

'They that make half revolutions
only dig a tomb for themselves.'

ST. JUST

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THE NATIONALIST FALLACY
LETTERS
THE END OF HOLLYWOOD?

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY - 4d.

**HOW MANY TRACTORS
IS A MAN'S FREEDOM WORTH?**

Castro's Mistake

DR. CASTRO'S offer to exchange the 1,200 members of the American-financed invasion force captured during the April 17 abortive invasion of Cuba, for 500 tractors, has certainly aroused passions in the United States. For some approve of Kennedy's call to the American people to support the Tractors for Freedom Committee which is appealing for the \$1,500,000 (about £550,000) needed, while others denounce it as Tractors for Blackmail. The *New York Times* supports the President and the Committee on humanitarian grounds. "This is probably the only practical line of action open at the moment, distasteful as it is". We are told, however that Castro was acting "in a well-defined if hardly creditable, tradition when he made his proposals", that is, in his "callous disregard of human life tending to treat it as an expendable commodity useful as a policy instrument as it may be needed" which is a characteristic of "totalitarian dictators of the left or the right".

not as a punishment for the crime they had committed but to warn other spies what they might expect. In Britain we have the recent spy trials in which one individual was actually sentenced to 42 years' imprisonment. Surely such a sentence shows a "callous disregard of human life" by any standards? The traditional persecution of war resisters in France, for instance, is neither intended to make them "see reason" nor to punish them, since clearly these men will not give in, but to deter other would-be objectors. And so on.

Furthermore in time of war democracies and dictatorships equally treat human lives as "expendable commodities" in pursuing their policies. Remember the Roosevelt-Churchill-Stalin meeting where the impending German surrender was being discussed, and the gentle

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ACCORDING to the Financial editor of the *Guardian*, "in the past few weeks more progress has been made in 'taking Britain into Europe' than in the previous ten years". This does not, to our minds, indicate a change of heart by the British government on the question of European "unity". The same considerations which hitherto kept Britain out of the E.E.C. (European Economic Community) and resulted in the creation of the outer-seven block (EFTU) of nations as a kind of economic counter-weight to the Six, now determine the newly-found interest in seeking membership of it. In other words economic and political interests—but mainly the former—are the yardstick of British policy on the issue of the Common Market. As the *New York Times* put it

Business is good [in Western Europe]. Demand is expanding. Plants are operating at full blast. Surveys show conclusively that demand will go on growing. And thus outsiders—chiefly American and British—have decided that they cannot afford to stay out. Meanwhile, progressive European concerns themselves must expand to preserve their share of the market and reap the fruits of growing demand.

Undoubtedly the Government's economic advisers and Big Business here are impressed by the statistics which show that the biggest percentage gain in trade last year was that of Italy (33.2 per cent.) followed by France (21.6 per cent.) West Germany expanded her exports by 16.8 per cent. and now has 19 per cent. of the world's export trade in manu-

EEC! Concentrating power In few hands

factured goods compared with the United States' 22 per cent., the United Kingdom's 16 per cent. and France's 10 per cent. Percentages for 1956 were 16, 25, 19, and 8 respectively. Thus France and Germany (and Italy and the Bene-Lux countries) increased their share of world trade at the expense of Britain and the United States.

We refuse to join the chorus of those who point an accusing finger at the government for having missed the boat by not joining at the beginning and cashing-in on the success story of the Common Market. The earlier refusal to do so, and now the new interest (but still the Government refuses to commit itself), indicates not so much a dithering attitude by the government but yet another proof that in economic matters, at any rate, it is the mouthpiece of large vested interests which on the issue of the Common Market have been strongly divided. Among these interests must be included the Commonwealth exporting countries as well as the Trades Union Congress. Far from looking upon the issue as one of ultimately establishing a United states of Europe, each country which has joined the block has done so in the belief that on balance it would result in an improvement in trade for itself

If then the government is, in the words of its spokesman, Mr. Heath, in the recent debate on foreign

affairs, of the opinion that "the question of what were to be the relations of ourselves, the Commonwealth and the EFTA partners with the new Europe [the EEC] was the one great issue of our time" it means that there is now a sufficiently strong body of opinion among the industrial and financial hierarchy in favour of Britain's entry to the EEC. But what the Federation of British Industries may think is in the interests of the country is no guarantee that it will be in the public interest. Indeed our rule of thumb is that what is good for the F.B.I. is bad for the common-good!

The confused thinking on the Common Market is revealed by the ill-assorted collection of signatories to the Statement issued by the Common Market Campaign launched last week in London under the chairmanship of Lord Gladwyn. This campaign organised on a "non-party" basis aims at "persuading" the government to come out into the open as being in favour of membership of the EEC and to accept the institutions of the Treaty of Rome "after necessary consultation" with the Commonwealth and the EFTA (European Free Trade Association—the outer seven bloc created by Britain to counteract the Six and which in the event, looks like being a greater embarrassment to its creator than to the Six!).

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THE MALTESE CROSS

THE Roman Catholic Church which has its own agents in practically every country in the world is communism's biggest single competitor for the domination of men's minds.

Its opposition to communism makes the Church an important ally of the West today which gives it a special status even in the United States where, a generation ago, a Catholic President would have been inconceivable.

Very few people, with the exception of the rabid anti-catholic protestant, think of the Church as a political organisation, and yet it is in the political field that it is seen at its most authoritarian and wily.

Its alliance with Mussolini, an avowed atheist, was not prompted by a spiritual affinity (although the infamous concord was followed by Mussolini being blessed in St. Peter's); its alliance with the fascist dictator Franco followed naturally from its age-old enmity towards anything tainted with liberalism, and assisted the dictator in establishing his murderous régime.

Its authoritarianism is evident in the directives which emit from the vatican threatening members of the Church with excommunication if they dare vote for any political party frowned on by the Church.

In Italy Catholics are forbidden to vote for any communist candidate, but it is not only communists who are on the index.

