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Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"The laws are the codified will of the dominating classes . . . a rebel or an innovator is always guilty before the laws made for conservation."

—VANZETTI

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Threepence

Richard Titmuss on the Affluent Society

Poverty in the Midst of Plenty

A FEW weeks ago at a conference sponsored by the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (FREEDOM 13th August, "Food & Poverty") Lord Boyd Orr said, the problem of the world today is whether Governments will have the intelligence to use the enormous new powers given to us by science for the benefit of the world, and appealed to them to co-operate for mutual advantage.

Richard M. Titmuss, on a similar theme, discussed the problems of the 'irresponsible society' in a B.B.C. Third Programme broadcast, in which he submitted that:

"What is fundamental is how we distribute our increasing affluence; the extent to which we collectively decide to deny ourselves, to benefit others; and the degree to which we bring under public control the exercise of arbitrary economic power."

Explicit in both cases is a criticism of Western Democracy and its failure to equalise the distribution of wealth. This failure is summed up by Orr when he says:

The West grows food not to feed hungry people, but to make a profit.

Discussing the situation of the powerless groups in society, the dependent poor, the sick and disabled, the mentally afflicted, the feckless and the obscure, Titmuss questions the value of existing social policies in these terms:

"Well-intentioned welfare legislation does not, by itself suffice. Nor is it enough in an increasingly prosperous society, to claim, for instance, that the poorest fifth of the nation are sharing in this increased wealth. To take up such a position, to set this as our objective, can imply that in absolute terms we shall be accepting a society of more inequality; relatively more social injustice."

From American sources he quotes, in a period of unprecedented economic growth, the proportion of old people with low incomes—more than 50 per cent.—was virtually the same in 1957 as in 1947.

From the book, *The Waist-High Culture*, he quotes an American critic of his own society.

"We are breeding a new type of human being: a guy with a full belly, an empty mind, and a hollow heart. It is the age of the shrug."

It is also the age of passive ignorance about "the obscure powerless groups". Titmuss compares the growing affluence in Britain with the lack of knowledge about the incidence of poverty and the standards of living among the old and other dependent groups. He equates our own conditions with American society and states that there may be seven to eight million people today "living precariously close to the margins of poverty."

Titmuss points out that the social welfare services have benefited most of those who have needed it least, and that the corresponding growth of the 'social welfare firm' has been largely concentrated on the better-off third of the population.

In considering the concentration and combination of economic power, he views with alarm the accumulation of immense funds in the last decade in the hands of insurance companies and insurance trusts. The staggering accumulation of funds invested in the amalgamation of companies and the growth of control over the "economic surplus" places too much power in the hands of private enterprise which, in the words of Titmuss is:

A potential power concentrated in relatively few hands which can affect

many important aspects of our economic life and social values . . . accountable, in practice to virtually no one.

In these circumstances government plays a 'dwindling role', and Titmuss believes that one consequence is the "muffling of social protest and the spread of conformity" which will leave social welfare to the whims of private enterprise.

Titmuss may well ask:

"Where do we look in future for the men, the movements and the values that will continuously nourish the social conscience?"

The Labour Party has dismally failed to offer a real alternative to *laissez-faire* capitalism. As Peter Townsend, himself a socialist, wrote in the *New Statesman* (26/9/59):

The party now seems to be characterised by a diminished attachment to moral and social principle and by a correspondingly greater concern with piecemeal reform . . . and there is a noticeable shifting of feet whenever there is the slightest suggestion of using taxation as a weapon for social ends.

Titmuss is not fooled by "well-intentioned legislation", but his view that the dwindling role of government in social policy making muffles social protest, suggests that the alternative would be government by conscience.

It is on the solution of social inequality that anarchists take issue with the social reformer.

Their alternatives to what we might call a complete social revolution may seem more realistic in existing society, but we would not today be discussing inequalities in a time of economic prosperity if the alternatives had not failed to produce results.

