

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"All power results in injustice because power corrupts moral judgment."

—ROBERT BRIFFAULT.

THE FRENCH BOMB

They must have it so as not to have it

IT is obvious that you cannot do away with something unless it exists in the first place. And the socialist argument on getting political power maintains that you cannot abolish government until you become the government.

This fallacy has always ignored the heady nature of power, and it has been demonstrated to be too much for those who have sipped it to give it up easily and voluntarily. Yet exactly the same kind of argument lies behind the French determination to have their own atomic armory. At least, on the surface.

When French scientists exploded their very own atom bomb in the Sahara on Saturday morning, de Gaulle's proud announcements to the French people said first: 'Hurrah for France! She is stronger and prouder than before since this morning', and then later declared that France is now better placed to influence the 'atomic' Powers in the direction of nuclear disarmament. Now that France has the bomb, she can seek agreement about abolishing it!

This is only one aspect of the crazy nature of nuclear politics, and even to justify this kind of argument, France must go ahead developing stronger weapons and the means to deliver them.

The nuclear device exploded in the desert is small fry by 1960 standards. It is a mere 5 times as powerful as the Hiroshima bomb, and Monday morning's French papers—

L'Aurore, for example—were already crying 'Now towards the H-Bomb'. And no doubt de Gaulle will be able to smother all misgivings by demonstrating quite logically that France cannot possibly ban the H-bomb unless she has one to ban.

From the point of view of power politics this all makes a certain amount of twisted sense. World powers today must be states with the power to destroy the world, and French patriots felt keenly her exclusion from the ranks of first-class powers because of her lack of this destructive force.

That wasn't all they felt keenly. The hard facts of two successful German invasions which were beaten back only by the combined might of her allies; the inevitability of the shrinking of her colonies; the apparent absurdity of conquered Germany recovering so rapidly from the war while France (on the victorious side after all) floundered from crisis to crisis, all this and more has made nationalists of the French and made them seek a strong man to lead them back to glory.

De Gaulle, more realistic about

Algeria than the Right-wingers who hoisted him to power, nevertheless must have spectacular successes. And a success so bound up with the re-achievement of World-Power-Status as the atom bomb is just the job.

But the argument that French possession of atom bombs make her stronger in disarmament conferences is too specious. It is clearly recognised that France has now opened the door of the nuclear club to second-rate powers. Germany—both East and West—will not lag behind, nor will China. Then why not Italy and Greece, Egypt and Israel, Scandinavia, South America, the emerging African States and India?

Why should any State not say that its possession of H-bombs, or even teeny-weeny A-bombs is its own special contribution to world peace?

Unhappily the world's peoples swallow it all. Bemused, as ever, by patriotism, glassy-eyed and mystified by the mythology of national glory, bought off by the welfare state, they wallow either in prosperity or want, while the states' men dig our graves.

The Contraceptive Pill

Birmingham Appeal for Trial Volunteers

THE first news published in the British non-medical press about the development of a foolproof oral contraceptive pill, appeared in *FREEDOM* a little over three years ago.

The implications of such a discovery were discussed by several of the contributors to *The Human Sum*, the volume produced to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Family Planning Association in the autumn of 1957. Bertrand Russell remarked that

"I could wish to see it generally recognised in the West, as it is coming to be recognised in the East, that the problem of over-population could probably be painlessly solved by the devotion to birth control of one-hundredth of even one-thousandth of the sum at present devoted to armament. The most urgent practical need is research into some method of birth control which could be easily and cheaply adopted by even very poor populations."

And C. H. Rolph in his introduction to the volume commented that "This, it can hardly be doubted, will one day become available for the control of human fertility, universally, among the most backward as well as the most advanced communities in the human race; and its tremendous implications must, in the soberer thoughts of any person with social compassion dwarf any other consideration that this book can provoke." Dr. A. S. Parkes, discussing the technical problems, defined the ideal contraceptive:

"Evidently it should not depend on local action contemporaneous with coitus, and preferably should involve only occasional dosage by mouth. Moreover, it should be effective retrospectively over a short period, and prospectively over a known period, and it should be simple enough to be generally available and easily usable by people intelligent enough to understand the possible consequences of coitus and to know whether they do or do not wish to become parents. Finally, of course, it should have no other effects than the prevention of conception."

Since then there have been reports of the successful trials in America and Puerto Rico, where not one pregnancy occurred among 897 women who volunteered to take part in the tests. However, "a great deal remained to be done before it was certain that this was a contraceptive to be used all over the world with complete confidence. The suppression of ovulation involved did not impair subsequent fertility. Women had often become pregnant after leaving the trial and had given birth to normal infants."

Announcing the first mass-trials of the pill in this country on February 9th, Mrs. Leila Florence, chairman of the Birmingham Family Planning Association (who advise more than 1,000 couples a year on birth control methods), asked married women who live in the city to take part in the tests which will last for several years.

She pointed out that although the need for a simple safe oral contraceptive has been widely recognised, there has been very little progress until the very recent past. The Birmingham association was still recommending the methods in use when it was founded 33 years ago.

"We feel that the time has come when we in Britain should do our share of the proving. There is still much more to be settled about dosage and quantity. In this field you have to do a great deal of proof before you put a product on the market."

"We do not mind how many women come to us for the trial. There will be no charge."

The women who take part in the test will be asked to take one pill a day for twenty successive days each month. The product in question is already widely used in the treatment of gynaecological disorders, where it has proved safe and well tolerated. The British manufacturers have already co-operated with some private medical practitioners who have prescribed pills for their own patients. Now they are making an unlimited supply available for the Birmingham association. The normal cost of the pills at present would be 38s. for a month's supply. The association will spend between £500 and £1,000 a year on the tests. One of the nine doctors working at the clinic will examine each volunteer and observation will continue regularly throughout the trial. Additional research will be carried out by a social worker and detailed records kept.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS



Reflections on

The Strike that might have been

THOSE Labour M.P.s who indignantly declared last week that the government should have intervened sooner in an effort to settle the rail dispute are really too naive to be good politicians! The issues in the dispute were patently clear, however complicated they may have been made out to be by the Press or by the unending conferences between the leaders of the Unions, the Transport Commission and eventually of the Ministry. The N.U.R. representing the majority of railway workers, as well as having in their ranks skilled and unskilled workers, were demanding a wage increase immediately. And they threatened strike action if their demands were not met.

The need to give notice of strike action seriously reduces the effectiveness of the strike as a weapon in the struggle between workers and employers. Ostensibly it serves to give both sides time to negotiate a settlement. In practise it gives the employer a chance to take what counter-measures are available to him to reduce the impact, the disorganization, resulting from a stoppage. It gives him time to seek to

divide the workers, to create a public opinion hostile to the would-be strikers so that if it comes to a show-down the climate of opinion will be against the strikers and within their own ranks there will be a fifth column of waverers, grumblers and get-back-to-workers who will doom the struggle to failure from the outset. The period between giving notice and taking strike action, is therefore a serious test of the determination of the organization concerned to carry through its threatened action. And as we have so often seen, long before it is due to take action its leaders have been fobbed-off with some compromise offer.

