

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Since governments assume the right of death over peoples, it is not astonishing that sometimes people assume the right of death over governments."

—GUY DE MAUPASSANT

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April 16th, 1960

Threepence

The Saints Go Marching In... But the Politicians Go Marching On IS ALDERMASTON ENOUGH?

ON this week-end many thousands of people young and old will be once again on the road from Aldermaston to London. Their actions will be duly recorded and noted by all the instruments of mass communications, while their protests will be studiously ignored by the government they seek to influence.

As a means for awakening interest in the threat to mankind by nuclear weapons, these marches may well be effective, although let us face it; even if twice as many people march this year as compared with last Easter, they still represent only an infinitesimal proportion of the country's population—or for that matter of the population along the route—and one wonders how many more years will pass before 100,000 people can be persuaded to give up even one day to express their solidarity with a cause which after all has the interests of everyone at heart. One cannot help noting that some six weeks ago more than 1,000 people set out on a 1,000 mile walk when the incentives were money prizes, and we have no doubt that next year Mr. Butlin's money marathon will attract even larger numbers. We must not shirk such reflections for they make us aware both of the limitations of such protest movements as exist in this country to-day as well as of the problems which face all of us who would wish to make our contribution to the establishment of a world at peace.

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THE Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament rightly seeks to keep party politics out of its demonstrations. Though we all know that the March will be largely composed of people of different political or religious denominations and allegiances, it is essentially a people's movement, of volunteers joined by a common horror of the last word in scientific research, which threatens the future of mankind. But the CND ceases to be a non-political movement when it looks to political parties and governments to implement the demands put forward by the thousands of marchers and non-marchers who abhor the development of nuclear armaments.

In this respect, the C.N.D. has suffered a set-back since last year's march, for it has always been the dream of the leaders of the movement that their plans would stand a greater chance of success if the Labour Party were returned to power. Hence the acrimonious debates with the Direct Action Committee over their Voters' Veto, which no democrat could challenge on moral grounds but which the C.N.D. attacked on the grounds that it would operate in favour of Conser-

vative candidates at Elections). In October last the C.N.D.'s hopes were dashed with the Labour Party's resounding defeat at the polls. For at least another four years they must face the fact that the Government is a Conservative one which doesn't even take orders from its own Party let alone from an orderly column of Easter marchers! But also it is surely time that any remaining illusions they may have of Labour politicians were equally jettisoned in face of the Labour Party's recent performance over Defence expenditure. The official Party line on Nuclear weapons is no different from that of the government. The only considerations which would influence Labour Party policy are military, tactical and political ones, just as for the Conservatives, and 10,000 or 100,000 marchers offer no arguments which fit into this scheme of things.

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TO our minds the only effective function of an organisation such as the C.N.D. at the present stage is that of provoking more independent thinking among the people. This, as we, who are engaged in just such a task with FREEDOM, know only too well, is much more difficult than organising spectacular demonstrations which appeal to the emotional temperature of the moment, but which leave little trace once the organs of mass communications cool off and the provocative incident has been relegated to a paragraph in history and replaced by new provocations.

But of one thing we are certain, and it is that you will not induce people to think seriously and deeply, through fear. The C.N.D. whatever the original motives of its founders bases its public appeal on the fear of universal extermination in the event of an H-bomb war. This is confirmed, to our minds, by the Campaign's refusal to be committed to a programme for total disarmament. Yet how can one effectively campaign for the abolition of nuclear weapons without provoking thought on, and eventually resistance to, war itself except of course by believing that one can build up a solid movement based on fear alone? Such a movement, however, will lose as many supporters as it gains, for most people can accustom themselves to fear, and live without it unduly upsetting their lives. We dodge death every day of our lives without giving it a thought; some of us continue to smoke the deadly (but delectable) weed though we shudder at the thought of dying from lung cancer. One fear more or less is not going to radically change our way of thinking, or make us into active opponents of H-bombs.

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Too bad he Missed

THE general chorus of righteous indignation with which the wonderful news, that someone at last had decided it was time to eliminate the racist butcher Dr. Verwoerd, has been received in the Press and in official circles in this country was to be expected. The Queen, who as far as we know said nothing when 91 African men, women and children were shot down in cold blood by Verwoerd's police, duly sent her sympathy telegram; Mr. Macmillan who could not be persuaded to protest in the name of the government over the shootings at Sharpeville also produced the standard condolences cable, and the Leader of the Opposition, though he didn't go to the lengths of emulating the Prime Minister, who assured his shot counterpart that he and Mrs. M. "are both thinking of you very much", nevertheless issued a statement in which he declared that

"Whatever the circumstances and despite the Labour Party's strong disapproval of the South African Government's racial policies, I deeply regret that this attack should have been made upon Dr. Verwoerd."

The Press as a whole was even more sickly in its editorial expressions of horror. The *News Chronicle* which only a few days before had featured in its front page a dispatch from correspondent Stephen Barber, in which he described the indiscriminate terror which had been unleashed by the police against all Africans they found in the streets, refers to the attempt as "deplorable" and the impact of the first news as "appalling". Like the *Guardian* ("We must be profoundly thankful") this voice of Liberalism was relieved to learn that the unsuccessful assassin was not an African.

The Tory *Daily Telegraph* on the other hand which views that attempt with "revulsion" also considers it "senseless" and fears that it may bring new bitterness between white South Africans". Had Dr. Verwoerd's assailant been a black African—declares the *D. Telegraph*—"that would have been understandable". We wonder whether that

would have been the editorial line if in fact the assailant had been a "black African"!

The *Times* from its lofty heights editorialises in "A Dreadful Act". This is a moment at which all men of good will—Africaner and English, white, coloured and black—pause in a spirit of mutually shared horror.

What a lot of nonsense! Reports from Johannesburg pointed out that in spite of the shooting the people attending the Agricultural Fair went on enjoying themselves on the roundabouts and swings as if nothing had happened! And we agree, for once, with Cassandra of the *Daily Mirror* when he wrote on Monday that

In fact such is the bitterness in the minds of the British public that when the news came through on Saturday afternoon there were expressions of everything from satisfaction to pleasure—but no regret.

★

HOW wrong is the *Times* when it suggests that "An assassin has no friends; his dreadful act points no moral; it comes simply as a heart-breaking reminder of the infinite fallibility of human nature".

Millions of people throughout the world disgusted by the racial policies of the South African government will have read the news of the attempt on Verwoerd with disappointment only because the attempt failed. For them, David Pratt did what they had neither the opportunity nor, in the event, the courage to do. Of course assassination is a desperate act, and we know that the elimination of Verwoerd would not have removed the basic problems which divide the people of South Africa. But who will deny that it is the only language that dictators and tyrants understand? Verwoerd has escaped with his life, but we suggest that if he returns to lead the government what happened to him last Saturday will influence his future policy and the way he seeks to carry it out. If he decides to retire then those who succeed him will be chastened by the thought that what might have

happened to their predecessor might well happen to them.

A society such as that in South Africa, in which the majority is denied the most elementary rights by the ruling minority, can only be maintained by the use of naked violence. Throughout its history the black African has invariably been the victim. Last Saturday's news made a pleasant change. And in sending our condolences and solidarity to David Pratt, who for his gesture is to be detained indefinitely under the Emergency laws, we express the hope that no dictator, be he black, white or coloured; in Africa, Spain, South America or on either side of the curtain of power, will now sleep in peace!

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**HOW
TO END
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AND
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Alternative

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Alex Comfort's broadcast in the series on the Nineteen-Sixties: THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE

WHEN we talk about future scientific developments most of us, research men and others, are thinking of new fundamental discoveries which may be made, or new techniques, or at least new applications. What I have to say is relevant to these, but I am thinking primarily about possibilities of a different kind. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes said that law is what the courts will actually do. For my purposes here, scientific progress means what we, what our culture, will actually do during the next ten years.

Let me put it like this. Through the applications of science the expectation of life in most of western Europe has risen over the last two centuries from about thirty years at birth to about seventy years. A child, even an under-privileged child, in Holland or Britain, or in New Zealand, can therefore now expect to grow up, to avoid fatal disease in early adulthood, to produce children who will grow up, and to reach middle age. He can reasonably expect to do this without ever having experienced actual starvation, without ever having been exposed to plague, typhus, cholera, or smallpox; without losing a wife in childbirth or a child in infancy; and without ever having depended for a living on the kind of physical exertion which Gorki saw, as a boy, among the Volga hauliers. These are minimal expectations; familiarity makes us forget just how unusual they are in human experience.

All these expectations depend on existing knowledge and techniques. In the next ten years they could perfectly well, so far as practical considerations are concerned, be made available to the majority of human beings. We have them: at the same time we all know well that if things go on as they are, they will not be made available.

In fact, let us limit it still more. Let us take three treatable diseases. It would be possible, I think beyond any question, to guarantee that at the end of this decade there will be no untreated cases of leprosy, yaws, or malaria in the Commonwealth. This is a relatively modest

objective: it presents no unusual difficulties. It is a scientific possibility in the sense that it could be done, beginning tomorrow. I am suggesting that I know as well as you do that as things are it will not be done.

Why not?

Why not? Not for lack of theoretical background; not for lack of physical resources—not because of practical difficulties in the field. If it could in some devious way be represented as a military project, if, in fact, public health workers could conspire to convince the authorities that these diseases were not natural, but put there by the Russians, we all know it would be done in two years, not ten.

I want to go into the natural history of this blockage between feasibility and realization in our science: first, because it is coming to have effects not only in practical contexts like those I quoted, but in fundamental contexts as well; secondly, because I think it is simpler than it is commonly said to be; and, thirdly, because apart from determining what concrete gains we are likely to make in human health and happiness during the nineteen-sixties it is at present determining whether we survive the decade at all. One of the most satisfactory ways of obscuring an issue is to say that it is being over-simplified: in this particular case, to call the whole of human economic and social behaviour in evidence to prove that there is nothing to be done about it. The striking success of Marxism in inducing people to act has lain in an over-simplification of this kind which went far enough to be fruitful. It pointed out that the reason that the discoveries of the nineteenth century were not being made more widely available was because, in that century, nobody was prepared, by and large, to do anything which did not pay them.

Destructive Fantasy

That, so far as it goes, is still real—but it is not now the main obstruction to science, either here or in the Marxist countries. In fact, as I will show, the problem in both ideological camps is now similar. But let us stick to our own for the moment. When public health experts discuss the chance of getting something done, they do not as a rule ask whom it can be made to pay. But I have heard them perfectly seriously asking whom it will be necessary to frighten, and what aggressive or destructive fantasy they will have to link it with.

This puts its finger, I think, on the point. The Swiss criminologist Reiwald drew a distinction between satisfactory and unsatisfactory crimes. Rape, murder, and sexual aberrations are satisfactory crimes: smuggling, swindling, driving when drunk, are unsatisfactory crimes—they do not produce the same glow, either of curiosity or of righteousness. Our culture is now drawing exactly the

same distinction between satisfactory and unsatisfactory science, in its priorities and in what, as against its pretensions, it is actually doing. Satisfactory science now means the spectacular, the humane which can be dramatized or sentimentalized, and projects which either allay anxieties, real or imaginary (cancer research or 'defence' for instance), or which excite them. The choice, in other words, bears no relation to purpose or to reality. Nuclear weapons, of course, are pre-eminently satisfactory. This response to them is not confined to the blood-thirsty or the deranged—it occurs in liberal intellectuals.

The reason that the abolition of yaws or the provision of protein in African diets is not likely to be realized at more than a snail's pace is that in Reiwald's terms they are not satisfactory.

'Satisfactory' Crimes

Satisfactory to whom? In one sense, no doubt, to all of us, because we know from psycho-analytical research that this type of response is one to which all human beings are susceptible. In Freudian terms, I would agree, the factors which make crimes and projects 'satisfactory' are identical. The point I want to make however, is that it is false to suggest that we are all to blame, or that this pathological system of priorities has been created by the popular demand and simply embodies original sin. Patently neurotic considerations are steering our civilization in its most important technical decisions, but the selection of policies which are being enacted, or projects which are taking the lion's share of our technical powers, is being determined almost wholly by the opportunity of play therapy, of acting out, which they offer to an extremely small number of people. The choices may well express public fantasies. But, as Koestler said, the public was not the prime mover in insisting on diverting energy to them. It was not even told when the decisions were made. Self-dramatization is certainly catching for all of us, but it is demonstrably false that we are all responsible for the decisions. Not only were we not consulted—elaborate measures are taken to see that we do not anticipate or alter the choices made.

The point is not that this generation is governed by particularly corrupt men—either here or in Russia, America, France, and China. It is rather that the advent of science with its present force and possibilities has transformed the so-called 'art of the possible'.

The process we know as government, which now determines national policies, has always been composed of two halves—a side with some organizational bearing on real events and purposes, and a side concerned solely with self-dramatization in some or all of the power-holders. This is in no sense a new problem. But the balance between the two sides has changed rapidly in the last few

years with the development of complex scientific cultures. In this generation much which used to be a matter of intuitive opinion has become open to operational methods. Decisions in all practical fields are now taken purposively in this way, except the few key, *directional* decisions, between guns and butter, or purpose and nonsense. We have a society which is, as it were, decapitated: it has vast technical resources, brilliantly maintained, directed and allocated not to achieve purposes but by experts in the art of preventing the possible so that they can divert these resources in the interests of what is, effectively, play therapy.