In Malta the political struggle

between the Malta Labour Party and the opposition reached a climax last Saturday when Roman Catholic priests were instructed not to "give absolution to people sympathising with the Malta Labour Party and its leader Mr. Dom Mintoff".

The order also applies to:

parents who allow their children to join the Labour Brigade and to anyone reading, printing, selling, distributing or advertising in Party publications. Newsagents today refused to sell the publications.

In a televised programme a few months ago a Malta Labour Party spokesman said that Mintoff was a "good catholic", but resented the Church's interference in politics. This may or may not be true, the issue which concerns us is the authoritarian attitude of the Church, which by playing on the superstitions of the people, tries to force them into making political decisions agreeable to the Church.

This ally of the "free world" has little to learn from the tactics of political tyrants whose only real difference seems to be that they obtain allegiance by threat of force instead of spiritual deprivation.

The Catholic Church and the Communist Party believe that they alone have the right to decide what people under their domination shall do with their lives, in private and in social matters.

It is true that the Church has no military power of its own, clearly it does well enough without it.

This often repeated illusion that in the democracies human life is something sacred may well be believed—if you repeat any lie long enough people will eventually believe it—but it just is not true. The fact that every government believes in the sanctity of the law and surrounds itself with means to enforce it as well as punish those who dare to disregard it, clearly shows that in maintaining the machinery of society they are quite prepared to disregard the individual. Yes, "disregard the individual" because as everyone well knows, the severity of the punishment meted out to law breakers is very often intended primarily as a deterrent to others. In America, cases that come to mind are Sacco-Vanzetti (who were sent to the electric chair not for murder but because they were "anarchist bastards" and as a warning to other similar "bastards") and the Rosenbergs who were also done to death

ANARCHY 4

ON SALE NOW

asks:

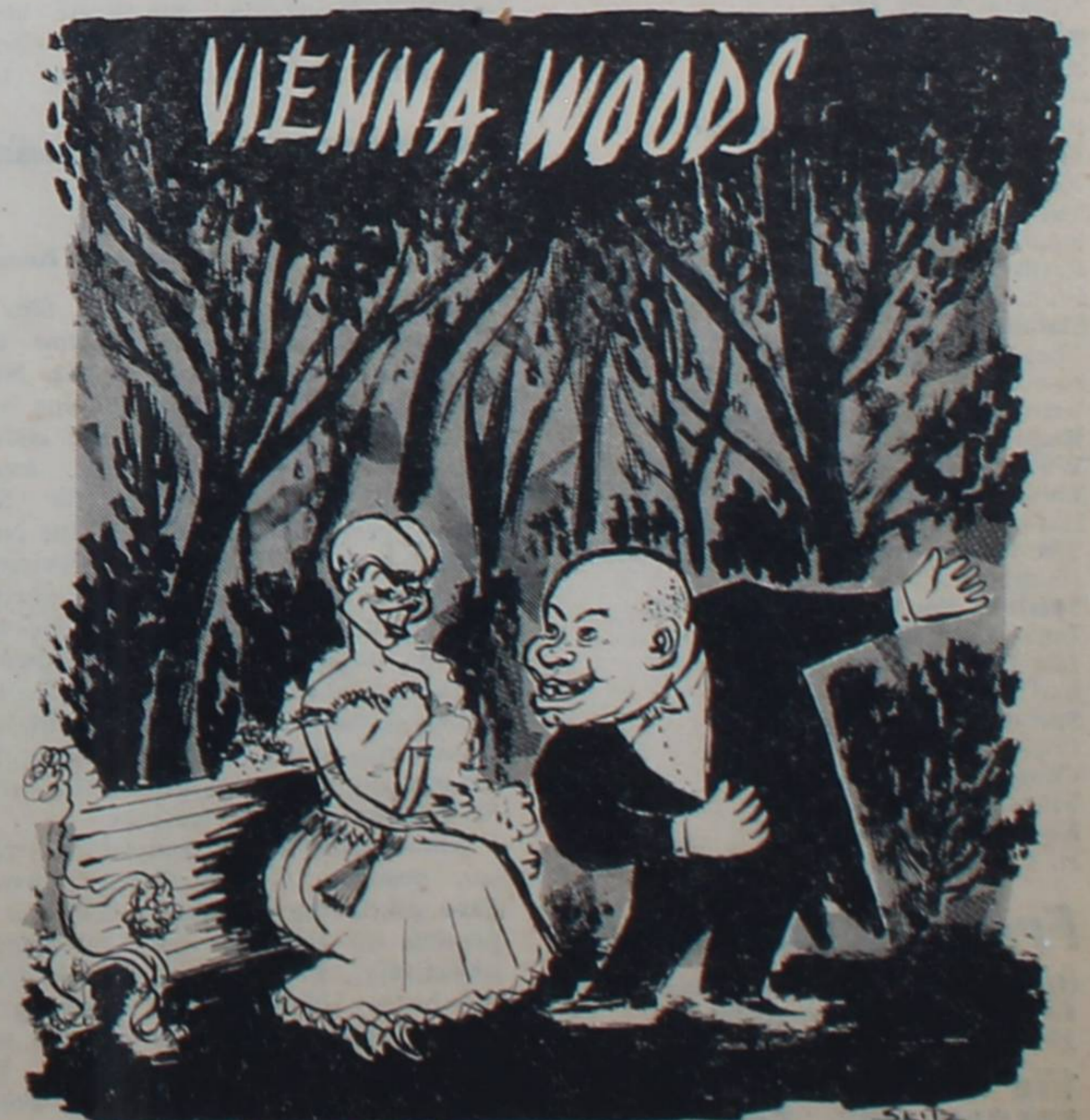
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'SHALL WE DANCE?'

THE RE-AWAKENING OF AFRICAN CULTURE

"MINTU. AN Outline of Neo-African Culture" by Janheinz Jahn. (Faber 30s.).

