

'There is one essential point wherein a political liar differs from others of the faculty, that he ought to have but a short memory.'

JONATHAN SWIFT

## In this Issue:

DUTY, DIVORCE & THE BISHOPS  
LIFE & RESPONSIBILITY  
OUT OF THIS WORLD  
CORRESPONDENCE

DECEMBER 1 1962 Vol 23 No 37

## THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY - 4d.

# Sell-out all round

IT seems at the moment as if Fords are winning in their bid to smash the shop stewards and the militant rank and file. From the very beginning, when they sacked a shop steward for holding a 15 min. meeting during the lunch break on the firm's premises, Fords have been awaiting their chance. After all, what can be wrong in holding a meeting for the purpose of reporting back to the men the result of certain negotiations with the management? This is a common enough occurrence in factories and on building sites, but Fords were determined to have a showdown and used this as an excuse to call the tune.

The immediate reaction to the sacking was a call for strike action from the other stewards, with the result that the factory was brought practically to a standstill. The management replied that they were standing firm and would not re-instate the sacked steward, pointing out with their usual patriotic fervour, the cost of this strike financially, to the country and themselves.

The fact that the Motor Show was on at this time added fuel to the fire as they could see the prospect of fat profits from overseas orders receding into the distance in the face of the possibility of being unable to comply with the delivery dates. The prestige of the country was at stake, and so with these thoughts in mind, the whole mass media was turned against the strikers who, after nine days, went back after a recommendation from their unions.

After the resumption of work, Fords announced that they would not take back seventy men whom they considered to be trouble makers, and so the unions in reply called for an official strike.

In the circumstances, the Union Leaders could not do anything else but call a strike and with over a week's notice, giving the management plenty of time for negotiations. How many times have we heard the call for strike action only to have it withdrawn and some face-saving explanation given, followed by further negotiations? This was no exception.

The papers were full of statements from Fords' management complaining of the endless upset and damage these trouble-makers had caused, not to mention the cost. Giving themselves a mental pat on the back, they told the Press how they were facing up to this vital issue which was affecting the whole nation and the prosperity of every one of us. This, of course, is the normal diplomatic way of saying that they are worried about a possible drop in their profits.

In the long run it is perhaps better from their point of view to have a showdown now to settle the question of these seventy men. The openhearted generosity of Fords' management has seen fit to pay them 30/- per day while on suspension, after exploiting them in an inhuman manner at the assembly lines.

While negotiations were going on between unions and managements over the proposed official strike, anti-strike meetings were being held in various places and people were asked to sign

petitions. It was reported in a Dagenham local paper that a man organising a petition against the strike, had claimed that Communist shop stewards were sabotaging his efforts by destroying his signature sheets. This petition stated that the strike was "ill-timed" and "ill-conceived" and asked the T.U.C. if there could be a secret ballot among the Ford Workers.

The following week, Mr. Edward Martell of the People's League for the Defence of Freedom wrote to the T.U.C. General Secretary, Mr. Woodcock, offering to finance a secret ballot of Ford workers. A spokesman commenting on his offer said that the T.U.C. had no power to organise such a ballot. Mr. Martell is well known for his anti-union views and his organisation is always ready to help break a strike. A fleet of buses is kept in readiness for use in the event of a bus strike and the People's League air transport which is available for national emergencies was used to fly in paper supplies from abroad during a printing strike.

The Ford wives were the next to organise anti-strike activities. They held an extremely stormy meeting which was widely covered by the national press. Apparently, the organisers didn't have it all their own way, and the speakers from the platform got plenty of heckling from the wives who were in favour of the strike. The meeting ended with the signing of a petition urging the arrangement of a secret ballot. An interesting postscript to this meeting was the revelation that the

husbands of two of the chief organisers are not working at Dagenham, but at Woolwich which is not involved in this strike.

The next scene in this drama of anti-victimisation came a few days later, when the strike was called off by the Union Leaders, left winger (whatever that means) unilateralist Cousins being one of the prime movers of this. The suspension of another shop steward earlier in the day, the reason being given of slack work, made no difference whatsoever to their decision, in spite of the

fact that Mr. Cousins had said that there must be no victimisation by the company.

The following week, the Ford National Joint negotiating Committee met the Management to continue the negotiations. The management representatives announced that they had reduced their Black list to 40 men, after 12 had found other jobs and the other 18 had been re-employed. The company would not in future guarantee the re-employment of unofficial strikers and any that were taken back would pro-

bably lose their merit money, an average of 4d. per hour.

The question of the 40 men left without jobs was to be resolved by discussions between the local officials of the men's individual unions and Fords. A further carrot for co-operation was the increase from £7 10s. to £11 per week for these men while their cases were under consideration.

These discussions no doubt will be long drawn out affairs and meanwhile these 40 men await the outcome. As for William Francis, the sacked shop steward, Fords have refused point blank to re-employ him, all because he held a 15 min. meeting during a lunch break.