All the meetings between the leaders, all the "negotiations" behind closed doors, the mysterious interventions of personalities, the eminent go-betweens are nothing but a combination of psychological warfare and the most vulgar horse-dealing. The *Observer* referred to last week's negotiations as "industrial brinkmanship", suggesting however that it was Mr. Greene of the N.U.R. who was the exponent as well as proving himself a "pastmaster", at it. It is true that Mr. Greene won

the tussle, but surely everybody concerned in the "negotiations"—from the N.U.R. to the other two railway unions, from the Transport Commission to the government—all were playing at industrial brinkmanship in their different ways.

The government only intervened at the eleventh hour when it was clear that neither the T.U.C. nor the Transport Commission could make the N.U.R. "see reason" or call their bluff. Until then the government had been doing its share in the game of bluff by taking steps for emergency transport arrangements, using the Press to reach the public as well as to warn the railway workers that no efforts were being spared to take action to minimise the effects of a strike, implying thereby that if need be the government could hold out longer than the strikers with their limited funds. The N.U.R. added their contribution to the battle of nerves when an official of the Co-operative Bank let the Press know that they were negotiating a loan of £1 million to the N.U.R.

★ THE intervention of the Ministry of Labour on the Wednesday

Secret Police Busy Again

THE other day Chief Inspector Stratton of Scotland Yard phoned the Direct Action Committee and asked to be informed as soon as the Committee had decided whether it was going to organise a further picket at the missile base at Watton, Norfolk. Would the Committee mind phoning Whitehall 1212 when the decision had been made?

This sounded so unbelievable that the Committee phoned him back at once. The Watton project had been discussed at only one place—the Friends' Meeting House at Wellingborough, immediately after the court hearing the previous day at which the Harrington demonstrators were released.

How did Scotland Yard know about the possibility, and so promptly? When asked this question, Chief Inspector Stratton observed: "We have our spies everywhere." So one of the Harrington demonstrators may have been a police spy.

This reminds me of a story in Reg. Reynolds' autobiography in which he confronted a plain-clothes man (who moved in anarchist circles) face to face with the surprise question: "How long ago were you transferred from the Metropolitan Area?" "About three months" came the frank reply.

The spate of police photographers at all sorts of Left-wing demonstrations is now fairly widely known. Only last week three plain-clothes men were found in an attic in Middlesbrough. They spent two hours there taking pictures of a Communist political school session in the house opposite.

Wasn't it J. R. Clyne, the Home Secretary in the first Labour Government of 1924, who had the best evidence of the lot? When he took office he was amazed to find the great file that his own department had on him. But, of course, he didn't mention it—he was "responsible" by then.

'Phyz' in *Peace News* 5/2/60.

London Anarchist Group Sunday Lecture

LOLITA & SOME PROBLEMS OF OUR TIME

I DO not propose to discuss the literary merits of Nabokov's book *Lolita* in my lecture this evening. I do, in fact, agree with those critics who have hailed it as a work of outstanding literary merit. What I am going to talk about is a certain novel feature of the book, that is its unusual realism about childhood and early adolescence. I say 'unusual' because most novelists are content to accept the current fictions of our time about the nature of children, and hence their child characters are seldom presented as real people. *Lolita* is presented as a very real child and her child's-eye-view of the society in which she lives is one of the important aspects of the book.

If any of you have not yet read *Lolita* I'm afraid some of my lecture may be rather unintelligible to you, for I am going to assume that people coming to a lecture such as this will be familiar with the book.

It has been erroneously assumed that *Lolita* is a book about a middle-aged man who seduces a twelve-year-old girl. This false assumption has been fostered by some of the critics. It is not unnatural that a society such as that of European-American culture should put such a construction on a sexual association between a mature man and a pubescent girl: it is the conventional misinterpretation of the situation. Yet the facts of the story are otherwise. The man Humbert is a nympholept, and he lusts after all pubescent girls of a certain type, but he is restrained from taking any initiative in the actual satisfaction of his erotic desires by his conscientious scruples—that is by his acceptance of the moral propriety of the taboos of his culture. The process of seduction is carried out step by step by the girl herself. In all the incidents of physical intimacy which lead up over a long

period of time to their eventual copulation in an hotel bed, it is Lolita who takes the initiative. Humbert dreams and schemes, and in fact goes to the most elaborate trouble to arrange opportunity for being with the girl, but the ironic humour of the story lies in the fact that it is she who initiates every kiss and other act of physical intimacy until she has at last seduced him.

Many people will find this portrayal of the affair repugnant. They would much rather think of a middle-aged man seducing a girl of twelve, than the other way round, yet I think that Nabokov portrays the two characters very realistically. The man consumed by smouldering desire yet covering up all his furtive scheming with humbug and defensive platitudes, the child being cynically amused by adult humbug.

"Look here, Lo. Let's settle this once for all. For all practical purposes I am your father. I have a feeling of great tenderness for you. In your mother's absence I am responsible for your welfare. We are not rich, and while we travel, we shall be obliged—we shall be thrown a good deal together. Two people sharing one room, inevitably enter into a kind—how shall I say—a kind—"

"The word is incest," said Lo.

This was before she had technically seduced him.

The Mutual Trap

When the child had satisfied her sexual whim she did not scruple to pretend that he had raped her and half-seriously threatened to complain to the police. When she finds that she is all alone in the world, an orphan, with this sexually demanding, jealous man, her only protector and provider, she does not scruple to exploit him economically all she can. He becomes utterly enslaved by his passion for her, and she is soon bored with his sexual attentions. What is the child to do in these circumstances? Lolita finds herself in a position of helplessness typical of a child in an impersonal society such as that of the American middle class. She has no close family or community ties; she is bound to no-one by close affection and habit—no community is there to give her advice or help. If she appeals to the agents of "child welfare" and reveals the sexual relationship which persists between her and her stepfather, they will clap her into some ghastly home for delinquent girls who have been "rescued". (Humbert makes this plain to her when she hints that she might report him to the police).

Lolita has to accept the consequences of having seduced Humbert. She must continue to satisfy his sexual demands even when she is bored with him. She becomes, in fact, a hard-headed young whore and exploits him both for money and what she conceives to be having a good time among the vulgar fleshpots of the United States. She is a real whore; she holds his tenderness, his hopeless love and his strange worship of her in contempt. She despises his attempts to cultivate her aesthetic sensitivity and to introduce her to the world of adult sensibility. She is content to remain a raucous child, contemptuous of all that she conceives as the adult world of humbug.