Supermen and Cardboard Missiles

The effects of parliamentary democracy have been in many ways unexpected. Since it now appoints rulers by public theatrical competition it tends to act as a personality sieve, which selectively promotes people with an ingrained wish to use public affairs in this manner. Since under these conditions the first—and, as we see it in the modern English parties, virtually the only—object of policy is to stay in office, even those who might otherwise have ideas beyond self-dramatization are obliged to concentrate on this, and on 'satisfactory' policies which are the easiest both to promote and to conduct by Barnum and Bailey methods; with the result that while Marxist governments are at least directional in their planning, no Western government has at the moment any policies, other than military ones, which extend beyond the next general election; and finally, since most administrative and organizational matters now require knowledge, government as conducted by Cabinets is becoming increasingly drained of practical relevance and, indeed, of all content apart from its value as psycho-drama.

The world which is envisaged by the art of preventing the possible is both familiar and unattractive. It is, in fact, the landscape of the comic strip. There is little or no reference to the business of ordinary life at all; instead we have a peculiar mental territory studded with Freudian but otherwise useless projectiles and the enormously costly equivalent of tin soldiers, blistered with satisfactory 'summits' and pitted with satisfactory crises to justify them, traversed by negligible V.I.P.s in the tunic of Superman, and enlivened with the perpetual, deeply satisfactory shadow of annihilation under which little men, like adolescents with flick knives, look and feel big. In doing so, not only do they prevent the possible, but they provide the equipment by which real and dangerous psychotics, which they are not, or even mere accident, may translate satisfactory fantasy into real genocide and real suicide. This is an even more dangerous situation than the unregene-

rate capitalist condition in which the possible was contingent on private acquisitiveness—profit at least was a reality-centred notion, and though it might lead to murder it did not usually lead to intentional suicide. None of the present mythology of priorities is related to reality at all. Cardboard missiles would serve the same purposes more cheaply and without running our present risks. Instead we have the astounding sight of the whole vast technical and intellectual effort of man being diverted down the drain of a few individuals' imaginations—pyramid-building, but in a form which endangers the actual survival of the species.

Irrational Authority

I have been discussing this in terms of our own culture: in the Communist countries the same problem has taken a different form which is far more traditional: the demand for intellectual conformity. There, ever since Lenin, the constructive uses of science have been treated as a source of public prestige, and the results, as we have seen, have been real and remarkable. Their power-holders have used science for real purposes, but have tried to tamper with its content, while ours have left it free but used it chiefly for pathological projects. Our version is now the more physically dangerous, but theirs began to affect the validity of science for any purpose. I rather think that it is in the Marxist world, rather than here, that the initial battle has begun to be fought consciously between the demands of real purpose in science and pathological fantasy in the direction of human affairs.

This conflict of the purposes of living with irrational authority is, I think, manifestly the most important process for this generation, and the very existence of our political liberties may handicap us in our perception of it by making us confuse irrationality with tyranny. In spite of differences of all kinds, the problem is now becoming essentially the same in all cultures: how are we to control the psychopathology of normal people in office?

One possibility—the one which scientists have sometimes used in recent years to gain approval for constructive projects included in the story, as it were, of the current comic strip—has been to try to

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FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

OPEN DAILY

(Open 10 a.m.—6.30 p.m., 5 p.m. Sats.)

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The Wise Man and The Fool

RUDOLF ROCKER once gave a lecture on the subject "The Wise Man and the Fool in World Literature". He masterfully contrasts these two types, bringing out the idea that the "Fool" is always swimming against the stream of our conventional life, always looking for new ideas, and a very unsatisfactory person he is, ready to sacrifice himself for some new light shining on the horizon. The "Wise Man" is very different, swimming the easy way: new ideas and lights on the horizon have no interest for him.

When I read Nicolas Walter's two articles "A Revisionist Approach" and "Revisionist Anarchism—a Reply", I was reminded of Rocker's lecture. I can see that he has become very tired of waiting for the anarchist ideals to come to life, and has decided to be a "practical person", and comes to us with the advice that we should "revise" our approach towards parliamentarism, in other words, that we should abandon our fundamental attitude towards the state.

I could understand him advising the state socialists to revise their kind of socialism, because they have seen plenty of "socialist" governments in Germany, England, and other countries, not to mention the experiment in Russia, and the results can easily be seen. But to talk of revising anarchism, which has yet to have its laboratory test, its test in real life, and is still only in the educational stage, seems to me premature, to say the least.

What is our main objection towards parliamentarism? It is that it makes the individual a robot, a voting machine, who has only the duty of taking part in the ballot every few years, and the rest of the time can listen to the lullaby of the politicians telling him that they are doing the best for him. I can see that Walter knows his Marx and Engels, but it seems to me that he knows little of the history of anarchism when he suggests that if only anarchists would change their attitude towards Parliament, the anarchist movement would achieve much more for social progress.

I would like to ask him if he can show us any social progress which a parliament initiated of its own free will. If he looks at the historical background of any social progress, he will see that it was the result of a bitter struggle outside parliaments, and that politicians were compelled to enact this or that social reform simply to avoid a revolt of their subjects or to placate their demands.

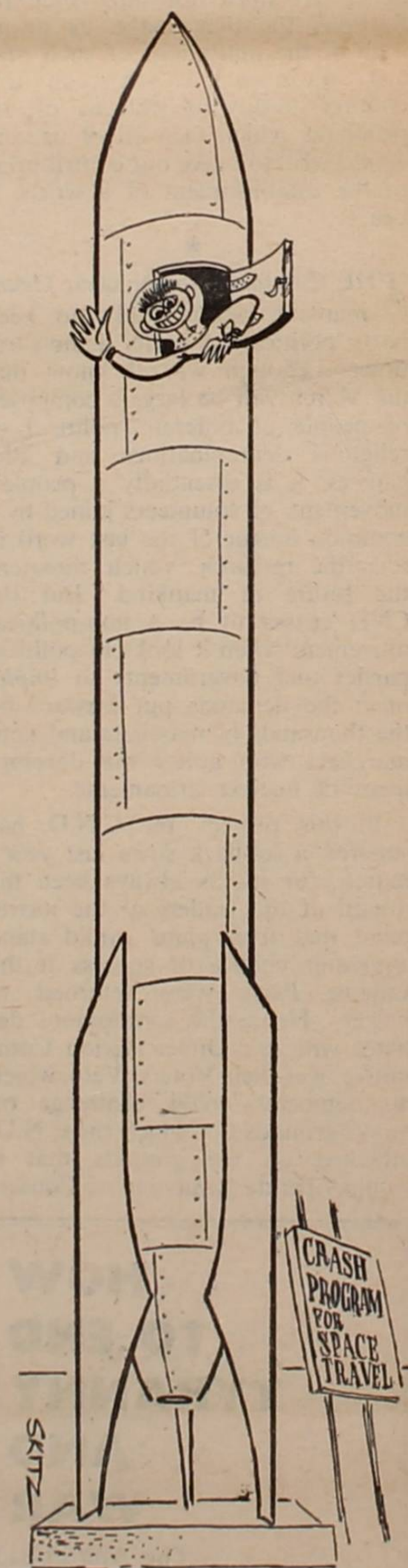
The German Chancellor Bismarck introduced measures for social security, etc., not because he was in love with the workers, but because he had to in order to avoid a social revolution. Here in America the history of the struggle for an eight-hour working day, tells us that five anarchists had to die on the gallows in Chicago in order to make this social reform a social fact. Similarly the fight for free speech in the United States had to be fought for many years by such people as Emma Goldman and Alexan-

der Berkman until they were able to speak in any city they pleased.

At this moment the American Negroes are fighting for the freedom and equality which the American politicians have been promising them ever since the Civil War, nearly a hundred years ago. In reality every freedom that the American Negro has won has had to be bitterly fought for and paid for with his blood, down to the present passive resistance revolt. Hundreds of historical instances show that not parliaments, but the interest and agitation and direct action of the people themselves are what brings about social progress.

He is not the first to suggest that the anarchists should revise their anarchism. Dr. Marison did so in America, and, if I am not mistaken Pestafia did so in Spain. A few years ago some French anarchists decided to organise with some members of the Spanish C.N.T., an Anarchist-Bolshevik Party. We have in the United States a large number of anarchists who have revised anarchism, and whose great men are Franklin D. Roosevelt and Adlai Stevenson. You can see an example in the letter from Ben Capes in FREEDOM for Jan. 2nd, to show how a "revised" anarchist can move so far that he cannot even stand criticism of a political party.

We can see from our history that the revisionist anarchists simply disappear from the arena. But the idea of anarchism is still alive, the only idea that can bring our civilisation out of a dead end. Chicago, U.S.A. B.Y.



"See you in the next world!"

The Anarchistic Things they say . . .

G. D. H. COLE wrote that

"to stake the future on larger and larger aggregates of routine operatives does not hold out, to me at least, the prospect of a Socialism under which men would be happy or making the best use of their creative qualities . . . The most notable writers who have stood out against the acceptance of this trend have been not socialists, but anarchists such as Kropotkin, and original thinkers like Gandhi. These, I know, are unpopular authorities to quote to present-day socialists; but may they not prove to have been prophetic?"

DWIGHT MACDONALD wrote that

"The revolutionary alternative to the *status quo* today is not collectivised property administered by a 'workers' state', whatever that means, but some kind of anarchist decentralisation that will break up mass society into small communities where individuals can live together as variegated human beings instead of as impersonal units in the mass sum. The shallowness of the New Deal and the British Labour Party's post-war régime is shown by their failure to improve any of the important things in people's lives—the actual relationships on the job, the way they spend their leisure, and child-rearing and sex and art. It is mass living that vitiates all these today and the State that holds together the *status quo*. Marxism glorifies 'the masses' and endorses the State. Anarchism leads back to the individual and the community, which is 'impractical' but necessary—that is to say, it is revolutionary."

ALEX COMFORT wrote that

"It has been argued that against tyranny equipped with nuclear energy no resistance is possible. Orwell foresees a stable order of tyranny based on these weapons. But it is an essential feature of the new ways of war that they are indiscriminate, and can only be used against a community—they are weapons with few ideological possibilities . . . The very states which are able to make and use atomic weapons are singularly vulnerable, by their very complexity, to the attacks of individual disobedience, and the events of the war have proved abundantly that the weapons at the disposal of tyranny against individual recalcitrants are precisely what they were in 2000 B.C.—terrorism, mass execution, political police, propaganda. The contentions of anarchism have been strengthened, not weakened by the advent of new weapons. . . .

"I write as an anarchist, that is, as one who rejects the conception of power in society as a force which is both anti-social and unsound in terms of general biological principle . . . A society which orientates itself towards life and human solidarity is a civilisation—one which orientates itself exclusively towards death and allies itself with the purely anti-human status of non-existence, non-living, asociality, is barbarism. Every indication points to the steady movement of Western cultures away from the first, and towards the second."

J. B. PRIESTLEY wrote that

"I have called us anarchists because we distrust and dislike the power systems, the immense machinery of authority, believing that men would do better to rely on mutual help and voluntary associations . . . All that I ask is that you try to give some unprejudiced consideration to our views . . .

"It is in fact, not modern man's pugnacity but his docility that lands him into war. He obeys orders.

"These orders are given him by the state. It is states and not people who make total war. But we shall be told that states represent people. But do they? Not in their war-making capacity . . . In no country have the people in general ever demanded atomic warfare, biological and chemical warfare, and all the other horrors; their opinion has never been asked. It is governments and not people that have created these nightmares . . . After all, the state is a war-making organisation, which has to come to terms with other war-making organisations. You cannot ask the modern state not to think in terms of power, to abandon the use of force, any more than you can reasonably ask a tiger to turn vegetarian."

ARTHUR LEWIS wrote that

"Contrary to popular belief, Socialism is not committed either by its history or by its philosophy to the glorification of the State or to the extension of its powers. On the contrary, the links of Socialism are with liberalism and with anarchism, with their emphasis on individual freedom. . . ."

ALAN SILLITOE asked

"Who are the Rats? Well, they're the people who do nothing about anything, who accept the atom bomb and want the cat back, the Civil Servants with closed minds and politicians who believe in armaments, all the forms of authority and persuasion which want people to conform into a mass, and all the people who worship the State and submit to over-government. This is nothing to do with politics, because the conformist is found under all banners, under Communism and Conservatism. . . ."

