

FREEDOM

'Whatever rights each man asks for himself, the same also let him grant to every other man.'

THOMAS HOBBS

In this Issue:

TREASON DOTH NEVER PROSPER
AFRICAN COMMENTARY
AROUND THE GALLERIES
MOURN NOT THE DEAD
ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK
LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

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POLITICIANS OF LEFT AND RIGHT FEAR THE 'PEOPLE OF THE STREETS'

Away from the Parties!

LAST week's Tribune in a short and sour Editorial comment on the April 29 sit-down, attacks such demonstrations as "ineffectual" acts of civil disobedience which get publicity but this "is not the same thing as publicity for the arguments against nuclear weapons". These arguments, declares *Tribune*

account for the spectacular success of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. The Aldermaston marches have had their place in the campaign, but mainly as demonstrations of the growing body of support won at meetings and discussions all over the country.

Patient explanation won the TUC for unilateralism and found its culmination in the decisions made at the Labour Party conference. But patience is not a

quality that commends itself to the organisers of the Whitehall sit-down. Although getting rid of nuclear weapons must be a political decision they want to lead nuclear disarmers out of, not into, the political struggle.

Now, one cannot just write-off the *Tribune* criticisms of the Committee of 100 as worthless—even though one might think them dishonest. And those of us who take part in these demonstrations, at least, would welcome a clarification of the objectives, the direction, of the sit-downs. Are they intended to bring to the notice of the public the imminent dangers of nuclear war? If so then *Tribune* is right, for however much publicity was given to the last demonstration—a *Peace News*

report estimates that it was more than for the last two Aldermastons put together—it was the kind of publicity which to our minds can hardly have advanced the cause of nuclear disarmament or unilateralism one jot. (And it is interesting to note that whereas most newspapers published more or less accurate accounts of the demonstration, the editorial columns maintained a deathly silence!)

That such demonstrations earn the disapproval both of the Press and the major political parties, as well as of the so-called progressive Left-wingers, is understandable. We are sure that the eloquence of the last sentence of the *Tribune* piece has not escaped our readers.

Although getting rid of nuclear weapons must be a political decision they [the sit-downers] want to lead nuclear disarmers out of, not into, the political struggle.

In that one sentence *Tribune* expresses all the fears of politicians, of all who have a stake in the maintenance of the political and social status quo*. As we were saying in these columns last week the people "in the streets" equally upset the powers-that-be and the aspirants to power more than all the petitions, votes of censure put together, and parliamentary "oppositions" and

*Note that not a single M.P. or T.U. leader took part in the sit-downs whereas a number joined in the Aldermaston marches.

We are not sure whether the Committee of 100 and some of its supporters are clear in their minds as to where such a movement leads. Or perhaps they do know but being committed to a campaign for unilateral disarmament have armed themselves with blinkers no less than those socialists who, having entered the political arena, no longer "see" the political realities around them which make it abundantly clear to everybody else that there will never be any socialism *via* the ballot box.

★

THERE was an interesting letter in last week's *Peace News* in which a woman reader seeks to distinguish between "relevant" and "irrelevant" civil disobedience. By the former the writer meant "that the passer-by can grasp that a protest is being made against modern war". On this basis she could understand demonstrations at rocket bases, and outside the Ministry of Defence. But "to sit down in Parliament Square seems to me irrelevant, and I doubt if publicity can overcome this weakness. And she concludes:

Can Michael Randle tell me how I am to explain to intelligent and sympathetic onlookers the value of sitting down in *Parliament Square*; why, in fact I am wrong, if I am, in believing it to be irrelevant and therefore stupid?

To this Michael Randle (Secretary of the Committee of 100) replied

agreeing that civil disobedience must be relevant to be effective, but adds that

I am not convinced, however, that this means that only "direct action" at nuclear establishments and rocket bases is valid. Obstructions at symbolic points—the Defence Ministry, the Houses of Parliament—can also make their point.

Firstly we would make the point that any symbolic act whether it be that of a David Pratt or of 2,500 non-violent sit-downers courting arrest is not sufficient by itself, but needs its "propagandists", its interpreters. If therefore the relevance of sit-downs is to be grasped by the passer-by (or the public at large)

Continued on page 3

Far from the Spirit

RUSSIA is the only country in Europe which officially stages its May Day celebration on the first day of May. This was the day selected by the Paris Congress of the Second Socialist International 1889 for annual international celebrations.

