

'There is nothing inherently sacred about moral codes. Like the wooden idols of long ago, they are all the work of human hands, and what man has made, man can destroy.'

—RAGNAR REDBEARD

**Make 1962
a GOOD ONE
for FREEDOM**

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY - 4d.

INQUEST ON THE SIT-DOWN-3

THE policy of the Committee of 100 has all along been one of non-violence and openness. We want to discuss this week the question of openness *versus* secrecy in the light of the Committee's activities and experience in the past year. In general we would say that where it is possible to carry on one's propaganda freely, then secrecy is an unnecessary hindrance, and that the more openly one acts, the greater is the chance of reaching the maximum number of people. At the initial stages of its existence the Committee of 100 depended for its success on its plans for civil disobedient action receiving a maximum of advance publicity; the organs of mass communications were its principal means for reaching the sympathetic minority among the public who would join them in their activities. The question now is whether a point has been reached where a policy of complete openness, so far as action, as distinct from day to day propaganda, is concerned, can only result in one costly "defeat" after another which could in a short time lead to the disintegration of the movement through disillusionment, by the feeling that the odds against which we were pitting our forces were overwhelming.

A year ago when the Committee of 100 was formed and its campaign of civil disobedience announced, its potentialities could not be accurately assessed by the authorities. Indeed it will be recalled that at the first sit-down when more than 4,000 people including the "big names", took part, the forces of law and order contented themselves with playing the role of onlookers; it is true that they were also faced with an accommodating assembly which packed itself on the pavement and not in the road, around the Ministry of Defence, but they closed an eye to the "obstruction" and there were no arrests. When the second sit-down took place there were as many police as demonstrators, and the arrests started in earnest, and those not arrested were all dragged from the road and dumped on the pavements. By the time the Trafalgar Square demonstration took place the authorities were taking the movement seriously, and operated according to a plan. The demonstrators' chances of achieving their immediate objectives receded into the background. By the time the December demonstration took place not only were the authorities ready to deal with the optimistic plans of the Committee, but they had taken a number of measures such as raiding the offices of the Committee as well as the homes of some of its mem-

Openness or Secrecy?

bers; calling on the printers of the Committee's leaflets, arresting five members of the Committee and charging them under the Official Secrets Act; warning the public that by participating in demonstrations directed at military establishments they were making themselves liable to arrest under these Acts, which carry heavy penalties. And of course these measures were given a maximum of publicity by the very organs of mass communications which the Committee had been depending on to get a maximum number of supporters.

By December 9 then, what free publicity the Committee of 100 had received from the organs of mass communications by its policy of openness on the one hand, can only be properly estimated by considering on the other hand what harmful effect the counter-measures of searches, arrests and intimidation by the police which, of course, were given maximum publicity in the Press, had on many people who were sufficiently sympathetic to the cause but deterred by the barrage of threats by the authorities. And not only were the authorities able to use the weapon of intimidation-through-the-application-of-the-law (even though it is highly questionable whether they will proceed with the charges under the Official Secrets Act, or, if they do, succeed). But by being told beforehand—not to mention the fact that plain-clothes Special Branch officers attend all the meetings of the Committee of 100 where they can not only note the discussions that take place, but single out each individual and form an impression of his views and role in the movement and thus build up a dossier which would be invaluable if and when it was decided by the authorities that the time had come to attempt to destroy this movement—we were saying, that by being told beforehand, the military and civil authorities between them, were able to take all the steps necessary to meet the challenge threatened for the 9th December.

To tell the authorities beforehand that not only are you courting mass arrests, but that those who are arrested have been advised to refuse to give their names because in doing so the machinery of the courts, the prisons, etc., will break down, is a warning as well as an invitation to the authorities to take steps beforehand to deal with such a situation. Which is what they did. Not only were the barbed wire fences enclosing the air bases strengthened, and patrolled on the ground as well as from the air, but schools were taken over to be used as emergency courts; police were drafted from all parts and the whole operation was carried out with the kind of thoroughness and lack of concern for "expense" which one expects from the authorities when it is a question of defending the sacred "principle" of Authority!