The issue at stake is not only the future of these 40 men, but also the future relationship between employer and employee. If these men are not re-instated, Fords will have established themselves in a position where they can sack men, whom they consider are not co-operating. In this way, the management will be able to get rid of all militant workers making it easy to introduce new and faster methods of production. Not a week goes by without us reading that industry must be more competitive, a state which is achieved by a number of inhuman methods. They call it rationalization of production, and it involves amongst other things time checks and the speeding up of the conveyor belts.

We have just embarked on a National Productivity Year, and workers are being assailed on all sides by calls for higher productivity, from people who never seem to produce very much themselves. The Duke of Edinburgh, who officially opened it, exhorted everyone to do their utmost to further productivity and then cleared off to Australia to watch the Commonwealth Games.

As it is, conditions in a modern car

Continued on page 3



## KAUNDA'S ABOUT-FACE . . .

I HAVE only just seen the astonishing reference to Kenneth Kaunda by J.W.—your Nov. 10th issue (Kaunda's About-Face). Why does he assume Kaunda is slowly graduating into a rodent simply because he has been seeking an alliance with Nkumbula? It is true Nkumbula is a stooge politician of the Tshombe stamp, but consider Kaunda's position. He has been seeking independence for a number of years in an atmosphere of rapidly increasing African consciousness of the oppressiveness of white rule. This has been matched in turn by a growing determination by the whites to maintain their grip 'by force if necessary' (to quote Sir Roy Welensky).

The Africans are completely unarmed, the whites possess guns, tanks and aircraft galore. In this explosive situation

with an ever-increasing risk of a mass slaughter of Africans, Kaunda sought to persuade Nkumbula to make common cause with him against Welensky's U.F.P. Had he succeeded, the way would have been open now for a peaceful transfer of power to African majority rule and this long dangerous period of tension would have been ended.

It may be right, Nkumbula being the sort of man he is, to describe Kaunda's move as unrealistic, but to impute the morality of exploring this faint hope as something on a level of rodent behaviour is surely no less unrealistic.

If J.W. had been able to show that Kaunda was prepared to sacrifice any principles in order to secure this compact, and J.W. hasn't and Kaunda didn't, the headline of the article "Kaunda's About-Face" would have still

required some justifying. As subsequent events have shown (i.e. Nkumbula has refused the overture and is secretly plotting with Welensky whilst maintaining a public facade of non-alignment with either side) it is simply not true.

J.W. may dislike as much as I do the role of authority implicit in the structure of mass parties. But that is another argument altogether, where the issues can be clarified better if we exercise charity and avoid extreme language, especially towards people bearing a burden of responsibility for the lives of many others of which we are free.

I have no doubt there is an alternative to mass parties and the problems of leadership they pose, but so far neither J.W. nor I have put forward one that is practicable.

JOHN PAPWORTH,  
(World Peace Brigade).

Der Es Salaam, Nov. 19

## . . . and the role of authority

JOHN PAPWORTH, whose letter is published on another page, should not allow his personal regard for Mr. Kaunda to obscure his political judgment. During the past two years Kaunda has gone a long way, as a politician. As the *Guardian* pointed out when it was reported that he might be meeting Tshombe in company with Nkumbula: "some of Mr. Kaunda's supporters have taken the meeting amiss . . . [but] are learning that with power comes politics".

Our correspondent "dislikes the role of authority implicit in the structure of mass parties" but declares it to be "another argument altogether". But on the contrary it is very much part of the argument. Kaunda is engaged in "high level" discussions and bargaining, and Papworth can refer to him having to "bear a burden of responsibility for the lives of many others of which we are

free" as if this were a situation not of Mr. Kaunda's own creation. The "atmosphere of rapidly increasing African consciousness of the oppressiveness of white rule" has invariably been exploited by a small number of African politicians, generally educated in Europe, and already corrupted by the politics of the West, for their own ends. In Mr. Kaunda's case this was not so, and the fact that he expressed strong views on non-violence must have given many of his supporters the hope that independence in N. Rhodesia would be achieved by different means.

It is no argument to say that circumstances were stronger than Mr. Kaunda's good intentions. He had the choice of staying with his people and using his education and political understanding to develop their "consciousness of the oppressiveness of white rule" and make

them aware of the fact that unless they learned how to manage their own lives all independence would mean for them would be a prolongation of oppressiveness but under white-black or just black rule—or of using the confidence they had in him to "negotiate" with the white rulers, thereby using the ferment among his people as the bargaining counter for what Papworth calls a "peaceful transfer of power to African majority rule" and thus end "this long dangerous period of tension".

In other words, the former solution would have sought to develop the rebellious mood of a people and give them a direction which could lead them from white oppression to freedom; whereas the latter tends to extinguish the rebelliousness and militancy of the people by leaving the initiative to a handful of trusted leaders who engage in negotia-

tions. These are so long drawn-out that by the time they are concluded (a) they are a watered down version of the original intentions (b) their trusted leaders have learned all the tricks of the politicians' trade which they then put to good use in ruling their own people (c) the people have lost their militancy and are divided among themselves because the government job-hunters in their midst have been preparing the way for the day of "liberation".