It is quite unrealistic to say that a change of government with the en-

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Music by Muzak

"MUZAK—a new word enters the language," begins a current advertisement. "A new sound makes the day run smoothly. Music by Muzak," it continues. "Less than a year ago, few people in England had heard this music, or even the name. Now many of our most progressive companies subscribe to the Muzak service—recognising Muzak as a technique of good management."

What the hell is this Muzak? you ask. "Muzak is a scientifically planned music programme designed to ease tension and fatigue, to make the day run smoothly and happily, at work and at leisure." —! you reply. But the advertisement isn't meant for you, gentle reader. It is for the bosses, the manipulators. "Whatever your business, there's a Muzak programme designed to make it smooth-running, pleasant and efficient. Let us tell you more about Muzak."

No thank you, that's quite enough! you exclaim. But soon you won't even be asked. Muzak will be everywhere. In the Brave New World of tomorrow, Big Brother will feed you with Muzak while you work, Muzak while you read, Muzak while you eat, Muzak while you sleep, Muzak while you make love, Muzak while you sit on the lavatory, Muzak while you travel to the Moon, Muzak when

you get there. You will think of things like TV jingles and ice-cream chimes as delightful sentimental memories—rather like the organ-grinder and the muffin man. You will look forward to the roar of the next jet-plane that passes, in the hope that it will drown the scientifically planned tranquillizer that perpetually afflicts your ears.

Already Edward Hyam's wife is being driven crazy by a constant hum in Kent. Already organ-music is being heard on the M1 near Luton. Already farmers in India are playing music to their rice-fields (the rice-plants like it a lot, whatever is played) rather like an audience at the Proms. It used to be thought that there was a Music of the Spheres, made by the other planets as they cumbrously danced round our own. In 1984 a Martian flying-saucer approaching the Earth will hear not the Music of the Spheres, but the Muzak of the Serfs; no doubt it will turn back at once.

But what will you do, gentle reader? Will you cut the loud-speaker wires, and be sent away for psychiatric treatment? or will you do what James Thurber once suggested—"run, don't walk, to the nearest desert island"? If it turns out to be Eniwetok—well, at least that's quick, at least it's not smooth. Just a moment, wait for me . . . A.F.

Reflections on the 'Herald' Hand-over

AN INDEPENDENT PRESS?

"INDEPENDENT—Outspoken" is how the *Daily Herald* is advertising its newly-won freedom from the strings that have tied it to the T.U.C. and Labour Party since its inception in 1911. The implication is that up to now it has been neither independent nor outspoken, presumably because the T.U.C. had editorial control over the paper by virtue of its ownership of 49 per cent. of the stock of the *Daily Herald* (1929) Ltd. Does the fact that the National Press is independent of control by the political parties automatically guarantee its editorial independence? Of course not! Not only is the Press in business to make a profit but where it can also reflect the particular political or other interests of the controlling individuals or groups without jeopardising its circulation, it will do so in the most outspoken manner (e.g. the *Beaverbrook* newspapers). And Odhams Press, who print the *Daily Herald* are no exception to this rule. Their wish to be independent of any editorial control by the T.U.C. is not a matter of principle, but a question of business. (After all, in the early '30s when the *Herald* had a daily circulation of more than 2 million copies, the largest in the

world, there was no talk of severing the T.U.C. connection! Only now that its circulation is one of the lowest among the popular National Press and Odhams are losing about £300,000 a year has the "disadvantage" of the T.U.C. connection been discovered!).

In spite of the fact that nearly 14 million people buy the *Daily Herald* Odhams were quite prepared to kill the newspaper if the T.U.C. would not sign a 25-year agreement which freed the *Herald* from any obligation to support the specific policies of the Labour Party and trade union movement. So much for any illusions that the controllers of our National Press are primarily concerned with service to the public. And short of publishing the paper itself the T.U.C. had no alternative but to accept Odhams' demands. For in the first place, Odhams and not the T.U.C. have been standing the losses and in the second place they were only prepared to pour more capital into the *Herald* if they had a free hand. Since under the new arrangement the T.U.C. will still hold 49 per cent. of the stock the negotiations may well have thought that a profitable *Herald*

would show a return for their stock if nothing else!