FOR anyone who wishes to attain a full and deep understanding of Africa this is a vital and important book of very great value. Within the confines of 250 pages with 16 plates the author, a European, has covered a vast field in an intelligent and scholarly manner whilst presenting the whole with loving care and fond attachment. For anyone interested in anthropology, history, cultural developments and modern conflicts for the African peoples this book must not be missed.

The introductory chapter sets the tone of the book where the problem of what Jahn describes as the "black souls in a white world" is squarely faced. Those coloured people who turn through a sickness of the oppression in an alien set of values to a stimulant, an intoxicant which is no less than a renaissance of African values and a re-birth which is termed neo-African culture. It is the expression which this culture takes in

many forms that is the subject of the book, but first before we study the cultural achievements we look into the traditional African standards and values. For an example of African religion the author turns to Haiti where Voodooism is a mixture of different African cults and an assimilation of certain Christian influences. Jahn claims that "Voodoo is not Christianized... but Christianity is voodooized, assimilated to the residual-African religion." He quotes a Haitian scholar Jean Price-Mars as saying: "Voodoo is a religion because out of the chaos of legends and distorted fables we can extract a theology, a system of concepts with the help of which our African forbears explained in primitive fashion the natural phenomena—a system which laid the foundations for the anarchistic faith on which the corrupt Catholicism of the mass of our people rests."

Throughout the description of Voodoo ceremony one is struck by the drama and theatrical quality of the religion, and also by the obviously sexual basis of much of what is carried out in the form of religious ritual and rite. In fact if only the truth of African religion were honestly faced, that much of it is just a form of sexual kick—and a damned good one by all accounts—then this reader's irritation at the mysticism of the Voodoo religion would disappear. Unlike much European religion Voodooism is no substitute for sex and not the result of a warped emotional development; it is an out-and-out celebration of sexual excitement. The way in which the Loas (Gods) are "ridden" and "mounted" is certainly sexually significant and part of an invocation to the Loas cited below is certainly no more (and no less!) than imploring the Loas for a good woman:—

"Atibon Legba, open the barrier for me,
Papa Legba, open the barrier for me.
Open the barrier, that I may enter.
Voodoo Legba, open the barrier for me.
When I return I shall salute the Loas.
Voodoo Legba, open the barrier for me.
When I return, I shall thank the Loas.
Abobo!"

As Jahn explains "Only at the cross-road (of the cross), where the human and divine axes meet, does contact with the divinities take place. And this cross-road is guarded by Legba. In Haiti he has the function of opening the *barrière* that separates men from the loas (divinities)."

In the following chapter the meaning of the dances again depict, though less shadedly, the healthy sexuality of the African people. The ecstasies achieved in the dances have been described by some Europeans as obscene but the rubbing of thighs together, as the men and women do in some dances, and the final sensuality of ecstatic dances are both sexually realistic and self-controlled. The psycho-therapeutic value of the

rhythmic African dances is untouched by western psychological methods and the ceremonies depicting life unfolding, becoming fertile are simply about love. If one compares the fertility dances of the Afro-Cubans described in this book with the ritual at a London strip joint one can only come to one conclusion as to which is the manifestation of a sexually healthy society and which the manifestation of a sexually sick and neurotic society.

In Cuba the author describes the influence of the Spanish on the Afro-Cuban poetry. "There has grown up," he writes, "perfect harmony between Spanish language and African Rhythm, Spanish and African art, in a lyric poetry that can be grasped only by those who hear it. The poems can be recited to a drum." On this last point the African, Léopold Senghor writes: "I insist that the poem is perfect only when it becomes a song: words and music at once. It is time to stop the decay of the modern world and especially the decay of poetry. Poetry must find its way back to its origins, to the time when it was sung and danced. As it was in Greece, in Israel, above all in Egypt of the Pharaohs. And as it is still today in Black Africa." One might add as it still is in the Blues and as it is being attempted in the jazz and poetry sessions of Rexroth and others in America. Indeed this line of creative development: dance, music, poetry all integrated together in a rhythmical style seems very possible for future experimentation.

The chapter on African philosophy is a most absorbing one, and to sum it up in a few words is certainly beyond my powers. However, one can say that it is about harmony and unity although as Jahn tells us "Since it is a question of an African and not a European philosophy, it is difficult to put it in terms of European concepts." Jahn selects five works on African philosophy, one by a Belgian monk, another by a French ethnographer, a third by a North American actress and two by Africans, one a sage unable to read or write and the other by an African scholar with a command of several European languages. The basic concepts of African philosophy are found to be the same in each of these studies. As a concise and accurate account of the basic principles of African philosophy this section of the book alone makes the book quite invaluable.

An intriguing chapter follows on the "Magic Power of the Word". "Nommo" is the Bantu for Word and Jahn describes it as thus: "Nommo is water and the glow of fire and seed and word in one. Nommo, the life-force, is the fluid as such, a unity of spiritual-physical fluidity, giving life to everything." In the portrayal of the ways of the African medicine man Jahn points out that the healing of diseases is not so much a matter of medicines as of the magic word, the incantation, the "Nommo". This may sound unintelligible but I think one can understand if not accept the attitude if we remember as Jahn says that "According to African philosophy man has, by force of his word, dominion over 'things'; he can change them, make them work for him, and command them.

But to command things with words is to practise 'magic'. And to practise word magic is to write poetry—that holds not only in Africa. Thus African philosophy ascribes to the word a significance which it has also in many other cultures, but there in poetry only." Within this same chapter the author deals with the influences of Négritude on Surrealism and Expressionism. What emerges is that African culture must be judged independently of European culture, and should be seen within the concepts of African philosophy. That neo-African culture had a great influence on European styles such as surrealism and expressionism is undoubted but neo-African culture has a separate identity and is African in tradition. However as Jahn explains "Naturally, authors like Césaire also belong to French literary history."

There follows a chapter on African Style in Image and Form, in Rhythm, in Masks and in what Jahn describes as the New Art. By this he means those Africans who have returned to their origins and are growing independently. Such men as Ben Enwouwu who have found a way to neo-African expression in Art. In this category are some European artists and Picasso's women of Avignon, the figures of Kirchner, Brancusi and Modigliani are cited as examples. Paul Klee is an outstanding example of a man close on the track of the nature of African artistic creation.

