthy and despicable tasks: and to Mr. Mikoyan personally is allocated the final special task of the bloody crushing of the revolution of 1956.

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I think that the more people read Mr. Mikes' book, the better understanding may be developed between the "socialist" and "capitalist" blocs of this beautiful world.

FULVUS.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Power, Reforms and Anarchism

DEAR COMRADES,
As I see it, Bob Green's 'viewpoint' on anarchism, when stripped of its irrelevant flippancies, amounts to the following:

1. How would the anarchist survivors of a collapse of civilization, having managed to form a free community, resist the aggression of a numerically and materially stronger authoritarian force?
2. That "power is inherent in things". Therefore, evil lies not in power but in its abuse.
3. Are anarchists prepared to support reforms (e.g. the abolition of corporal punishment in schools)?

1. Bob Green here envisages a situation in which anarchists are a small minority and asks how they could effectively resist an attempt by the majority to impose its authority upon them. Given a situation such as he describes, I do not think that these anarchists could effectively resist being subjugated by the forces of authority. They would be, in all essentials, in a similar position to the one we are in now. That is to say, they would be faced by the possession of overwhelming power by their enemies and they would have to yield. This does not mean, however, that every form of resistance would be impossible (any more than it is today), nor that they would not try to resist, but that they would have to recognise that they were fighting a losing battle as long as their numbers remained so small. I think that this consideration would apply whether they sought to resist violently or non-violently. It would even apply if they attempted to resist by creating a war machine or any other type of authoritarian means, but then the question of anarchists resisting authoritarians would not arise, since it would now be a question of one set of authoritarians resisting another set.

2. This is a confusion of 'power to' with 'power over'. 'Power to' is the capacity to do something—e.g. to speak, to walk, even to spit in someone's eye. 'Power over', on the other hand, is domination—i.e. a relationship in which one man, or a group of men, can compel the obedience of others. It is this—second—kind of power to which anarchists refer when they speak of 'the abolition of power'. Due to the imprecision of English misunderstandings like this can easily occur unless this distinction is kept in mind. Erich Fromm writes well on this problem in "Man For Himself" (pp. 26-28).

3. I do not think that most anarchists are opposed to all reforms, but empha-

size the inadequacy of reformism as a means of solving social problems of the kind we have in contemporary society. A reform is usually only (or is meant to be) an improvement of what already exists, not its replacement by something fundamentally, radically different, which is how I understand the term 'revolution'. The best approach to this question I have seen appeared in an article by David Wieck entitled "Reforms and Emancipation" (*Resistance*, August-October, 1954). In it he stated:

"The central equation of the anarchist idea of integral emancipation is this: power, expressed in governments, corporations, bureaucracy, tends to isolate the individual, to render him powerless and deprive him of the opportunity for growth, while the magnification of the collectivity and depletion of the individual are expressed in imperialism and wars. To the complex of power and social atomization and war, we see as the only alternative the development among individuals of habits of freedom and sociality, and the ultimate expression of these in a free society."

Defining Power

DEAR EDITORS,

Bob Green has got things wrong hasn't he? Isn't it the love of power, like the love of money, that always corrupts?

Again, Bob seems to take the "reform is a waste of time" contention the wrong way. Let us take a particular example—Old Age Pensions: Let us assume that Robert the Reformer would support an organisation like the Labour Party, which is (fighting?) for a -0 shilling-a-week increase for O.A.P.'s. Now even if this did, by some strange unprecedented stroke of the miraculous, result in getting them the increase before the cost of living had risen to cancel it out, it would not have contributed to the principle that O.A.P.'s should enjoy the same standard of living as everyone else. The only way to get the O.A.P.'s a decent advance is to go the whole hog on the aforementioned principle: this might result in a 10 shillings reform before the cost of living cancelled it out. Half a loaf is better than none—but you won't get even that if you don't demand at least a whole loaf. We shall have to put up with reforms before we reach our goal: if we waste our time advocating such miserable inadequacies we shall never get the principle of the thing over.

ERNIE CROSSWELL.

P.S.—Was Bob's example of a reform (stopping teachers from caning children) a good one? Surely a reform would be to get the number of strokes of the cane halved!—E.F.C.
Slough, Nov. 29.