"The tighter society is, the worse it is for the country . . . People have told me it's an anarchistic point of view."

and even THE TIMES observed that

"At its annual conference in 1919 the Labour Party took a fateful step when, following the lead of Sidney Webb, it committed itself not only to Socialism but to one particular definition of Socialism which happened at that time to have found acceptance with the Fabian Society. By this definition Socialism is identified with the increase (almost unlimited in the economic field) of the State's power and activity. It is a direct consequence of this decision that an important element among those in the Labour Party who doubt the direction which the party has taken consists of those who looked for more power for the workers and for ordinary people and have been given instead the huge, impersonal and management-controlled public corporation . . . There is nothing in the history of Socialist thought to suggest that the State is the natural and inevitable instrument by which Socialism is to be attained. From Proudhon to William Morris to the Guild Socialists, distrust of the State has been a constant element in the development of Socialist ideas. It is the tragedy of the Labour movement that it has been so intent on extending the authority of the State that it has overlooked the purpose of its existence."

**Do you agree with any of them?
Are you another anarchist without knowing it?**

Anarchism and Political Myths

FROM whatever point of view you look at anarchism, there is some kind of myth to put you off. The interesting thing is that several of these myths are mutually contradictory. For instance, if the general picture of anarchy as social chaos, brought about by vicious bomb-throwers cannot be substantiated in a particular case, the opponent has only to change his ground, and describe it as an ideal form of existence, so perfect in fact that it could only work among people of superhuman social virtues.

Parallel to this, some socialists regard anarchists as disrupters, splitting the working class movement, diverting militants from the important issues by their "petit bourgeois" individualism, securing the return of reactionaries to parliament by their anti-election campaigns, and being thorough nuisances altogether. On the other hand, many members of socialist, communist and progressive movements admit that anarchists are right in their aim of a stateless society, their scorn of the political method, and distrust of reforms imposed from above, but feel that these ideas are quite impracticable as a basis for current activities and propaganda.

There have been many polemics carried out, and pamphlets written, on the question "Socialism or Anarchism", but most of them have dealt chiefly with the possibilities of attaining the ideal society through the respective methods of approach. Now most people, including those who desire and work for a better society for themselves and others, agree that sacrificing today for the sake of a doubtful revolution tomorrow is a mug's game. Not only is it uncomfortable, but it is dishonest, for there is not one instance in history where heroic sacrifices by revolutionaries have been rewarded by the kind of results that the revolutionaries were working for. It is far more likely that the path to more social freedom will be paved with gradual advances towards it. If then, it were true that supporting the Labour Party were a way of getting worthwhile reforms, and that to oppose it meant giving up the material benefits of the welfare state, then it would be sensible to support it.

The Fruits of Government

However, the fruits of post-war politics, both under Conservative and Labour rule, are showing more forcefully than ever that nothing worthwhile has been achieved by political socialism. Material prosperity depends far more on world markets and the ups and downs of the economic jungle than on the alternative parties in power in London. While the

vast majority of people look to nothing more than their own material well-being as a criterion of the success of a government, they are just as likely to choose the Tories as the Labour Party. Furthermore, the Conservatives cannot run the country or the world just as they would like to, not because of Labour opposition, but because the forces opposed to them have to be pacified. Wage increases (but not freedom from wage slavery), have to be granted for fear of industrial strike action. Independence is granted to the governments of former colonies (but not to the peoples living in them) because they are too difficult to subdue by force.

What all this adds up to is to prove conclusively the truth of the anarchist views, that it doesn't matter at all which party is nominally in power, and that the actions of the government are determined by factors quite different from the professed ones of political principle. One of these factors is the strength or absence of opposition among the subjects of the government. Most of this opposition makes itself felt quite unconsciously, as a kind of reflex action. If the government decided to put a heavy tax on butter, the consumers would become disaffected. If it neglected to improve pay and conditions in the regular army, recruiting would not keep up to the required level. As in the last example, the reactionary elements in society do not save up their complaints until election time. The Institute of Directors wields rather more influence than its voting strength.

The anarchist outlook is consistent with these facts. Anarchists stress that the only effective way of securing real social improvement here and now is to take action ourselves, and not to leave it to politicians to get it for us. Successive failures on the part of the Labour Party to even get itself into the lead in parliament have inclined many people outside the influence of anarchist ideas to think about non-parliamentary activities. The Direct Action Campaign against nuclear war, the South African Boycott Movement, and in some of its characteristics, even the Aldermaston March, are expressions of this tendency.

Beyond Politics

Yet people who take part in movements such as these still give their support to the Labour Party, and regard their non-parliamentary propaganda as being something to carry out while Labour is in opposition. For instance, propaganda for the boycott lapsed temporarily during the election period. It

is interesting to speculate as to what support it would have got from the Labour Party if they had been carrying the "responsibilities of office".

The anarchist view is that these methods of struggle against the hateful policies of governments are more effective if they are used as the chief form of activity, and not just as a sideline; and far from using the politics of government as a sideline, anarchists prefer to ignore it completely, except to expose the trickery which it involves and warn people against being fooled by promises.

Further justification for the anarchist approach is being provided, surprisingly enough, by some of the contemporary sociological writers within the Labour Party. These writers have been forced, like the idealistic left, to take note of the fact that party politics is not a practical question for the immediate future. They have been discovering under these circumstances, that welfare state government has not had any real effect in changing people's attitudes to society, or their ability to derive happiness and satisfaction from life.

This leads straight back to the anarchist premise, that real social change, that will have permanent liberative effects, can only be brought about from below, by the people themselves.

It does not matter whether we put the greatest blame for the present social set-up on the rulers or the ruled, but it is clear that only the ruled are likely to want to change it. Socialism suggests that people should elect different rulers, and promises that these will make life better for everyone. It becomes very suspicious of people acting on their own account, as its attitude to the CND has shown, amongst other things. Anarchism throws the challenge on to the individual and claims that social change will come about when a sufficient number of people withdraw their support from governments and try to organise their society for themselves.

The practical action movements mentioned above are hopeful signs that among progressive people, it is being recognised that it is the prevailing attitudes to society, and the extent to which people base their actions on liberative ideas that will determine the immediate future. The success of these trends depends on the measure to which it can free itself, both in theory and practice, from the apron strings of an authoritarian political party, and crystallise a libertarian approach consistent with the methods it is beginning to re-discover.

P.H.

The Art of the Possible

Continued from p. 2

harness the existing system. Suppose that a conspiracy of unusually public-spirited scientists were to study all the accidental deaths in the world, famine, traffic, and disease included, and by an effort of international co-operation could fabricate evidence that these accidents were really the work of a malicious adversary—say the Martians; the devil is too long dead. Suppose they successfully kidded and frightened their governments—exactly as they have to do now when a constructive proposal needs to be got through. They would find that the protein deficiencies in Africa were part of an organized strategy of conquest; and protein deficiency would be gone in one year, not ten. We should see British, Russian, and American leaders bawling allied defiance at Mars as they did at Hitler, and their respective scientists co-operating with their tongues in their cheeks and a song in their hearts. The road accident rate, malaria, hook-worm, leprosy—all of them would be put down to the Enemy and prodigies would be done to remove them. And finally we would set the wild hunt on psychopathology and irrational dominance behaviour, and cure the decision-takers themselves. After that they could safely be told the truth.

Psychopathic Policies

That is not an entirely frivolous idea—it is, in fact, almost the usual method now of securing support for useful work in many fields. In some ways it is also much what has happened in the history of revolutionary science and science in war time, but these in themselves suggest why it will not do. So long as psychopathic policies are there in the structure

of decision-making, we shall find ourselves balked in exactly the way that Soviet or our own war-time science was often balked by the emergence of political paranoias to divert it from the fruits of its purposive activities. And in fact not only is the problem now almost identical as between Britain and America on one hand, and Russia on the other, but there is ultimately only one solution, which is the same in each case—the growth of active resistance both by scientists and by the generality of individuals—including, in our own country, the 'clownish' activity which seemed so pointless to Mr. Koestler. The difference between the situation in open and closed societies is not that public opinion here can be expressed electorally—through the present parties it cannot, and if it were, the promises given would not be kept once the electoral situation was over—but rather that this kind of direct action is safe here and can therefore be orderly. We at least can have no excuse for failing in personal resistance to official pathology. This is particularly true of scientists and technicians, for whom the traditional ways of justifying a sitting posture in terms of neutrality, carrying out democratic decisions, or plain silence and ear-shutting, will patently not do. Apart from anything else, they face the germ of a new, and this time domestic, Lysenko situation. The reason that, as the public cynically recognizes, official scientists always support official utterances on scientific grounds is not that they have been bribed or threatened, but that governments are experts in selecting experts who will participate in their own fantasy. We are now getting cases in the West where a pathological scientific tail is wagging a reluctant political dog.

I do not need to illustrate that any further by concrete example.

Up to our Recalcitrance

In case what I have said seems depressing, I would like to end with an expression of confidence. Our generation has an excellent chance of seeing this problem resolved. The next decade has also a chance of realizing Mr. Nevil Shute's prophecy, but the acute risk of that may be receding a little, and history has a way of disappointing apocalyptic prophecies. If we succeed, the character of human experience will change even more radically than it has been changed by medicine.

Our best hope of realization is not in stern enthusiasms, but in the combativeness of the ordinary man in defence of the things he is always being encouraged to think unworthy—his skin, his food, his sexual relationships, his pleasures. We need courage, certainly, but only courage of one kind: if we could exchange the courage which is willing to annihilate the entire race on principle for a little intelligent cowardice in office, and above all for an intelligent love of pleasure, it would be of great value. Even the lack of principle and policy in party leaders is perhaps an exploitable thing—it makes it possible for us to reverse their attitudes 180 degrees by pressure applied to their chances of office. Men who like living for choice under the shadow of annihilation are not the natural masters of the art of the possible. It is up to our recalcitrance, then, in the nineteen-sixties to control, or instruct, or better eject them in favour of realities.

ALEX COMFORT.

ARE YOU MARCHING FOR KICKS?

DOING IT FOR KICKS describes very aptly the approach of many young people to some of their activities. Some things, like working for a pay packet, are directly remunerative; others, like studying, are for self-improvement; and others, like rock 'n' roll, motorcycle racing and snogging, are done for kicks. This division of activities goes for people of all ages to some extent.

Are you taking part in the Aldermaston March and other CND activities for kicks?

Many marchers may repudiate this suggestion indignantly. They may point out that the issues at stake are far too serious to be treated so lightheartedly. Some marchers are going at quite a lot of personal inconvenience. For many there is a deep moral purpose behind the march, an affirmation of the voice of sanity which can find no adequate expression elsewhere. It may seem that asking whether people are doing it for kicks is insulting since it implies that there is equivalence between such a campaign and a trivial activity like rock 'n' roll.

But many will acknowledge, privately or publicly, that they are in fact coming on the march for kicks. And why not? I do not think that such people are less valuable members of the CND movement. Indeed, I would commend them for their honesty and their avoidance of the smug "holier than thou" attitude which afflicts a certain section of all movements of social protest. To take offence at the question is to imply that there is something wrong in doing things for kicks. But human motivation is complex and much of our activity contains the element of seeking emotional stimulation and gratification. A life-loving and positive movement must appeal to the emotions as well as to intellectual convictions of righteousness. The Aldermaston March is so popular with young people because it has taken on something of the character of a Spring festival and pilgrimage. Even if it snows or rains at Easter, the rigours of the trip do not deter the participants because they are communally shared. The degree of discomfort of the march and the rough dossing down at night, and the socially conscious purpose—all this adds the spice that is lacking from an ordinary picnic. But best of all is the fact that the whole thing is quite outside the realm of ordinary experience. It is a-political in that it does not depend on any political party; indeed, it shows up the inadequacy of political parties in the face of a real



live issue. It does not depend upon bigwig politicians—it is a popular movement, and it is perfectly natural to enjoy thumbing our noses at those shockers in the power game who claim to be implementing a sane policy with lunatic weapons, in our name.

★

THE Aldermaston March has a particular relevance to anarchism, and anarchism has a particular significance for the marchers. They are people of all shades of political and religious opinion. There are Labourites, Tories, Liberals and Commies. There are Quakers, Jews, C. of E. and atheists. For once these labels do not matter—they are men and women escaping from their political and religious uniforms and appearing in the guise of human beings demonstrating against a monstrous lunacy which is imposed on us as the outcome of "political necessity".

Oh, I know that some politicians and a few religious bods are using the march to grind their various axes. But I venture to think that, apart from the demands of axe-grinding, many of them are doing it for kicks. It is worth while to get a kick out of being a human being for a change, instead of a tool of the Party or a pillar of the Church.

This is what anarchism is all about. It is concerned with a-political action. And even though you joined the march partly to meet up with some nice girls, or to play your guitar, or to keep up with friends made last year, or to get away from home, or to show your genius of organizing, or to be amongst sane people for a change, or because it is a cheap Easter holiday—you did it partly because of the utter incapacity of any political or religious body to express what you are feeling. You may never have heard of anarchism, or you may have heard it is some daft bomb-throwing (!) cult. But the fact that you have joined the march indicates that you are prepared to act outside the manner of procedure accepted by parliamentarians of all colours and the mass of "right-thinking people". You are in fact showing the horse-sense implicit in anarchism. The marchers are demonstrating (whether they acknowledge it or not) that in this democratic country there is no political channel by which a halt can be called to the official policy of riding roughshod over the interests of the mass of the people on a matter which is literally that of life or death. It is natural that the anarchist paper FREEDOM should have the large sales

it does on the Aldermaston March. This road leads to anarchism, and the element of doing it for kicks is in no way a contradiction of the journey.