I do not know how common it is for fathers to have sexual relationships with their young daughters or step-daughters, as Humbert Humbert had with his Lolita. Naturally one has little actual knowledge of this sort of relationship because it is criminal. What I do know however, is that the psychological aspects of it are very common in our type of society. Many children are in fact forced into the relationship of whoredom with their own parents even where there is no overt expression of sexuality in the relationship. This is of course especially true of middle class homes. A variety of allurement are spread before the child with all the boost of high-pressure advertising. These delights may be had for cash. The child cannot earn cash by useful productive work; like Lolita, the child is dependent on the bounty of the parent. The gifts from parent to child have strings attached: in the case of Lolita she had to sleep with the giver and endure his romantic jealousy. More commonly, Lolitas are required to live up to certain parental ideals of girlhood which do not acknowledge copulation as a permissible sport. But the element of whoredom may be there; how far is the child tempted to exploit and deceive the parent in order to gain the wherewithal to satisfy those appetites which do not square with parental ideals? To some extent Lolita in the book was in a strong

position because Humbert had to reveal himself as a humbug to her—he pretended to the world to be a rather old-fashioned father who believed in a sheltered upbringing for his step-daughter. By this means he was able to be jealously possessive of her and give her little opportunity for having much fun with other people. But where there is no overt incest between parents and children, parents can maintain a front of humbug much more successfully. Many parental restrictions of children's freedom, and of course the same sort of restrictions which are imposed by schoolteachers, are simply due to the same sort of jealousy that Humbert Humbert suffered from.

The Point of Tension

Some years ago I was on the staff of a school where a boy and girl were found having sexual intercourse rather openly one afternoon. Their escapade was debated at the staff meeting at length. In fact it ran to more than one staff meeting. The whole business was rather like one of those projective tests beloved of psychologists. The staff was broadly divided between those who deplored the exhibitionism of the young couple, and those who went off the deep end at the knowledge that a girl of thirteen was enjoying a lover. A number of these alleged "progressive" school-teachers revealed the frustrations of their own lives and the nature of their interest in children with pathetic clarity. The teachers in the latter category were, I am glad to say, a small minority, but they made up for the fewness of their numbers by the vehemence of their expressions of condemnation.

When it was first announced that Nabokov's book *Lolita* was to be published in this country, a perfect spate of letters about it appeared in such journals as the *New Statesman* and the *Observer*. The general cry was that here was a book that might corrupt. We are all familiar with the English laws about obscene publications; apparently any-

thing is obscene if it will corrupt those who are open to corruption. Now in the case of *Lolita* the alleged targets for corruption, according to the letter-writers, were a somewhat novel category—middle-aged men. As far as I know no-one suggested that the book would fall into the hands of schoolgirls and they would begin to make a dead set at prospective Humbert Humberts! It is hardly believable; here in a sophisticated society such as ours with the printing-presses daily turning out lurid tales of murder, assault, swindling, robbery, rape and torture, earnest intellectuals are afraid that middle-aged men are going to be corrupted by reading Nabokov's novel. What possible explanation can there be for this phenomenon? Why is it that such a novel is regarded as so dangerous?

Every society has its points of great tension. In Medieval times the area of tension was that concerned with Church doctrine: one could be tortured or burnt for making too original contributions in theology. A classic example of evasion of Church censorship is that of Dr. Rabelais' great work; he disguised a satire on various theological doctrines in the guise of sexual and scatological humour. In the totalitarian political régimes political doctrine is the area of great tension, and writers like Pasternak are in danger because of the "objectionable" nature of their literary themes. This attempt to look at different types of human societies may help us to approach towards the problem of understanding why the book *Lolita* is considered dangerous. It is not just because it concerns a sexual relationship; the majority of novels are concerned with sexual relationships. There are no "obscene" words in the book. As a matter of fact it is now permissible to print "obscene" words in novels, but Nabokov doesn't go in for that sort of thing. One can only conclude that our society is very conscious of a taboo which concerns sexual intercourse between adults and young adolescents. If

Humbert had simply murdered Lolita there would have been no fuss. But he didn't murder her; he had a two-year affair with her, and in the eyes of many that is really very much more shocking.

In Other Cultures

Someone commented on the book—"Why didn't Humbert Humbert go to some Near-Eastern country and there no-one would have thought him odd for preferring young girls to mature women." Indeed, one may well imagine the puzzlement of people in cultures different from our own why there should be any fuss at all about a man falling in love and having sexual relations with a beautiful girl of twelve. There has lately been a Tunisian film *Goha*, which has been praised everywhere. Part of the story concerns a grey-bearded scholar who takes a teen-age girl as his second wife, and the girl then deceives him with a young man. No-one in their society seems to think it reprehensible that an elderly man should take sexual pleasure in a teenage girl, they only think it dreadful that the girl should be so ungrateful as to take a young lover. One cannot therefore pretend that there is anything "unnatural" in the *Lolita* theme. It is merely against the prevailing taboos of European-American culture. The novel is not in any sense a plea for greater toleration in sexual matters. Humbert is the sternest of all his critics and it is the strength of his own self-criticism, and indeed self-loathing, which makes him the obsessional neurotic he is.

Someone may object that *Lolita* is after all, only a work of fiction, a novel. Wherein does its importance lie? Here I am very much in agreement with Alex Comfort's views as expressed in *The Novel And Our Time*. Comfort regards the novel as of particular significance in our type of society, which he chooses to call "barbarian". I am not too happy about Comfort's use of the term "barbarian"; by it he means to describe the sort of non-organic industrially based society which has grown up in Europe and America in the last two centuries. He regards it as significant that the novel as a form of literary expression hardly existed before the nineteenth century, and that it now forms the major means

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VIEWPOINT

The Anarchism in Science Fiction

MENTION science fiction to an anarchist and much the same reaction is provoked as mentioning anarchism to a layman. The former thinks of Bug Eyed Monsters and half naked nubile young women in the clutch of flying dinosaurs, and the latter gets a Chestertonian vision of a cloaked and bearded figure carrying a spherical object marked "BOMB". In neither case does the public image bear much relationship to the reality. As I first made contact with anarchist ideas through science fiction short stories the following article is an attempt to explain why I feel that this medium is of great value to the dissemination of anarchist ideas, and why I think anarchist writers should attempt to write such fiction.

