

In this Issue

- How to Screw your Neighbour in 13 Easy Chapters - p. 2
Freedom Readership Survey - p. 3
Anarchism and the Teenage Thing - p. 4

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"You can never get me to regard freedom as synonymous with political liberty."

—HENRIK IBSEN.

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Threepence

Reflections on that Promise of a Four-minute Missile Warning in 3 Years' Time! IS POWER POLITICS A HOAX?

ONE member of the serious press, *The Guardian*, admits in an editorial on the subject of how much warning of a missile attack will be obtained from the radar chain now in course of construction, that

only in a world gone slightly mad can there be serious argument about whether Britain would have four, five, ten or fifteen minutes warning of the surprise attack from Eastern Europe.

But being also one of the serious pillars of this "world gone slightly mad" the *Guardian* hastens to add:

Yet the argument is serious, for on it depends whether the bombers and missiles based on Britain can be counted as a deterrent to major war.

And this of course is the official line put forward last week by the government's spokesman when discussing the Defence White Paper and explaining why, after all these years of goodwill missions, disarmament conferences and even the recognition, last year, by Ike and Mr. K. that neither considered the other a warmonger, Defence expenditure will be £116 millions more than for last year!

It is to our minds sheer lunacy to believe that a nation deciding to launch a missile attack on other nations will be deterred by such considerations as to whether the other nation will be in a position to get enough H-bombers into the air before the missiles destroy them on the ground. None of the nations possessing nuclear weapons have any illusions about the boomerang effect of starting a missile war. Once started only wholesale extermination can be the outcome for mankind, and everybody knows it, and for this reason no one will knowingly start the conflagration.

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WHAT we have been experiencing since the end of World War II is unprecedented, and the result of the revolution in mass communications and in science and technology which was sparked off during the last war. We would suggest that power politics prior to 1939 was a much more real and potentially dangerous phenomenon of capitalist society than it is to-day. Then, whole continents were the prize over which the colonial, the naval, powers manoeuvred for advantages, for conquest. With the growth of nationalism and the liquidation of old style colonialism (accelerated by the military needs of the colonial powers in their armed struggle against the military might of Germany and Japan), the power struggle between the nations has been modified radically. That is, the *real* struggle, for it is an undeniable fact that however much frontiers may be modified, or countries "occupied" there can be no

return to the approach of old-style colonialism. And this fact is all the more significant when one bears in mind that in terms of military weapons and techniques alone there is no reason why the colonial powers should not be in a better position now than they ever were to physically occupy and grind down the peoples of these territories.

It is equally significant that the military occupation of W. Germany has not prevented that country from rebuilding its industrial potential and raising the living standards of its people to among the highest in Europe. In world markets to-day W. Germany and not Russia is Britain's most serious competitor.

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WHAT then is the struggle for power all about? For many of us this is a question which has long ago been answered. To some of us it is simply the ambition of some nations for world domination; for others it is a question of economics, a struggle for markets in a world of shrinking markets. We believe that there are politicians whose lust for power is so great that they dream of world conquest. On the other hand we believe that in the world we live in there are too many ambitious politicians and industrialists as well as "unco-operative masses" to make the realisation of such personal dreams of world hegemony impossible. We are even coming to the conclusion that economic issues are no longer the dominating factor in the power struggle that they once were.

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INDEED we are inclined to the view that the "power struggle" in international politics is a huge con-

fidence trick in which so many people have a vested interest, that it is virtually impossible for any body of citizens to break the vicious circle. Apart from the "summit" leaders whose most pedestrian utterances are repeated by the Press and flashed on the T.V. screens in millions of homes throughout the world, every minor political leader has an interest