We do not deny that the revolutionary choice we have outlined would probably have set back the date for N. Rhodesian independence; and it is probable that Mr. Kaunda would now be packing his bags for a spell of preventive arrest (assuming that his people had not learned how to hide him from his would-be persecutors) instead of waiting for the day when he will be summoned to the plush armchairs of Lancaster House, or wherever it is that the transference of power over the heads of the African people is currently negotiated (his friend Papworth read the sickly reports of the most recent sell-out, with Dr. Banda licking everybody's boots and having his licked in return. We heard on the Radio the Doctor praise Butler *et alia* as well as his own "boys" who,

Continued on page 2

## ANARCHY 22

presents a conversation between **MARX & BAKUNIN** and other features

ANARCHY is Published by Freedom Press at 1/6 on the last Saturday of every month.

This Year's

## Anarchist Ball

will be held next year. On January 25th at Fulham Town Hall with Mick Mulligan & his Band and George Melly. Guest Artists will include Sidney Carter, Bob Davenport, Red Ner, Redd Sullivan, Wally Whyton.

Price 6/-, Refreshments available.

TICKETS AVAILABLE SOON

# Duty, Divorce & the Bishop

THE Bishop of Bath and Wells is worried about the divorce rate. Speaking on "The Christian Family" at Weston-super-Mare he stated (according to the *Bristol Evening Post* for November 17): "Between five and seven of every 100 marriages in the country ended in the divorce court. Last year 26,360 decrees were made absolute, the highest number for six years." He also said that the "people of this country do not want easier divorce. They look over the ocean and see a situation which exists in America and they recoil. There are 42,000 marriages and 39,000 divorces a year in California."

Which people in this country do not want easier divorce, the bishop did not say. Presumably they do not include those who are tied to a hated mate because neither has the courage to commit an appropriate "offence" with which to convince a divorce court. Nor those who, while separated, are stopped by conventional humbug from forming a new alliance. The bishop was equally vague as to who were the "sociologists and others" who rejected divorce by consent. One would like to think that it was because such supporters of marital misery preferred to remain anonymous.

Few words need be wasted on the bishop's troubles. Were legal restrictions less heavy, or the economic position of women better, then he might have even more cause to worry about the divorce rate. Who knows how many unions are kept together because of lack of money, the monstrosities of the law, or simply fear of "the neighbours"? The wonder is not that there are so many divorces, but that there are so few. Sex, like other human activities, usually thrives on variety and when confined to the cage of monogamy soon tends to wither and die.

## BOOKS?

### We can supply

ANY book in print. Also out-of-print books searched for—and frequently found! This includes paper-backs, children's books and text books. (Please supply publisher's name if possible).

#### NEW BOOKS

- The Conservative Enemy  
C. A. R. Crossland 30/-  
The Private Life of Joseph Stalin  
J. Fishman & J. B. Hutton 21/-  
London: City of any Dream  
Colin MacInnes 50/-  
Dostoevsky David Magarshak 50/-  
To Katanga and Back  
Conor Cruise O'Brien 35/-  
Selected Poems Gregory Corso 12/6  
The Illusion of Immortality  
Corliss Lamont 25/-  
Profiles of the Future  
Arthur C. Clarke 21/-  
The Fraternal Society  
R. & H. Hauser 21/-  
A Rational Animal G. Ryle 5/-

#### REPRINTS AND CHEAP EDITIONS

- Meditations Marcus Aurelius 7/6  
Complete Poems Hart Crane 7/6  
Intentions and Other Writings  
Oscar Wilde 7/6  
French Liberal Thought in the  
Eighteenth Century  
Kingsley Martin 25/-  
Take a Girl Like You  
Kingsley Amis 3/6  
Selected Poems George Barker 2/6  
Exile and the Kingdom  
Albert Camus 2/6  
Nightmares of Eminent Persons  
Bertrand Russell 2/6  
Alarms and Diversions  
James Thurber 6/-  
The Victorian Chaise-Longue  
Marghanita Laski 2/6  
Family and Kinship in East London  
Michael Young & P. Willmott 4/6  
Walden and Other Writings  
H. D. Thoreau 6/-

#### SECOND-HAND

War and the Soviet Union H. S. Dinerstein 15/-; The London Head Teachers' Association Jubilee Book 3/-; The Shape of Things to Come H. G. Wells 6/-; Liberty and Tyranny Francis W. Hirst 3/-; History of Old Testament Criticism Archibald Duff 3/-; History of Mathematics in Europe J. W. N. Sullivan 2/6;

### Freedom Bookshop

(Open 2 p.m.—5.30 p.m. daily;  
10 a.m.—1 p.m. Thursdays;  
10 a.m.—5 p.m. Saturdays).

17a MAXWELL ROAD

FULHAM SW6 Tel: REN 3736

The real basis for the bishop's complaint, however, is to be found in his objection to certain "young people" who "greedily and selfishly . . . forget their duty and what they owe to the community to which they belong." Here is a moral spook which has been used to terrify millions of wretches who have succumbed to its blandishments—Duty and Debt to the Community. It will be worthwhile taking a brief look at this spook, since even some anarchists seem to be still under its influence.