We anarchists would have been most surprised and even disappointed had the authorities acted otherwise. Yes, disappointed because it would have meant that they felt so strong as to be able to ignore the movement of the Committee of 100 completely. The fact that they cannot write-off the movement is the measure of its success after one year of activity. But just because the authorities take the movement seriously it is doubly necessary that the movement should take the authorities seriously! And so far this does not seem to us to be the case.

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IN a front page editorial in *Peace News* Dec. 1) on the police raids on the Committee of 100's offices we read:

Police brutality and political police are

closely related to totalitarian and racist policies; they are also closely connected with preparations for and the waging of war. Elaborate "security" arrangements foster use of underhand devices to weed out spies and enemies of the state. The degree to which any society condones either police violence or the use of political police is symptomatic of the lack of liberty in that society. Political police methods are one of the things we are fighting against.

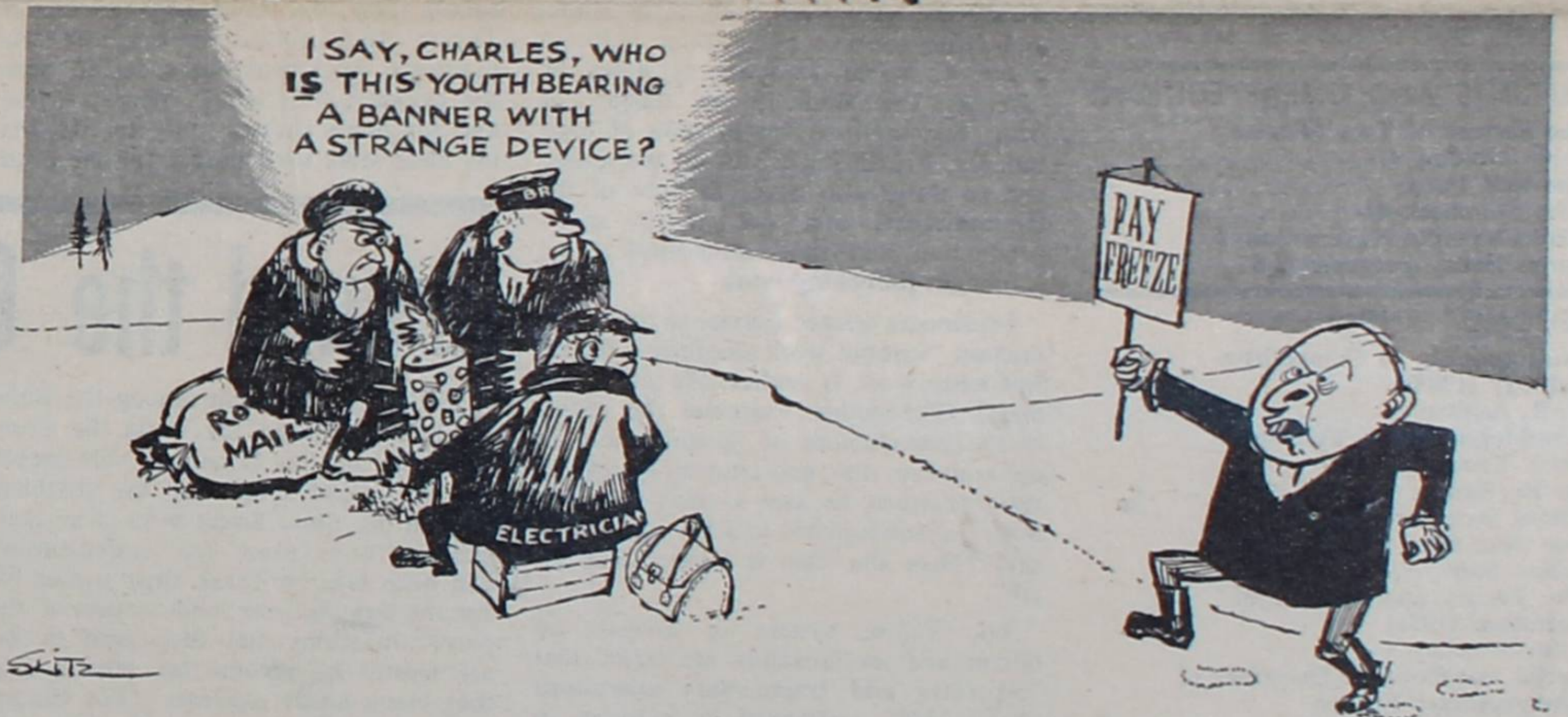
We believe use of violence and the use of spies, telephone tapping, questioning neighbours (or printers) would all be wrong if used against members of a violent and secret political organisation; but at least in this instance they would have some kind of justification. But in the case of the Committee of 100, which has always publicised the names of its members, broadcast its plans to the world and been quite open about its aims and activities, there is no shred of justification.