As few people will take seriously the suggestion that anarchism is merely a daft bomb-throwing cult, it is necessary to indicate still further what anarchism is *not*. It is not a denial of order and organization. This march is quite orderly and demands quite a lot of organization by those taking part; but there is no sort of coercive machinery behind the organization, the good order depends upon voluntary co-operation.

★

DO not think that anarchists believe for one moment that if national governments were miraculously abolished overnight there would be anything but chaos. We are not vague idealists and we do not believe in miracles. Our criticism of society is that it is power-sick, and the evil of power is double. First, it corrupts those who wield it to the extent that they can calmly base a policy on the H-bomb. Second, it also corrupts those who are powerless. The powerless ones in society, the mass of apathetic stooges who rely on being told what to do all

their lives—they make any monstrous policy possible. And every political party depends upon a deliberate policy of flattery and deceit of the stooge mass to gain its election fodder. They are dumb, powerless and will-less. If the organs of mass delusion tell them that it is perfectly O.K. to live under the shadow of the H-bomb, or to go to war with Russia, Germany, Mars of Venus, they accept it. This mass docility is what all the politico's want, for only on such a basis can a political party climb to power. But while this is the basis of our democratic system, you haven't a hope in hell of raising any sort of significant protest against the H-bomb.

Anarchism is a-political. You cannot "join the anarchists" in the same way as you can "join the Liberals", for there is of course no anarchist party. There are groups of anarchists organized for specific purposes, such as running this weekly paper, but anarchists do not form any party to capture political power as they do not seek to rule or coerce anyone. But equally, they do not want to be ruled or coerced by anybody. Anarchists may support progressive movements of a voluntary nature like the CND, but they have no illusions about the capacity for such movements to achieve far-reaching ends. Such movements must be considered as being valuable in themselves. They are a manifestation of sanity and healthy social action even should forces beyond our control destroy the world tomorrow. The fact that there are forces beyond our control, acting so irresponsibly in our name, underlines the anarchist criticism of the basis of power in modern society. The doctrine of political necessity, under the banner of Tory, Labour, Communist, Republican or Democratic politicians, has led to the present *impasse* of nation-states sitting on their ever-growing piles of H-bombs. Is it not time to wonder, just to consider, whether there may be something in the entirely different approach that the anarchists advocate? Anarchism will give you not cut-and-dried solutions, in fact it will cause you to undertake quite a lot of re-thinking.

And it doesn't matter if you have come on the march for kicks. It is natural to get a kick out of a breath of fresh air in a stifling atmosphere, and for many this march is like coming up for air. When you no longer get a kick out of your natural human reactions, then you are on the way to morbidity and it won't matter to you that the demands of political necessity drives grave statesmen to debate how we can all be sent up in smoke. G.

Anarchism and the struggle for Workers' Control of Industry

THE relationship between Marxist revolutionaries and the working class is what can only be termed a 'love-hate relationship'—if I may coin a phrase.

Any left-wing political organisation sees the workers as a source of great power. Wage earners are the most numerous section of society, therefore they carry more votes. When organised industrially they are the most powerful section of society, therefore they can be used to raise leaders to power.

Once the leaders have attained political power, however, the industrial power of the workers has to be contained. Useful as it is for the ambitious politico as a ladder to the top, it becomes a threat to his stability once he has stepped over the line dividing the rulers from the ruled. The votes of the workers are useful and this is a completely safe way for their numbers to be used. But industrial action puts effective power directly into the workers' hands, and that is why it is so hated by leaders who have reached their goal.

We may remember, as a recent

example of this, the attitude of the Labour Party at the time of Sir Anthony Eden's Suez adventure.

'No Industrial Action for Political Ends'

Although they were so vociferously against the Suez campaign, the Labour leaders were very concerned that opposition did not take the form of industrial action. They, no more workers even to begin to think in than the Tories, do not want the terms of using their collective strength for social ends, for when that happens all politicians will become redundant.

It should not be thought for one moment, of course, that we think of the Labour Party as a Marxist revolutionary party. But the attitude is in reality exactly the same in those parties which do rejoice in that description. However much they claim to speak for the workers, the workers are in fact a means to an end—and that end is political power for the party.

This is glaringly obvious in the case of the Communists. Although they have used working class strength to get power, they have been utterly

ruthless in suppressing working class aspirations (from Kronstadt 1921, with the help of Trotsky, to Budapest 1956) when they are the government. And no different attitude could be expected from any other group of similar nature.

How 'New' Are They?

We have in Britain now a bunch of so-called 'new revolutionaries' organised around a paper called *The Newsletter*. They are seeking to build an organisation in industry which would be the basis of a mass revolutionary party. These people in the main are disillusioned Stalinists who, since the denunciation of Stalin by Krushchev and the crushing of the Hungarian rebellion, have joined up with existing Trotskyist groups.

But they remain politicians. Their attitude, basically, is the one we have been describing. Although they work like beavers and are very militant in factories, their aim is to use the workers' strength as a foundation for another political party.

Now the anarchist contention is that this party—if it ever materialises—will go exactly the same way

as the Communists of the Stalinist variety. Any political party, if it achieves power, must crush the power of the organised working class because the continuous aspirations of those at the bottom of the ladder are always a threat to those at the top.

The Reactionary Trade Unions

We have not so far examined the hole of the official trade unions. At this stage we hardly think it necessary to do that. Anyone with a glimmer of social consciousness recognises the reactionary function of the trades unions today. They are at the best wage-bargaining institutions and at the worst, organs of discipline over the workers. Their job is to keep the workers quiet with the least possible trouble and expense. They have no social aim and hold out no hope whatever to the workers of any change in the character of society.

So what is the anarchist alternative to all this?

Well, in the first place, anarchists have an aim. We want a free society without exploitation or the domination of man by man. In terms of

industry this means that we reject nationalisation (state control) just as much as private enterprise (boss control). We want to see workers' control, *i.e.*, the means of production and distribution organised by the workers on the job, directly controlling these processes for the benefit of the community (which includes themselves of course).

Necessary Organisation

It is a misconception, fostered by our opponents, that anarchists don't believe in organisation. This is nonsense. What we do not believe in is *authoritarian* organisation. We object to *being organised* in the interests of bosses or careerists. We are happy to organise ourselves for our own purposes.

The same applies to the workers in general we maintain they should organise themselves *at the point of production* in order to use their strength where it is most effective for the purpose of coming into control of the means of production. If this is their aim, they should never allow their organisations to pass into the hands of full-time officials or

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ALDERMASTON

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Let us face the fact that something more is needed if we are to build up a spontaneous movement of the people which will also be able to influence the course of events. As Bertrand Russell put it in a debate last year in which he said that banning nuclear weapons was "not enough" since in the event of a war breaking out they would be manufactured again.

The thing you have to do is to ban war . . . We must work towards some system which will prevent war. It requires a different way of viewing all the affairs of men from any that has been in the world before.

★

THE Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament falls over backwards trying to be respectable, uncontroversial, and politically orthodox. Do we really have to spend time and energy campaigning that the results of war are horrible, and of H-Wars annihilation? Doesn't everyone know that already? This awareness of the disasters of war has not, so far, prevented wars.

What we have to succeed in getting across is that no thinking person will be a consenting party to any activity connected with war—under any circumstances. This is not just a question of persuading people to "sign a pledge" (how many of the million who signed such a pledge in the inter-war years ignored it when their call-up papers arrived?) but part of a new way of thinking and living which deals with the issue of war as part and parcel of a number of problems such as authority, corporal punishment, racial equality, freedom, religion, work, power, etc. . . . and not as something *exceptional*, outside the day to day problems of life. And this was the significant point in Bertrand Russell's statement: the abolition of war, he said, required "a different way of viewing *all* the affairs of men . . ." (note the word we have italicised).

This is also the anarchist approach. As we wrote in these columns last Aldermaston day

There are no short cuts to peace. There are no compromise solutions between the rulers and the ruled. The day we are in a position to influence governments we shall also have the strength to dispense with governments.

★

THE C.N.D. in their publicity for this year's march call on you to "make this the Biggest Demonstration Britain has ever seen . . . In this way we might finally get rid of nuclear weapons".

These are all illusions. What have government to fear from 100,000 demonstrators who politely express their anti-Bomb sentiments on four days of the year and behave as obedient sheep for the other 361?

Anarchism Defined

ANARCHISM (from the Greek an- and archia, contrary to authority, is the name given to a principle or theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government—harmony in such a society being obtained, not by submission to law, or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements concluded between the various groups, territorial and professional, freely constituted for the sake of production and consumption, as also for the satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations of a civilised being . . .)

—Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Who Gets the Warning?

THOSE who have survived the world wars of our time and the various minor skirmishes around the globe made necessary by the defence of our masters' interests, have become conditioned to violence, on the grand scale. It is only individual violence which arouses indignation in the righteous, who want the return of the birch for the teddy-boy with the cosh, but who cheerfully approve of a knighthood for the responsible adult who developed the British hydrogen bomb.

The conditioned acceptance plus patriotism plus complacency led the British public to receive the news about 'our' warning system, and the establishment to be built at Fylingdales, with its customary phlegm.

A mild token commotion was raised in Parliament by members of Her Majesty's Opposition, whose arguments appeared to revolve around the question of 'four minutes warning or fifteen?' And our free press raised its eyebrows and tutted for a day or two and then forgot all about it.

It was made clear, however, that, brief though it may be, the warning

period was enough for us to get our own bomber force off the ground and away on a raid of massive retaliation on R—, sorry, on enemy territory.

Who gets the warning?

This then, was our great consolation. As the minutes tick away we say to ourselves 'Well at least those bastards are going to get it, too,' and we kneel and pray to gentle Jesus to receive our souls (but not theirs, the bastards) in grace. And we are consoled and a great peace comes over us. Just in time.

This was all discussed quite seriously. The panel on the radio programme 'Any Questions' were asked to tell us what they would do with their last four minutes and the usual fatuous answers were given—*seriously*. One M.P. on the panel assured the audience that four minutes was the absolute minimum; that fifteen was nearer the mark. *Seriously!*

In all the discussions on this fantastic bit of science-fiction-come-true, however, the talk revolved around the amount of warning 'we' were going to get. But who are

'we'? Who is going to get the warning? Is the radar system at Fylingdales to be linked up with all the air-raid sirens in the country? Will the BBC tip us off that rockets are on the way and we'd better get cracking with the brown paper under the dining-room table?

Are you Priority?

Of course not. The four-minute warning is for the top brass. The only purpose of the warning is to set the retaliation forces in motion. It is useless for civil defence *because there is no defence*.

If any individuals will get warning it will be the important individuals—not the likes of you and me. We have understood for a long time that there *are* deep shelters which may ensure the survival (from the explosions) of a select few, and that there is a list of names, or office-holders, arranged in strict priority.

But for us, for the ordinary people, there will be no warning. Not even four minutes. And it wouldn't be any use even if there were.

The purpose of the warning is to

get 'our' bombers off the ground. They must be saved at all costs, even though the people they are supposed to defend are incinerated moments afterwards.

Have They Thought?

Have the pilots of these bombers—which stand in readiness today—given thought to this? Do they realise that when they scramble and get airborne they will be leaving their wives and children behind to take the rockets? Have they understood that even if they survive their retaliatory mission on the 'other side' they would have nothing to come back to? Have they forgotten that they can last only a little longer than those they have left behind and during that time they would have to live with themselves and with what they have helped to do?

Perhaps we shouldn't waste too much space sympathising with the dilemmas of the last of the few. But these few are symbolic of the many. All those who support in any way the lunacy of war preparation are digging graves for themselves and their loved ones.

The labourer who is digging a trench for a water pipe to a rocket site is digging his baby's grave. The carpenter on a training camp is making a coffin for his wife. The girl in the textile factory making material for uniforms is weaving a shroud for us all.

Opposition to nuclear weapons must lead us to opposition against all armaments. And that must lead us to the position where we recognise the connection between armaments, war, the State and government, and the economy.