The next chapter deals with the history of African Literature. This includes both assessments of and extracts from the most important African writers such as Amos Tutuola, Peter Abrahams, Amé Césaire, Léopold Senghor and Thomas Mofole and also of Afro-Americans such as Richard Wright and Langston Hughes. The African tradition is traced in the writings of the Afro-Americans although differences are emphasised, such as the "split personality" characteristic of Afro-Americans. Langston Hughes is a particularly interesting writer who in his 'blues style' poetry has evenly balanced the two elements, the African and the American. Richard Wright on the other hand is only a man of Western culture. The lyric poetry of the Afro-Cubans is considered briefly and the modern writers in the new African tradition of rediscovery are succinctly covered. Tutuola is cited as the purest expression of neo-African prose, as Jahn writes: "He does not try to take issue with the western world; he simply borrows the necessary materials which he assimilates into his own purely African world." Summing up his survey of literature in Africa Jahn concludes on this very encouraging note which says much for the determination of creative Africans: "Surveying the fifty years of African literature, we may say that it began with the rejection of the African tradition and the emphasis on Christianity, but turned further and further away from Christianity, and has now returned to an African way of thinking."

The final chapter deals with residual African elements in North America, mainly the Blues, and with the conflict of cultures that both the Afro-Americans and the Africans are facing. Jahn provides much evidence to show that the Negro Blues music and singing has much

of Africa in it and he deals efficiently with the myth that the Blues are predominantly sad. As he shows "we find them mocking, sarcastic, tragi-comic, tragic, dramatic, and accusing, often crudely humorous." They are in fact often rebellious songs of protest and personal experience is not dwelt upon as such and practically no self-pity is to be found—rather a typical experience of all those rejected by society is sung about and the singer is but a delegate from the community.

The rebellion of the uncompromising anarchist is defiantly sung:

"I'd rather drink muddy water, sleep in a hollow log,
dan to stay in dis town, treated like a dirty dog."

And as Langston Hughes writes:

"To keep from cryin' I opens my mouth an' laughs."

No wonder it is that so many anarchists are able to identify themselves with this assertion of human dignity and victory over "civilised man".

The conflict of the African with "Civilisation" is excellently portrayed in all its tearing agony by the Ghanaian poet Dei-Anang:

"Here we stand—
poised between two civilisations
Backward? To days of drums
And festal dances in the shade
Of sun-kist palms.
Or forward?
Forward!
Toward?
The slums, where man is dumped
upon man...
The factory
To grind hard hours
In an inhuman mill
In one long ceaseless spell?"

And this is echoed by the Nigerian poetess Mabel Imoukhuede:

"I'm tired
I'm tired of hanging in the middle way
—but where can I go?"

Aimé Césaire expresses the same type of conflict in a different setting as he writes of the European:

"... my heart, preserve me from all hatred,
do not make of me that man of hate
for whom I have but hate
you know that it is not through hate
of other races
that I make myself a digger."

Paul Niger, from Guadeloupe, asks of the future that "A new rhythm will penetrate the world, an unknown colour will settle in the rainbow." As Jahn writes: "The Africans could become 'black Europeans' if they wished. But they do not want to do so, as their representatives unanimously insist." But which representatives are these? They may be the cultural representatives but are they the political like Nkrumah, Banda, Mboya, etc.?

However this may be, of all the abysmal crap that is heaped on us today, of all the rubbish, hatred, neurosis, confusion and guilt there can be said after reading this book as we put it alongside *Facing Mount Kenya* and *Old Africa Re-Discovered*, that something good and beautiful has come from the struggle for independence in Africa, at least some freedom has been attained, at least something has resulted from the foul colonial system disappearing. There has been a re-awakening of African culture and this will surely be the first of many more books that will be written on this subject in the future. R.J.W.

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MEIN KAMPF (Continental, Tottenham Court Road).

THE blessed word about this film is 'authentic'. The main items are scenes from the history of the Nazi Party and World War II, beginning with the Kaiser's levée in 1914, and ending with the liberation of Auschwitz. Interlaced are photographs of the S.S. leaders, personal documents of the Nazi leader, as well as 'hot' because previously unreleased shots from Warsaw ghettos and private Nazi rallies that give the film its notoriety. Far from authentic is the sound-track, which includes the rolling of boards together (to imitate the goose-step), and a Hebrew lullaby, incongruously made to illustrate the burial of Warsaw children's corpses.

Now anyone but a complete illiterate (or, possibly, a film director) would have asked the question whether it is possible to tell the story of Nazism objectively. It isn't. No episode from the history of the world involving so many millions of people can be told objectively. What is the solution? The answer is artistic unity. In other words, historical filming is subject, like any novel or play, to the canons of art. And the greater the subject (as Eisenstein

THE NATIONALIST FALLACY

abundantly shows) the greater the necessity that it should be so.

Unfortunately Sjöberg (director) seems never to have studied his forebears in documentary, nor realised that the film must be a form of art, if it is not merely to serve the uses of propaganda.

In "1984", it will be remembered, the documentary was the accepted form, in fact, it was doubtful whether any other form of cinema existed. Note on 1961 audience reaction: of the middle-class, mixed audience a few were moved, most looked puzzled. There was only one man who seemed to enjoy it in true Oceanic fashion, getting up from his seat and shouting 'bloody bastard' whenever the pale face of the paranoid maniac (greatly enlarged) appeared on the screen. To approve his reactions, would have meant approving of the 'myth', and it is as a mythical writer that Mr. Sjöberg must be approached.

This myth is the notion that Evil can be completely personified in one living person, or persons. In "Mein Kampf" it almost convinces: the rise of the Brownshirts in Bavaria, the induction of

A. H. (Goldstein) to the Chancellorship, the mass meetings, the Himmlerian death-squadrons, the massed ranks of Hitler youth, from Frisia, Silesia, Thuringia—there is no lack of material. After all, the Nazis themselves were myth-makers (who turned their myth into reality), so that Sjöberg could hardly go wrong.