This year the B.B.C. arranged for a television link up on May 1st between Moscow and London, only the second time in TV history, the first being on the return of Yuri Gagarin to earth a week before.

Technically the television link up was a remarkable achievement and the trip round Moscow with the TV cameras an interesting experience, but the only link between what used to be called the spirit of May Day as expounded by men like Robert Owen and the Moscow celebrations was the date, May 1st.

Even the blindest supporter of the USSR must have found it difficult to detect anything like a spirit of international solidarity in the military parades headed by massive tanks and flanked by nuclear missiles. It will take a lot of word distortion to describe the patriot nonsense in terms of "Workers of the world unite", and only the faithful would describe as equal the people on the streets and the Russian leaders safely elevated on a

balcony of royal proportions.

In short the Soviet adherence to the traditional May 1st labour celebrations is as meaningful in terms of international workers solidarity as "our own". May Day turn out.

This year the first of May was a Monday and in keeping with the British Labour tradition no official support for any celebrations must interfere with production. Not that the Labour leaders need worry that the rank and file will down tools for such an unrewarding principle as international solidarity. They too arranged their annual outing for the following Sunday, May 7th.

Of course, not all workers were even aware of the historic event, or at any rate not all were interested.

In North London an event of greater importance occupied the minds of the people where thirty thousand frenzied workers marched to Tottenham Town Hall. To protest against the use of nuclear weapons or racial discrimination; to raise a cry against the political systems which divide people everywhere?

Nothing so crazy man! The occasion which roused the fantastic display of enthusiastic solidarity was the return of Spurs with the F.A. Cup and League Championship Cup to its home ground.

Meanwhile, elsewhere on May Sunday, Labour Party leaders at meetings throughout the country were seeking support for policies which involve all of us, even the disinterested, and which if adopted may at some time in the future finish us in a cloud of radio-active dust, including themselves and the Spurs football team.

For the first time in a number of years this writer did not speak at Hyde Park on May Sunday, therefore cannot give a first-hand account of the annual political pilgrimage. But judging by previous years and the antics between, it is safe to say that "the people" are as far away as ever they were from the spirit of May Day.

LORD PARKER, the Lord Chief Justice, true to the traditions of his forerunners, Goddard and Jeffries "threw the book" at George Blake, a Government official, when he sentenced him to 42 years' imprisonment for espionage at the Old Bailey last week. This sentence is longer than a "life" sentence and it was imposed by splitting the five counts and awarding fourteen years on each three counts to run consecutively and two to run concurrently. This beautiful piece of judicial mathematics was expressly designed to dodge the minimal "life" sentence usually imposed.

It would seem that the recent sentence of 25 years on Lonsdale was insufficient to act as a deterrent and Lord Parker, at least, will see to it that Justice not only is done but appears to be done.

How these savage sentences will deter politically dedicated spies, (which is what the accused seem to be) is Lord Parker's problem. Deterrence seems to have played no part in the procession of treason from Fuchs to Rosenberg, from Nunn May to Lonsdale, and now to George Blake.

The merely mercenary spy can probably be bought by the dozen, British Military Intelligence has doubtless several on its payroll, (in all countries, including America and our N.A.T.O. allies) but the politically dedicated spy is a liability to both sides. The Soviet agents implicated Nunn May by giving him presents although he had given information from the highest motives. A spy has no friends and the

TREASON DOTH NEVER PROSPER

government which employed him washes its hands of him during his trial and generally has nothing to do with him after his release. The idealist spy has no more control over the use made of the information he has given than has the loyal employee.

Another point that arises from this question is the use that Governments make of the information supplied to them at such great personal risk.

Sorge, the Russian spy employed at the German Embassy is reported to have passed to the Russians information about the German invasion of Russia. Sorge was executed by the Japanese but the invasion of Russia took Stalin by surprise. In a similar way a Turkish valet stole plans for the second front from the British to sell to the Germans but these were ignored. Information about Pearl Harbour reached the Americans in advance but it was still "treachery". C.I.A., the Central Intelligence Agency seems to have made poor use of information supplied on nine occasions (see *A Study*



of a Master Spy, Housmans). In Czechoslovakia, in China, in Korea, in Egypt before Suez; in Latin America before Nixon's visit; in Iraq, in South Korea; in Turkey before the collapse of Menderes; in Japan before Eisenhower's visit and last—but not least, in Cuba. It is probable that the expression "Military Intelligence" is a contradiction in terms but certainly this dismal record of the use to which information is put is no encouragement to the recruitment of spies.