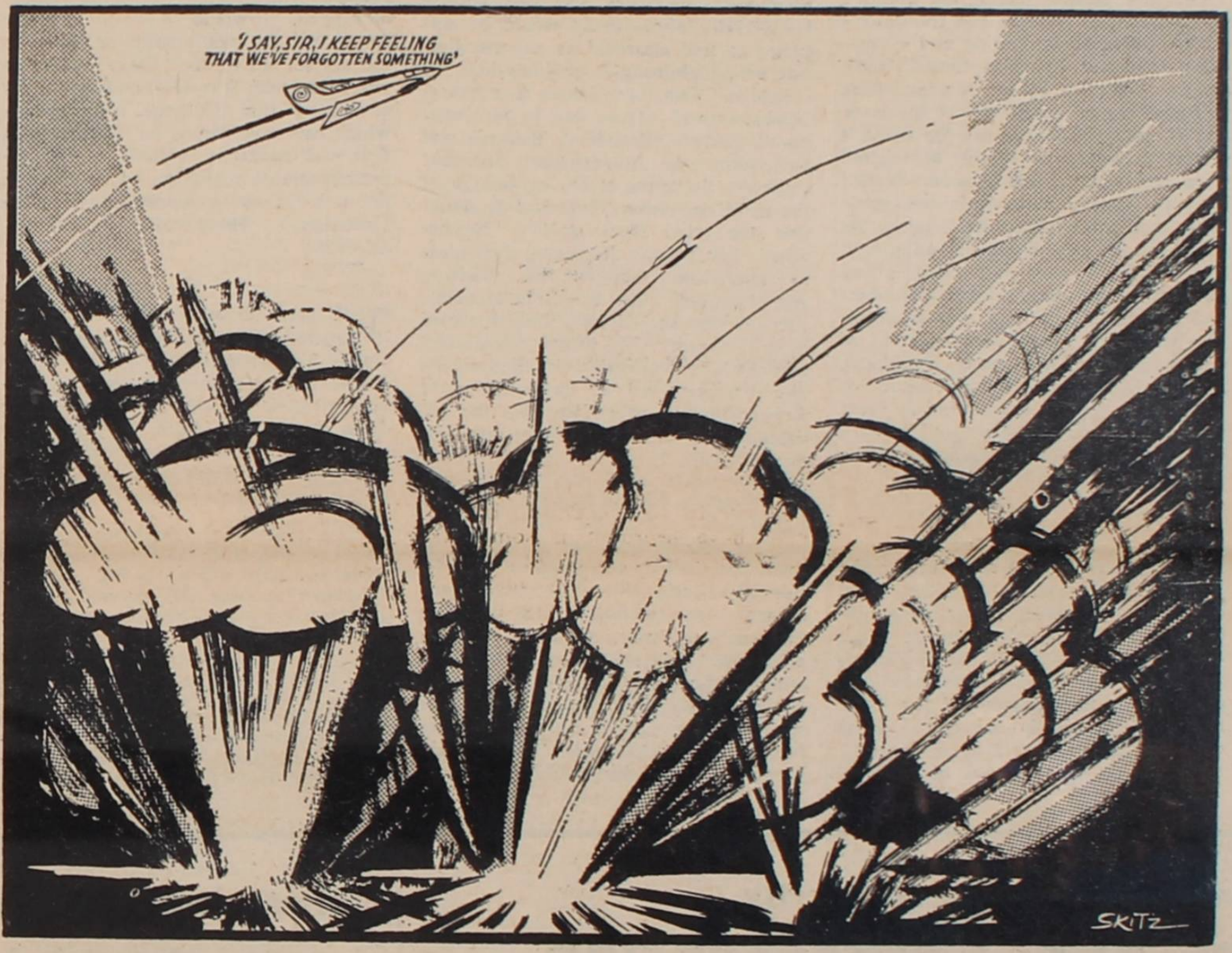
It's all Bound Up

Nuclear lunacy is a direct descendant of economic lunacy—which has been destroying millions for centuries. In 1933, Anthony Eden, representing Britain at the League of Nations, successfully fought against the banning of the bomber as a war weapon because 'Britain needs bombers to police her empire'.

Our own interests of survival have thus obviously been bound up with the adoption of an anti-imperialist struggle. It's all bound up together. That is why sooner or later opposition to nuclear weapons, to be logical and effective, must develop into a revolutionary opposition to the kind of society which has spawned the H-bomb. (Even magistrates today recognise the roots of juvenile delinquency in the parents!)

Such opposition is provided to my satisfaction only by anarchism. From the State we shall get no warning—only destruction. We must warn ourselves and act accordingly.

P.S.



Industrial Struggle

Continued from p. 4

even semi-professional militants.

The ideas of anarcho-syndicalism provide the basis for such an organisation. These consist of simple principles such as: That organisation should be at the place of work aiming at workers' control of that place of work.

That there should be no full-time paid officials.

That any delegate or organiser losing pay through his activity should be compensated at the rate for his job at the bench.

That decisions should be taken by workers irrespective of their crafts, i.e., that they should organise by industry, not by craft.

That works' councils be established in every factory, mine, mill, depot, station, or dock, controlled by the workers there and linked with each other to form a federation of labour, enabling the workers collectively to control the means of production and distribution throughout society.

What Hopes?

All this, of course, pre-supposes a high level of revolutionary awareness. An understanding, for example, that it is useless to go on fiddling with wages and differentials, but that the workers' aim must be

the abolition of the wage system altogether. It means recognising the futility of parliamentary action, realising the true nature of the State as the executive of the ruling class and relying on our own strength through direct action.

What are the hopes for such aims? As we see it there is only one factor in industry today providing the basis for such an organisation. That is the Shop Stewards' movement, hated by the official TU leaders, and eyed enviously by the 'new revolutionaries'. This can remain an organisation representative of the rank and file only as long as it keeps out of the hands of groups anxious to use it for political ends, and does not become ossified, official or respectable.

And it can become truly revolutionary when the rank and file see it as the means by which they come into control of their own affairs. In other words, when they choose to turn it from a ginger-group in the trade unions into an organisation by which they fight effectively for their true interests now and prepare the means for organising the economy in a free society. When they turn the Shop Stewards' movement into an anarcho-syndicalist movement.

Students, Sex, and C.N.D.

AMERICAN TEACHER DISMISSED BUT SUPPORT FROM STUDENTS GROWING

DR. LEO KOCH, the biology professor who was fired this week for advocating free love for students, parried the 64,000 dollar question today.

When I asked him if he would resent someone suggesting a similar course of action for his own 15-year-old daughter he replied: "I am quite confident she will know enough about the problem to act intelligently in any situation that might arise."

"I would not try to sway her in any way unless she asked for my advice."

Dr. Koch, aged 40, is attached to the University of Illinois. Besides the daughter Toni, he has two sons aged 12 and 10.

Support for him is growing on the campus. Students burned an effigy of Dr. David Dodd Henry, the University President, who directed that Prof. Koch be relieved of his duties.

He told me he did not expect people to agree with his ideas that "a mutually satisfactory sexual experience would eliminate the need for many hours of frustrating petting." But, he claimed, he was entitled to air his opinion.

edly with his views on sex among the unmarried students and she had discussed the subject with him many times.

His views were originally expressed in a letter to a college newspaper. It was written in answer to one from two male students deploring the high incidence of necking on the campus.

Koch said the only thing wrong with necking and petting was that it did not go far enough. He felt that a good down-to-earth, no-holds-barred, all-the-way love affair would "lead to much happier and longer-lasting marriages among our young men and women."

(News of the World, 10/4/60).

BAN ON BADGES

AT the meeting of the L.C.C. Education Committee on 5/4/60, the Chairman, Mr. Harold Shearman, admitted that pupils at the William Ellis School, St. Pancras, had been forbidden by their headmaster to wear Nuclear Disarmament badges, and had been questioned about their political beliefs.

"It is an accepted principle in this country," he said, "that the schools should not be used for purposes of propaganda, and parents have a right to expect that every effort will be made to safeguard this principle."

Propaganda, that is, except that of religion, the state and the armed forces!

An Important New Freedom Press Publication Provides A HANDBOOK OF ANARCHISM

ANARCHISM, by Paul Eltzbacher, trans. by Steven T. Byington, ed. by James J. Martin. (London: Freedom Press 21s. New York: Libertarian Book Club 6 dollars.)

AT the end of the last century when the popular stereotype of an anarchist was that of a sinister figure with a bomb, ticking away like a death-watch beetle under the crowned heads of Europe, a German professor of law, finding that no external analysis existed which sought to explain what anarchism was. "We want," he wrote, "to know anarchism scientifically. . . . We wish to penetrate the essence of a movement that dares to question what is undoubted and to deny what is venerable, and nevertheless takes hold of wider and wider circles." He set out therefore to define the concepts of Law, the State, and Property, and then to ascertain what the anarchists asserted on these three key topics in political philosophy. But since he found little consensus of opinion on them amongst anarchist thinkers, he examined in turn the ideas of seven of the anarchist 'teachers', and set them out in the form of carefully selected quotations, attempting in his concluding chapters to classify them according to the basis of their thought, and to their teachings on the law, the state, and property, and as to the manner in which they conceived the realisation of their ideas.

Paul Eltzbacher's *Anarchism* was published in German in 1900 and was later translated in many languages including Yiddish, Bulgarian and Japanese. The English translation by Steven T. Byington appeared in America in 1908. Both the author and the translator (who was himself an authority on some of the thinkers discussed and gives a scrupulous examination of Eltzbacher's interpretation of his sources) were men of very high analytical intelligence, and this book, written by an author whose opposition to anarchism only emerges at the very end, has been regarded by many anarchists as the best, and certainly the most methodical, statement of their point of view. Kropotkin, for instance, wrote in the article on 'Anarchism' in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, that it was "The best work on Anarchism, and in fact the only one written with a full knowledge of the Anarchist literature." This verdict still stands, and as the book has been out of print for many decades the new edition is very welcome indeed.

This is especially so, since the new edition, published in Britain by Freedom Press and in America by the Libertarian Book Club, has been made so much

easier to read than the one of 1908. It has been most skilfully edited by James J. Martin (whose book *Men Against the State* about the American individualist anarchists of the 19th century was a model of well-documented but readable scholarship). The forest of footnotes on sources have been collected together at the end of the book, leaving only the valuable comments of Byington at the foot of the pages, the biographical sketches of the anarchist thinkers have been rewritten, and in order to introduce an account of anarcho-syndicalism, a current of anarchist thought not touched upon in Eltzbacher's exposition, a long essay on *Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism* by Rudolf Rocker has been appended to the book. This has not, of course, the analytical quality of Eltzbacher's text, but perhaps for this reason might be read first by the reader to the subject to get a synoptic view of the history of anarchist thought before turning to the book as a whole.

The new edition retains the author's introduction, as well as the translator's preface (what an interesting and sympathetic character Byington himself was), and has a preface by Dr. Martin telling us something of the history of the book and its author. There is also the author's original bibliography, largely of original texts and French and German works, Rocker's general bibliography on anarchism, and a bibliographical note by the editor for the general reader noting both the modern critical and biographical material on the seven anarchist thinkers and the modern editions of their works. The volume is thus from one point of view a veritable handbook on anarchism, and for this reason I would like to see it filling the gap on this subject in every public and university library and in every student's reading list on political science and social philosophy.

HAVING said this I may turn to the book's limitations as they will appear to the casual reader, who, objecting to Eltzbacher's legalistic style, may very well agree with the translator's remark that "the collection of quotations, which form three-fourths of the book both in bulk and in importance, is as much the best part as it is the biggest". However, no serious book on political

thought is "easy" to read, and it seems to me that the very rigour of Eltzbacher's approach and his attempt to categorise and tabulate the thought of the recalcitrant anarchists, is itself a stimulant to the reader. The extent to which the views of the anarchist thinkers are unconsciously distorted by the author in order to fit them into his categories, is thoroughly discussed by both translator and editor.

Is the author's selection of anarchist 'teachers' satisfactory? They are William Godwin (1756-1836), the 'father of anarchism' whose *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* was the first systematic exposition of anarchist thought, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, (1809-1865), the first man to describe himself as an anarchist, Max Stirner (1806-1856), the German apostle of 'conscious egoism', Michael Bakunin (1814-1876), the Russian revolutionary, whose disputes with Marx in the First International marked a turning-point in the history of socialism, Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921), the most influential of anarchist thinkers, author of the sociological classic *Mutual Aid* and founder of FREEDOM in 1886, Benjamin R. Tucker (1854-1939), a representative of the American school of individualist anarchism, and Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), whom many would be surprised to find classified as an anarchist, but whose philosophy qualifies him for inclusion. Can these figures be taken as representative? There can be no doubt about Godwin, Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin, the 'mainstream' anarchist thinkers. In terms of the etymology of the word *anarchism*, there is little doubt that the other three qualify. Neither Stirner nor Tolstoy designated their ideas as 'anarchism', but nor did Godwin. Are there any other trends in anarchist thought who should have been included in such a work? The anarcho-syndicalist school which developed after Eltzbacher's day is represented by the inclusion of Rocker's essay, which has also the advantage of giving something of anarchist history.

The author himself in his conclusions recommends the reader to "investigate the less notable teachings as well as the most prominent", and suggests that "in this investigation he must expect many surprises: the teachings of the unknown Pisacane will astonish him by their originality", and the student of anarchist authors who remain largely untranslated, would probably make the same claim for such writers as Gustav Landauer, Errico Malatesta, and Domela Nieuwenhuis. However, within his field and period,

Eltzbacher's claim that "the special ideas that Anarchism has to offer are given with tolerable completeness in the seven teachings here presented", is justified.