To say that this is history rewritten by the victors is not to approve of Nazism. So that any current Fascists who chance to read this article need not pat themselves on the back. It is to disapprove of the myth itself, the collective lie that what is evil for the individual becomes good when millions are doing it. And the florid face of the (moustached, or cigar-smoking) maniac becomes as hideous in the light of this lie as any Austrian social misfit.

It might be a good thing to have a film story of Hitler, as carefully and faithfully composed as Alan Bullock's biography. It might, Judging by the emotions involved, this film is probably better left unmade. It would be better to document the spiritual corruption of a nation, with crowd scenes, anony-

mously, as Eisenstein documented the Russian revolution. But what company would script such a film, what group (in the era of the neo-Nazi alliance) would finance it?

No, the real interest behind the history of the 'thirties (which is 'our' inglorious epoch as well as 'theirs', the one valid point this film rather feebly makes) is to trace the rise of the nationalist fallacy and its consequent effect on one life, or a few lives, the only way it can be done. And who has done this? Not even Sartre (though he points the way), not even Pasternak.

Incidentally, has no one thought of making a film of the U.S. military scene? The napalm victims in Korea, the deportees from Bikini, the "Golden Dragon"? Then the Soviet Union, and so to the Tibetans under Chinese occupation, the Nagas under Nehru, and even our glorious ally Portugal? The whole thing could be run serially, or mounted as a kind of permanent World Exhibition in Brussels. That would be worth quite a few convertible sterling to go and see.

ARTHUR FOOTE.

The End of Hollywood?

CASTRO'S MISTAKE

Continued from page 1

Roosevelt declaring that he wanted another two million Germans to be killed before any cease fire were agreed; and the obliging Churchill making it clear that he wouldn't stand in the way of his old friend's wishes. Remember Truman's remark that he had not spent a sleepless night over his order to atom-bomb the civilian population of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. "It had shortened the war" was the excuse but even if this were true, the fact remains that some hundreds of thousands of civilians were considered "expendible commodities" in the circumstances. The French and the British and the Portuguese have killed hundreds of thousands of Muslims and Africans to maintain the privilege of the white minorities believing that in this way other natives would be deterred from agitating for their rights. During the Kenya "troubles" more than 1,000 Kikuyus were publicly hanged by the British authorities; the French in Algeria resorted to torture of the most disgusting nature not only against Muslims but against Frenchmen who sided with them against the "colons". And now in Angola the Portuguese have a plan to exter-

minate tens of thousands of Angolans as an example to the others. But does one need to add to the sordid catalogue of the "expendibility" of human lives where governments are concerned?

To compare Castro's contempt for human life when he offers to exchange two prisoners for one tractor with that of the democratic and totalitarian governments of the world indicates the degree of hysteria that can invade even the sober columns of the *New York Times*! Indeed that journal goes so far as to compare the Castro offer with "the Hitlerite régime's offer during World War II to trade Hungarian Jews for trucks". It only takes a little thought to realise that there is no comparison between the two situations. But since the comparison has been made one should mention that not only did the Germans treat the Hungarian Jews as expendible commodities but so did the Allied governments in refusing even to consider the offer (see *Advocate for the Dead*). Or should one put it this way: that in the circumstances they considered one truck was more valuable than the lives of one hundred Jews; that the trucks were not expendible commodities.

An appeal to imagination!

WE hope we have made it clear that we think no "democratic" government or its supporting press has any right to take a holier than thou attitude to Castro's exchange offer. But we must also make it clear that far from considering Castro's "gesture" worthy of our support we think it should be denounced by all libertarians, supporters as well as opponents of the régime in Cuba. When the invasion took place the régime and its supporters had a right to defend themselves; they captured 1,200 of the invaders. We believe they were entitled to disarm them and detain them under reasonable conditions, certainly until the fighting ended. According to the *New York Times* they also rounded up some 200,000 Cubans "suspected of disloyalty". If true, it is a considerable opposition, and it is surprising, in the circumstances, that the invaders received so little support. (Perhaps it is not true that 200,000 were rounded-up?)

However having successfully crushed the American-inspired and financed invasion Castro was left with 1,200 defeated opponents on his hands. He says that he has armed the people in Cuba to defend themselves from those who seek to destroy the new order. Would the liberation of these 1,200 unarmed opponents (who would also be given the choice of exile to Miami) among the people represent even a minor threat to the régime or to the people-in-arms? If the answer is that it would, then one must conclude that the people are not armed or are not in sympathy with the Castro régime. We personally believe, without being supporters of the Castro régime, that Castro enjoys a very large measure of popular support and has no need to fear the consequences of liberating his opponents from detention. (After all his "exchange" offer gives them an opportunity to prepare for another invasion.

On the whole one is tempted to view the "prisoners for tractors" proposals as a gesture which has misfired. That he asked for tractors and not guns must, we think, be viewed not as an indication that he is a realist pure and simple (the U.S. government could not possibly agree to a Guns for Freedom campaign, but could be expected, and has in fact, agreed to tractors) but that tractors are a symbol of peace as well as badly needed instruments in the development of Cuba's new economy. His gesture misfired because as we have shown, the American press with a complete lack of objectivity overlooked the fact that had such an invasion been directed against the American coast by, say, a group of American communists, operating from Cuba those captured would probably have been tried and executed; certainly they would not have been traded to Cuba for ten bags of sugar per prisoner. But that Castro takes steps to defend his régime from the invaders is itself a crime in the eyes of these freedom-loving, law-abiding Americans.

To our minds if Castro has confidence in the people-in-arms he should have released his prisoners and then directed an appeal to those American people who would have understood the significance of his action, to send tractors not armed men to Cuba. And we believe that there would have been enough imaginative people in that country to appreciate the point and to act.