It is with regret that we find our selves disagreeing with almost every word of the foregoing paragraphs, especially since *Peace News* is now controlled by the militant elements in the Committee of 100 and not muzzled by a moribund P.P.U., which values respectability and political orthodoxy as being more important than militancy.

"Police brutality" and "political police" are not phenomena only of those countries pursuing policies

which are "totalitarian" or "racial" or which are "preparing for or waging war". They are part and parcel of every State, every nation, in which the many are ruled by the few; in which the latter enjoy privileges connected with power and/or wealth; in which the many depend on the few, whether they call themselves the employers or the State, for their means of livelihood. Police brutality and political police exist in direct ratio to the opposition which the ruling class encounters from those who challenge its authority. Let us be quite clear. The opposition represented by the Labour Party does not threaten the ruling class, the *status quo*. The revolutionary workers' movement in Spain in February 1936, in spite of the victory of the Popular Front parties, did. And for that reason when, only six months later, the military rising was launched, there were as many revolutionary workers in prison under the Popular Front Government as had been liberated in the flush of the Popular Front victory in February! All political parties aspire to the armchairs of government; none challenge the foundations of a society which is maintained by the threat, or use, of force. Indeed, they, when in office, use the

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WHO SHOULD RUN THE POST OFFICE?

ADDRESSING 6,000 members of the Union of Post Office workers on the eve of their "work to rule" campaign for increased wages, Mr. George Woodcock, TUC General Secretary told them "It is a serious thing you are engaged on. I hope you realise that, but I can assure you the whole of the working people of the country understand the provocation under which you have suffered and realise that on this occasion your fight is theirs". We too hope that the seriousness of their action will make many among the postal workers think beyond the immediate implications.

For instance, the first question that comes to mind is: Why is it that working to rule will, if it lasts a few weeks, result in a pile-up of mail, of phone calls, etc., which will virtually paralyse the service? As has been pointed out, "working to rule" does not mean going slow; it simply means that the rules laid

down are being adhered to. Most of these rules have been made by the employers, a few, such as the maximum loads to be carried by a postman, have been forced upon the employers by the workers' Union. The employers' rules are presumably intended to safeguard the public's interests (letters to be delivered to the recipient personally and so on) as well as the employers'. But the fact remains that in *running* the service, as opposed to laying down the rules, it is only by ignoring the rules that the service will work! And the employers presumably only apply the rules when it is a question of fixing responsibility on a rule-breaker; but in normal circumstances they condone the breaking of the rules since to be otherwise can only result in a breakdown of the service.

Is it not clear that a service as vital to the community as that of

communications cannot be operated by a centralised bureaucracy, which in order to maintain its control invariably has to make so many rules, which if applied, must result in the paralysis of the service? This is what the postal workers are proposing to show the public by their "work to rule" campaign. We hope they win their demands, and if they do, we would also wish that they started thinking beyond the question of pay claims to that of who should run the postal service. Many years ago, their journal the *Post* was engaged in a campaign for workers' control (it was at the time when Allen Skinner was on the editorial staff). Surely it is now time to revive this campaign.

The lessons to be learned from the Post Office workers' campaign are too clear to need underlining. If only the working people of this country would take them to heart!

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ANARCHY 11

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OPENNESS OR SECRECY ?

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same machine to maintain "law and order". Have the editors of *Peace News* read nothing of police brutality in India since independence? Or of the Belgian police during the strikes of last year? to mention only two examples of countries which can hardly be called "totalitarian", "racist" or bent on "waging war".

This naive nonsense about "justification" for phone tapping, snooping, etc., by the police would be laughable if it were not tragic. Here are good, active people willing to suffer imprisonment and forego the temptations of material comfort to achieve a happier world for everybody to live in, who still think that those who are the ruling class will give up their power and privilege without a fight; that in their dealings with those who challenge their authority by openness, non-violence and brotherly love they too will in due course use the same openness, non-violence and brotherly love!