Lord Parker appears to have taken some comfort in the fact that George Blake was only a British subject by-virtue of the fact that his father was a British subject, Blake's mother was Dutch and he was born in Holland. He must unfortunately have imbibed treason with his mother's milk. Nationality is for all of us a geographical accident. Patriotism is an attempt to make a virtue of necessity. The Nation State is the club that enrolls us all despite our efforts to repudiate it. In spite of all temptation it is very difficult to be anything else than an Englishman, a Dutchman, a Frenchman, or (horror of horrors) a Russian. It depends upon the bedroom one is born in and statelessness or world citizenship is even more difficult.

But one who transfers his loyalty to Communism is merely expressing "the patriotism of the fatherlandless" to use Koestler's phrase and is no whit less diminished as an individual.

Continued on page 4

ANARCHY 3

includes
Moving with the times
... but not in step
Maurice Goldman's
South African notebook
Jeremy Westall on
Africa & the future
Nicolas Walter on
"The Long Revolution"
Anthony Weaver on
Exceptional Children

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African Commentary

CHRISTOPHER FYFE in an article that appeared in the *Listener* (27/4/61) on the independence of Sierra Leone, stated quite truly that: "There is no tradition of European democracy in West Africa", and he went on to explain that "the tradition of democracy in West Africa is a West African tradition which has often tended to restrict a ruler's power by obliging him to consult his chiefs and people. People forget this when they attack the present government of Ghana. The government of the Gold Coast was not democratic. What we did was to withdraw in such a way that it was possible for the Ghanaians to establish a form of democracy of their own. And that is exactly what they are doing. In Sierra Leone it will be the same." And indeed he is right! The Commonwealth correspondent of the *New Statesman* (28/4/61) reports "The celebrations of Sierra Leone's independence this week have been marred by the knowledge that most of the leading members of the opposition party are detained in gaol. When they were seen to be organising a general strike, demonstrations, and perhaps sabotage, to coincide with celebrations

of independence, the government decided to detain them." It is with interest that one notes the detention of Wallace Johnson who was described by John Gunther in "Inside Africa" as "the father of the independence movement not only in Sierra Leone but elsewhere in West Africa", it is very indicative that he was particularly active in developing trade unions. One begins to see the scare the politicians must have had as they saw such a threat as a general strike just as they were to leap into the coveted positions of Power.

An editorial in what looks to be a pretty Establishment paper *West Africa* writes in these ominous tones:—"Once detention depends on informers and police investigation alone there is bound to be injustice. But who should be blamed for this? Those who feel obliged to take emergency powers or those whose irresponsibility obliges them to do so?" It is with a sad heart that one reads Christopher Fyfe explain that "They (the people of Sierra Leone) are returning to the political independence they enjoyed for centuries, though in a more unified and organised way." (my italics). They have, to be sure, learnt well the lessons the British administrator taught. But as Fyfe informs us the Church is also to be found baring its ugly unwanted face in the midst of this great success story. The country is "One of the outstanding triumphs of concentrated missionary work. Missionaries of the Church Missionary Society and Methodist Missionary Society preached to these people, and, cut off as they were from the religions of their homelands, all over Africa, most of them became Christians. They learnt English, which soon became their vernacular; they took European names; they adopted European styles of dress and behaviour." One notices the unquestioned role of domination the missionaries take, typical of the hierarchical conceptions of the Church. In fact, these people Fyfe refers to as being from "All over Africa" are a minority of Creoles who live in Sierra Leone.

It is this settler minority of Creoles in Freetown whom Dr. Wellesley Cole,

a prominent Sierra Leone doctor depicts in his book "Kosso Town Boy"; they are shown to be deeply Christian, decorous and hierarchical. They consider themselves superior to the other two million inhabitants of Sierra Leone who are largely illiterate, their manner is aristocratic.

Sierra Leone strikes one as being full of interest and even though the independence of the country has got off to so unfortunate a start it is certain to achieve better living standards for its people; however, the fact that the economy is largely based on iron, bauxite and diamonds does not encourage this observer to set any great heights for the liberty that will be achieved in Sierra Leone.

In Vol. 1, No. 2 of the *Portuguese and Colonial Bulletin* (obtainable from 374 Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1., 15/- sub. for twelve issues), it was reported that "Leaders of the national liberation movement of Angola have called upon four million Angolans to struggle 'by every means' for the end of Portuguese domination." In a statement issued by the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola on March 23 a declaration of direct action against the war policy of the Portuguese government was made. "Angolans, could only react by direct action and by a popular rebellion" they stated. Since these declarations, despite rigorous censorship, it has been clear to all that Angola has risen to this call. Something approaching an elemental upheaval of long-felt hatred for colonial rule has been sweeping much of northern Angola, one can have nothing but admiration for a people resisting so heroically the savage hand of the European fascists.