The book's most serious limitation, considered as a handbook of anarchism is one which is not Eltzbacher's fault. Because he is considering anarchism as a political theory, he has to omit from consideration many of the important insights of some of the anarchist thinkers, particularly Godwin and Kropotkin, where these are not strictly in the field of ideas on the law, the state and property. Several of the most important of Kropotkin's works had not appeared when Eltzbacher was writing, or were not used by him: *Mutual Aid, Fields, Factories and Workshops, Ethics, and Modern Science and Anarchism*, and it was precisely in these works that their author sought to derive anarchist conclusions from the actual study of human society, from economic life, and from scientific method itself, (see the article on this topic elsewhere in this issue). Moreover, when Eltzbacher was writing, modern sociology, anthropology and psychology were in their infancy and the evidence for anarchy which can be adduced from these sciences was not available either to him or to the authors he studied. It would be foolish to blame Eltzbacher for not attempting what he did not set out to do. There is more to anarchism than is to be found within the covers of this 300-page compendium, which can nevertheless be regarded as a first and necessary volume to the encyclopaedia of anarchism which exists so far only in our imagination (see "The Unwritten Handbook" FREEDOM, 28/6/58).

THE great value of this book to the anarchist reader, in leading him to clarify his own attitudes, whether or not Eltzbacher's categories are a valid conclusion from his evidence, can be seen from this passage from his conclusions at the end of the book, where he is attempting to classify the philosophies of his seven thinkers:

"The Anarchistic teachings have in common only this, that they negate the State for our future. In the cases of Godwin, Proudhon, Stirner, and Tucker, the negation means that they reject the State unconditionally, and so for our future as well as elsewhere; in the case of Tolstoy, it means that he rejects the State, though not unconditionally, yet for our future; in the cases of Bakunin and Kropotkin it means that they foresee that in future the progress of evolution will do away with the State.

"As to their basis, the Anarchistic teachings are classifiable as *genetic*, recognizing as the supreme law of human procedure merely a law of nature (Bakunin, Kropotkin) and *critical*, regarding a norm as the supreme law of human procedure. The critical teachings, again, are classifiable as *idealistic*, whose supreme law is a duty (Proudhon, Tolstoy), and *eudemonistic*, whose supreme law is happiness. The eudemonistic teachings, finally, are on their part further classifiable as altruistic, for which the general happiness is supreme law (Godwin), and *egotistic*, for which the individual's happiness takes this rank (Stirner, Tucker).

"As to what they affirm for our future in contrast to the State, the Anarchistic teachings are either *federalistic*—that is, they affirm for our future a social human life on the basis of the legal norm that contracts must be lived up to (Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Tucker)—or *spontaneous* that is, they affirm for our future a social human life on the basis of a non-judicial controlling principle (Godwin, Stirner, Tolstoy).

"As to their relation to law, a part of the Anarchistic teachings are *anomic*, negating law for our future (Godwin, Stirner, Tolstoy); the other part are *noministic*, affirming it for our future (Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Tucker).

"As to their relation to property, the Anarchistic teachings are partly *indoministic*, negating property for our future (Godwin, Proudhon, Stirner, Tolstoy), partly *doministic*, affirming it for our future. The doministic teachings, again, are partly individualistic, affirming property, without limitation, for the individual as well as for the collectivity (Tucker), partly *collectivistic*, affirming as to supplies for direct consumption a property that will sometimes be the individual's, but as to the means of production a property that is only for the collectivity (Bakunin), and, finally, partly communistic, affirming property solely for the collectivity (Kropotkin).

"As to how they conceive their realisation, the Anarchistic teachings divide into the *reformatory*, which conceive the transition from the negated to the affirmed condition as without breach of law (Godwin, Proudhon), and *revolutionary*, which conceive this transition as a breach of law. The revolutionary teachings, again divide into *renitent*, which conceive the breach of law as without the use of force (Tucker, Tolstoy) and *insurgent*, which conceive it as attended by the use of force (Stirner, Bakunin, Kropotkin).

This passage, if you can stomach words like *eudemonistic* or *renitent*, which he does at least define for us, is surely useful, since it poses very concisely the variety of possible attitudes, leads us to consider whether his attempt to put each thinker into a particular category is correct or not, and at the same time challenges us to examine our own opinions in the light of the possible divergencies of opinion which he poses.

T.S.

A Sidelight on Sexual Hypocrisy Capitalism and Contraception

THE new style oral contraceptive pill that is so much in the news lately (see "The Adolescent & The Pill", FREEDOM 26/3/60) has urged me to set down these few comments of how I saw Capitalism and Contraception well wedded and producing quite indecent profits. For six months I worked at a "Surgical & Hygiene" Store in a working-class district, as a counter assistant and my work also entailed the checking of invoices. It was whilst performing this latter duty that I became convinced that no matter how the Church and Social Workers may bleat, Capitalism has got a little racket here that can bring nothing but profits and more profits. At weekends, high-days and holidays we used to sell French letters faster than we could unpack them. No doubt a sociologist could draw conclusions from this, but even though we have never had it so good, most working-class people it seemed from our sales only have strength to have it at weekends, or when they can lay in next morning. French letters were our main stock-in-trade, they kept the business going, because if we had had to live on the sales of trusses, bedpans and urine bottles we would have been bust in a week. My boss was a Communist, but card-carrying was his only duty. I have never seen such wholesale swindling of the public as went on in our shop, and yet whilst singing the praises of the USSR he would be ringing up more profits from someone's misfortune.

Perhaps he thought he was helping the Commie cause by whittling down the population of the West in this way. We used to peddle dreams, hopes and wishes. Naturally there are always mugs enough

to part with their money for these things, but the speed and eagerness they show to do so astounded me. Some of our more novel items used to come from a manufacturing chemist in Leicester, and it was part of my job to pack them up. One good seller was the "Strength Capsules—Joy of Living". We used to pack them in a gold box, double sealed (God knows why!) and on the front was the solemn warning that they were under no circumstances to be given to members of the opposite sex. Men Only it added. Their formula was quite harmless and routine. A box of 21 (note the psychological approach in that number) sold for 7/6d.—we got them for about 8d. I can remember now the big old tin we kept them in under the counter, and they were at least three years old then! It was sad to see the old and tired come in to discuss "a personal matter", and then wasting their cash on an empty dream. I suppose virility was cheap at 7/6d., but of course the boss wouldn't let it stop there. In a confidential and hushed tone he would explain that "a prolonged course of treatment is really vital." The box would last him a week and then back he'd come, and then again. If he started to complain, we had to switch him onto "Testonic" which was not a tonic for the testicles as the name implies, but merely a general tonic. If he persisted even then we politely implied that he was generally knackered and no pill can cure that.

The real rotten immoral racket though was the "Female Pills & Capsules", and I hope lady comrades will take note of all I say. The pills and capsules are sold for female irregularities due to

"shocks, anaemia and colds, etc." Note the 'etc.' because all we ever sold them for was as hope for some poor girl who was in the cart and couldn't find, or didn't want to risk an abortionist. My boss suffered delusions about this a bit and thought he was doing good humanitarian work, as the average age of our customers for these was usually about 17. If it hadn't been such a swindle he may have been, but they only work, if they are taken almost immediately and you have a lot of luck. There are hundreds of different varieties, all in the fanciest of packages, with all the writing in French. People will insist on the writing being in French even though they state quite clearly, Made in Leicester. "Capsules Pour les Dames" reads the blurb, and people are fooled into thinking they have got something like "Ergotapoile" or "Yankee Smith" which would do what they wanted, but which can't be sold in the U.K. Our biggest seller was the "Capsules Moulin Rouge" in a cute sealed plastic box. We sold them at 35/- a box, and got them wholesale for 8/-! The "Luna Rouge Capsules pour les Femmes" we sold for 21/- and got for a mere 4/-. Also various "novelty" companies made them by the gross for us which we packaged under our own name.

We also sold Slippery Elm Bark, but when they got home they found it was powdered and useless for self-abortion purposes. Now if any lady Anarchist wants a pill (or as our mail order list discreetly said "something much stronger than a pill") beat them down over the price. The one thing they dread when tip-toeing along the edge of the law like they do, is a fuss. Let them know that

'Thinking the thoughts which all men should be thinking . . .'

PRINT, PRESS & PUBLIC, Selections from *Freedom*, Vol. 9; 1959 (Freedom Press, cloth 10s. 6d., paper 7s. 6d.)

IN 1951 a new task was added to FREEDOM's editorial chores: that of saving the type of a few articles from each issue of the paper, when the rest goes back to the melting-pot, and then re-arranging and reprinting it in book format, so as to produce early in the following year, a book of about 240 pages or 100,000 words forming a selection from the previous year's paper, which is given a title from that of one of the reprinted articles.

This has been going on for nine years now, and the new volume, selected from last year's FREEDOM is now out, with the title (since this was a year of disputes, strikes, and take-over bids in the periodical press) *Print, Press & Public*. The collector of these volumes thus has,

you know the wholesale price and then persist—you'll get them at your own price in the finish. If you hint that you think you might be pregnant they will only talk to you if you are alone, as two "friends" together are often agents provocateurs. One can only hope the new pill will do away with all this rotten business, for you can be sure if someone is in peril, there is always a vulture waiting to reap a reward. Let's hope the CWS make them, at least there will be no profits then! One day a police-lady came in (so obvious with her gawky cronie) and leaning on the counter top said "Ere mate. Got anything that'll shift a baby?" "No. modom," I replied, "we don't sell prams." D.G.

for a very moderate outlay (as the paper-bound editions are available to readers of the paper for only five shillings each) a panorama of the decade which has just ended. The titles of the previous volumes are suggestive of the immense variety of topics covered in the million-word output of the last nine years: *Mankind is One, Postscript to Posterity, Colonialism on Trial, Living on a Volcano, the Immoral Moralists, Oil and Troubled Waters, Year One—Sputnik Era, Socialism in a Wheelchair*.

In these collections you will find not only the anarchist criticism of the political, social and economic phenomena of our time, but also praise and analysis of the "positive trends" which can be found, like seeds beneath the snow, even in the most authoritarian societies.

The American independent magazine *Manas* wrote of one of the volumes in this series:

"The reader of this book will make an important discovery—that the anarchists are thinking the thoughts which all men ought to be thinking, in these perilous times. The anarchists are not afraid to call attention to what we are losing, have already lost in terms of freedom, in terms of love and respect for other people, in terms of the elemental decencies of life—the decencies we so easily forget when it becomes time to plunge the world into fratricide for the sake of . . . all those things we say we go to war for."

D.H.

Anger on the Left

THE so-called "angry young men" have not had much connection with the so-called New Left before now. It is true that John Braine has a page in the first issue of *New Left Review*, but otherwise all we can say is that most of the contributors to *Declaration* and *Protest* (Part II) have left-wing sympathies and that most of the contributors to *ULR* and *NLR* are angry. But with *The Glittering Coffin* by Dennis Potter (Gollancz, 18s.) we have an angry young man (no need for inverted commas) who also belongs to the New Left; and this, apart from anything else, makes the book interesting and significant.

It was presumably commissioned by Victor Gollancz in accordance with his policy of catching 'em young. Potter is certainly very young and also very angry. Unfortunately his book has been produced in such a hurry that it is far more difficult to read than it need have been. It has no list of contents, no chapter headings, no index, and not much plan; it is also appallingly written. Dennis Potter may have only come down from Oxford last year, but surely he can do better than—"the pin-striped ethos of the Labour Party, stinking as it does with the green-gabled, tea on the lawn atmosphere of neat suburban homes and well-mannered conversation over garden fences"—"metal-heavy, hard-edged and ruthless, Power is one of those awkward words that need stuttering over"—"the primitive throb of rock 'n' roll from an oversized café juke-box". There is something real in each of these phrases, but he has done his best to make nonsense of them.

This is not just a literary objection. His style is a fine example of what might be called "Oxonian journalese" typical of clever arts undergraduates who are intoxicated with the exuberance of their new-found verbosity (I ought to know—I was one not so long before Dennis Potter)—and its danger is the same as the danger of any journalese. The search for the striking phrase and looseness of language lead to (or from) looseness of thought and the search for the flashy idea. Dennis Potter has plenty to say, but far too much of it is, as Tony Howard remarks, "bogged down in the porridge of his own polemic". Just take a look at the title to begin with. This book shouldn't have been published as it stands—certainly not with the *Postscript* at the beginning.

Getting away from these minor complaints, what is it all about? The author calls the book a "scattered, highly impressionistic and youthful description of a few of the social and political problems of present-day Britain", and the way the promise of that phrase is spoiled by its ending suggests the way the promise of the best parts of the book are spoiled by its "message". The account of his Forest of Dean background (Chap. III) and his view of Oxford (Chaps. V & VI) are good, if rather superficial; the rest is not so good, and is more superficial.

At Oxford he was that unhappy being, a working-class scholarship boy. As such he became famous in 1958 when he wrote in the *New Statesman* and to the *Times*, and appeared on television; he was also a controversial editor of the *Isis* and chairman of the Labour Club. Incidentally, it is interesting that he should come from Oxford; apart from nearly all the ULR/NLR people, Oxford also produced Angus Wilson, Lindsay Anderson, Kingsley Amis, John Wain, George Scott, Alan Brien, Ken Tynan and so on—why so many?

If asked what the book is really about, one might paraphrase Coolidge's report of a sermon he had heard and reply that it's about class. What does he say about it? To paraphrase Coolidge again, he's against it—or rather, as Kenneth Allsop put it, he has "a hair-trigger sensitivity towards class"; there is a chip on his shoulder about the size of an oak tree. He assumes that other people feel the same way, and remarks that discussing class is "like small boys discussing sex in the school playground". He also assumes that "class matters more than it did in, say, 1945". This seems absurd to me, and a lot of other things he says seem absurd.