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IN order to join the circulation race, Odhams are talking of spending £3 million on the "independent" *Daily Herald*. We wonder in what way those millions will be spent and what form that "independence" will assume in the end? Indeed, how independent can a newspaper be that seeks to compete in the mass circulation race? There are rumours of a merger with the *News Chronicle*. There is no doubt that since the latter took over the *Manchester Daily Dispatch* three years ago in an attempt to build up its falling circulation, it has fallen off as a serious popular newspaper and still its circulation has continued to drop. Is there any reason to believe that with or without a merger the independent *Daily Herald* will become a more serious paper than its T.U.C.-controlled predecessor? We find it difficult to understand how a paper as bad as the *Daily Herald* could sell 1,400,000 copies, but like the *News Chronicle* it was obviously not bad enough to compete for circulation

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An Independent Press?

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with the gutter Press. Since it is concerned with circulation, and since we know that the few serious newspapers published in this country enjoy an even smaller circulation than the *Herald* or *Chronicle*, one must assume that the "independent—outspoken" *Herald* is going to look more like the *Express* and the *Mirror* than either the *Guardian* or even the *Telegraph*!

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In fact no newspaper, periodical or any other means of communication can be independent. To our minds the hall mark of a responsible Press is *objectivity* in collecting and reporting the news; *journalistic integrity* in making clear what is opinion and what are facts; and last but not least the use of the Press for the *free discussion of ideas*. Such a Press will not be independent because it will be controlled by those who are responsible for its existence. Just as today the Press is controlled from above by about five groups of multi-millionaires, so the responsible Press of tomorrow will be controlled but from below by thousands of groups, small and large, each group existing as a result of a common interest and assuming its full responsibility. Then each newspaper or periodical will serve the ends for which it was created.

It is only in a country such as Britain where the daily Press is dominated by Fleet Street, and newspapers such as the *Chronicle* or *Herald* each with a circulation exceeding a million copies a day are in dire straits, that the idea of a decentralised Press, of thousands of daily newspapers instead of the mere 120 which are at present published, seems unrealistic and uneconomic. Yet even in the United States, with only 4 times the population of Britain there are 1,817 dailies, or 15 times as many as in this country. And Switzerland with a population of only a sixteenth of that of Britain boasts as many dailies!

The fact that these local dailies are generally dreary sheets is beside the point, which is, that even within the capitalist system it would be possible in this country for local dailies to exist on circulations a fiftieth as big as that of either the *Chronicle* or *Herald*.

And such a Press could be interesting, the rallying ground for discussions as well as for local activities but only if it came into being by the efforts—in time and material contributions—of enough people in each locality, for whom an intelligent newsheet, a forum for discussion of ideas, were more important to living a full life than the possession of a motor car or a refrigerator. We shall only get the Press we want when we are prepared to play our part in creating it.

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TODAY we have mass-communications because we have mass-minds. We have mass-minds not because, as those believers in the elite fondly imagine, the "masses" are born with atrophied brains, but because we come into a world stiff with tradition, prejudice and ignorance. And most of us are deprived of the necessary education and advice without which one cannot fight against such an environment.

It is not a question of a formal education. There was more social awareness among the semi-illiterate

A London Anarchist Group Lecture NON VIOLENCE AND DIRECT ACTION

WHEN one is speaking of non-violence and direct action the first quotation that comes to mind is one by the most authoritative exponent of non-violence, Gandhi. "Nothing on this earth has ever been accomplished without direct action."

So marked is the correlation that exists between these two terms, non-violence and direct action, that—far from being opposites—they complement each other in an undeniable way.

No doubt a comparison between non-violence and direct action seems to Western people to be paradoxical, and it evokes in our minds an understandable scepticism. But if one examines the question more closely it becomes clear that the two concepts can easily be reconciled. Only ignorance has prevented their true value being widely recognised and used to achieve positive aims. Look back into the past and study objectively both what direct action has been and what it now is.