We do not choose to come into this world. We are thrust into it by an act of our parents. When we arrive we find that we have to conform to a pattern of life in whose shaping we have no voice. Willy-nilly, we are supposed to fulfil the obligations it imposes upon us, whether or not these are to our tastes or interests. How, then, can it be argued that we owe a debt to the "community"? We have made no pact, nor concluded any agreement—by what right can our obedience be demanded?

The reply may be that the community provides us with its services, with food, shelter and work, and that this puts us in its debt. This in no way follows. If a man is sold into slavery to a plantation owner who gives him food and shelter and puts him to work, is that man under any obligation to stay with his "owner" if an opportunity for escape occurs? Even the Bishop of Bath and Wells would probably say that he was not, particularly since this form of slavery is now almost universally condemned. Since the man was forced into slavery, since he was denied any free choice in the matter, he is considered to be under no obligation to remain a slave.

Is the position of the individual in present society fundamentally different? He has been given no choice and cannot live his own life, except at the risk of imprisonment, or even death. Everywhere he is hemmed in by laws which make him an object for domination and exploitation. It is as ridiculous to pretend that he has any more "duty" towards this "community" than the slave had towards his owner, or the sailor of two hundred years ago had towards the press-gang that conscripted him. To argue the opposite, is to subordinate the individual to the collective and logically leads to his complete absorption into the total state.

## KAUNDA'S ABOUT-FACE

Continued from page 1

he added "I keep under pretty strict control"—followed by loud laughter from the plush armchairs. Banda is one of them!). Unlike the nationalists, anarchists do not believe that independence of white rule must be achieved at any cost as a first step and as quickly as possible.

If it could be shown that the kind of "independence" which is negotiated among black-and-white politicians leads to an immediate solution of the nagging problem of hunger, this writer, at least, could not argue for long-term revolutionary solutions which would perhaps prolong the physical suffering of millions against immediate solutions which at least would guarantee that every human being had the necessities to maintain life. It is one thing to talk of making material sacrifices for freedom and human values to the over-fed, over-gadged people of the "affluent nations" and quite another to the starving millions of the rest of the world! But let us face up to the facts of life which are: (1) that the standards of living in the Western countries are rising; (2) colonialism has virtually been ended, in the sense at least that India, or Algeria, or Ghana are no longer ruled by a metropolitan power; (3) in 1961 the world's population increased by 52,000,000; (4) food production, according to the FAO, did not increase at all in 1961.

Since the number of people still under colonial rule today probably does not exceed 100 million and the world's population exceeds 2,000 million, and since the standards of living of the West and Russia and satellites are increasing it is unreasonable to conclude that the standards of living of the people in the rest of the world, including those that have achieved "independence", have remained stationary or have even gone down?

WE advocate the revolutionary solutions then, because on the evidence it seems that the people, as distinct from

It is in keeping with the job of a priest to utter empty phrases about duty and sacrifice. Were he to do otherwise, he would soon cease to be a priest. But to anyone wanting to be an autonomous individual, the concept of duty as a sacrosanct entity, a mystical something which must be done whatever one's personal wishes, is a piece of mumbo-jumbo to be thrown into the dustbin along with all the other metaphysical rubbish used to prop up authority.

S. E. PARKER.

## Editorial Footnote

[Unless Comrade Parker can discover a way whereby we can come into this world not willy-nilly but by choice; unless he can also discover a way whereby the newly born babe could dispense with the services (including the

## On the same shelf?

READERS of FREEDOM will be familiar with the selections of articles that have been published yearly since 1951. These have offered a range of subjects and opinions that no other weekly journal can rival, and have shown a courageous uninhibitedness about topics that even the most extreme of 'party' weeklies somehow refuse to face. As the political parties become more similar the harder they try to establish their differences, and freedom of speech and thought becomes increasingly regarded as heresy, journals such as *Tribune* and the *N.S.&N.* have in their own ways become as conservative as *Time & Tide* and *The Tablet*. The 'line' must be followed and sanctified.

In this stifling circle of 'topical' journals, the *Spectator* has from time to time offered a refreshing independence of thought. Or, to be more exact, they have offered space to writers and columnists who have been prepared to voice the kind of individualistic views that would have little chance of appearing in more 'rigid' papers. The period 1956-61 was particularly rich in this kind of comment, and though recently the *Spectator* has lost much of its fire, it is

## WHEN PRIVILEGE IS ENDED . . .

the new privileged class, do not enjoy immediate material advantage from independence achieved from above, and the immediate effect is simply to replace one set of rulers and exploiters by another. At most, all that has changed is the colour of their skin. In such circumstances an intelligent as well as a conscientious revolutionary would resist the temptation of clutching at the constitutional solutions which offer him and his friends status and power so long as he is prepared to treat the people he alleges to represent, as pawns in the electoral circus. Indeed, only as revolutionaries could Kaunda and his friends be expected to recognise the equal rights of a white minority which is outnumbered by the blacks in the ratio of about eighty to one! Instead they accept the solution which gives the whites equal representation as the blacks! If it follows, by implication, that we suggest Kaunda should have held out for proportional representation, we would hasten to express our opposition to any solution which is based on rule by minorities or majorities or such fantastic criteria as the colour of a man's skin! For a revolutionary the criterion is not between black and white but between exploiter and exploited whatever the colour of their skins.