The *Observer* (7/5/61) carries an astounding report from a Special Correspondent in Leopoldville on the situation in Angola. "Twenty thousand Africans have been killed", he reports, "Thousands more are in four concentration camps. Thirty thousand refugees cram villages along the Congo railway between Matadi and Thysville". The savagery of the attempted repression of

the popular rebellion of the Angolan people is hardly believable. At a time when the trial of Eichmann is filling the pages of every rag going, we are witnessing a world in which inhumanities just as despicable as those that took place in Nazi Germany are being committed by the Portuguese authorities at the order of dictator Salazar. We read in the *Observer* report: "At Tombold, the inhabitant were surrounded in the centre of the village. Mothers with children were allowed to stand to one side. The rest of the population—men, boys and women without children—were then shot down."

One recalls a report by C. Mahala entitled "Portugal and the Colonies of Angola and Guinea" that appeared in Vol. 2, No. 30 of *Presence Africaine* in which he mentions a demonstration of strength by the Portuguese Air Force last year, that took place in Angola. He tells us of a report that appeared in the Belgian weekly paper *La Gauche* from a correspondent in the Congo: "The operations were carried out as though on a battlefield, the authorities have made it quite clear that this was a question of the form of combat they would apply in the event of having to crush an anti-colonialist rebellion". The demonstration included the use of napalm bombs, and the accuracy of the report is underlined by the news supplied by the *Observer* Special Correspondent. Refugees have brought with them fragments of napalm bombs and tales of bombing raids.

Since the dramatic capture of the *Santa Maria* by exiled revolutionary Henrique Galvao, Angola, Portugal and Mozambique have been seething with revolution. On February 2 Galvao declared in a message to the Portuguese people: "We are in fact at war with the Spanish and Portuguese dictatorships. We are not interested simply in overthrowing Salazar by itself. We pursue a revolutionary aim: the reconstruction of Portuguese society on new bases."

Are we now witnessing the long overdue emancipation of the colonies of Angola and Mozambique? As the *New Statesman* (21/4/61) put it: "Angola is likely to become Salazar's Achilles' heel. Unless the conflict is quickly suppressed a chain reaction may well extend to Mozambique on the East Coast of Africa and back to Portugal itself." From there, one might add, the whole Iberian peninsula might rise at last, and the Africans of South Africa be inspired to attempt a revolutionary general strike.

If I may anticipate the cries of pacifist comrades at the terroristic methods adopted by the Angolan revolutionaries, let me just quote the Summary and Conclusions of Patricia McGowan that appeared at the end of her article in Vol. 1, No. 1 of *Portuguese and Colonial Bulletin*:—"After more than 400 years of Portuguese rule over 99 per cent. of the African population of Angola are classed as 'uncivilised', with all the legal handicaps and inferior position this status entails.

"Literacy and education are at a low level among the European population. Among the Africans they are very much lower; the overwhelming majority of Africans get no education at all.

"Health. Figures are scanty. There are no comprehensive vital statistics. The number of births and deaths per annum is unknown, as the causes of most deaths. No record is available of infant mortality or the incidence of disease. Medical personnel are few.

"The wages of European craftsmen in

Angola are not high, but they are almost three times as much as the wages of Africans doing the same work. African labourers' wages are lower still. And lowest of all are the payments made to that special category of labourers known as 'contracted' workers, who earn just over £20 per head per year on average.

"From published material it is difficult to assess exactly the extent of racial assimilation that has taken place, or to check precisely the authorities' claims about the absence of racial segregation. But certain data provide an interesting pattern, typical rather of a racially divided society than of a multi-racial one. Only 9.2 per cent. of marriages are between white and coloured persons, and in no case is the coloured spouse black; where mixed marriages do occur they are between white and mulatto."

From these facts, I would argue, that unlike the more complex situation in South Africa, where some organised industrial action is possible, terroristic direct action is a good tactical weapon in Angola. It does, however, seem to have been used too indiscriminately and without due thought. This, indeed, is only evidence of the desperation of the African workers and peasants, and of the lack of cool calculated murder. However when it is a matter of war, when you are forced to kill or be killed, a cool head may be an essential factor.