The main difficulty faced by the anarchist in trying to convince a non-anarchist of the validity (or even the sanity) of his views is the basic idea that

authoritarianism of some kind (religious, political or legal), however democratically organised, is necessary to prevent society from lapsing into a catch-as-catch-can barbarism. "We have to have law and order", "It would mean survival of the most brutal", etc. Those who stop to think at all dismiss anarchism as a beautiful but impossible ideal. The vast majority are not even aware that such an ideal exists. Anarchy, to the man is synonymous with chaos, and as he is not given to reading political pamphlets he remains isolated from the liberal stream whose well-point is anarchism. The last point was certainly true until the astonishing growth in science fiction's popularity after the war; a popularity that can be partly explained by the general dissatisfaction with the main political parties and blind unconscious searching for new ideas and a new approach to the problem of humanity living together peacefully and freely.

Science fiction magazines are the only popular media that as a matter of course present ideas that the upholder of the present *status quo* would regard as subversive. It is no accident that many of the best writers in the field hold ideas that the parliamentarian would regard as dangerously progressive. They hold these views because the very nature of science fiction compels the writer, and therefore the reader, to examine what is wrong with society, where humanity went off the rails, what the present political systems are leading to. Continually the themes occur of the fight for individual freedom and dignity against totalitarianism, against welfare states gone off the rails, and of the dangerous tendency of the majority of humankind to accept what they are told is good for them.

To quote Edmund Crispin in his introduction to Faber's first anthology of science fiction: "Science fiction is not, as it is often accused of being, all pessimism, but it is sceptical about Man. It cannot trust him to colonise other planets, other galaxies, without vandalism and brutality . . . but science fiction IS all ethics, politics, sociology and philosophy. It is in fact a layman's textbook of vividly-stated problems in these fields . . . whether the author chooses to make these problems explicit or not the problems are constantly there because science fiction subject matter

compels them to be there. Readers of science fiction have their noses rubbed in politics, ethics, sociology, and philosophy and find the process enthralling".

There is a story by Eric Frank Russell "And Then There Were None", which describes the successful attempt of a completely free society, descendants of followers of Gandhi, to thwart an attempted re-colonisation by an imperialist Earth. The society is moneyless and works on a system of mutual obligation. It is in fact, not very far removed from some postulated anarchist utopias. In an introduction to this story William Sloane says: "Human beings . . . resist regimentation with something deep and indestructible inside themselves. Brute force, the tyrannies of power and orthodox disciplines can suppress and thwart this resistance but the only drink in all human experience headier than pure alcohol is the well-water of freedom, individual freedom. No human being who has drunk of it will settle for anything less . . ." Such a paragraph would not seem out of place printed in FREEDOM.

But there's the rub. An article printed in FREEDOM is preaching to the converted. If anarchist writers are anxious to spread anarchist ideas among the general public, if they are anxious to DO something other than sink pints of bitter in the "Marquis of Granby" and deplore public apathy, then may I suggest they turn to the science fiction field. When people have assimilated anarchist ideas in their light reading they will be much more likely to listen to the next anarchist speaker they hear, or read the next anarchist writer they come across. The idea of a really free society will no longer seem so alien.

To quote Edmund Crispin again: "To think about these subjects (ethics, politics, sociology and religion) in purely macrocosmic terms may have its dangers but it is better than not thinking about them at all." And the fact that many writers and readers of science fiction have ideas on these subjects that would not be despised by anarchists seems to show that the thinking is to some purpose. I believe that the world is a slightly better place, the prospect before us just slightly more hopeful, and a free society a fraction nearer, because of it.

J. M. PILGRIM.

British United Press.

The Strike that might have been

Continued from p. 1

Mr. Greene argues that if Sir Brian made an offer immediately he got the report, there would be no guarantee that the unions and he could get agreement on it. The awful spectre of differentials is raised here again. Mr. Greene spoke sadly of his experiences during these talks and said he was apprehensive about whether they would be able to get agreement even after February 29. If an argument on differentials developed, then of course, it might be a long time before any money reached the railways.

(Guardian).

Furthermore it was pointed out that the Transport Commission's offer ("Sir Brian Robertson guaranteed that within one week of the receipts of the report he would make an offer for an interim increase for all the staff under discussion.") said nothing about it being subject to the terms of the Report. So why not disclose what the offer was there and then?

(Incidentally, everybody is talking of the Guillebaud Report as if it will be the answer to every railwayman's prayers. Even assuming that the Press is right in suggesting that the Report will propose an increase of at least 10% on their wages, is one justified in taking for granted that the Government will carry out the recommendations of the Report. Are memories so short that we have forgotten the government's arguments for rejecting the findings of the Devlin Report on Nyasaland?)

WHEN the government intervened on the Wednesday it was with the intention of conceding Mr. Greene's last demand and all this involved was to appease the other two unions (A.S.L.E.F. and T.S.S.A.) by promising them that nobody would pinch their differentials even if they accepted an all-round increase; the other was to decide how much.

At a meeting of the T.U. General Council on Thursday, Mr. Greene, who is a member (as well as Mr. Webber of the T.S.S.A.) was questioned about the size of the increase which his executive was prepared to accept. He is reported as having "avoided answering this directly by saying that it had not been considered by his Executive" (then what did they talk about when they got into their early huddles?) Nevertheless "some members of the General Council think his mind is running around 5 per cent." And in Friday's *Guardian* one reads the (modest) headline "Promise of 5 p.c. increase may satisfy N.U.R." And this is what the Minister of Labour, after consulting Mr. Guillebaud to see if that was alright by him, and to save face all round, proposed to Sir Brian and that is what they settled at with Mr. Greene and the two other Union leaders—but only after Sir Brian had tried to get away

*Few people, we imagine, believe Mr. Guillebaud's explanation for the sudden discovery that the Report could be ready earlier than anticipated. The *Guardian's* Labour correspondent commented: "There is one intriguing question behind Mr. Guillebaud's action: Did he fall or was he pushed? The immediate assumption was that either the T.U.C. or the British Transport Commission have suggested to him that he should try to expedite his findings. I was assured last night that no such approach had been made. The explanation offered from one source was that Mr. Guillebaud, being a man of good sense and a reader of the newspapers, had acted on his own initiative. Whether he had any prompting from the Government may never be known with complete assurance.

with an offer of 4 per cent. Brinkman to the very end!

THE sigh of relief all round was followed however by "a bad taste in the mouth" for the right-wing *Sunday Times* and a liverish Monday morning editorial in the *Guardian* on "Railway Finances" in which it is pointed out that "the 'settlement' which has bought off the railway strike that had been threatened for today has settled nothing". The *Guardian* of course is, as usual, concerned with the "brass", and we will leave them to their actuarial nightmares.