WE do not profess to know anything about local politics in N. Rhodesia and apologize in advance to most of our readers for the fact that their stinginess precludes us from attempting to give them our version of on-the-spot opinions! But even from this distance we are prepared to surmise that Mr. Nkumbula, who is financed by Tshombe in Katanga, who is a pal of Welensky, looks for his votes among the exploited but better paid workers in the copper belt, whereas Mr. Kaunda enjoys the support of the exploited but badly paid workers in the tobacco, coffee, wheat—in the agricultural and cattle-rearing areas of the country. N. Rhode-

love) of those who provide for him until he is capable of providing for himself, he must either accept these limitations on individual freedom with good grace or register his protest at being brought into the world against his will by committing suicide!

Supposing Comrade Parker had been born into an anarchist world. Does he imagine that he would find no "pattern(s) of life" even if there were no laws, no bosses, no money system, no exploitation? It is true that in such a society he would be free to opt out of society, and plough his lonely furrow—which in existing society it is virtually impossible for the individual to do. But in an anarchist world, would Comrade Parker demand as a right "the services, the food and shelter that the community provides" or at least those which he cannot produce by his own labour and which he needs? If he has no debt to the community, what debt has the community to him other than recognising his equal right to the means of production? Obviously an anarchist society would take such rare birds as Comrade Parker in its stride and would waste no time arguing about "pacts" and "agreements" or of pointing out that he was exploiting their labour when he used the

roads, or borrowed books from the public libraries and switched on the light to read them, etc. . . .

Our criticism of Comrade Parker's individualism can be summarised in a paragraph from the pamphlet he has just published containing three essays by Emil Armand:—

"But our kind of individualist is not only mind, spirit, thought. He is neither dry, nor niggardly of heart. If exclusively a rationalist, he would feel himself incomplete, so it is a necessity for him to be both sensible and 'sentimental'. This explains his plan for freeing "his world" of useless and avoidable suffering. He knows that this is possible when one speaks and understands "the language of the heart" when one prefers agreement to struggle, abstinence to the unclashing of actions dictated by bitterness, animosity or spite."

To our minds Comrade Parker's "autonomous individual" is, in Armand's words all "mind", "dry" and "niggardly of heart". Why doesn't he make him occasionally "speak and understand the language of the heart"? Then he might also have a better opinion of his fellow beings.—EDITORS].

\*E. Armand "Anarchism & Individualism" (1s. 3d. post free from Freedom Bookshop).

"POINTS OF VIEW" (A selection from the "Spectator"), Longmans 18s.

headquarters for the whole operation; the Editor of *The Times* would open his correspondence column to the idea, probably starting with a column-length letter from Lord Radcliffe, and would then round the correspondence off with a leading article which managed to give the impression that the whole idea had arisen quite spontaneously . . . ; and Lady Violet Bonham Carter would, I hope, be on the telephone.

Humour has always been one of the qualities of the *Spectator*. Writing of beds, Katherine Whitehorn remarks:

"There have been beds that haul you up to the ceiling to escape the ants and beds that drop you down into the cellar to be murdered by the innkeeper; travelling beds on wheels, beds with plumbing, beds for receiving several polite callers (with silk hangings) or one friend (with mirrors)."

And the following does not come from the pages of FREEDOM but from a commentary by Taper:

"The gradual petrification of the party attitudes has spread well up into the defence regions of the body politic; from Mr. Bevan's attacks on German rearmament (Mr. Gaitskell folded his arms and gazed on Nirvana) to Mr. Lloyd's accusation that the Opposition were unpatriotic in dividing the house, the attitudes were as predictable as they were silly, and almost more irrelevant than either." C.H.

our ignorance on the subject, and welcome enlightenment).

(3) What propaganda has been made among the miners of the Copper belt to identify themselves with the land workers?

(4) What steps have Mr. Kaunda and his friends taken to politically educate the people of N. Rhodesia to take over the management of their affairs themselves as opposed to the acceptance of a transference of power from one set of rulers to another?

(5) As to his friend Mr. Kaunda's intentions when he does get his majority: (a) does he propose to expropriate the mining corporations? (b) if not, what solutions does he propose which will free the African miners from their servitude and will result in the equitable distribution among all the people of N. Rhodesia of the benefits derived from its natural resources? (c) in view of his repeated appeals to his people on the subject of non-violence as a principle, how does he propose to govern without laws; and without law courts, without police and the magistrates if he introduce laws; and without the threat of force (hence an army) if he distinguishes between "his people" and those beyond the artificial frontiers?