Have they had their illusions shaken by police actions since the raids: by the arrests of their fellow Committeemen under the Official Secrets Act, by the Ambulance trick at the two entrances at Wethersfield and by the arrest of 15 Marshals at Brize Norton who had been called by the Police Chiefs "to discuss arrangements" for the demonstration?

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IF they look upon "openness" as a principle rather than a tactic then it is clear that no examples as to the duplicity of the forces of Authority will influence them. And it would seem that they still consider this question of openness as one of principle as the concluding paragraph from the *Peace News* editorial clearly indicates:

If the Committee were ever to abandon significantly its policy of non-violence or openness, then the police would have some justification for using political police methods, and to the same extent the Committee would itself have compromised democratic and libertarian values. But we now have the right to ask the police not to stoop to underhand, undemocratic and unnecessary measures, and to protest vigorously when they do.

The utter confusion in this kind of thinking is the result of applying the same moral values to the man who is armed with arguments, a desire to see that reason prevails and that all mankind shall live together as equals and at peace, with the man who argues with a truncheon, the majesty of the law, and the threat of imprisonment. Don't our pacifist friends see that in such a relationship both sides are speaking a different language. And that the word "justification" has one meaning for us and another for them, and that therefore while on the one hand we must expect no consideration from them, on the other hand, we are worse than naive if we attempt to see their point of view. To say, as does the *Peace News* editorial, that while deprecating political police methods in all circumstances, the authorities would have "some justification" if the Committee were to "abandon significantly its policy of non-violence or openness", is to confer on society, as it is organised today, some kind of moral right; or to put it another way, that until such time as the people will not change society what exists is right.

With this view we anarchists disagree profoundly. We seek to change society not for the sake of change, but because we believe that the whole edifice of society has been built on wrong foundations. For us it is a question of building on new foundations and for this very reason we do not expect to receive, nor do we ask for, the co-operation of those who are directly engaged in defending the present social edifice from the demolition squads!

At most we shall demand that, since they are the upholders of law and order, they shall not exceed the limits of the powers they enjoy. And not because we are legalists, but because the law is already sufficiently weighted in favour of the *status quo* for the under-privileged majority not to use the law when it is in their favour. We know that the ruling class can change the law when it does not suit its purpose: as Verwoerd's government is doing in South Africa. But in the meantime it would be, in our opinion, a tactical mistake to allow the authorities, the Press and any other upholders of "law and order" to attack, and inhibit us, by actions which exceed their legal rights.

We must resist the taunts of the gutter press which will be the first to point out that we are opposed to the law yet demand that the police should respect the law. And we must answer them by pointing out that when we break the law we do so for our own reasons, and knowing what price the law may exact from us in terms of personal liberty. Because we do not recognise the Law does not mean that we recognise the right of the Authorities to imprison us without trial!

Neither does it mean that we should allow the police to get away with abuses of their rights, involv-

ing violence, or even procedure. They are the "pillars" of law and order; we must insist that they be the first to observe the rules! (Note: the Post Office workers to press their wage demands have not bothered to go on strike. As we write, they are proposing to work to rule. They are not going slow; they are simply carrying out their duties as laid down in the book of words. And just by doing this they will virtually paralyse the postal services. If the public were to demand that the police carry out their duties according to rule the already "undermanned" police force could be made to be even less "efficient"—or should one say "effective?"—than it is at present. Not only would the police be hamstrung, but probably half the population would be on some charge or other and the courts and prisons would certainly be unable to cope with the "criminals".)

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THE Committee of 100 viewed as a breakaway movement of the CND, that is as a movement which believes that more spectacular methods of propaganda than marches, meetings and parliamentary pressure groups, may result in unilateral disarmament so far as this country is concerned, has achieved all it can achieve, and the leaders of CND far from being embarrassed by its unruly offspring, should be deeply grateful to it, for the sit-downs have obviously saved the CND from oblivion and the political pigeon-hole which is the fate of all those movements which illude themselves that they can transform society by influencing political parties, or governments.