The *Sunday Times* on the other hand has "a bad taste in the mouth" for other and more interesting reasons. The immediately settlement, "desirable as it was" has the air of concessions to "blackmail" in the manner of its achievement. The *Sunday Times*, as the Editor in person, in an article on the "Right to Strike" makes quite clear, believes in Trades Unions so long as they play the bosses' (or the state's) game and in the right of workers to strike so long as they don't use that right. We will not attempt to summarise his arguments and proposals except to say that they are more in keeping with the policies of Franco's Spain of Krushchev's Russia, than of the proud traditions of "democracy" and above all "free enterprise", of which the *Sunday Times* is normally so outspoken an exponent (where millionaires and big business are concerned).

MUCH capital is made out of the struggles between the three railway unions.

A single union—writes the Editor of the *S. Times*—at loggerheads as much with its fellow unions as with the employers, confronted the nation with the prospect of a catastrophic blow at its economic life and welfare. . . .

That the railway workers should be divided is all the more lamentable when that division is the result of economic and class differentials. But it is ridiculous to blame the N.U.R., which is open to all who work on the railways, for not being able to co-operate with, or for wishing to absorb, the other two unions which restrict their membership to engine drivers and signalmen and Technical and Clerical staff respectively. It is they who have the narrow approach to the workers' problems, who see themselves as superior to the majority of their fellow workers and presumably better served by remaining outside the Industrial Union.

When the N.U.R. made its wage demands it was acting on behalf of its members, and the Transport Commission was complicating the issue by refusing to make a settlement without the agreement of the other two unions. Of course if the N.U.R. had been awarded an interim increase there would have been loud protests from the other two unions. Not, surely, on the grounds that the N.U.R. workers had received a "rise"—when has it been the business of one union to prevent another to negotiate a pay rise?—but on the grounds that they too want a rise. That is reasonable enough. What is not, is that a major stumbling block in reaching a settlement of the recent dispute was made out of the fact that the two "differentials" unions refused to accept a rise, and because they refused, it was not felt that the N.U.R. could be given an increase!

That is sheer lunacy. So long as there are three railway unions each must be negotiated with separately, for it is obvious that they cannot agree among themselves. If they could there would not be three of them. And it's no use for the "free enterprisers" taking a holier-than-thou attitude about the division and rivalry between those unions. It is at the root of capitalist society, a commonplace of a free-for-all, class society. And in big business the struggles are resolved by take-over

Lolita

Continued from p. 2

of communication between the ideas of the writer and his public. Nabokov is certainly conscious of what Comfort means by "barbarian" society, and the wanderings of Humbert and Lolita which he depicts, from motel to motel all over the United States, are a telling commentary on the "barbarity" of such a society. Humbert suffers from a rootlessness, a condition of *anomie* which makes him a sort of Ishmael. He is an a-social anarchist. What roots he has are in European culture, and he despises the vulgarity and crudity of the American Way of Life. Yet he falls in love with a girl who is the very typification of Yankee culture; Lolita, raucous, brash, greedy and immature. Lolita seduces him without a moral qualm because copulation is to her just "kinda fun", an ancillary pleasure to hot music and synthetic drinks at the drug-store.

An Honest Portrait

It may be that Lolita's view of sex is typical and healthy for pubescent children. Perhaps the richness and complexity of adult sexuality grows rather slowly. Certainly Lolita's views of the humbugs of adult life are fairly general among children. Humbert as depicted is crazy, neurotic, not because he feels sexually attracted to a certain type of little girl, but because this attraction assumes such monstrous and obsessive proportions in his life. A healthy man of his intelligence and level of sophistication, would feel the same boredom for Lolita that he feels for the immature pleasures of Yankee Coca-Cola civilization. But Humbert is perverse; he is irritated and charmed together.

As I have said before, Lolita deserves a high place in literature. She is one of the very few child heroines who are depicted honestly. Practically all literature distorts the face of childhood. We read of the whimsy of children, their romanticism, their folly, their bravery, their slyness, their innocence—but very, very seldom do we come across an honest account of their randyness. Why shouldn't little girls of twelve be accep-

ted as randy? They can be greedy for sexual fun just as much as for ice cream; and little girls can be hard-headed and cynical too when the need arises. Lolita is forced into outright whoredom because in the "barbarian" society in which she lives, Humbert is the only source of material provision that she has—society offers her no alternative. That is, until she picks up another man.

Lolita as a novel is unusual enough to remind me of another book which portrays children fairly honestly—I refer to Richard Hughes' *A High Wind in Jamaica*. Here we have a family of children in the somewhat peculiar position of being given unwilling hospitality on board a nineteenth century pirate ship. The story mainly concerns Emily, a girl of ten years old. She is of course pre-pubescent and is not faced directly with the problems of sex on board the ship. Her friend Margaret is thirteen and becomes the sailors' sexual plaything, and a rather despised one at that. Emily is protected by her immaturity and is concerned with problems of survival and adaptation to a strange environment, as are her younger brothers and sisters. Like Nabokov, Richard Hughes brings out the essential ruthlessness of children and the shallowness of their emotions. Emily perpetrates a murder in a fit of rage and panic, but covers it up quite successfully later on, even to the extent of letting it be pinned on innocent shoulders. When restored to her family she soon becomes a normal little girl again.

Now I think that the mistake which adults tend to make about children is twofold. First we tend to endow them with the emotional capacity which we ourselves have, and second, we tend to underrate their sensual capacity. On the whole they are beings with shallower emotional lives but deeper sensual lives than we have. I would go along with A. S. Neill in the matter of "hearts not heads in the school"; in general little provision is made for the satisfaction of the appetites of children in ways that are profitable to them. If all that society

offers is the Coca-Cola type of civilization depicted in *Lolita*, children will grab at that; if it is the snobbery of the British prep and public schools they will swallow that. But the underworld is always there. Prep and public school boys' sensuality goes into ritualised cruelty and homosexual practices, and the jungle of the girls' school equivalents is rather worse. For the working class the underworld is that of "juvenile delinquency". A "juvenile delinquent" is a child who gets caught. What we would do with the enormous number of J.D.'s which would be on our hands if the law enforcement officers were more efficient, I do not know.

Real Live Issues

The book *Lolita* is important, readable, memorable and moving because it is about real live people and real live issues. One can contrast it with the muck of conventional fiction and science fiction which is churned out year after year, which is completely dreary and ephemeral because that deals with things as they are conventionally supposed to be rather than as they are. I mention science fiction, which is largely an attempt to liven things up by bringing monsters from outer space or malignant variants of plant life on to the stage, with technological diversions. But life on a rocket-ship or on a beleaguered islet of civilization, is dull and banal when seen through the eyes of a purblind writer. Monsters from outer space are really far less interesting than the real live creatures which do inhabit our world. It is the job of the novelist, if he has any talent, to show us the world in which we live, to increase our vision of it. All great writers do just this, and although the novel is fiction yet its effect is the enlargement of truth.