Let us hope that the pledge of Nkrumah to fight for the "total liberation of Africa", is not mere empty air, and that he will send troops to help the Africans in Angola struggling for life itself.

R.J.W.

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TROPICAL PENGUIN ON THE WAY?

The Grove Press, who were initially responsible for publishing the unexpurgated version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in the United States in 1959, now plan to reprint Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*, which has been on the U.S. Customs list of proscribed books for more than a quarter of a century. The book was first published by the Obelisk Press in Paris in 1934. Two more novels followed—*Tropic of Capricorn* and *Black Spring*—which were also published abroad, but were banned in the U.S. American tourists are reported to have smuggled untold numbers of copies into the country in their luggage. There have been a number of pirated editions overseas in addition to the regular Obelisk one.

According to the *Publishers' Weekly*, Grove Press propose to issue the book in hard covers, at a fairly high retail

price, and to promote sales in much the same way as they promoted those of *Lady Chatterley*. Publication date is not being fixed yet as the customs ban is now being challenged in court. A painter, Mrs. Dorothy Upham, is seeking to recover a copy of the book that was seized from her last October. She had given the Customs officials advance notice that she planned to bring the book into the country. The hearing starts next week.

Grove Press say, however, that if the court case lasts a long time, they will not wait until its conclusion before publication.

Mr. Miller receives \$50,000 advance from Grove Press, who intend to seek copyright protection for the work, even though it was first published abroad without *ad interim* protection.

The Bookseller, May 6, 1961.

COSMOPOLITAN ART

THE only claim that Zoran Krzisknik the director of the Moderna Balerija, Ljubljana has over these 31 artists whose works is now on show at the Tate is that they are citizens of Yugoslavia; for though the exhibition carries the title "Contemporary Yugoslav Painting and Sculpture" the work on show reflects the accepted influences of nearly every art trend and style of the western countries. And though every potted biography of the artists finishes with the punch line that they still live in Yugoslavia it is an undeniable fact that every exhibitor to this exhibition has lived and studied abroad and what we are viewing is not the parochial work of home grown talent but of a group of men whose ethical allegiance may be to their fatherland but whose style and execution pays homage to the adopted capitals of the west that for good or ill provided the soil of which these paintings and sculptures are the

flower. But for all that it is a magnificent exhibition and gives us a rare opportunity to view the work of men whose *ouvrage* is known on the continent and the States but is as yet unfamiliar in this country. Each group of paintings has been segregated by well-placed screens and we can view the output of each artist without being distracted by adjacent canvases.

Stancic's "Dead Child" is in the blurred realism of the American school while his "Old Posters" is a beautiful essay in merging yellows and Hegedusic uses the American Shah's gimmick of placing naïf figures against a highly technically conceived background. Sbrinovic's use of sullen greens and browns gives his blurred images a quasi-religious grandeur and Stupica's loose drawings upon a collage of newspaper cuttings has a Steinberg wit.

It is only Mihelic whose work held

ROUND THE GALLERIES

me overlong, for on a sanded and blistered surface he has spun his twentieth century fantasies and like Hieronymus Bosch he offers us what appears at first glance to be an innocuous subject but the more we examine it the more horrific it can become. At a moment when our own local talent is dangerously low this exhibition is doubly welcomed. In conclusion a mild protest on my part.

It has become the accepted thing of late for the critics of the national rags to savage Pietro Annigoni whenever that unfortunate gentleman waltzes into town and it was left to the gossip columnist of the *Evening Standard* to sneer at Annigoni's vulgarity. True Annigoni announces every painting with a fatuous press statement and it is equally true that he has more of an affinity to "Bubbles" than to Botticelli, but there is a market among the nouveaux riches for these boneless cardboard figures draped in quasi-quattrocento draperies painted against a pastiche Claude landscape but to publicly call a society painter vulgar is a new low in slop column backbiting!

ARTHUR MOYSE.

We're no Ladies

PHIL STARR and Terry Dennis's review "We're no Ladies" at the 20th Century Theatre, 291, Westbourne Grove, W.11 played to its final packed house this week and this gay and off-beat review has now given way to Williams' "Rose Tattoo" leaving the happy band that thronged there nightly to seek other stamping grounds. The drifting voyeurs such as myself ever eager to peer under wet stones found themselves among an audience who had identified themselves with the players in a manner only found at the political Unity pantomimes, army shows or fascist private dinners where a *double entendre* is read into every innocuous phrase. The six female impersonators who form the company played to an audience who anticipated every witticism and every mention of camp, of gay, of cherries and of fairies was met with laughing applause and good-natured audience participation heckling while the introduction of the noun Butch into a lyric brought thundering demands for an encore.