"We are seeing something akin to a moral disintegration"—"Conversation is a lost art"—"The new constitutional respectability of 'pressure groups'"—"The dying remnants of the British theatre"—"The breakdown of community"—such gloomy, almost Toynbeean, phrases appear all the way through the book. He looks back admiringly to the Thirties—"the decade of protest . . . of outraged conscience"—and seems to think there has been a decline since then. He talks about "this twisted, acquisitive and essentially hollow society of ours"; does he really mean that—or know what it really means?

The trouble with this exaggerated, overloaded sort of argument is that it detracts from what is good in this book. Many of his victims deserve to be sacrificed—educational apartheid, commercial advertising, the gutter press (he quotes the reporter—*Daily Sketch*?—who said, "My readers are the scum of the earth and I throw my muck at them"), the Top press, the women's magazines (here he quotes the *Woman's Own* editorial that called them "the most intelligent and progressive form of British journalism"), chauvinism in sport, British comic and war films, the "Rank-ABC oligopoly" (always whining about taxes and television), Operation Britain posters, British Travel Association advertisements—in fact the whole neo-Elizabethan "Opportunity State" racket. But we have heard (or said) it all ages ago. Anyone can make nasty remarks; the point is (as he admits himself) that "many have failed to get beyond the brash shouting of an exasperated polemic". Has he?

There is a lot of good stuff here, but there is an awful lot of nonsense too. It really isn't good enough to write off Kingsley Amis's Fabian Tract (*Socialism and the Intellectuals*, January 1957) as "an unfortunately all-too-typical example of the insularity and political ignorance of the age"; to declare that "elegant Georgian houses . . . have more than an edge of immorality about them"; or to dismiss Dacre Balsdon and Professor Trevor-Roper as "socially and politically illiterate . . . hollow figures". He doth protest too much, methinks. At least he should give people he dislikes or disagrees with some credit for being sincere, even if they are mistaken; they aren't all unmitigated villains.

What is really extraordinary is that after such a sweeping attack on almost every aspect of contemporary English society he should declare that he "should very much like to make a career in politics" as "a competent Labour Member of Parliament". In fact he says this even before his attack, which makes it still madder. He seems to agree with Mervyn Jones that "Socialism is a total rejection of the practice and values of the existing society" (*NLR* 1, p. 17); and yet he admits to a "qualified and at times unhappy allegiance" to the Labour Party

which, "whether we like it or not, has been and will be the only practical instrument for achieving anything remotely resembling a Socialist society in this country". What he means by Socialism is not quite clear, except that "the collective ownership of the means of production . . . must remain the essential criterion for a Socialist party". Presumably he thinks the Labour Party is—or should be—a Socialist party.

It is difficult to make head or tail of all this, and in fact one of the chief defects of this book (which is also one of the author's most attractive qualities) is the way he keeps on taking the wind out of his own sails. "Contempt for 'mass' tastes," he says when expressing such contempt, "is an instance of that attitude of mind which itself creates such an alleged 'mass' culture", he quotes at length (pp. 98-99) a letter published in *Isis* in June 1958, which is really an excellent criticism of this book; he rejects middle-class sentimentality about the workers, but then insists that "the political future of this country necessarily lies with the working class" (*necessarily?*). In the same way, after confessing his political ambitions he is extremely rude about the leaders of the Labour Party; he doesn't think he will be "the most popular of would-be candidates"—damn right he won't!

But if he really wants to be a politician, why write a book like this? Alternatively, if he believes what he says in this book, why does he want to be a politician? (He says himself that "when party leaders grumble about 'apathy' on the part of the public, they would be more honest to substitute the word 'contempt'.") Certainly *The Glittering Coffin* must be one of the most remarkable attempts to begin a political career ever made.

I feel that Dennis Potter is perhaps just a natural rebel who must have something to rebel against. "Criticising Britain from within is like beating with puny fists against a thick wall of sponge," he says; "the sovereignty of the consumer is a phrase that reeks of dishonesty and needs little discrediting from people like me"—but he goes right on criticising Britain from within and discrediting such phrases for more than 150 pages (for which, by the way, 18s. is a disgustingly high price). It's easy to see what he's against—his idea of "a new kind of social democrat Right-wing society"—but what is he for? Reading his book, I begin to feel as if he were that preacher who was against sin. After a time the roll and thunder of the rhetoric leaves me unmoved, and I begin to pay attention not to what he says but to him. Why does he shout so loudly? Why does his hand tremble and his forehead sweat? Why do his cheeks flush and his eyes glare . . . ?

Perhaps the criticism of the New Left made by Jay Blumer, a young Ruskin College tutor (Oxford again!), is relevant here: "Spiritual emigrés, their alienation from society may be so severe that they cannot provide useful suggestions for coping with the problems that arise in it" (*Socialist Commentary*, February 1960). But before we begin worrying too much about Mr. Potter, let us remember that he is only 24 (a whole year younger than me) and has plenty of time. At least this is far better than *The Outsider*, and if our generation must have a spokesman Dennis Potter is a far more acceptable one than Colin Wilson. It's a pity neither of them seems to have a sense of humour. N.W.

About Anarchism:

What do YOU Expect of Society?

WHAT do you expect of society?

It appears to us that most ordinary people think they would be content with a high economic standard of living, plenty of leisure time, an education which would give them a certain social prestige, and the satisfaction of personal needs within the circle of the family. And most ordinary people, in our opinion, want too little.

We think it would be not at all unreasonable for them to expect not merely a high economic standard, but free access to everything they want; not only adequate rest, but the ability to choose when, where and how they should work; an education designed not for social prestige and earning power, but for developing the capacity to enjoy life; and personal relationships unrestricted by what is appropriate and useful to civilisation. . . .

"But we have to put up with the things of this world!" Yes, of course, we have to put up with death, disappointment, bad weather, gravity, all the things beyond our control. But the way wealth is distributed and work organised, the way we learn, and the way we live with our families, are all aspects of the particular society we live in. We submit that it is possible for ordinary people to change society quite considerably, if they want to.

There is some disagreement about what society is for. We all know from experience why people associate together: simply because it is natural for us, like eating or sleeping; without food we are hungry, without sleep we are tired, without society we are lonely. But it is not so obvious why the urge to associate should be so strong. It is generally accepted, and easily demonstrated, that food and rest are essential to the very survival of the individual, but society is not such an obvious bodily necessity, and there are conflicting opinions about why we want to associate at all. Some thinkers have suggested (or tacitly assumed) that human beings associate in order to work God's Will, or assist Historical Processes. Others, that some group of people (the nation, for instance, or mankind in general) is the proper unit of human existence, and that individuals should surrender themselves to it.

Our opinion is that individuals associate in order to increase their own opportunities. An isolated human being would have to devote his life to the struggle for bare survival; a helpless, hopeless slave to his environment, he could have absolutely no choice of activity, no individuality whatever. But when individuals associate together, helping each other and learning from each other, bare survival need not be a problem, and individual development becomes possible.

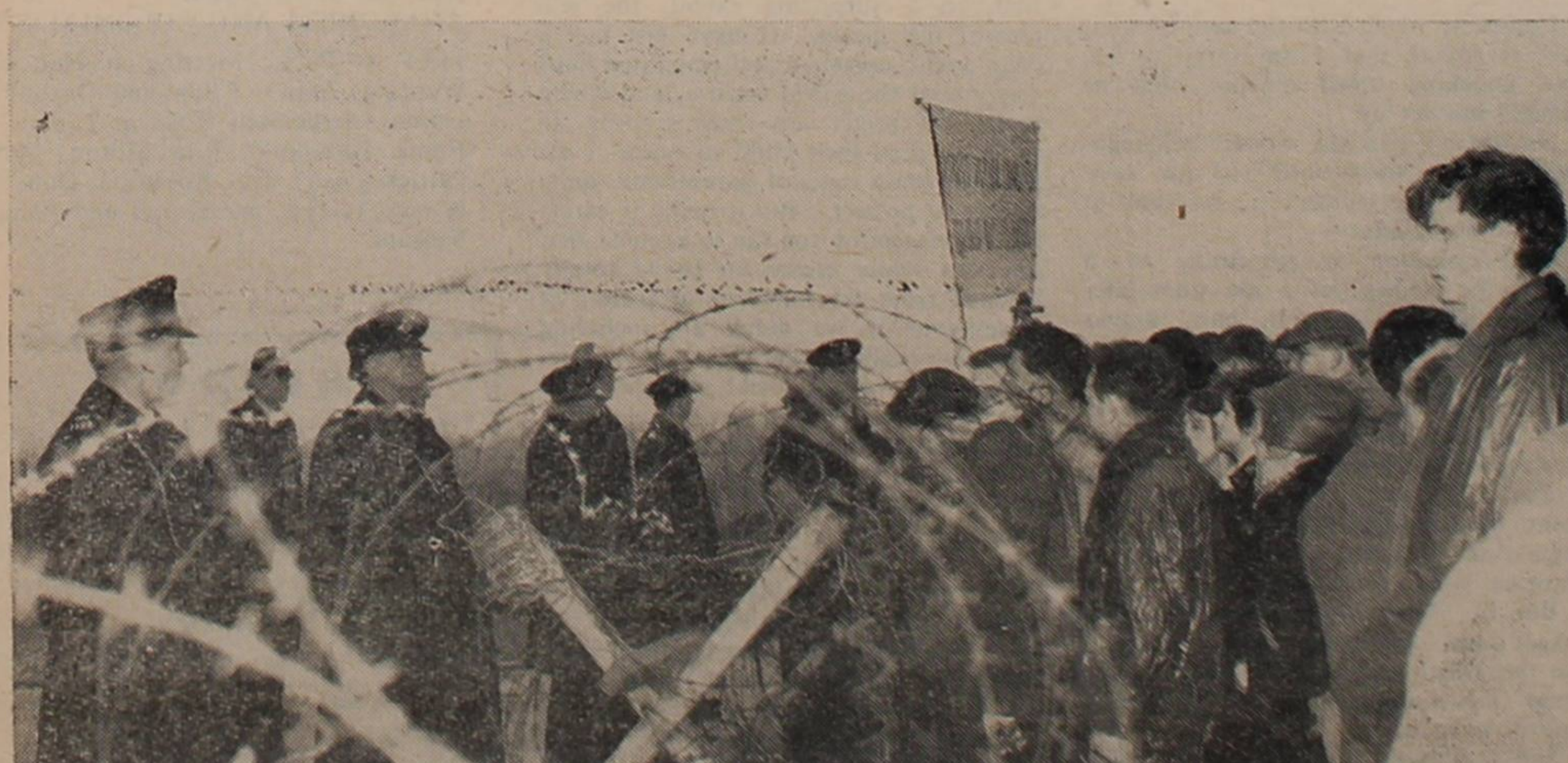
Obviously, any society must extend individual opportunity in some directions and limit it in others. We base our arguments on the assumption that the most desirable society is that which provides the greatest freedom of action for its individual members.

Anarchism in 200 words

RELATIONSHIPS between persons (or groups of persons) may be classified into two sorts: first, those in which the parties concerned are mutually free, and associate voluntarily for their mutual benefit or satisfaction; and second, those in which one party commands the other, by reason of some accepted right to command, or some open or tacit threat of real or imaginary punishment.

Anarchists approve of relationships of the first sort (even though they may not always agree with their objects or achievements), because they increase the opportunities of the individual; they give him a choice of activity, a possibility for self-expression, which he could not have without them. And anarchists disapprove of relationships of the second sort, because, no matter how benevolent their intentions or beneficial their results, they lessen the choice of action, and decrease the opportunities, of at least one of the parties involved.

It follows that no society is completely satisfactory to anarchists unless all the relationships within it are of the first, co-operative kind. The ultimate goal of anarchism is 'Anarchy', a society of sovereign individuals, in which all relationships, or at least all institutionalised relationships, are of the voluntary kind. P.H. & D.R.



"Sooner or later we are faced with the ugly facts of state power . . ."

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Anarchist Attitudes in the Everyday World

SOME people think that anarchism, because it postulates the idea of society without government, is merely a utopian dogma whose adherents have to assert that because no road leads to utopia, no road leads anywhere. But many anarchists would deny that they envisage "an anarchist society" at all, that history does not work that way, and that the value of anarchism for them lies in something quite different: the importance of anarchism as a movement of permanent protest, and as a concept of human and social relations.

Government, as an institution, has, as one of its characteristics the maintenance of what Martin Buber calls the "latent external crisis", the fear of an external enemy, by which it maintains its ascendancy over its own subjects, and preserves the myth of its indispensability. This has in our own day become the major activity of the major governments of the world, and the biggest field of expenditure and effort. War is the trade of governments and the health of the state, and obviously the anarchists support, in common with the pacifists, all anti-war activities, but they can hardly be expected to see anything but illusions in the hopes which are placed on "summit conferences" or the signing of petitions. The petitions go to the wrong address: they should be addressed not to governments but to people.