In dealing with *Lolita* I have been chiefly concerned with its author's study of child-adult relations seen against a background of a particular social milieu. This is only one aspect of the book. The book itself is not a tract, not a plea for any cause, any ideal. It is moving but it does not preach. It does the best that a novel can do: it holds up a clarifying mirror to life. G.

A Further Comment on REVISIONIST ANARCHISM

I DO not have the time, nor do I think it all that necessary to answer in detail every issue Nicolas Walter mentions in his reply to my article. I will confine myself to commenting on certain basic questions which he raises.

Firstly, however, let me try to clear up one or two misunderstandings.

Nicolas Walter states that he did not suggest that anarchists should try "to make the best of" parliament and he quotes the full sentence in his article in which this phrase appears. But his preceding sentence ran: "I know—we don't want any form of government, and much of what goes on in Parliament is just a charade." In view of this, and the fact that his previous paragraph was almost entirely concerned with Parliament, I do not think that I was wrong to give the meaning to his words that I did. As for his qualification of the phrase "best form of government", I can only say that in using it I was not necessarily referring to parliamentary government alone. What I wanted to bring out was my belief that even the best form of government conceived of by men would still negate individual liberty.

I do not know whether Dolci could have done in the times of Mussolini what he has managed to do today. Anyway, I have never denied that it is possible to do some things in a parliamentary democracy that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to do under a dictatorship. (It is also possible to do more things while suffering from influenza than from diphtheria, but no man in his right mind would argue that he supports influenza against diphtheria). What it is important to realize, however, is that activities such as those of Dolci or of Bhava can only continue so long as the governments of their respective countries deem it expedient to allow them to, or so long as they have so much support that it would be dangerous for

them to enter into the political arena to recognize, by implication, the principle of government. To vote is to coerce or threaten coercion. Behind the ballot is the bullet of the soldier, ready to force the defeated minority into submission. The voter does not merely assert his right to self-government, he sets up a claim to govern others. The anarchist cannot employ a method which would put him in such a false light.

If this is "thinking along metaphysical lines", then it seems to me that metaphysics have in this case been borne out by experience and I am not at all worried by the title of 'metaphysician'.

the authorities to suppress them. Governments may vary in the tactics they use, but their aim remains the same: to retain the power and privilege of the dominant classes, of whom they are both product and producer.

Nicolas Walter asserts that the state "is different in every society" and that the legislative bodies of Britain, the USSR and the USA "are not the same thing". This view is only superficially correct. The forms of political systems in different countries do vary, but their content is the same—they are all based upon coercion. This was recognised by the late Harold Laski when he wrote in his *An Introduction to Politics*: "The state is . . . a way of regulating human conduct. Any analysis of its character reveals it as a method of imposing principles of behaviour by which men must regulate their lives . . . It lays down a system of imperatives, and uses coercion to secure obedience to them" (my emphasis). In other words, whatever the accidents of power which cause the state to assume this or that form, its essence remains the same. It is for this reason that anarchists oppose all states, and cannot logically take part in the election of their governments, where this exists. As Victor Yarros once put it:

... to enter into the political arena is to recognize, by implication, the principle of government. To vote is to coerce or threaten coercion. Behind the ballot is the bullet of the soldier, ready to force the defeated minority into submission. The voter does not merely assert his right to self-government, he sets up a claim to govern others. The anarchist cannot employ a method which would put him in such a false light.

We are told that civil disobedience, strikes and other forms of non-cooperation and direct action are authoritarian methods. As far as I am concerned, authority is that human relationship in which one man, or a group of men, can compel the obedience of others. The existence of authority means that the sovereignty of the individual is invaded and his right to control his own life denied. It follows that any attempt to resist the invasion of one's sovereignty which does not involve an effort to im-

pose one's own will upon the invader cannot be considered an exercise of authority. On the contrary, it is a *liberative* act, an act of self-defence against aggression. The establishment of rocket bases, for example, is an act of aggression against those who have not freely consented to them. Not only is their right to self-determination denied by this action, but their very lives—indeed all our lives—are in peril as a result of it. To resist the establishment of such bases is not, therefore, to engage in coercion, but to rebel against coercion.

Our 'revisionist' friend scatters so many red herrings around that he misses the point I was trying to make in my remarks on direct action—that direct action is the one means appropriate to anarchist ends. I did not deny that reforms had been brought about by other means. (After all, even dictators like Peron and Krushchev can be reformists in some spheres of life). Nonetheless, while he argues that direct action would be nearly impossible in such places as "bad hospitals and bad hairdressing salons", the remedy he proposes is "to kick up a fuss and make it unpleasant for the authorities". To make things "unpleasant" for those in authority is hardly the same as working through authority. It is, rather, to look to extra-governmental forces as the source for reforms and that is something anarchists could well support. There are other ways of direct action, however, than those of the strike and the take-over and these can be used when the latter are not practicable. Some examples can be found in the struggles waged by the Wobblies (the IWW) in the USA and no doubt others can be found in the struggles of workers and peasants in other countries.

The ideas Nicolas Walter puts forward are not new. From the days of Bakunin, if not before, there has been a succession of 'revisionists' urging us to abandon our anti-parliamentarian position. Had we been persuaded by them we would have dissipated our energies pursuing the myriads of stop-gaps and chimerical hopes so beloved of 'progressive' politicians. Not only this, but we would have lost our identity and come to regard means as ends as did those comrades who threw themselves to the lions in the 'political arena'. If we wish to "walk towards anarchism today, tomorrow, and always" our path lies in a different direction from that which leads to authority—whether it be of any king, a priest, or a parliament.

S. E. PARKER.

END GAME

Things we were Sorry to Miss

IN the eighteenth century when the latest novelty was the novel, moralists used to go on about the evils of novel-reading. It was rather the same in the nineteen-fifties with television: glued to our goggle-boxes, we would, it was said, have no time for Other Things. I find it just the other way round: so pre-occupied with Other Things, I always seem to miss television programmes, which from what people tell me, I would love to have seen. "I suppose you saw that play about an anarchist last night?" they say, and I shake my head, thinking that they must be talking about some rehash of the Peter the Painter story. But evidently it wasn't so. It was, by all accounts a very good play by Terence Dudley, *Song in a Strange Land* (BBC, Feb. 2), about a Spanish anarchist exile in this country who works as a window cleaner and finds himself in the magistrate's court on a whole series of charges, from withholding his son from primary school persecution to painting slogans on walls. He uses the dock as a platform for his anarchist beliefs, quotes Ferrer, attacks the Church and declares "I have a great contempt for this court". From the magistrate's point of view the only thing to be said for him is his fanatical honesty, but as his story gradually

emerges... well I should have seen it myself.