The Committee of 100 viewed as a movement which no longer believes in the goodwill of any political party but casts its lot with the people, in the street, in the factory and workshop, is in its infancy—and we say this not disparagingly, but as "brothers in arms", more than anxious that all the positive forces in this movement should be fed, inspired and encouraged, but not sacrificed to a theory or formula. Ideally we must act from strength, in which case we can afford to declare our intentions openly, defiantly. In such a case either we propose to wrest some initiative from government or we are pitting our physical, numerical, social strength against that of

authority. But for a movement at present rooted in the coming generation rather than in a section of the working class movement, to our minds, lack of numbers must perforce be counterbalanced by the element of surprise; hence, at this stage the question of secrecy or openness is one of vital importance.

We do not hesitate in advocating that the Committee of 100, as a movement of civil disobedience, should drop its "openness" and seek instead to organise its demonstrations as secretly as it possibly can. Either it is a movement of civil disobedience or it isn't. And if it is then its aim should be to disorganise the machinery of State as effectively as is possible. By informing the authorities of one's intentions beforehand is the most ineffective way of going about it! This, we maintain, is elementary common sense, but only if by civil disobedience one means to change the rules as well as hampering the Government. To advocate new values, a new society without at the same time doing everything to ensure that there is a breakdown in existing government is as ineffective as seeking to paralyse existing social and economic organisation without having ideas as to what should replace this organisation.

The Committee of 100 movement has therefore a double role to play: on the one hand that of propagandists for a libertarian society based on co-operation and equality between men, and the more openly this work can be done the better; on the other hand by acts of disobedience they must demonstrate that Authority is basically weak when faced by even a minority when that minority is united and determined. And to achieve the maximum effect for such activity preparation must be done in secret.

To our minds the most significant social event of 1961 in this country has been the growth of the Committee of 100 movement. 1962 must be a year of consolidation, of growth as a *social movement* which will inspire the working people of this country to an awareness of the real power which now lies dormant in each one of them. No movement of revolt which does not have its roots in the working classes can change society in the direction of freedom; indeed we doubt whether it can change society at all!

Nehru and Goa

AT most times we find ourselves in agreement with FREEDOM's cartoonist. The last issue of FREEDOM was an exception to the rule. Firstly because he implies that Gandhi would not have approved of the use of armed violence in the circumstances. In this connection Kingsley Martin has some interesting things to say from his first-hand dealings with Gandhi. Writing in last week's *New Statesman* he points out:

In January 1948, three days before his assassination, I had a talk with him about the Kashmir war. Kashmir had already become set in the pattern in which it has remained ever since. The mountain areas were effectively part of Pakistan, and Jammu similarly was part of India. Only the boundaries and status of the Valley could still be reasonably discussed. I remarked to the Mahatma that the partition of Kashmir appeared to be the only alternative to war. But he would have none of it and he was prepared for India to defend her legal rights by force. So we discussed how far non-violence, which is a powerful weapon for throwing out an occupying power, can serve the purposes of established government. How could non-violence be applied in Kashmir? Did the principle break down as soon as those who had won by non-violence found themselves inheriting the responsibilities of the government they had overthrown? On this I got no clear guidance from the Mahatma, though he directed me to read Tolstoy.

I am therefore dubious whether

Gandhi would have blamed Nehru for sending troops into Goa. If he was prepared to resist violence with the army in Kashmir, he would probably have overlooked its use in Goa. He would certainly have supported the non-violent demonstrators who attempted to liberate Goa in 1954, as he had in the previous non-violent effort in 1946. In 1954, 15 people were shot by the Portuguese as they sat on the ground. Nehru put a stop to such attempts as likely to lead both to more bloodshed and to insistent demands by Indian public opinion that the army should be used. In 1960 many thousands have been prepared to offer non-violence in Goa, and Nehru is certainly right in saying that, by using the army, he saved the bloodshed which further demonstrations would have caused: if there had been a massacre of non-violent resisters the fury of Indians everywhere would have led to many more casualties than the very few who lost their lives in what Indians regard as mere police action.