It is now too late and what is done cannot be changed. But it is never too late to rectify a mistake. Castro should now declare that he will liberate the prisoners unconditionally, giving them the choice of staying in the country or returning to the United States. He will do his cause more good than anything he can do with those 500 tractors.

NEARLY fifty years after the scene is all confusion but the emergent fact (underlined by Dwight MacDonald in a recent lecture at the American Library) is that Hollywood is on the way out. The sunny climate of California was as much a necessity to the new American film as the streams of Lancashire were necessary for power to the new cotton mills. The provision of indoor lighting like the provision of new forms of power made decentralization a possibility but only financial catastrophe made it compulsory. As Dwight MacDonald said making American films in Hollywood is like making British films in Tanganyika; Hollywood is nearly as far removed from the cultural centres.

Laski and Goldfish would not comprehend the modern pattern of the cinema. The leading films made by Swedes, Japanese (a Japanese 'Western' *The Hidden Fortress* repays the compliment of the American western adapted from the Japanese *The Magnificent Seven*) and Indians; the return of the subtitle and the monstrosity of dubbing; the rise of the amateur and near amateur low-budget film (*Come Back Africa, The Savage Eye, The Day*—made by Peter Finch—*Circus at Clopton Hall*); the closing of many cinemas, their conversion into bowling alleys or warehouses, or as with the Empire, Leicester Square, its conversion into good-site value plus a small economic cinema; the exploitation of forbidden themes—sex, horror, politics, pacifism and anarchism for example Clement's *Quelle Joie de Vivre*, now showing at Cannes; attempts to start a co-operative cinema, as well as 'off-beat' clubs; the importance of ice-cream, pop corn and advertising films in cinema economy; the collapse of 'fan' magazines; the 'block-buster' of Cinerama, colour and stereophonic sound; the vanishing of three-D; the revivals and re-makes (biggest box office biz:— *Ben Hur*); the films made abroad with mixed nationality cast; the 'Classics' and art-houses; the growth of the cinema as a minority art form rather than as a mass-entertainment; the sinister shadow of TV (business men like Laski and Goldfish would appreciate the typical response 'if you can't beat them make money out of them'), the showing of old films on TV, the showing of TV films at cinemas as second feature quickies; the desperate attempts to get in audiences, the late-night shows, the topical cash-in (e.g. Eichmann) all this labyrinth tangled up from the humble beginnings in the Los Angeles suburb in 1912.

Dwight MacDonald gave it as his opinion that the 'twenties and 'thirties were Hollywood's best years and Hollywood film-makers were not artists but craftsmen. Hollywood films were under-felt. *Ben Hur* he claimed was the worst film ever, even the chariot race was a flop. Oscars were awarded to technicians which is why *Ben Hur* won so many. In the year that *Wild Strawberries* was nominated for an Oscar, *Pillow Talk* actually won it. Dwight MacDonald's lecture was in the nature of an obituary for Hollywood delivered in what seemed to be a semi-official capacity in the undertaker's parlour (or should one say mortician's?) of the lecture room of the new American Library under the double-breasted eagle in Grosvenor Square. Speaking before tastefully draped U.S. and U.K. flags he took over the revolutionary fervour of ex-editor of *Politics* into his new job of cinema critic to *Esquire* and a thorough art job he made of it.

After a quick review of the history of the American film, Dwight MacDonald cited Rudolph Arnheim in *Film as Art* as saying that "every engineering improvement was an artistic step backward". For Hollywood the first downhill step was the 'talkie' which lost the essence of cinema (in movement) and tended to bring back the photographed stage play. Colour, according to Dwight MacDonald was only suitable for spectacular films and in any case Soviet films had the best colour, which, it was claimed, they captured from the Germans. Improvements in photography made for detail which made for chaos. For comparison one should see Victorian photography which made everything count. They only had one plate and one shot which had to be good. Millions of feet of film were discarded in Hollywood to get what seemed to look right.

Dwight MacDonald had previously declared that his criticism of Hollywood

"In 1912 Jesse Lasky went into partnership with his brother-in-law Goldfish (later Goldwyn) and a young man called Cecil B. De Mille, and arrived in Hollywood with about twenty-five thousand dollars and some big ideas. The Jesse L. Lasky Feature Play Company had decided to start off boldly by filming a stage hit of the day, *The Squaw Man*. Five thousand dollars went to Dustin Farnum as star, five thousand for the film rights and the rest was spent on production. The firm did not have enough money to establish itself in Los Angeles, but had to be content with a barn in a miserable district on the outskirts where no respectable producer would have been found dead. This dismal place was called Hollywood."

"History of the Film",
BARDECHE AND BRASILLACH.

would be 'unconstructive and reactionary'; what most people meant by 'constructive criticism' was 'favourable comment'. In the same way anarchists have been accused of being destructive and the Bakunin cliché 'the impulse to destroy is also a creative impulse', carries no conviction to the unconverted.

What constructive demolition can we do? Looking round this decline and fall of the Rank Empire (from Odeon to odious to odium) gazing at the stumps of Ozymandius Lasky what fragments can we shore against the ruin?

Some fragments are salvagable but without demolition we cannot even use those fragments. Many of the joists and corner stones of the temple are worm-eaten and cracked and unusable but we can assess what must be done from what is being done.

The monopoly control of Hollywood of art can be produced in all countries. The giganticism of technical proficiency is no criterion to the making of good films. We have seen how poor nations (Germany and Russia in the 'twenties, Italy in the late 'forties, India today) have made excellent films not in spite of, but because of, poverty. Every inch of celluloid had to count, professional actors needed salaries, studio sets were too expensive. The growth of montage and Italian realism owe more to poverty than to Marxist dialectics or Stanislavsky.

The financial tycoons of Hollywood have spurred the actor into becoming an independent producer and the lower labour costs in Europe have sent him farther afield for his mighty spectacle. The Emperor of Costing has turned his thumb down on the Culver City lion.