Dissenters

The same applies to the Associated Television 90-minute programme compiled by Ken Tynan on American social and political dissent, which was described in FREEDOM a fortnight ago. I would like to have seen professors Galbraith and Wright Mills, and Maurice McCrackin the Cincannati pastor who was sent for psychiatric examination and then jailed for refusing to pay the 80% of his taxes which are spent on arms, Mort Sahl and Jules Feiffer, and the 'beat' poets Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Allen Ginsburg. I did hear the latter on the radio in the BBC's *Art, Anti-Art* series in Feb. 6th, but it was a disappointing interview, and to my amazement, he denied both the humour and the social criticism as important elements in his poems. The kind of Whitman-in-reverse poems which Ginsberg and Ferlinghetti write is fatally easy to do badly, but their best features seem to me to be the very ones which Ginsberg minimises:

"Are you going to let your emotional life
be run by Time Magazine?
I'm obsessed by Time Magazine."

I read it every week.
It's cover stars at me every time I
slink past
the corner candy store.
I read it in the basement of the
Berkeley Public Library.
It's always telling me about responsibility.
Businessmen are serious.
Movie producers are serious. Every-
body's serious but me.
I am talking to myself again."

Or again in the same poem,
"America you don't really want to go
to war.
America it's them bad Russians.
Them Russians them Russians and
them Chinese. And them Russian.
The Russia wants to eat us alive. The
Russia's power mad. She wants to
take our cars from out our garages.
Her wants to grab Chicago. Her needs
a Red Reader's Digest.
Her wants our auto plants in
Siberia. Him big bureaucracy running
our filling stations."

And here is Ferlinghetti in a poem whose repetitions and pauses are determined by the jazz rhythms against which it is meant to be declaimed:

"I am waiting for the Second Coming
and I am waiting
for a religious revival
to sweep the state of Arizona
and I am waiting

for the Grapes of Wrath to be stored
and I am waiting
for them to prove
that God is really American
and I am seriously waiting
for Billy Graham and Elvis Presley
to exchange roles seriously."

Government-Sponsored Research

Something else I missed was the Brains Trust a few weeks ago, when apparently Grey Walter was saying some critical things about Governments. One viewer tells us that he declared: "There shouldn't be any laws", and another writes that, "As far as I remember, Dr. Grey Walter said that Government-sponsored research was bad in that it led to legislation. He also said (so far as I remember) research on the army and other services was O.K. It puzzled me. I thought I should see a mention of it in FREEDOM. Perhaps you missed it." Well we did, but I can think straight away of two accidentally useful results of research in the army. One thing that crept out of Dr. Arenfeldt's book *Psychiatry in the British Army in the 2nd World War* is that volunteers were nuttier and more prone to delinquency than conscripts! The army's more recent investigation of the intelligence, as opposed to the education, of National Service conscripts, is used in the Crowther Report to indicate what vast numbers of the young adult population could have benefited from much more education than the arbitrary "tri-partite" system prescribed by the 1944 Act. These figures are bound to become another nail in the coffin of "11-plus" selection.

The problems of the scientist in an age when most research is sponsored by governments were touched upon in a talk by Prof. Stephen Toulmin in *The Scientist's Dilemma* (BBC Thir Programme, 7/2/60). Just after the war, he said,

"I was employed in one of those teams... when went round Germany interviewing the men who had been working on military electronics. Tucked away in a lonely, moated castle in Thuringia we found a little team of scientists who had spent the war doing entirely impractical work on atmospheric electricity. Their subject had been certain minute fluctuations in the electrification of the atmosphere, what you might call 'micro-thunderstorms'; and the work they had been doing was purely academic... How (you may ask) had they gone on getting government money for this useless research right up to the time of the final capitulation? It was all a matter of bluff: they persuaded the Luftwaffe that their work would lead to a better understanding of lightning discharges, and that would in the long run be of importance for the air force. Having got their financial support, they went on exactly as before, studying problems they found interesting for their own sake. This particular bluff—I shall argue—is one which scientists have been using for the last 300 years."

Alex Comfort comments on the same thing (*Peace News* 5/2/60) in an article on the food-producing potentials of the oceans. He mentions the alarm of biologists at the use of the sea as a dump for radio-active wastes, and describes Dr. Piccard's bathyscaphe journey to the bottom of the Challenger Deep (7½ miles down), three weeks ago, as an achievement as remarkable as the sputnik. "Its originator has succeeded in getting Government backing, after years of propa-

ganda solely because the sea bottom has become militarily important".

"Here, as in all other matters affecting the future of Man, policy control is still in the hands of men who can only be shifted by loud noises, or by the idea of hostility or self-advertisement in one form or another. Scientists cannot advise them—they have to kid them, flannel them or frighten them. Piccard has somehow scared the U.S. Government into paying for his machine."

Damping-down Non-conformity

I learn from one of the weekly radio critics that Alan Sillitoe, author of two brilliantly funny and devastatingly anarchistic books published during the last eighteen months, *Saturday Night & Sunday Morning* and *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner*, appeared during the last week on a Midlands Home Service programme "That Reminds Me". Paul Ferris, in the *Observer* complains that in this kind of programme

"the writer is somehow scaled down to fit neatly into his home town or county. It was no use Sillitoe declaring that 'the tighter society is, the worse it is for the country... people have told me it's an anarchistic point of view'. He was, said the interviewer firmly, 'a very kindly and compassionate young man.' Nottingham loomed up, and quite right too. He is almost famous, the programme seemed to be saying, but he's ours."

The same kind of damping-down of real conviction and opposition because of the manner of presentation is what many people complain about the "mass-media". It is the basis of Richard Hoggart's criticism of the trivialisation of everything as just another snippet of entertaining oddity. The beats aren't really subversive. The anarchists are a lovable lot who don't really mean any harm. It was this kind of production treatment which angered the members of the London Anarchist Group who appeared on television last year. All the same, two of the respondents to our questionnaire said that it was seeing these programmes that made them take out subscriptions to FREEDOM, and another says she did so as a result of hearing Sir Compton Mackenzie on ITV say that it was the best weekly paper.

Too bad I always miss these television plugs!

TRISTRAM SHANDY.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS Building Workers

IF building workers are as pathological a bunch as J.U. describes them in his letter, it is a poor look out for the building industry both economically and socially.

If building workers "regard all other workers as 'women' with the exception of the miner", devote part of the dinner hour to jeering at passers-by, and leap to their feet ready for a fight at any answering back—then the proportion of nut-cases among them must be high. Indeed one might suspect that as a whole they suffer from a sense of general inferiority as a group if they foster delusions about the sexual nature of other workers and are morbidly sensitive on the question of insult and violence. Here indeed is the perfect soil for a fascist movement to take root, for fascism has always appealed to those of uncertain virility who need to assert their manhood through otherwise pointless violence. It is therefore reassuring to know that building workers are noticeably multi-racial, hence the difficulties encountered in building the Tower of Babel must beset those who might otherwise seek to erect a fascist political edifice on such otherwise promising material.