Phil Starr as a well-built blonde with the raw voice and melodic undertones of the true jazz singer and Terry Dennis as an over-thin red-head devised, produced and carried most of the show, while Terry Durham in scarlet tights, false breasts and the neatest of blonde wigs smiled and lip puckered and played peek-a-boo with a male audience that loved every wiggle of every tassel. Only one member of the audience was wearing full drag, but a small number of women among the crowd at the bar had elected to come in sweaters and jeans and the uninitiated stood clutching clammy beer glasses in the safety of corners for fear of leering at or being accosted by the wrong sex. Plump and well-tailored gentlemen with raincoats slung cloak-wise around their shoulders padded softly through the crowd followed by slim and silent young men whose hair shone with oil and whose faces bloomed with make-up and a seedy handful of decaying military types drifted sadly and unsuccessfully from group to group while the inevitable odd sprinkling of those grey-haired middle-class women who can take American realism, French eroticism, the Old Vic or German decadence without missing a biscuit bite sat and gossiped away the evening. Only the chorus of young and animal healthy Wynette London Girls hammering out the tap routines and a player with a five o'clock shadow brought a touch of unreality to the theatre and when the company assembled for the finale the six female impersonators pulled off their wigs in what one felt was a pathetic and defiant declaration of maleness but the momentary hesitation in the applause made one conscious that when we who are normal by the mores of our society pass out into the slum of the Portobello Road the majority of this audience will have to enter their public hell, for though Phil Starr and Terry Dennis state "Isn't it grand to be gay" there can be no envy from the uncommitted.

A.M.

AWAY FROM THE PARTIES!

Continued from page 1

almost as much attention should be paid to such mundane tasks as the distribution of leaflets to the passers-by as to the organisation of the sit-down†, bearing in mind that one cannot rest any hopes on the Press filling the role of faithful "interpreter" of one's act of "disobedience".

Secondly we would argue that a demonstration of "civil disobedience", valuable as it undoubtedly can be, in awakening public interest to specific issues, has an equally important psychological effect on the demonstrators themselves. And the authorities have not been slow in summing up the situation. The facts speak for themselves: They honoured the Whitehall sit-down with a record police turn-out and a record number of arrests though the demonstrators were only a little more than half the number engaged in the first sit-down and but a fraction of those who participated in the Aldermaston and Wethersfield marches that made their way to London this year.

Their method was intimidation by mass arrest. And when the machine they relied on was choked, they found themselves obliged to carry each demonstrator from the road to the pavement, and accept the *fait accompli* that they were unequipped to prevent them from remaining seated on the pavement. Most of us, we think, were aware of the fact that they could then have tried to wash us away with the help of the Fire Brigade (5,000 of whose members have only this week been lobbying their MPs in Parliament Square to secure more money!), and that had we been in democratic France or in totalitarian Russia the police might have sprayed us with their sten guns (which probably explains why the French and the Russians do not normally protest by sitting-down?). The fact is that for reasons known to Mr. Butler and the Police chiefs we were not washed away. Perhaps, once more they paid us the compliment of, this time, believing that we would refuse to be washed off the pavements?

But by that time how many demonstrators were engaging in a demonstration against nuclear war and how many more were, instead, demonstrating against authority and for their dignity as human beings?

FOR this reason not only ourselves but many around us found the gratuitous remarks of some Marshals that "the police are only doing their job" more than irritating; and when the arrests and removals to the pavement had been completed that some demonstrators should chat and joke with the policemen showed a lack of understanding of the role the police play in the society against which these very people were supposed to be protesting.

After all, if we are prepared to excuse the policeman for being a policeman on the grounds that he is "only doing his job" then we must apologise for the General, the politician and the hangman as well as the soldier, airman and the workers in

the armaments industry who are also only doing jobs which are considered essential to the well-being of society. If we haven't the courage to declare that we know what are anti-social occupations and activities and show our disapproval by refusing to have normal intercourse with those who engage in them, then we might as well give up sitting in the streets and buy a "telly" instead, and spend our lives sitting in front of that!

Michael Randle in his reply referred to above, declared that "there is also a case for more general obstruction and defiance in a society which is so closely geared to the production of nuclear weapons". A "case"? This sounds to us like the week's biggest understatement!