In the *Grand Dictionnaire Socialiste* of Compere Morel we read:

"Direct Action: Action opposed to the analytical and methodical political action of the Socialist Party, advocated by anarchists and some syndicalists. The general strike is the most widely known and practical form."

It is, to say the least, somewhat pretentious to affirm that the political methods of the socialists are analytical and methodical, and to claim that direct action is no more than a move in opposition to political action. In itself direct action is just as analytical and rational as political action, and one could consider that political action is in fact a degenerate form of social action. One which has moreover led the workers into a blind alley of reformism and parliamentarism, a morass where all action intended to lead to liberation has ended.

In fact, direct action is not new in the annals of social, religious and economic struggle. It is a great honour in a way that it is always the anarchists, and some syndicalists, who are described as advocating it. It would indeed be more logical to write that anarchists and syndicalists have never ceased to advocate direct action, to counter those politicians who have denied its value. At all times direct action has been a method used by those who have stood up against tyrants, dictators and exploiters, who have tried to impose their will and ideas upon others.

But let us turn to what the principle theorists have said about direct action.

Emile Pouget in *La Confederation du Travail* wrote:

"The characteristic of direct action is that it is a spontaneous and reflective demonstration of the consciousness and

peasants of Spain than in the university-studded United States of America, and it is *social awareness* that matters, not just in the head but in the heart as well. Then not only does one seek to live one's ideas, but one also finds the time to communicate to others the things one has discovered for oneself. Every anarchist *should* be a propagandist; not necessarily on a platform nor necessarily with a pen, but just in the day-to-day contact we all have with our fellow beings. From such apparently modest beginnings will the revolution in values emerge. *Of this we have no doubt.*

And for this reason we go on talking and writing. One reader, whose letter we publish elsewhere, criticizes us on the grounds that "one has the feeling that [reading FREEDOM] one can almost predict what is coming next". Far from being a criticism, we consider it a compliment. We have obviously made ourselves clear! If he really wants to be entertained he should read what the politicians have to say. It will be white one week and black the next. We realise we cannot be as entertaining but we hope that each week someone picking up FREEDOM for the first time will at least be provoked into thinking for himself. Thought precedes *responsible* action. Anarchism is inconceivable without responsibility.

will of the working class, without the intervention of external agents.

"Direct action is not necessarily synonymous with violence. It can be brought about by gentle and pacifistic conduct, as well as by very violent means, without ceasing to be, in one way or another, 'direct action'."

The above definition of direct action, written by one of the most competent theoreticians of French revolutionary syndicalism, merits all our attention. For those of us who are pacifists a great practical lesson is clarified by such a definition, and we should not neglect to examine it. We therefore can understand perfectly the vital purpose of direct action, that is to say, action completely divorced from compromise with capitalist interests and governments, and action which is taken without the interference of intermediaries.

Emile Vandervelde, the Belgian socialist, in the Brussels newspaper *Le Peuple* once wrote:

"To get anything out of the capitalists it just will not do for the working class to give a mandate to their representatives to struggle on their behalf. We have told them many times, but not of course enough, the great truth that is part and parcel of the theory of direct action—one cannot get any serious reforms from intermediaries."

"The Belgian working classes have been left by the ruling class in ignorance and misery, but nevertheless have for twenty years given proofs of their capability and sacrificial spirit. If we can permit ourselves to reproach them in any way at all it is to point out that they have counted too much on political action and co-operation with the establishment—in other words, they have chosen the line of least resistance. They have not done enough for syndicalist action, they have given way to the dangerous illusion that when the day comes that they have their own representatives in parliament, reforms and concessions will just fall into their hands."

Who could ever deny that this is the truth! Direct action is the triumph of individualism. In other words it is the way of liberation, which those, who reject beliefs imposed from above and below, will take. It is a call to the consciences of all to participate in the common fight.

"Direct action is a denial of miracles—God's miracles and the State's miracles. It opposes any belief in Providence, no matter what form this belief may take. It proclaims the way to practise the saying "the future lies in our hands".