Perhaps the ideological points we have raised and the direct questions we have asked may appear irrelevant in the context of our own present political impotence in the West. But Africa, N. Rhodesia, is not the West. So far as its people are concerned they have everything to gain and very little to lose if only the politicians white or black can be prevented from stifling their generous and impulsive rebelliousness against authority. If the function of the World Peace Brigade is to ease the tensions between rulers and the ruled, we would have no hesitation in denouncing them as reactionaries and stooges of the ruling class! We welcome these tensions as a healthy manifestation of the militancy of the underprivileged. The "period of tension" can only be ended when we find solutions which not only end white privilege but all privilege of man over man.

# FREEDOM

December 1 1962 Vol 23 No 37

DEAR SIR,

This whole debate about thalidomide babies is "unreal" for the obvious reason that we cannot know in advance how a newly-born human being is going to feel about its deformities when it reaches adulthood. Some will choose to go on living, others to die. Since this is the case, it is probably better to err on the side of life, but the dilemma

is always a tragic one. Whatever FREEDOM may say, Mrs. Vandeput hasn't solved anything for anybody.

You also say that a mother has the right of life or death over her baby. You have gone very Roman all of a sudden. Personally, I can think of nothing more authoritarian than murder.

Yours faithfully,  
London, Nov 16 GEOFFREY MINISH.

## LIFE AND RESPONSIBILITY

OUR correspondent declares that the debate about deformed babies is "unreal" for what he considers the "obvious reason that we cannot know in advance how a newly-born human being is going to feel about its deformities when it reaches adulthood. Some will choose to go on living, others to die". And he concludes that it is "probably better to err on the side of life".

We would like to support this view for the obvious reason that in a free society such a choice should rest with the individual concerned. On the other hand, we cannot be satisfied that more than a few adults would have the courage and the rationality to take such a decision and execute it. Our correspondent even seems to overlook the fact that in the case of seriously deformed persons their only way out would be by self imposed starvation; and at what a price for the loved ones, who for years had devoted their lives and perhaps material security to provide not only love but all that science can offer to compensate for the imperfections of Nature, the ignorance of science or for what "God decreed".

The baby that, in our opinion was mercifully, lovingly, spared by its mother the agony of living to become aware of its "enormous handicaps"—assuming that what follows can be summed up in two words—was described by the Belgian Attorney General in these terms:

The child, which had no arms, no shoulder-bone structure but with embryonic fingers attached to the trunk . . . and no anus, was starting life with an enormous handicap, though nothing permitted one to say it would not have lived. He hoped, moreover that no one would say it was a monster.

No, when we think of monsters we think of the Verwoerds, the Hitlers and the Francos and not a helpless babe rendered more helpless by the quirks of nature, the ignorance of scientific man, or for those who believe in him "the will of God", and who will remain helpless when he should normally be expected to fend for himself and live and grow as a human personality. Think of the problems of an otherwise normal, limbless human being at the age of puberty. Think of the intimate day to day functions and the daily unhappiness they and their loved ones must endure; think of the loneliness and the frustration of the being who can neither touch nor approach an object of interest without the arms and legs of another human being constantly in attendance. We believe that a

human being so deformed, that has been allowed to live, not only has the right to hate those who have allowed him to live but also the right to demand that they should be in constant attendance for his every wish. Society, or at least Society, the Church and the law, demand that the individuals who have the misfortune to bring into this world a grossly deformed babe shall be threatened with a murder charge if they have the imagination to destroy it and be accused of being inhuman monsters if they do not sacrifice their future to it.

When we wrote (FREEDOM, Nov. 17) "This writer has no hesitation in declaring that no society can claim, as of right, even less to being free, that women should not decide the fate or the future of the babes they bear" we were attempting to summarise in one sentence not only the right of a mother to destroy her creation, but what is equally, or more, important our belief that no-one better than the mother knows what is best for the future of her babe. And this applies in its negative as well as its positive aspects. To seek to persuade an "accidental" mother who rejects her babe that it is her duty to care for it by applying moral pressures is against the interests of the child; it is much better that it should be adopted by people who want children but are unable to have their own. To demand that the mother of a grossly deformed child has a duty to society or to God to keep it alive and to sacrifice herself to it presupposes that she believes in God and that society has over-riding rights as to the fate of her deformed babe.

MR. MINISH suggests that apart from going "Roman all of a sudden" we are putting forward views that are authoritarian and if put into effect can only be described as murder.

Having for the first time been charged with advocating murder we turned to our dictionary, and discovered that this terrible word is defined as "unlawful killing of human being with malice aforethought" (Oxford Concise). Is Mr. Minish prepared to maintain that this writer, or a whole host of correspondents in the press, notably the *Times*, who welcomed the Liège verdict are motivated by "malice aforethought" and that this writer in going one step further and declaring that all mothers should have the right to decide the "fate or future" of their babes is an authoritarian because an advocate of murder?

## Santa Baby . . .

WE NEED MORE READERS!!

There is only one month left to find the hundreds of new readers we need not only to balance our budget but to increase the influence of our paper. Are you doing your bit? What about a 3-month gift subscription to a friend? What about copies of ANARCHY complete

with envelopes if requested instead of Xmas cards (we can supply all back numbers except Nos. 6 and 13 of which stocks are so low that we have kept them for orders of complete sets).