As a matter of fact our friend is wrong. Our society is geared to the production of Profits and Power. Nuclear weapons are only means to those ends. Assuming that you eliminate these horrors, States and power-hungry politicians will only resort to others. The tank, the flame-thrower and the A-bomb may well be in the category of pea-shooters compared with the H-bomb but it must not be forgotten that in their time, in relation to scientific and technological "progress", they were "ultimate" weapons; the last word in destruction and "wickedness". Modern man, capitalist society, have always been "geared" to the most destructive weapons that science and industry could produce. There is no reason why the public at large should be more concerned with the weapon at the disposal of governments now, because it is an H-bomb, than it was when it was an A-bomb or an "invincible" tank or "Big Bertha" herself. So long as the public feels impotent to change the development of events it will resign itself to its fate, and we applaud its wisdom in refusing to express preferences to dying by radiation, roasting or blasting.

THEREFORE to ensure that we shall not die as a result of nuclear war, it is necessary to abolish war as an inevitable concomitant of our society; as one of the many risks we humans have to accept. If, as we maintain, war is a means and not an end, then we will never (repeat, NEVER) remove the threat of war so long as we continue to accept, or believe in, the hierarchical, class society; or so long as we believe that some are better fitted to run our lives than we are ourselves.

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, as well as those *enfants terribles* (it should be *méprisables*!) of *Tribune* and the Labour "left" pin all their hopes on legality and the return of the Labour Party at the next elections. What a hope! This week the Shop Workers, one of the Big Six Unions representing more than 300,000 workers voted for the Padley-Crossman compromise defence programme, thereby reversing last year's support of unilateralism. The only argument we could find in their debates and Walter Padley's (one more ex-ILP chairman who has "made the grade") two emotion-laden speeches was the need for unity in the Party. (So much for *Tribune's* boast of the successes of CND's "Patient explanations" winning the TUC for unilateralism!).

Mourn not the Dead

*Mourn not the dead that in the cool earth lie—
Dust unto dust—
The calm, sweet earth that mothers all who die
As all men must;*

*Mourn not your captive comrades who must dwell
Too strong to strive
Within each steel-bound coffin of a cell,
Buried alive;*

*But rather mourn the apathetic throng
The cowed and the meek
Who see the world's great anguish and its wrong
And dare not speak!*

*They riddled us with volley after volley;
We heard their speeding bullets zip
and ring,
But soon we'll make them suffer for
their folly—
Oh, Buddy, How I'm longing for the
Spring!*

These poems and songs have a quality which is lacking in much of *The Little Red Song Book*. Chaplin was an artist in more ways than one. Even his simple little sticker

*The hours are long,
The pay is small
So take your time
And buck 'em all.
Join the I.W.W.!*

has the virtue of clarity and directness free from the sentimentality and bad verse with which high thinking and poetical aspirations are so often associated.

Chaplin was a craftsman-artist first and a propagandist afterward. His contribution belongs to a special period in American history and unlike much of the mock heroics his prison poems will convey man's inhumanity to man. For example "Escaped!"

*A man has fled . . . ! We clutch the bars
and wait;
The corridors are empty, tense and still;
A silver mist has dimmed the distant
hill;
The guards have gathered at the prison
gate.*

*Then suddenly the 'wildcat' blears its
hate
Like some mad Moloch screaming for
the kill,
Shattering the air with terror loud and
shrill,
The dim, grey walls become articulate.*

*Freedom, you say? Behold her altar
here!
In those far cities men can only find
A vaster prison and a redder hell,
O'er shadowed by new wings of greater
fear.
Brave fool, for such a world to leave
behind
The iron sanctuary of a cell!*

His epitaph could be that of Voltairine de Cleyre whom he quotes in *Wobbly* as writing just before her death in 1915:

"If you choose the liberty and pride and strength of a single soul, and the free fraternization of men as the purpose which your life is to make manifest, then do not sell it for tinsel. Think that your soul is strong and will hold its way; and slowly, through bitter struggle perhaps, strength will grow. And the foregoing of possessions for which others barter their last possibility of freedom, will become easy.

"At the end of life you may close your eyes saying: I have not been dominated by the Dominant Idea of my age. I have chosen mine own allegiance and served it. I have proved by a lifetime that there is that in man which saves him from the absolute tyranny of Circumstance, which in the end conquers and remoulds Circumstance—the immortal fire of Individual Will, which is the salvation of the Future."

Mourn not Ralph Chaplin. . . .
*Siren blown during escapes.
J.R.