My late friend Pierre Besnard did not hesitate to write, having finished a study of direct action, that it was "the only real weapon of the proletariat. No other method, however it is used, will allow them to be free of all pressures and dictatorships—including the most absurd of all, the dictatorship of the proletariat".

As a revolutionary syndicalist, Pierre Besnard saw in direct action a violent method. This prevented him from discerning the possibilities of non-violent struggle. He thought violence necessary in the face of violence by the adversary. However the revolutionary act, the insurrectional general strike, is, according to him, vastly different from the armed insurrection of political parties. Also it aims at stopping a seizure of power by any faction. There is some element of truth in his way of considering the matter. But this statement of Besnard may be superseded, and facts can prove the opposite. Although the events of his day justified his opinion, subsequent history might have nullified his apprehensions. The example of non-violent direct action, as used by Gandhi, is a living proof of the efficacy of non-violent direct action.

Pierre Besnard concluded his study with these lines, which will meet with general approbation:

Don't Forget the Challenge!

We remind readers of the announcement we made last week of an offer by a friend to contribute £50 to the Deficit Fund if during September readers in this country contribute a similar amount. Please don't wait for others to start the ball rolling. Send your contributions now and so encourage others to do likewise!

"In fact there is a great difference between the bourgeois definition of direct action and the real significance that we ascribe to it. Although our adversaries have tried to explain this method as a series of violent disorders and brutal acts without reason or motive, as destruction for the pleasure or satisfaction of those who carry it out, we affirm that direct action is ordered, methodic and only violent when it becomes necessary. It is always directed towards concrete aims that are noble and thoroughly humanitarian."

In the pamphlet *L'Action Directe*, by Emile Pouget, the author proclaims the relative precision of the 'direct action idea, as a comprehensive formula for the battle against exploitation and oppression. The theory is clear and self-evident.

We can already openly put forward a few comparisons and similarities between Pouget's conception of the struggle for liberation and the methods advocated later by Gandhi and Barthelemy de Ligt. Certain important points will separate the two sets of ideas, but will not the actual methods also diverge? The methods modify themselves, they differ according to time, place and aims. One must point out that in the West direct action has been the product of circumstances and social evolution, and we must dispense with some romantic interpretations of the method. The barricade era has passed. Nowadays we are faced with atomic weapons. Street demonstrations are out of fashion, useless and sometimes dangerous, considering the vast power of the forces of repression today. Strikes, the occupation of factories, guerilla strikes and sabotage, have marked successive stages in the social struggle. It is a question of amplifying the practise of these methods, of learning the uses that can be made of them, without leaving the way open to careerists and opportunists to exploit these diverse actions for questionable ends.

The opinion of those men, though of widely differing outlooks, demonstrates an idea common to all of them, that direct action is a factor in the development of the human personality, for it re-awakens the spirit of initiative. The sheep, the following types, must be shaken out of their inertia by it. Direct action, by arousing consciousness, can

do away with regimentation and immaturity. It can give direction, meaning and power to the workers. With it minorities are free to express themselves. Initiative is not choked, and progressive elements have a chance to emerge triumphant.

Without doubt man often neglects his own personality and education, he altogether forgets that revolution is the product of daily action and needs a continuous effort. It will not do for him to find himself unequipped to face the possibilities of success in realising a new society. He must acquire a capability, or he will rest in the hands of his new masters or chance leaders. In this case his exploitation will simply be continued under a new system. He must have the will to attain for himself the world of his dreams.

It is a long task, a daily task. The way has to be prepared continually, and maintained and improved. This necessitates efforts—for there ain't no such thing as miracles—and a belief in the miraculous has often the effect of creating a spirit of passivity. This inertia leads individuals back to slavery.

The coming of a messianic revolution has too often been proclaimed by the political playboys. They proclaim that it will form part of an inevitable process, which will follow the decomposition of the capitalist system.

As I have said, miracles do not happen. It is only the will of the workers which can succeed in dispelling the belief in them.

"Direct action is the demonstration of the workers' power and will," writes Pouget, "it materialises according to the circumstances and the place, and manifests itself by acts which can be as mild as they can also be violent. It is only a question of necessity."