And the Deficit Fund. Have you contributed your share this year? If not, there's still time to give Freedom Press an Xmas box!

THE THREAT of an outbreak of peace hung over the world, the spectacle of Mr. Krushchev and Mao Tse-tung "going limp" as it were, startled the world into fantastic political speculations. . . .

AN ATTEMPTED inquest on Civil Defence preparations for the last crisis but one (Cuba) was fobbed off by the Home Secretary. *Topic* magazine revealed that our C.D. plans were not ready, Hampstead residents found that C.D. officials were not at "action stations" during the Cuban crisis. . . .

GENERAL NORSTAD is reported to have said: "Nato troops are prepared to use battlefield atomic weapons, if necessary, to defend Western Europe. The selective use of limited atomic firepower will not necessarily result in total war, although it may heighten the degree of risk of total war." . . .

Mr. Minish raises problems in his criticisms which anarchists cannot dismiss lightly. If the mother has not the power of life and death over her progeny who has? If the State or society by what right? If no-one what moral duty has the mother to suckle her babe? Again, should society have the right to oblige women to bear? If not what moral right has it to legislate how the mother should dispose of it when she has it?

The Church says that "God gives life and it is for God to take it away" (half the under-25s gave this answer to a *Daily Herald* question on "Mercy Killing" following the Liège trial). The weakness of this argument, and which the law does not accept for obvious reasons is that if God has the power of life and death, then just as when we give birth it is the will of "God" so when we take life we are only acting by God's will!

Surely in a free society where there is no imposed laws, every individual would have the power of life and death over his fellows. Does anybody really think that people will go about trying to kill each other? Will there be the wholesale slaughter of wars which are characteristics of our present society with all its morality and its laws against killing? How many of those under-twenty-fives who solemnly declared that "life is God's gift", that "life is something too sacred" would refuse to bear arms if called upon by the State? By removing constraints the individual invariably assumes responsibility. To our minds no one has a greater sense of responsibility for a babe than its mother for reasons which seem to obvious to repeat. And we think, contrary to what our correspondent maintains, that the Liège trial verdict was tremendously important for the future happiness of millions of children.

The *TIMES* published the following letter from Barbara Wootton which brilliantly exposes the double-think of the "will-of-God" moralists.

Sir,—In his letter published today Mr. St. John-Stewas writes of the fundamental moral principle that "innocent life should never be taken". A few lines further down he adds a second principle that "immediate self-defence apart, the taking of life should be confined to the state".

Presumably we must draw the cynical inference that the moral law is not binding on those who act in the name of the state—a proposition with which, to judge from their actions, a number of statesmen would appear to agree.

If the sanctity of life is an inviolable moral principle (and this is indeed a noble doctrine) will someone please explain why it does not operate on the grand as well as on the small scale? Mr. St. John-Stewas has himself written an admirable book upholding the sanctity of life. So has Dr. Glanville Williams. Yet neither of these authors thought it necessary even to discuss the moral justification of the slaughter of millions in warfare.

By what logic do we invoke against the Vandeputs (whatever the rights or wrongs of their action) an inviolable moral principle from the operation of which we tacitly exempt those who perpetrate the bombing of undeformed enemy babies?

Yours faithfully,  
WOOTTON OF ABINGER,  
House of Lords, Nov. 13.

MR. JAMES H. MEREDITH, a law student at Mississippi University, Oxford (Miss.) wrote a letter to a reporter on the Bhandeis University student weekly in which he said, "I want to give my thoughts on the question of political power. By its very nature 'political power' is deleted from the list of give-able items. A person or group of persons cannot give to another person or persons political power. I believe that political power is always earned by the benefiting parties. As proof of this fact, I cite history. Nowhere in my study have I found any instance of one party giving to another effective political power. Consequently, the efforts presently being made by the different groups to increase the Negro vote by eliminating discrimination in registration, etc., will not in my opinion result in any substantial political power for the Negro. However it may, hopefully awaken the Negro to the task of securing these privileges and rights for himself. But as for legislative acts, court orders or even police coercion as a method of securing for a people the elements of political power (voting in America) it is in my opinion to no avail." This sublime expression of a somewhat anarchistic case is not maintained, since Mr. Meredith latterly points out that "there are only four Negro lawyers in the State [of Mississippi] and they all live in Jackson. (This is important because I feel that persons trained in law and government are essential to political progress)," and further, "I believe that the greatest need of the Mississippi Negro is for trained professionals other than teachers and clergymen. In the political sphere, the need is for lawyers and political scientists as well as other professional social scientists. My aim is to see a Negro lawyer in every county. Of course, I want to see doctors, nurses, and other professionals in every county, too." . . .