The second point on which this writer is not sure whether he is in agreement with our cartoonist is over the caption which reads "Yes, I [Nehru] know old friend. But you [Gandhi] never had to run a government". Now it is true that there were reports that the military action in Goa was linked to elections in Bombay in which Krishna Menon, Minister of War and Nehru's right-hand man, was seeking re-election; that pro-Goa feelings ran very high in Bombay which has some 100,000 Goan refugees among its population. Politicians are capable of all kinds

of intrigues. But it would be foolish of us to put the Goan campaign on a par with the Suez adventure or the Katangan intrigues. It is difficult to disentangle at this stage the real reasons behind the Indian government's action; the fact that no action had been taken during the 14 years since Indian independence, would rather indicate that from a purely governmental point of view no great advantage was to be gained from the liberation of Goa. Was the Indian action influenced perhaps by the African politicians and the Goan nationalists?

And are we prepared to affirm that the Indian action was not welcomed by the overwhelming mass of Goans? For anarchists the "liberation" of Goa by the Indian army is not a simple black and white issue. Some of us cannot help thinking back to the Spanish civil war. Obviously a majority of the anti-Franco forces would have welcomed military assistance from the Popular Front government of France, and, without exception, after the defeat, they hoped that the victorious allied armies would come to liberate them in 1945.

What is important in all cases, and on which anarchists can have no doubts, is that once the tyrant has been overthrown, and the country liberated the people do not allow their liberators to become the new tyrants.

If you're white, you're all right

AYLESBURY DOCTORS PREFER WHITES

The British Medical Association has criticised doctors at Aylesbury who turned away coloured patients, saying their lists were full, yet continued to take on English families. Said a BMA spokesman: "The Association is emphatically against the colour bar in any form. To discriminate against coloured people is directly against every principle a doctor should stand for."

The condemnation follows a letter written to the Buckinghamshire Health Executive by an Aylesbury woman doctor complaining that some of her colleagues were turning away coloured patients. The doctor has taken on more than fifty West Indian families to her list in the last six months.

Her letter, which has caused an outcry in Aylesbury, said doctors were turning away immigrants for two reasons: treating coloured families takes a great deal of time, largely because of language difficulties; and English patients are "not impressed" by seeing a waiting room full of coloured people. The letter added: "I think it is rather a shame that these West Indians should have to trail round the town being refused by one doctor after another. This is one reason why I have accepted so many so far. But although my list is small, I am not prepared to build up a practice consisting predominantly of foreigners."

The clerk to the executive, Mr. L. A. White, said yesterday: "We cannot tell doctors what patients to take on their lists. We have an allocation committee for people who write saying they cannot get treatment. Then we can order a doctor to take them on."

400 NEGRO YOUTHS ARRESTED

Albany (Ga.), December 12.

Some four hundred Negro youths were arrested here today when they protested against the earlier arrest of 11 "freedom riders". The youths, charged with a breach of the peace and with parading without a licence, were taken to a prison large enough to hold only half their number.

Before the arrests, police surrounded the courthouse where the "freedom riders" went on trial and the court-room was closed to all but witnesses, the accused, and court officials. As the hearing began, the 400 Negro youths, many of them students from the all-Negro Albany State College, began marching in pairs round the courthouse, singing hymns. They were arrested after ignoring police orders to disperse.

British United Press.

NEGRO PROTEST BROKEN UP WITH TEAR GAS

Baton Rouge (Louisiana), December 15

Some 2,000 Negroes, singing as they marched, made for the city prison here today. Police threw tear-gas grenades into the crowd and the protesters fled in confusion. The marchers ran and screamed as the tear-gas fumes spread.

Twenty-three members of the Congress of Racial Equality, arrested yesterday for picketing stores in Baton Rouge, were in the prison. The protest march to the prison was organised last night at Southern (Negro) University, north of here.

Most of the crowd was believed to have been students. They announced last night that they planned to march on the prison. Police, posted at 10-ft. intervals, kept the Negroes from entering the square where the prison is situated. The Negroes lined up across the street from the fourstorey court building that includes the prison. They sang "America" and other such songs, and carried signs.

When reports spread earlier that the Negroes were going to march on the Capitol—rather than the prison—state and city police, armed with both tear gas and riot guns, took up stations at all crossroads leading to the Capitol. Yesterday, police arrested 23 demonstrators at the request of owners of stores which were being picketed in protest against segregation. British United Press.