Only a question of necessity. Faced with the continual recurrence of violence that resolves nothing, we think the time has come to affirm that this necessity will in future be only non-violent, or at least will try to become more and more non-violent.

Some insufficiently informed people imagine that direct action is as Pouget said, "a massive window-smashing campaign". This is, after all, only another way, one that does not require much

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The Cookie Crumbles

THERE was a time when a man felt overawed by the mysterious and unpredictable power of nature, with its floods, droughts, and raging storms. The mystery and power remain, but man has learned to tame and even to turn to his own uses many of the forces that once terrified him. In the twentieth century, it is the power of the organization (the system, the government, the "enemy", "the way things are") that intimidates and paralyzes too many of us.

Any life-long rebel can testify to the occasions on which apparently happy conformists have confided privately that they hate the system but feel powerless to do anything but "go along with it." One of the saddest fallacies of our age is the feeling that the individual is helpless to stand against the system. As a result, millions perform meaningless (or even malicious) tasks, in anti-social relationships, adjust their consciences to the *status quo*, and then are driven to get their kicks by desperate attempts at frantic pleasure-seeking, by scrambling for status, or by grabbing more than their share of the material wealth which is supposed to bring fulfilment but never can.

A refreshing contrast to all this—and further evidence of the amazing power of the individual who is self-reliant but not self-seeking—is provided by the recent release of Rose Robinson from the Federal women's penitentiary at Alderson, West Virginia. Miss Robinson, an anti-war income-tax refuser, was originally sentenced to jail for the rest of her life unless she co-operated with the Federal Court that was backing the government in its efforts to collect

the tax from her. The response was to go on a total hunger strike for as long as the government kept her in prison. The response of friends and supporters was to organize continuing demonstrations at the jail and at Internal Revenue offices in New York, Washington, and San Francisco. Rather than allow these activities to dramatize the anti-war stand, the judge rescinded his order for indefinite imprisonment and imposed a sentence of a year and a day. Miss Robinson continued to hunger strike (she was tube-fed after the 18th day) and her support increased, culminating in repeated civil disobedience by Karl Meyer in Chicago and in the arrival of eight supporters to sit-down and fast indefinitely outside the prison where Miss Robinson was incarcerated. After a week of this latter activity (and while Meyer and a colleague were in jail in Chicago) and after only 90 days of Miss Robinson's sentence had been served, the judge commuted her sentence to "time served", on the basis of reports and recommendations of the government.

"Too Much Trouble" Authorities Say" was the subhead on the front-page news story in the West Virginia papers. But most of the country's press did not consider this story worth reporting. And in millions of homes throughout the country, individuals continued to gripe to each other about the way things are, interspersing their complaints with the debilitating question: "But what can one person do?"

DAVE DELLINGER,

(Liberation, U.S.A., June 1960).

Marchons!

P.H. misses the chief difference between the marching of soldiers and that of "the peace movement"—soldiers march in step, pacifists don't. The Aldermaston Marches and their like are not really marches at all, but processions. He also misses some of the most significant "antecedents for the anti-bomb march". Rebellion, pilgrimage, petition, mob—yes; but, far more directly, demonstration and protest. And here we can see that the Aldermaston marchers are descended from the Radicals who were shot at Peterloo in 1819, the Reformers of 1830-32, the Chartists of 1839-48, the Socialists of the 1880s and 1890s, the Suffragettes of 1905-14, the Hunger Marchers of the 1930s.

The modern peace march is a way of protesting against something (rather like writing to an M.P. or an editor), of affirming a certain opinion (like joining a party), of demonstrating feelings (like throwing bombs or leaflets), or just of meeting friends and getting some exercise. It is simultaneously a watered-down form of "propaganda by deed" and a mobile public meeting. It is also a powerful mechanism for absolving guilt feelings by bearing witness openly

and corporately. It is easy to make fun of such a march, but perhaps it is rather foolish. Here is something that is organised without being authoritarian, collective without being totalitarian; the marchers are participating directly in a political and moral action in an age of mass media and vicarious activity. It isn't really necessary that marching should have a "point"; what is necessary is that marchers should not suppose they are having any immediate impact on anyone else.