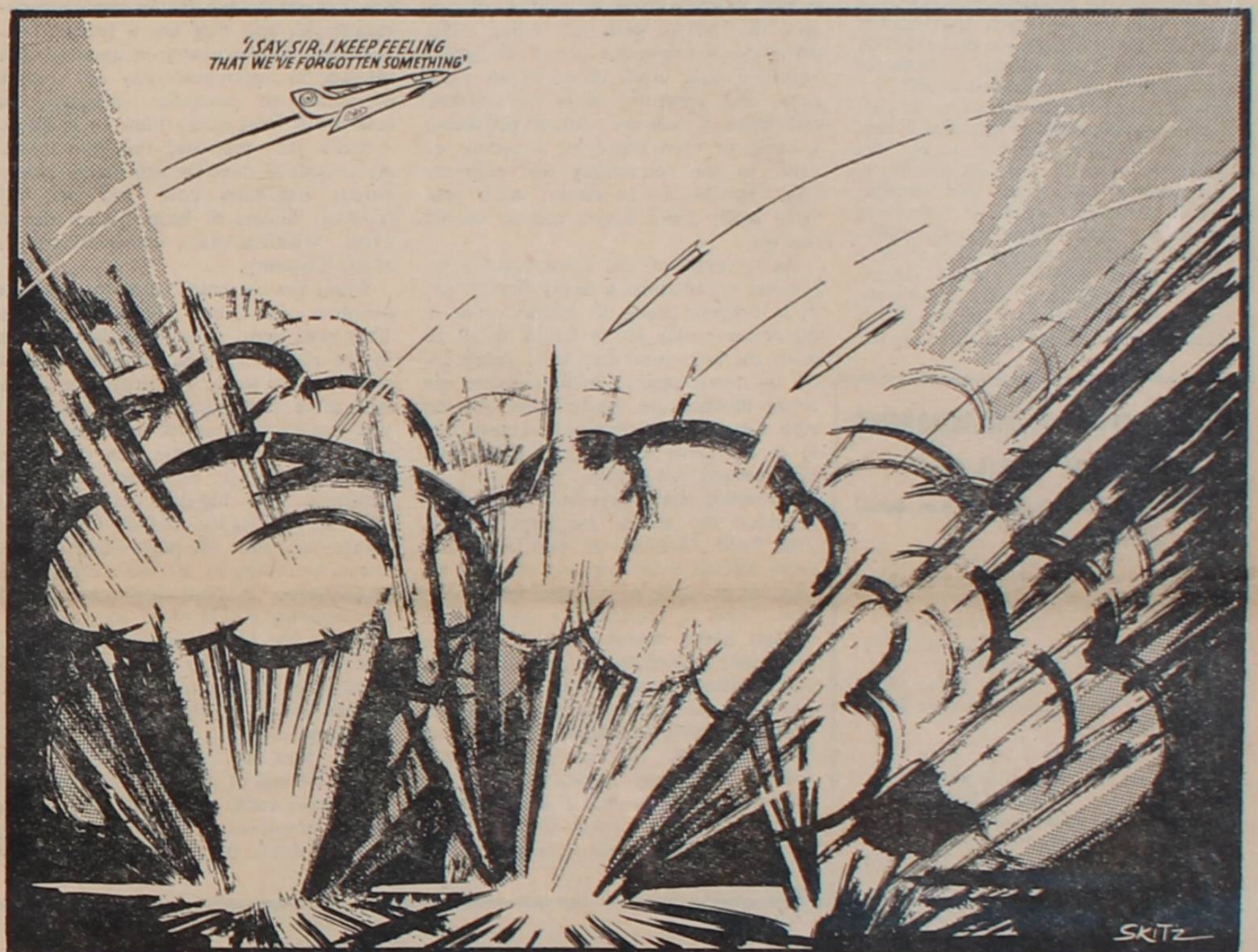
in the maintenance of international "tensions" and of playing his role in the alignment of world power. But for it Nkrumah could not dream of pan-Africanism nor Nasser of an Arab federation. And feeding the leaders are the hundreds of thousands of advisers, delegates and civil servants whose status and livelihood depend on the perpetuation of the

power-political struggle. Again how would the thousands of political journalists earn their livings, as well as pontificate on T.V. and Radio, if there were no international political crises to unfold and to analyse?