PROSTITUTION

I was most interested in S.F.'s explanation of "Why it's not Freedom", but I still don't agree with him. I think freedom is freedom (or licence, if you like) to do what you want, not freedom to do what you ought (the Christian, Rousseauist and Hegelian sense). I don't think freedom necessarily has anything to do with the goal of "a happy, healthy life", desirable as that may be. We tend to think of freedom as something beautiful, but it is a dangerous and sometimes ugly thing. The fact that personal freedom involves the right to go to prostitutes reveals the fundamental paradox of freedom. If it is all the same wrong to go to prostitutes, why is this so?

The answer to that question (well made by S.F.) is perhaps the weak point in anarchist theory, and is therefore important. The problem is, which is worse—to do wrong voluntarily, or to do right compulsorily? Is it worse to go to prostitutes, or to have laws against prostitution?

Incidentally, I am not a full, true, or blue-blooded Englishman, thank goodness. A.F.

PASTORALISM

I don't think it is necessary to say anything in reply to Mr. Uloth. He seems to have said all that needs to be said. I think he is a bit too pessimistic, but I don't feel so very optimistic myself. I don't think pastoralism is the way out, but I don't know what is. At least I hope we have made people think about it more. N.W.

"The tendency of present-day liberal and so-called radical thinking is to abandon all hope for such a way of life, and to abandon the practice of it now, and to pray that the State and social institutions founded upon its model can be domesticated and harnessed. Extrapolated to its ideal, this is man-protected, and not man-alive; extrapolated in its present tendencies, it is man-soldier."

"Since reform movements are generally dominated by State-hopeful persons, the criticisms of anarchists often make us appear to be enemies of all reform; we are enemies of reform which strengthen the State, of methods of reform which strengthen the State, and advocate methods which will give habits of sociality and freedom a rooting in our society."

As to the particular reform Bob Green refers to, it seems to me that:

(a) To seek an injunction against the use of corporal punishment by teachers on the grounds that it is the legal right of parents alone is a very weak position. It is rather like opposing capital punishment by the State on the grounds that it should be prerogative of 'private' enterprise.

(b) If the method advocated by Bob Green looked like being successful the government could always defeat it by making it legal for teachers as well as parents to use corporal punishment. The parents would then have to resort to direct action—which means that they would have to act to solve the problem themselves instead of appealing to a third party—the law—to do it for them.

(c) The most effective form of direct action against such schools I can think of would be for the parents to refuse to send their children to them until corporal punishment was abolished, and to do so on the grounds that they were opposed to corporal punishment as such, not that it should be their monopoly. Their success would obviously depend on their numbers and persistence, but, then, what struggle against injustice does not depend on these things?

(d) A more permanent solution would be for the parents concerned to support, or to find the means to create, schools in which not only was there no corporal punishment, but no punishment of any description.

Yours fraternally,

London, Nov. 29. S. E. PARKER.

Justice for Africans not 'Practical'

Continued from p. 1

extreme examples of which have been, and can be found, in any totalitarian country from East to West.

In Kenya there was a "Mau-Mau" to which the authorities could point as a reason for any repressive measure they cared to adopt* ignoring the conditions which gave rise to Mau Mau), but in other parts of British controlled Africa fantasy plots have been hatched in Whitehall with the aid of Colonial Government stooges whose main job is to defend British capital and the white man's rule against demands of equality from the Africans.

In Southern Rhodesia even mild reformers are resented by the white minority, and reasonable persons have been banished or detained without "benefit of appeal" usually taken for granted in this country.

In those parts of Africa where relations between black and white have changed, where Africans are partially or wholly in charge of affairs, Government officials boast of their concessions to African demands, thus hoping to prove that self government has been the intention all along. In reality these changes have been mainly due to the strength of African Nationalism, and by the deposed rulers recognising that new techniques of control and economic exploitation are possible through the co-operation of African politicians. The latter are proving to be excellent pupils in the art of Western type government!

*The eleven African prisoners who were beaten to death only a few months ago in Hola Camp occurred long after the defeat of Mau-Mau.

IN BRIEF

ONE MAN'S MEAT . . .

PRETORIA, NOVEMBER 25.