This of course is the danger that P.H. is concerned with, and it is a serious one. It is better to march against bombs than to talk or write against them, but it won't in itself get rid of the bombs. The only way to do that is to go and pull the bloody things to bits or bury them. If the CND leaders could escape the delusion of winning Mr. Gaitskell over and the Direct Action leaders could escape the delusion of non-violence, something tangible might get done. If only a march would just once turn into a mob and break into the Aldermaston establishment or the House of Commons, the marchers might realise their potentiality.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

For ultimately it is as futile to wave banners or to sit in the mud as it is to fight windmills with a lance. It is as ridiculous to tell the police what you are going to do as it is to play football with them—splendidly British, no doubt, but ridiculous all the same. People will respect your politeness, but that doesn't get anyone anywhere. The only way is to recognise that property is not the same as life. A surprise march on a rocket-site with the deliberate intention of dismantling it would have more effect than a hundred marches to Trafalgar Square. We might as well try to persuade Nelson up on top of his column as Macmillan in Downing Street and Gaitskell in Frogna Gardens. We have so much to learn from the Hungarians and the South Africans. Civil disobedience and passive resistance and hunger-strikes and marches and processions and so on are all very well. But in the end disobedience is nothing unless it is extremely uncivil. What are we waiting for?

Hampstead, Aug. 24. N.W.

Marching Backwards?

The Aldermaston March, started as one of protest, has developed into a left-wing picnic, and P.H.'s criticisms are largely justified. Now the march goes the wrong way. Instead of ending at Aldermaston, which does symbolise preparation for nuclear war, it ends in London, the seat of government. A march has a certain publicity value, but still rather in the freak category of Dr. Barbara Moore's achievements.

Probably the big centralised march

ON NOT GIVING UP "FREEDOM"

I was surprised to read that Martin Smith is suspending his subscription to FREEDOM on religious grounds. I also hold a metaphysical (though not orthodox Christian) view of the universe, but I have always found FREEDOM quite broad-minded and tolerant, especially when compared to the rigid anti-religious line of some left-wing groups.

Anyway, the Buddha said "Increase all good; lessen all evil; control your own mind". I'm not much good at controlling my mind, but I can at least do my tiny bit to increase good and to lessen evil, and that's why I hope to continue my subscription to FREEDOM!

Finally, my taste may be bad, but your cartoonist makes me laugh—keep him on!

Oxford, Aug. 24. J. W. SHAW.

SLOGANS

Occasionally I see in FREEDOM in the top right-hand corner a quotation which floats round in my mind, sometimes with useful purpose, but occasionally you print one which amounts to a shibboleth of your own. (Granting that society at large has many more).

The one which says "Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely" is an incorrect phrase to have in your repertoire, absolute power never corrupts in the hands of the incorruptible, I will not go into examples, but you must know many. The dangerous thing about the use of slogans such as these, is that there is implicit in them that society does not alter. It does, but whether it is altering fast enough to suit us is another matter. The institutions of our society, whether they are professional, religious, or political are as authoritarian as the people in them; Christianity first produced the early Christians in their simple humility and set of new values in a materialistic world, but later that same Christianity threw up the Inquisition. The early socialists threw up Russian Communism; every professional body, legal (although this is a doctors, all have their progressives—the doctors, have all their progressives—the flexible people who can adjust to changing conditions, and the inflexible who can only go by precedent and are authoritarian and reactionary. I would say, if I took every word to heart printed in FREEDOM that there is no growth in society, but fortunately for me I know there is, faith, perhaps, but justified by the facts.

Aug. 20. M.O.

HOPE IN ASIA?

Two minor comments on Arthur Uloth's review.

1. It is not true that "Europe was united by Rome". What Rome did did unite was the Mediterranean world. It was not until the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean were occupied by Muslims in the 7th century, and the people north and east of the Danube and Rhine were converted to Christianity in the 9th and 10th centuries, that the area now called "Europe" acquired unity and self-consciousness; Europe is, comparatively speaking, a recent concept.