Quiet Desperation

The mass of mankind, Thoreau observed, lead lives of quiet desperation. Is this why war and the idea of war, as an exciting break in meaningless routine, is tolerated? Yet who but ourselves has decreed the situation in which work is drained of meaning and purpose, except as a source of income or status, in which marriage and the family turn out to be a tight little tender trap which really satisfies none of the parties involved, in which increasing leisure becomes merely another field for the commercial exploitation of our fear or boredom. Look around you at the domestic resentments, the glum faces emerging from factory and office into the rush-hour journey home, the frantic consumption whipped up by the ad-men.

How desperately we need to find different ways of life which will liberate instead of imprison the individual, to experiment with new ways of living, a new assertion of individual values, more dignity and more satisfaction in daily life.

Work

At one time, forty years ago, there was a strong syndicalist trend in the trade union movement, calling for workers' control of industry. It died away, as the industrial workers pinned their faith on the Labour Party's programme of nationalisation, and concentrated on win-

ning a bigger slice of the capitalist cake. One of the most formidable tasks before us is to rekindle the urge for responsibility and autonomy in industry: to put workers' control back on the agenda. (See *Anarchism and Industry* in this issue).—In this we should draw upon the experiments conducted by industrial psychologists, who, not in the interests of workers' control, but simply to increase production or reduce industrial neuroses or absenteeism, have sought to introduce small and autonomous groups into industry, and upon the opportunities which new sources of motive power, and automation, which make great concentrations of industrial units obsolete, can give, if harnessed to the idea of giving the worker control of the product of his work, and of the process of decision-making. The means for achieving workers' control will follow the emergence of the demand for it.

Social Autonomy

The modern state is infinitely more ubiquitous and centralised than that of the time of the classical anarchist thinkers. It has also usurped many of those functions which belong to society, and which Kropotkin in *Mutual Aid*, listed as evidence of the innate sociality of man which made the imposition from above of state organisation unnecessary. In social organisation and in industry, and

consequently in the distribution of population, centralisation has been the great characteristic of modern life. The tendency itself is, however, one which changes in the speed and nature of communications and motive power, have already made obsolete, and there is a wealth of sociological data to demonstrate how undesirable it is in human terms. The anarchists and those who think like them on this issue, have to change the centralising habit of mind for one which seeks decentralisation and devolution, pressing for more and more local initiative and autonomy in all aspects of life.

Delinquency

To anarchist thinkers from Godwin onwards, crime has been, not the manifestation of individual wickedness, but a symptom of social disease—of material and spiritual poverty and deprivation. From Kropotkin with his dictum that prisons are the universities of crime, to Alex Comfort's modern studies of delinquency, the anarchists have opposed the system of retributive justice which creates more criminals than it deters, and have sought the identification and elimination of the causes of crime—to the extent that breaches of the law are in fact anti-social acts. A great deal of evidence has been gathered, even officially, in support of this view—official penal policy is floundering between different and incom-

patible approaches, and there is here an immense field for anarchist effort in changing the social climate. Anti-social acts as a characteristic of individuals follow a pattern that begins in youth, and the most interesting and exciting experimental approaches to the curing of delinquency have been conducted in a very anarchistic fashion—the work for instance of August Aichhorn, Homer Lane and their followers.

Changing Attitudes

The anarchists are not a party, membership cards and voting papers have no appeal to them. Since they are seeking, not power but autonomy, they are not concerned with counting heads or ballot papers, but in awakening men and women to personal and social independence and responsibility. They draw the evidence for their concept of society from a thousand examples and experiments which illustrate the fruitfulness of the libertarian approach—the Peckham Health Centre, the Adventure Playground movement (see *FREEDOM Selections*, volumes 1 and 8 respectively), to name two intriguing examples. The empirical evidence for the anarchist point of view has been provided by the findings of sociologists, psychologists and anthropologists. The evidence for their criticism of political and governmental society, you can see in the world around you.

Readers Write on Progressive Education

The Editor,
DEAR SIR,

G. says some very valid things in his article No. 2 on progressive education. But every one of them has been said before. This would not matter if G. did not write as the prophet.

To take two examples: In the *Orgone Energy Bulletin* he could have read all about the danger of parents trying to be "ideal" and then suffering from the guilt. It was put more clearly of course.

He attacks "therapeutic approach". I suppose he is attacking us. He repeats what we have said a number of times in the *Free Family*, seemingly without knowing. He says that the therapeutic approach means something only if it is the child being treated by the parent.

If he had been listening to the lecture, at which I expounded this point, he could have heard me say that the spontaneous loving attitude of children, the organotic flow from them (just to nettle him a little with terminology he will deem esoteric because he does not understand it), is as much a therapeutic factor in the relationship as the parent protecting the child from the outside world. In the latter G. would probably agree the child had less chance to protect the parent. Childhood an illness? How stupid can you get?

The therapeutic approach means a great deal more than G. has fathomed and it would be suitable if he either apologised or read our book before trotting out aggressive rubbish directed against people with whom he has to agree to make any positive point at all.

I would also like to say that the word "Reichian" is so devoid of exact meaning, like Anarchist, or Communist, that it is not advisable to use it if one is trying to make sense about a subject as specific as bringing up children.

Nottingham, April 3. PAUL RITTER.

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION TODAY

I agree so much with the core of what "G" is saying that I am sorry to see him knocking down ninetails that he himself has set up.

He doesn't like the words "self-regulation" and "therapeutic". I am convinced it is the words . . . for look at "G's" own beliefs:—

"Self-regulation is something of a myth", he claims, yet a few lines later asserts that "In general, baby knows what is best for baby and later:—

"If, by 'self-regulation' we mean a natural response to a child's needs as they become manifest, and abstaining from pointless interference with its activities", [Precisely]. What else do we mean by it? I.L.] "then practising 'self-regulation' is what is often known as showing 'horse sense'."

But, G., if you would stand back and take a good look at the world, you would see that what you and I think is "horse sense" is just about the rarest commodity known to man.

Self-regulation has little to do with models and ideals and nothing to do with nails knocked into grand pianos; and there are no absolutes in it. It has everything to do with helping the child

to satisfy real physical and emotional needs.

Simply invoke horse sense and

Horse sense tells most parents that if little Johnny is seen touching his penis he must be instantly and unequivocally "corrected".

Horse sense tells most parents to make sure Johnny gets three good nourishing cooked meals a day inside him, hungry or not.

"Boys don't cry" is most obvious horse sense.

Horse sense is enough to lead many parents to watch anxiously for a daily (twice daily; after each meal, etc.) bowel movement lest indescribable horrors befall the infant.

Parents have been relying on horse sense these many a thousand years; does the result give us much joy? Of course "self-regulation" embodies our brand of horse-sense, but it is elaborated in the sense that attention is drawn to the specific things that most parents do that are most harmful, and it is demonstrated by examples from a lifetime of clinical experience just how and why it is harmful not to respond naturally to a child's needs, and not to abstain from pointless interference with its activities. Prominently Reich was responsible for this detailed and comprehensive working-out; why should acknowledging this render one obnoxious to a charge of mysticism?

Some people misinterpret self-regulation, some use the words as an excuse for something else; oh, dear! Neill allowed self-regulation in his school long before he heard of Reich, talking simply of freedom. What word has been more abused than that? What interpretations have you met of the word "anarchism"? Shall we never name anything, then, for fear of misinterpretation?

I could not more heartily agree with G. on the need for free parents of free children to send them to free schools (read "cranky" *ad lib.*) And I agree that, to a surprising extent, the will creates the means. (I have just met a couple who uprooted and emigrated halfway round the world from a land where there just aren't any free schools, in order to send their child to one.) I see it as the main onus of parenthood, quite simply to protect. But it really is carrying self-deception too far to pretend that one can really create an island totally isolated from the influence of society at large—even if we didn't all, including progressive-school teachers, have something of prevailing social attitudes built into us—and, when you live in a society that is sick to its guts, you cannot escape infection altogether—only more or less. Of course childhood is not an illness—but it is the time of maximum susceptibility to infection (and equally, of maximum potentiality for building health). Of course a healthy child can catch measles—that does not make measles a manifestation of health. Of course a healthy child will react to unnecessary frustration with anger (in the most usual circumstances, directed against the parents)—that does not make anger a manifestation of health.

We all at times have to see our

children angry, irritable, miserable, hurt—and to help them get over it with the least possible aftermath. Some have to more than others; there are no absolutes. G. is quite right to stress the tensions arising from anomalies between home and school, but has the best home yet, combined with the best school, ever produced children who were "perfectly" happy and emotionally stable, as he claims? I doubt it. I believe it will take many generations before there is anyone who could not benefit from therapy (if effective, and if available). No, I don't even believe that; the very idea of such a "perfect" state is unrealistic.

I think that in the process of doing some very necessary debunking, G. has donned some very rosy spectacles himself. He has also made the mistake of regarding self-regulation as just another cranky "method". This is rather like dismissing anarchism as just another political "ism".

London, April 4

I.L.

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

APRIL 17—No meeting

APRIL 24—J. W. Westall on ANARCHISM AND COLONIALISM
MAY 1—Public Meeting at Hall of Working Man's Club and Institute Union, Clerkenwell Road at 7.30.
Frank Hirschfeld, Rita Milton, Max Patrick (chair), Jack Robinson, Donald Room (events permitting) and Philip Sansom.

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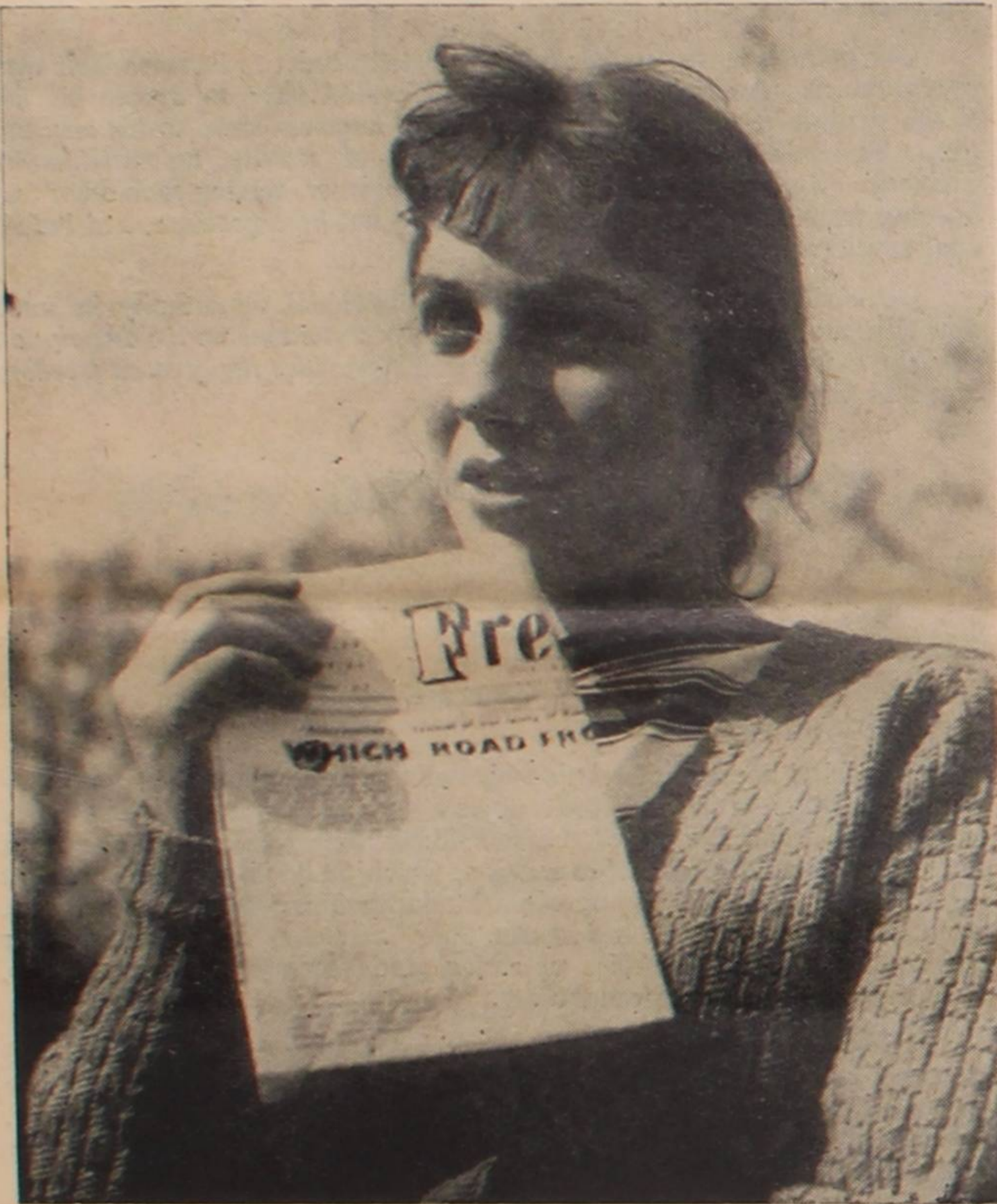
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