A senior official of the South African Bureau of Standards said here to-day that a full investigation was being made of how 150 to 200 tins of mixed beef and offal from a South African firm were included in a consignment of 20,000 tins of stewed steak sent to Bristol. Bristol's medical officer of health, Dr. R. C. Wofinden, described the contents of the tins as "a concoction of bone, gristle, hairs, kidney and liver, bits of arteries and veins."

An official of the Bureau of Standards said that he could not understand why there had been so much fuss. He added: "Haggis is an offal product. The Scots make it from offal, blood, and oatmeal, and it is cooked in the paunch of the sheep." Africans liked offal. It was used in the dietary scheme of the Cham-

ber of Mines, for whom the "offal pack" was originally manufactured. It was generally agreed, he said, that the mines' feeding scheme was one of the best in the world.—*Reuter*.

. . . Is Another Man's Poison

Amendments to the public health regulations relating to the use of preservatives in food are proposed in a report by the Food Standards Committee (Stationery Office, 4s. 6d.). This completes a review of the regulations by a preservatives subcommittee appointed in 1951.

"Some extension of the range of foods permitted to contain preservatives is justified under modern conditions (states the report). Similarly, having considered the pharmacological evidence now available in respect of potential food preservatives (including antibiotics), some of which have only been developed comparatively recently, the subcommittee is satisfied that there are several substances in addition to those at present permitted which may be safely used."

The more important additions to the schedule would be provision for bread to contain propionic acid; for flour confectionery, cheese and certain food adjuncts to contain sorbic acid; and for various canned foods and cheese to contain the antibiotic nisin. Provision would also be made for the use of more than one permitted preservative where a mixture might have advantages.

Before deciding whether and to what extent to implement the recommendations the Minister of Agriculture and other Ministers concerned will consider any representations received from any part of the United Kingdom by March 25.

Guardian.

WAIT FOR IT!

A hymn dedicated to road safety and courtesy composed by the Rector of Ingatestone, Essex, the Rev. E. F. Hudson, was sung by the choir of his church at the opening of the Ingatestone £250,000 by-pass yesterday. After the singing the congregation spoke the words, "May God bless this road and all who will use it."

The new road, which will speed traffic on the London-Colchester route, was opened by the Minister of Transport, Mr. Marples. The chairman of Essex County Council, Alderman W. J. Bennett, said generous provision of lay-bys had been made to prevent parking on the by-pass. *Guardian* 24/11/59.

We are not informed as to whether prayers were said at the official opening of the M1 motorway, on which two lorry-drivers lost their lives in the first few days.

We shall keep our readers informed, however, as to the efficacy of the prayers uttered at the opening of the by-pass mentioned above.

SUMMIT CONFERENCE?

MOSCOW, NOVEMBER 25.

More than two hundred Soviet clowns are taking part in the all-union conference on questions of clownery which opened in Moscow to-day.—*Reuter*.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP and MALATESTA DEBATING SOCIETY

Meetings now held at The White Bear (Lounge Bar) Lisle Street, W.C.2. (Leicester Square) Every Sunday, 7.30 p.m.

DEC. 6.—S. E. Parker on SOME IMPLICATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

DEC. 13. Arthur Uloth on INCEST.

DEC. 20.—Debate on motion: "That B.B.C. English is corrupting the English Language".

DEC. 27—No Meeting

EAST LONDON DEBATING COMPETITION (Round One)

REPLAY

Monday, December 7th at 7.15 p.m. at The City Literary Institute, Stukeley Street, W.C.2.

MALATESTA CLUB to oppose the motion "That Nature is nearly always wrong".

Dec. 20th, 7.15 p.m. at "White Bear", Lisle Street, W.C.2.

London Anarchist Group will propose the motion "That B.B.C. English is corrupting the English Language".

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Bourgeois Tendencies?

MOSCOW, NOVEMBER 22.

The newspaper *Izvestia* to-day appealed to Soviet husbands to be polite to their wives, and urged wives to use white tablecloths for dinner even if no guest was expected. It was in the "bourgeois" tradition for men to be rude to their wives, and also bourgeois to keep the best linen for guests.

Associated Press.

Where are those New Readers?

AND LOOK AT THIS

No Comment!

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Contributions received £832
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*Indicates regular contributor.

'Coming Out' Party for David Bell

Saturday, December 19th at 7.30 p.m.

at 5 Caledonian Road, N.1. (basement)

Entertainment. Refreshments
Admission 2/-