2. Nor is it true that industrialism made it possible for the whole world to be conquered by Europeans. Industrialism facilitated economic domination, certainly, but political conquest was already possible before 1800 because of superior scientific and technical knowledge—a very different matter. What has made Europeans unique in the field of world politics, however, has been a mixture of contempt for non-Europeans and a determination to rule them. Let us hope our victims have not learnt all our lessons!

Hampstead, Aug. 19. N.W.

Pre-September Blues

(See Challenge on p. 3)

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT!
Deficit on Freedom £700
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ANOTHER DISAPPOINTED READER?

DEAR SIR,

I agree a lot with what your disappointed subscriber, Martin Smith, has to say about FREEDOM's interpretation of Anarchism. Reading FREEDOM, one has the feeling that one can almost predict what is coming next; once the mentality of anarchism has been grasped, its values and judgments understood, there is little difference between their's and the judgments of the capitalist and communist press.

Unfortunately this seems to be a law applicable to all ideologies and those with an axe to grind. Anything resembling pure honest-to-goodness criticism and appreciation of reality is only very slight in the understanding of anarchists. Still, for all this, anarchism will be a concept one will have much sympathy for, and it is good to know that there are anarchists. It is a noble ideal.

Yours sincerely,

London, Aug. 22. BERNARD SCOTT.

Poverty in the Midst of Plenty

Continued from p. 1

suing control of capital could change the social conscience while capitalism is still the basis of our economy. One does not have to be a professional economist to see this.

Counter-Revolution

The Negro sit-in Campaigns to achieve equality in sitting down at lunch counters won three more victories last week. Variety stores (all of them national chains: Woolworth, Kress, Grant) in Durham, N.C., Chattanooga, Tenn., and Miami, Fla. opened counters to all customers without discrimination. Since the sit-in movement began last February in Greensboro, N.C., counters have been de-segregated in 32 other cities and counties in the South and the border states:

- Kansas: Kansas City.
- Kentucky: Frankfort.
- Maryland: Baltimore.
- Missouri: Jefferson City, S. Joseph.
- North Carolina: Chapel Hill, Charlotte, Concord, Elizabeth City, Greensboro, High Point, Salisbury, Winston-Salem.
- Oklahoma: Guthrie, Oklahoma City, Tulsa.
- Tennessee: Knoxville, Nashville.
- Texas: Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Galveston, San Antonio.
- Virginia: Arlington and Fairfax counties, Alexandria, Falls Church, Fredericksville, Hampton, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Williamsburg.

Time, 15/8/60.

Lord Boyd Orr's solution, that governments should co-operate for the benefit of the peoples of the world, is indeed a naive view of the role of government, which is demonstrably to govern and divide the peoples of the world. In the long history of government there have been many opportunities to "move towards" universal policies of mutual co-operation, but this is generally only practised for a limited period and on a small scale when political expediency has deemed it necessary.

Increased taxation or government control are not the answers either, when it is clear that capitalism, as it functions in the West, and democratic government are too closely tied up to allow policies which would equalise the distribution of social wealth.

The state capitalist economy of the U.S.S.R. has created its own divisions and its privileged groups, who do not exercise their power economically in the Western pattern, but as political yes-men are rewarded financially and socially.

Finally, if we do not agree with the various solutions to the irresponsible society we support the plea made by Titmuss that:

If Western democracy means anything at all it must surely mean that we should be continually asking such questions and continually seeking answers to them.
R.M.

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IMPORTANT

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London Anarchist Group AN EXPERIMENT IN OFF-CENTRE DISCUSSION MEETINGS

1st Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. At Jack and Mary Stevenson's, 6 Stainton Road, Enfield, Middx. Last Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. At Dorothy Barasi's, 45 Twyford Avenue, Fortis Green, N.2. 1st Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. At Colin Ward's, 33 Ellerby Street, Fulham, S.W.6.

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