Think of the number of career-men in the Services whose jobs and pensions would be affected if the Powers were to agree on disarmament! The Defence White Paper was a tonic to them. As the *Guardian* put it so tactlessly last week

The Defence White Paper ought to please almost everyone . . . The con-

Continued on p. 3



Boycott South African Goods

MANY of us have been carrying out our own individual boycott of South African goods ever since it was first asked for by opposition South African organisations last autumn.

Next Tuesday, however, we are to be joined by most sections of the official Labour Movement (whatever that means) who support the boycott in principle, but are chary about how it is to be applied.

The organisations calling for the boycott include the African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress and the Liberal Party of South Africa, and in a message to the people of Britain, leaders of these organisations have said:

This year it is proposed to conduct a limited boycott of South African produce in Britain for a period of one month, starting on March 1st. The boycott is a protest against Apartheid, the removal of political rights, the colour bar in industry, the extension of passes to women and the low wages paid to Non-White workers. In the towns and cities of South Africa over half of the African families live below the bread-line.

Economic boycott is one way in which the world at large can bring home to the South African authorities that they must either mend their ways or suffer for them.

This appeal is therefore directed to the

people of Great Britain to strike a blow for freedom and justice in South Africa and for those whom the State would keep in continuing subjection in the Union. If this boycott makes the authorities realise that the world outside will actively oppose Apartheid it will have struck a blow for freedom and justice in our country.

Much Controversy.

During the months following the first introduction of the boycott idea, the organisers have been busy, gaining much publicity and arousing much public controversy. They have succeeded in getting their proposals discussed at highest levels of the Labour and Liberal Parties, the TUC and the Co-operative movement.

It is the acceptance of the idea in principle by these organisations that gives March 1st its significance as the beginning of the month's official boycott.

But we must refer again to the equivocal manner in which the Labour movement has faced this issue. The Labour Party has officially supported the idea of a consumer boycott. This is the least it could have done, but unfortunately the immediate effect has been to give the boycott a party political flavour. (Mac went out of his way

in his Capetown speech to attack the boycott on those grounds). The same could be said of the Liberals, but oddly enough nobody ever thinks of them as of any significance in party politics.

It is in the reaction of the Trades Unions and the Co-ops that the chance of effective action has been thrown away. These associations of producers and distributors have all refused to accept responsibility in these functions, supporting the boycott only to the extent of urging their members to operate a consumers' boycott.

As we have pointed out before, this means that trades unionists will transport South African goods all the way to the shops and then refuse to buy them. While the official Co-op attitude is that it is not for distributors to curtail their consumers' choice, only for the purchasers themselves to refrain from buying.

Limited Effect.

This half-hearted approach, plus the fact that the action is only to be supported for one month will mean that the actual economic effect of the boycott will be strictly limited. The proportion of South African imports which are perishable is small anyway. It won't hurt retailers—

and wholesalers even less—to have their stocks of South African preserves or wines or tobaccos on their shelves one month longer than usual.

And, of course, perhaps the most important of all South African imports are gold and diamonds. How do we boycott these?

But it is not in the hopes of immediate economic effect that we should support the boycott. It should be done as an expression of revulsion against the practices of the South African Government and of solidarity with the oppressed African and coloured peoples there.

It has been suggested that participants in the boycott could send the money they save to refugee funds, and this is a most laudable suggestion, assuming that boycotters do not accept the produce of other lands instead of South African goods.

Continued on p. 4

NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD!

OTTAWA, FEBRUARY 17.

Canadian unemployment was estimated at 504,000 by the middle of January, about 134,000 higher than in December, but 34,000 below 1959 averages, says a Government statement.

Building industries accounted for more than a third of the increase.

British United Press.

MISSILES FOR INDIA

According to British aircraft industry sources, the Bristol Aircraft Company has been negotiating with the Indian Defence Ministry for the sale of its Bloodhound missile.

This was reported from London in the *Times of India* of January 30.

Later that day a Ministry spokesman in New Delhi declined to comment, but said that even if India were buying the missiles, they would not be equipped with atomic warheads, the use of which India had steadfastly opposed.

Peace News 12/2/60.