J.U.'s letter was rather a surprise to me. My own experience as a builder's carpenter was of limited duration, and quite a number of years ago, but I got the impression that building workers were on the whole a fairly enlightened though undoubtedly mixed bunch. Indeed it was heartening to compare them with the grim picture of the workers of 1912 in Robert Tressall's *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*. I note that in the sample of readers of FREEDOM which

has been analysed, building workers are quite well represented.

I doubt if J.U. is correct in asserting that the conditions the building worker works in are still probably the worst of any industry. Fools who consider themselves "hard men" can be got to accept ridiculous conditions in many industries simply because in thick-skulled cowardice they fear to be thought cissy by insisting that they are men and not brutes. It is a poor sort of satisfaction to call the boss all the obscenities you can lay your tongue to, when he can still force you to work like a brute for your living.

London, Feb 15. TONY GIBSON.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS & WAR

DEAR FRIENDS,

It is not illogical to protest against France's nuclear bomb even if other countries DO have them already; particularly as in Britain and America, protesters have already made plenty of fuss about the manufacture and testing of nuclear weapons by the U.S., the U.S.S.R. and by Britain. But perhaps the diverse demonstrations have not been reported in the French newspapers.

Whilst agreeing with Richard Fichner (FREEDOM, Feb. 6) that we want total disarmament and not just nuclear disarmament, it is necessary to emphasise and publicise the special properties of nuclear weapons. They are the only weapons that could destroy the world by devastation and radiation. They are the only weapons that when tested can cause bone cancer and leukaemia, and cause children of future generations to be born defective. The fall-out from the tests contaminates food and water all over the world.

The likelihood of nuclear war is dangerous enough without the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries, and that is why there has been so much opposition to the French test; in addition, it is deplorable that the test should take place in such a fertile part of the Sahara. The Sahara protest team have been very successful in focussing attention on this test, and it has stimulated Africans to express their opposition also.

So, although we aim at total disarmament, we should not ignore the desirability of protesting against nuclear weapons specifically, because of their particular dangers. We should make a noise about everything we don't like, even if we do not always appear to be logical!

Yours sincerely,
London, Feb. 8. D. H. BARASI.

ARE WE "BEAT"?

DEAR EDITORS,

Your contributor, Jeremy Westall, in his vehement protest against revisionism—which protest the majority of your readers will probably endorse—strikes a despondent note when he declares "we're beat". This is in line with other contributors to FREEDOM in recent months who have despaired of ever attaining an

anarchist society and who have concluded that the most we can hope for is to live as free individuals and apparently hope that others will do the same. How this is to be done in an Authoritarian State I have not been able to discover.

It is not surprising that individualist anarchists should be pessimistic. The task of convincing the mass of the people that a new way of life with full liberty and without either employers or government by way of persuasion and argument alone is truly gigantic. FREEDOM unfortunately reaches only a tiny section of the people, but a considerable number listen with passing interest to outdoor speakers, particularly in the Park, but few indeed are really impressed. The possibility of living without government appears to be so remote that the vast majority dismiss the idea as "plain daft". If individual conversion was indeed the only hope, it would seem to be true that "we're beat". Incidentally, why do we not make better use of local newspapers, some of which at least are willing to print controversial letters—even on Anarchism.

Anarchist Communism does not share this difficulty. With all wealth commonly owned and produced, the people will surely be receptive to libertarian thought. It is a truism that the structure of any given society is determined by the method of wealth production, and with wealth produced in profusion (as I think must be inevitable with revolutionary means of power) private ownership will become meaningless and fall naturally into disuse. It is then that individual liberty—which individual anarchism can never bring—will become universal.

Yours sincerely,
Woldingham, Feb. 10. B.F.

Working Class Objectives

WE were assured during the late war (1939-1945) that our bombers always aimed for military targets and it was the others who bombed indiscriminately. It is now revealed by the *Guardian's* Air Correspondent (February 12th) that our aim was indiscriminate in a different fashion.

Professor P. M. S. Blackett, who was Director of Operation Research at the Admiralty during the war, has attacked the whole basis of Bomber Command's offensive during the war. He said the area bombing of Germany was based on a numerical error—for which, by implication, he blamed Lord Cherwell, Sir Winston Churchill's scientific adviser.

About April, 1942, he said, a Cabinet paper known to have been written in Lord Cherwell's office was issued on the probable effect on Germany of the British bombing offensive over the next eighteen months.

"The paper laid down the policy of directing the bombing offensive primarily against the German working-class housing—middle-class housing was too spread out to be a good target and factories or military targets were too difficult to find and hit. As far as my memory goes, the paper claims that it should be possible within a stated period

to destroy 50 per cent. of all houses in all towns of over fifty thousand population in Germany, if Britain concentrated all her efforts on the production of bombers, and used them for this purpose."

Sir Henry Tizard, a member of the Air Council, concluded that this estimate was five times too high. Professor Blackett said he himself estimated the error as sixfold.

"The main mistake made was to assume that all bombers which would be delivered to the factories in the next eighteen months would in the same period have dropped all their bombs on Germany. The bombing survey after the war showed that the number of houses actually destroyed in the assigned period was only one-tenth of the estimate in the Cabinet's paper."

Professor Blackett, who was giving a lecture to the Institute for Strategic Studies in London in memory of Sir Henry Tizard, said what was needed now was more effective analytic activity within the armed services by those senior officers who would have the actual responsibility of waging war.

With true scientific detachment Prof. Blackett does not criticize the target but merely the failure to reach it.
J.R.

FREEDOM needs more Readers, more Completed Questionnaires and More Money please!

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT WEEK 7

Deficit on Freedom £140
Contributions received £125
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February 5 to February 11

London: Anon.* 9d.; London: J.C. 7/6;
London: J.S.* 3/-; London: Anon. £15/0/0;
Henlow: Anon. 7/-; Wolverhampton: J.G.L.*
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MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP and MALATESTA DEBATING SOCIETY

IMPORTANT

MEETINGS are now held at
CAMBRIDGE CIRCUS
"The Marquis of Granby" Public House,
London, W.C.2.
(corner Charing Cross Road and
Shaftesbury Avenue)
at 7.30 p.m.
ALL WELCOME

Feb. 21.—Max Patrick on
APPOINTMENTS AND
DISAPPOINTMENTS

FEB. 28.—A. Rajk on
THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION
(Up to Kronstadt)

FEB. 27.—L.A.G. SOCIAL at
5, Caledonian Road, N.1.
(Nr. King's Cross Station)
at 7.15 p.m.

Games, Entertainment, Refreshments.
Admission 2/-.

MAR. 6.—To be announced

MAR. 13.—Basil Bonner,
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