WIFE OF Luton Girls' Choir conductor was shocked by *Carousal* song-line "Our hearts are warm, our bellies are full", which she changed for a Royal performance to "Our hearts are warm, and we are full"; Sir George Eddy on the advisory council to Kidderminster playhouse was shocked by the healthy language in Weskter's *Roots*. A man who shocked a berth-master by telling him "You are trying to be bloody awkward", was unsupported by a magistrate's clerk who said, "We have only heard a Shakespearian adjective", and the case was dismissed. Scots Guards shocked by Nuderama Club doorman's wearing an overcoat of the Scots Guards regiment as he stood on duty, had the insult wiped out in a £5 fine for causing a breach of the Queen's peace, and seven guineas costs plus two pounds for wearing a uniform without the Queen's permission, since Soho strip clubs, though equally a tourist-trap with the Changing of the Guard, are not places of grace and favour. The people of the State of New York were apparently shocked enough to issue an indictment against Henry Miller, Grove Press and Others. In it the District Attorney of the County of Kings indicted them all on 15th October (unsuccessfully) for "selling, lending, distributing, giving away, showing and transmitting a certain obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, indecent, sadistic, masochistic and disgusting book entitled *Tropic of Cancer*, Henry Miller, a Black Cat Book (95c.)" which the indictment goes on "depicts and represents acts and scenes wherein the sexual organs of both male persons and female persons are portrayed and described in manners connoting sex degeneracy and sex perversion . . . of such a pornographic character as to tend to excite lecherous thoughts and desires". A painter in Johannesburg was charged with wrongfully and unlawfully and publicly slandering Jesus Christ and/or God by a painting entitled "My Jesus" which portrayed Christ naked with the head of an animal or monster and bearing the words, "I forgive You, O Lord, you know not what you do" . . .

AT LEAST SIX Africans were shot dead in Cape Province after a riot in which Africans killed a 17-year-old schoolgirl and a 22-year-old man. Thirty Africans were arrested. Mr. Brian Bunting, a journalist on the *New Age*, a Cape Town newspaper was placed under house arrest, together with his wife. Two African warders, one European, one Coloured were sent for trial in Cape-town charged with culpable homicide of an African convict, assaulted after escaping from prison, died of brain haemorrhage, crushed lungs, burst liver, bruised heart, eight broken ribs and many other bruises and cuts. A London solicitor visiting Aden jail witnessed a 'flogging' (it was only actually a 'caning') and said "I saw only the first of three—then I left because it was so unpleasant. The men were stripped



completely and tied hand and foot to a rack with muslin across their buttocks. They screamed terribly as they were given twelve strokes of a cane. I was told that the marks will be on their backs for four weeks". The "caning" was given for hunger-striking in sympathy with a fellow trade-unionist who was given four days penal diet for insubordination. The Minister of State, Foreign Office, explained in the House of Lords that a mistake had been committed, twenty-four hours' notice should be given before such 'canings' and they could only be given for mutiny, repeated assaults, and attacks on an officer, but not for insubordination. An African was sentenced to six months' jail in Southern Rhodesia for singing the anthem of the Zimbabwe African People's Union. A woman was sentenced to nine months in Bulawayo for possessing an offensive weapon, viz a stone, which she said she picked up to defend herself against a police-dog which had bitten her. An actor-producer escaped from house arrest in South Africa and took refuge in Southern Rhodesia. 28 Africans and Coloured students arrived in Bechuanaland after fleeing from South Africa. Some of them had tried to reach Tanganyika but were stopped and turned back to Bechuanaland. . . .

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD British Legion protested at CND Remembrance Day vigil with a banner which said, "They died to let us live. Please let us live". The father of the CND group's secretary was an RAF navigator who was killed on the way back from a raid. Exmouth British Legion was accused of snobbery. Lydbrook Parish Council was informed by a Government auditor that it was illegal to spend public money on Remembrance Day wreaths, so the parish council had a personal whip-round for this year's. An ex-German paratrooper preaching at Lincoln on Remembrance Day said, "We ought to remind ourselves this day that if it had not been for the sacrifice of the ordinary man, freedom might not be ours today." JON QUIXOTE.

## Sell-out all round

Continued from page 1  
factory are of an inhuman, soul-destroying nature. Men perform repetitive tasks all day long and the division of labour is carried to the Nth degree. The company crest should read "All for the Gods of Higher Production and Bigger Profits".

The rank and file workers are pushed around like pawns to suit the purpose of those who profess to know what is best for them, the political parties, union leaders, Mr. Martell, Catholic Action and Moral Re-arming. In most strikes these know-alls are out for their own ends. The struggle between the Communist and Catholic factions is a familiar pattern in the unions. The M.R.A. crowd are well known for their visits to militant workers and their talk of mutual interests between employer and employee.

All these have played their reactionary part in the sell-out at Fords. Workers have been used by these organisations, a state of affairs which will continue until they form their own rank and file movements and run them for their own interests.

These movements under workers' control, set up in each factory, must be linked in some way with one another. If then a dispute arises at any one factory, it is not a fight alone, but is backed up by the support of all the others. In this way it may be possible to avoid the usual pattern of strikes and the victimisation and sell out, which invariably follows.

Gradually as the strength of this industrial movement grows, the opportunity must arise to obtain more control over production, until eventually the running of the factory lies solely in the hands of the workers. Only then will the exploitation cease and the inhuman methods and conditions of work today come to an end. P.T.