Even the cine-camera has found its way as status symbol into many homes. (The Easter marches provided much moving fodder for home movies better by far than father on the beach, or baby's first steps), side by side with this the amateur movie makers have become more proficient. The rigor mortis of professionalism has not touched them. A recent programme at the National Film Theatre was full of works of love. *Circus at Clopton Hall* was an excursion into the world of children with the Reichian A. S. Neill understanding of a William Steig drawing of the spontaneous self-amusement of children. *Man of Rope*, a reconstruction of *Ballad of Reading Jail*, eloquent in its silence against capital punishment, *Michael*, a reconstruction of the life of a Mongoloid child: the only flop d'esteem to my mind in this programme was *The Choice*, a film in colour of a ballet with a background of a modern school. The irritating thing about this was its perfection and technical proficiency. The others had in them love, this like the Hollywood product it aped, had merely machinery.

The film as mass-entertainment has perished. Its place has been taken by the idiot's lantern, turnip-head, goggle-box, television which has captured the middle-brows with BBC and the lowest with ITV. That only leaves the high-brows and they're no mass market. So we have the proliferation of film societies, a National Film Theatre, innumerable 'classics' or as they are called in America with a suitable sneer 'art-houses'. This fortifies the makers of the better-class films and emboldens managements who find it is not necessary to insult the public's intelligence to get them into the cinema. Like a man under sentence of death, the cinema has become bold in its behaviour and thought.

In *Tribune* (April 28th) is a rather written-up account of co-operative enterprise in Leytonstone where the State Cinema has turned itself into a Club and Film Society which sells shares to its members. It needs to raise £5,000, it only retains four paid employees, the rest of the work is carried out by volunteers from members.

This seems to be a fragment from the ruins of many 'locals' which have had to close. It may be possible to form small co-operatives like this for your local cinema. Meanwhile Mr. Hooper of the State Cinema, High Road, Leytonstone, London, E.11 needs 1,500 to 2,000 patrons per week. Can this be guaranteed for any local cinema?

The high operating costs of the mammoth cinema speak its doom and the smaller cost non-Hollywood film is a welcome product since it helps to keep down the overheads. The vanishing of the unsuitable newsreel, has unfortunately been followed by the growth of advertising transplants from television, but the doom of the second-feature is a long time coming.

We see that the fragments left are all indications of the success of small-scale quality projects and the failure of the gigantic commercial empires.

The end of Hollywood may be a beginning of the film as art. When those gigantic potentialities for the cultivation of human sensibility and awareness will be released, like a sleeping princess aroused from the slumber into which she fell about 1921. J.R.

Letters

DIRECT ACTION, NEW LEFT, ANARCHISM

DEAR FRIENDS,

Says P.H. "Although there is no 'formal' anarchist movement . . . there is a conscious one and the more . . . anarchist ideas are . . . accepted the better chance for Direct Action to . . . find its feet."

True—and there is no chance—absolutely no chance—for the widespread rejection of the putative progressive Labour Party to find expression electorally except through independent candidates dedicated to action; action that will eventually result in "the withering away of the state" to the utmost possible degree. Party rule is merely another name for tyranny—a glance at any newspaper reporting of party or government machinations (apt word) demonstrates this to all except those who won't see. If you have no independent candidate, don't vote at all! This 'goes' for borough council elections, of course! Southampton. B. CECIL BEVIS.

PROPAGANDA IN HAMPSTEAD

DEAR COMRADES,

The off-centre discussion group in Hampstead has decided to make an attempt at propaganda among the Hampstead CND.

The meeting at 148a Fellows Road, N.W.3, on June 15th will be an informal public meeting advertised in the local press, with some such title as "Practical Action Against the Bomb". We would welcome the support of comrades, especially local residents, at this meeting. Nearest Tube station: Swiss Cottage.

London, N.W.3. L.M.R., P.T., D.R.

THE REICH SELECTED WRITINGS

DEAR EDITOR,

Thank you for Arthur W. Uloth's review of the Selected Writings by Reich.

May I make one comment as he judges The Murder of Christ having only read the brief excerpt from this large and great work?

It does not suffer in any but the slightest way from Reich's political irrelevancies. As it is, otherwise, penetrating in the extreme, original and profound, sensitive and sensuous, let no man be put off by Mr. Uloth's judgment, admittedly based on a tiny fragment. He might miss the greatest book of his life.

Yours sincerely,
Nottingham, May 20. PAUL RITTER.

LETTER

You gotta depart man

I would submit that N.W. certainly doesn't dig poetry, whose language lives on, as said—"in a different mode of existence. It has assumed value, but at the expense of its definite meaning. It has created the need to be heard again." Poetry is not distinguished by its quality of "saying something" which is equally well said by a critic in other words. Robert Creeley knows "The poem is not a signboard, pointing to a content ultimately to be regarded; but is, on the contrary, a form inhabited by intelligence and feeling. It is the way a poem speaks, not the matter, that proves its effect, and although this is an old insistence, it is one hard at times to remember when a great variety of desperations want a solution, a content capable of relief."

Not everything in the world can be reduced to "cultural affairs", "social affairs" and like subdivisions, not everything can be turned to practical disadvantage.

The criterion shouldn't be "What useful direction does this poem point?" "What's this music trying to say?" "This painting is meaningless"—to each its own language, in which its communicability may be felt though not assumed.

N.W. observes that Helms' text is typewritten, that Cage's music is for piano: but the one is doodling, the other psychotic. At this point William Carlos Williams' perceptions on the first critics of "Finnegan" are salutary: "British criticism is built upon the exigencies of the local literary structure and relates primarily thereto. Afterwards it may turn to the appraisal of heterodox and foreign works. But if these are in nature disruptive to the first, the criticism will be found to be defensive, to preserve its origins. Forward is the new. It will not be blamed. It will not force itself into what amounts to paralysing restrictions. It cannot be correct. It hasn't time. It has that which is beyond measurement, which renders measurement a falsification, since the energy is showing itself as recrudescence, the measurement being the aftermath of each new outburst." The most popular measurement these days derives from psychological categories, and so Alvarez in *The Observer*, hard put to classify Ginsberg's "Kaddish" as either 'prose' or 'verse', designates it "good psychotherapy"; and so N.W., though why "psychotic" Cage is bad but Paul Ableman's "schizoid

piece" good I cannot fathom. But all too clearly, reference to the established order, adjustment theory is bound to prefer Silkin, Mitchell and Featherston to Kerouac, Corso and Ginsberg (Featherston's urbane cynicism was deliberately set off on the page against Ginsberg's transcendental mysticism), bound to prefer beat theory to beat poetry, criticism to creation on all levels.