THIS was one of the poems of Ralph Chaplin, American I.W.W. organizer, editor of *Solidarity*, artist, poet and song-writer who died on March 23 in Tacoma, Washington at the age of 73. Any radical movement, especially one living on its past, has a temptation to fill its columns with obituaries. Reading some radical papers is like attending a non-stop wake with its bouts of nostalgia for the good old days, and its glorification of the heroic dead who enter into the proletarian Valhalla.

Death is implicit in birth and it is in the significance of the life lived that the value of a life is appraised. Ralph Chaplin's was a life well lived and mourning is not the response. Rather should we honour a life, for all its mistakes and questionings, well lived.

Ralph Chaplin and the I.W.W. grew up together and suffered the same difficulties. Ralph Chaplin's father came to the mid-western prairies in a covered wagon. He grew up in an expanding economy, embraced socialism and plunged into the bitter struggles of the I.W.W., watched the growth of the Communist Party within the ranks of the I.W.W. went to prison in 1917 for opposition to the war and came out in 1923 to find the I.W.W. had been irrevocably split by those who supported the Soviets and those who retained the anarchist and syndicalist tendencies which were always in the movement. Unlike Big Bill Hay-

wood (who died in exile in Russia), Ralph Chaplin was unable to make his peace with the Communists and their struggles to capture the American unions thrust him into the political wilderness. He returned to his art work and poetry, took up a little lay-preaching and with qualifications, supported the Second World War.

Later in the week, the AEU (Amalgamated Engineering Union) reversed its previous support for unilateralism, and so another 800,000 or whatever it is, bloc votes jumped from the pan of unilateralism into that of Gaitskellian multilateralism. Poor Michael Foot & Co. have surely had the smile wiped off their faces by an ex-ILP'er and the 52-strong National Committee (which includes some 20 Communists, whose party anybody, who has eyes, recognises is now putting its heart and soul into the Collins-Foot unilateral enterprise!).

When, next October, the Labour Conference reverses last year's unilateralist vote in favour of Gaitskell's programme, or even Crossman's Compromise, nothing will have changed. Just as the reversal of the AEU's policy can be explained to a great extent, to quote the *Guardian*, by "clever political management", one can rest assured that whatever government is in power, so long as it enjoys its working majority, neither the voice of reason or even the outburst of its own fanatics will oblige it to deflect from the path which serves its own personal interests and of the powers who rule the country.

The only threat to its power and the *status quo* is when enough ordinary people decide to exercise and express their own power, united as equals by a mutual respect which recognises the individuality, the uniqueness of each, a respect which is in contrast with the contempt in which they should hold all politicians and all the servants of State institutions.

He had the chagrin of being silenced in a meeting by the Young Communists singing "Solidarity Forever"—his own song. In his memoirs (*Wobbly*, U.C.P. 1948), he recounts listening to a recital of one of his anti-war poems "The Red Feast" and thinking how irrelevant it was to the Second World War.

This confusion of thought was marked in the I.W.W. as early as 1917 when the I.W.W. G.E.B. could not decide whether to oppose the draft. A compromise statement appeared in *Solidarity* which advised members to sign for the draft as "I.W.W. opposed to war".

As long as there was activity the I.W.W. had no doubts on which side it was. The class-struggle was a reality. Ralph Chaplin's poem "When the Leaves Come Out" has little affinity with Tolstoy or the Committee of 100.

*The hills are very bare and cold and
lonely;
I wonder what the future months will
bring?
The strike is on; our strength would win,
if only—
Oh, Buddy, how I'm longing for the
spring!*

*They've got us down; their martial lines
enfold us.
They've thrown us out to feel the
winter's sting.
And yet, by God, those curs can never
hold us,
Nor could the dogs of hell do such a
thing!*

*It isn't just to see the hills beside me
Grow fresh and green with every grow-
ing thing;
I only want the leaves to come and hide
me,
To cover up my vengeful wandering.*

*I will not watch the floating clouds that
hover
Above the birds that warble on the
wing;
I want to use this Gun from under cover
Oh, Buddy, how I'm longing for the
spring!*

*You see them there, below, the damned
scab-herders!
Those puppets on the greedy owners'
string!
We'll make them pay for all their dirty
murders—
We'll show them how a starving hate
can sting!*

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†We confess to being a little shocked to learn that the last sit-down cost "about £1,000 to mount" (*Peace News* May 5). How much of this was spent in explaining the "relevance" of the demonstration to the public?