Away—away—from this kind of bondage and predictability, which is only possible on account of competition and money. In this context of pop labelitis the question "Like where to, Man?" invites only the facetious counter—which James Dean lived and died for, "If you gotta go, you gotta go." You can't know your destination before taking a truly new departure—you can only create one for yourself.

Away there, away now, each artist his own, in the only war that matters, with Picasso—to combat darkness.

Darkness maintained by all who bandy labels, preferring to group artists and discuss their work in political terms—without realising that the natural inclination of an artist (and this applies particularly to the *New Departures* contributors) is towards an ordered anarchy. But without betraying it into an 'ism': in ANARCHY 3 the Britannica definition is given as "a principle or theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government . . . for the

satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations of a civilised being." This part of the anarchist creed is the instinctive practice of experimental artists: the mocking critic is always bringing them to heel with the obstacle of present world-values and economics in particular—but these are supremely irrelevant to the new ways of living which are daily discovered according to need.

N.B.—"the infinite variety of needs and aspirations": we can't all move in one direction and say that's It, the Utopia we're making for valhalla olympus schizam. N.W.'s idea that my editorial constitutes a party line to which the contributors should adhere is abhorrent to me; nor am I flattered he should regard it as a "defence"—it's a series of leads to warn the reader the areas of our review may be considered out of bounds to his uniform response, so he'd better discard it before going further. N.W. hasn't done this, and remains like Blake's questioner, always asking, but never capable of giving an answer. Each contributor follows his own only direction—that indicated by the tendency of his work, and not made to measure a public. If communication entails no more than meeting the reader halfway, supplying your own captions and translating his expectations, how is anything valid by its own originality and newness ever communicated? It seems to me that communication as 'understood' is a public masturbation session; and that N.W. refuses to be raped unless he is assured it's going to be fun, with an elaborate apparatus of concomitant explanations and apologies thrown in. And I'm not sorry we haven't supplied this in *New Departures*. Surely he knows freedom provokes diversity, and diversity preserves freedom. Our wide range through the arts makes criticism redundant: the whole thing is seen in perspective if we bear in mind that *critic* is the ultimate abomination in "Waiting for Godot"—consequent on *abortion*.

Yours faithfully,
London, W.1. MICHAEL HOROVITZ.

EFFECTS OF EEG, 6 & 7

Continued from page 1

Agricultural supports as well as Commonwealth and EFTA relationships were the "difficult problems" that had to "and could, we believe be solved in negotiations". But negotiations were only possible if

we first declare our willingness, subject to their successful outcome, to join the European Economic Community—a community in which no one nation will ultimately have the power of veto.

Unless we make this attempt, Europe, already split by the Iron Curtain, will be still further divided; for her part, Britain will be in increasing danger of becoming a backwater, both politically and economically. If, however, the negotiations succeed, we shall become part of a dynamic new power. . . .

The Common Market Campaign may well be non-party but its economic approach is coloured by the Russian bogey, the old, old political story of the need to unite to defend ourselves from the current menace to all our "cherished democratic values". It is not surprising therefore to find in the first list of signatories, Donald Soper rubbing shoulders with Sir Eric Bowater, Professor Ayer surrounded by retired Field Marshals and Air Marshals (who are probably chairmen of large industrial concerns). We would say that the support so far for the Common Market Campaign comes more from Lib-Lab supporters and M.P.s and officials than from the Tories. The big boys of Industry have not revealed their hand in the Campaign. The only powerful voice against Britain's entry into the Common Market is

that of Beaverbrook who had been reprinting as an advertisement in the nation's Press the Opinion that appeared in the *Daily Express* of what happens "If we go in". It is short and worth reprinting here:

Britons beware. The propaganda campaign to push this country into the European Common Market is being driven forward with vigour and cunning. Powerful interests stand to benefit from a tie-up with Europe.

Do not be bounced into helping the financiers and industrialists who are willing to sacrifice agriculture at home to promote markets for their products abroad.

For the people, the Common Market means higher living costs and higher unemployment.

Hard times for the many to provide rich pickings for the few.

A trenchant criticism of the capitalist system, all the more valuable coming from one of the citadels of capitalism! As if agriculture had not long ago been sacrificed to Industry and markets. If in this country agriculture is allowed to survive at all it is only because it is still looked upon as a necessary part of the "Defence" programme. To this extent home agriculture will continue to be subsidised and there is no reason to believe that the Six will consider agreement to this an obstacle to Britain's admission. But the "Beaver" is right when he says that "powerful interests stand to benefit from a tie-up with Europe". The Common Market, amongst other things removes all restrictions to the movement of capital within the member nations. Take-overs will increase as competition for markets within the bloc increases and profits temporarily decrease. As the *New York Times* Paris correspondent put it

Even if Western Europe's economy continues to boom, it is not necessarily going to be easy to make money here. The reason is competition.

Indications are that so many people are trying to dip into the European pot of gold that not all of them can win the prize that they had hoped. In short, there may be a problem of over-expansion in Europe, at least in many lines.

It seems to us that one of the results of the Common Market will be an even greater concentration of Economic Power in the hands of a few powerful financial-industrial interests, and that in the name of greater efficiency industries will be scrapped or transferred from one country to another. We do not, as does *Tribune*, think "that wages will sink to the lowest level prevailing and capital move to the places where wages are low". Nor do we

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