

# FREEDOM

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'Even voting for the right thing is doing nothing for it. It is only expressing to men feebly your desire that it should prevail.'

H. D. THOREAU

**DON'T BE  
A DON'T KNOW-  
REFUSE TO  
VOTE!**

A FEW days and the battle of words will be over, the tons of printed matter will be finding their way on to the rubbish dumps and into the pulp mills; the faces of the leaders on a thousand hoardings will be obliterated by "Beer is Best" or "Thinking Men smoke Cigars" or "You've never had it so white" posters; the votes will have been counted, the winning candidates declared; the new government formed. For a few weeks the political analysts, wise after the event, will be trying to show how right their forecasts were, however wide of the mark they may have been, and then the country will sink back into political apathy for another five years. For whichever party wins, life for the people of this country will go on much the same as it has done these past five years, and they will have as little real voice in the nation's affairs whichever party takes office. Indeed for about three months (counting the summer recess) Parliament has not been functioning, and during the

## To Those About to be Double-Crossed . . .

past month Cabinet Ministers have been proclaiming their worth from public platforms up and down the country . . . and yet the machine of State works on as smoothly or as inefficiently (according to your party allegiance) as ever!

★  
WHATEVER differences of objectives divide the two main parties (and we have tried to demonstrate in previous articles that they are differences of emphasis and not of principle) what is clear in the programmes of both parties is that the people will still have no voice

in their affairs; that the existing political and economic machine will go on determining our "values" and our "objectives" which thoughtful, radical people this past century have invariably condemned as inhuman, unjust as well as wasteful of human energy and resources.

According to all three parties the panacea for a "New Britain" is contained in the magic "4 per cent" growth in production each year. Yet it is, as a writer put it in last week's *Observer*, not only "an ideological escape-hatch for politicians of all parties" but that "growthmanship is the cult of

making everybody better off without affecting the structure of society". These words of wisdom, were surprisingly enough, penned by Sir Jock Campbell, head of the huge trading concern, the Booker Group, who, if we understand him correctly, has penetrated the smokescreen of wealth and status to discover that the values of today are all wrong,

artificial and do not fulfil the individual.

Now while it is probably true that there are few tycoons thinking along the lines of Sir Jock Campbell, and fewer still who will give up their wealth and power to seek to put into practise their social beliefs, we believe that in the years that lie ahead

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### ON THE PATH TO DISASTER

## The Spectre of World Famine

THE political parties are telling the public of this country that prosperity depends on increasing production annually by about 4 per cent. In Britain we live in a fool's paradise. The day will come, if present trends continue, when even if we have the money to buy the food we do not produce for our needs, it will not be available from other sources and large sections of the community surrounded by their gadgets, motor-cars and all the other accoutrements of the affluent society will be faced with starvation.

This is the message contained in the annual report of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation's annual report to be published shortly. The stark facts it reveals are that though the world's population increased in the 12 months to July, 1964, by 2 per cent, food production per head fell by nearly 1 per cent, or in more tangible terms agricultural production increased by between 1 and 2 per cent—that is less than the population growth, and since food production anyway was insufficient to provide at least half of mankind with the food it required to maintain normal health, it will be appreciated that today in the world in spite of vast increases in industrial production more people are without the necessities of life than a year ago.

The growing shortage is reflected in a rise in world food prices. According to the report, in 74 of the 85 countries for which information is available the cost of living has gone up because food cost more. Retail food prices increased by 6 per cent in Greece and the Netherlands, by 9 per cent in Italy and Japan, by 10 per cent in Spain and 17 per cent in Iceland. And in South America food prices soared: in Uruguay by 15 per cent, while in Argentina, Colombia, Chile and Brazil the respective percentages were 23, 39, 49 and 67.

In this country we are living in a fool's paradise because we are at present able to live off the fat of (other countries') land; because we can outbid the people of the food-producing countries, but there is no guarantee that such a situation will go on indefinitely. Even in the poorest countries industrialisation has increased the purchasing power of large sections of the community who if it comes to the pinch will forego the gadgets in order to secure food at any price because whatever the economists may say about "growth", what matters above all to humanity is the food without which life would be extinguished.

The only realistic programme of expansion in the world today is that which aims at putting every acre of cultivable land into production. Yet every country in the world, with few exceptions, is geared to more industrial production at the expense of the land. Workers in their thousands are leaving the land each year to work in factories. Millions of acres of land in the world are going out of production yet each year the need for food grows as the world's population increases.

We know that in these islands there is not the land to produce all the food we need. But this should not deter us from utilising every available acre to produce as much as we can. But we don't, for both the Labour and Tory Parties are more concerned with increasing production of cars and refrigerators than of food.

Each year the Food and Agricultural Organisation's report warns Mankind of its folly. The politicians and industrialists who rule our lives do nothing. How much longer are we going to allow them to lead us on the path to world famine and disaster?

**Meet Me  
at  
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**ANARCHIST FEDERATION  
OF BRITAIN**



## THE HARDY SPICER STRIKE

**INDUSTRIAL  
NOTES**

After voting, by 132 to 125, to return to work to allow further negotiations, and following the failure of these, inspectors at the Birmingham components factory of Hardy Spicer again took strike action to gain their demand. This was for an increase of 9d. per hour.

Mr. Frank Briggs, general secretary of the National Society of Metal Mechanics, the union to which the vast majority of inspectors belong, has said, "This is an unofficial strike inasmuch as it has not been backed by the executive but it is constitutional inasmuch as the men have exhausted all the negotiating procedures."

In fact, deadlock was reached in May and since then, the conciliation procedure of the engineering industry has still not brought any progress. The inspectors have been very patient and only took the present action as the very last resort.

It appears that all through these long negotiations, union officials have found it difficult to come to terms with the management. Probably one of the reasons for this is that Hardy Spicer is in fact a subsidiary of the Birfield Company, in which American capital holds a 40% controlling interest. Union officials say, "Things have continually to be referred to higher management. And this is manifestly the case with Hardy Spicer. We have been dealing with shadows all the time. I think we might have been able to settle this strike if we had been able to talk to the chairman."

The chairman, Mr. Herbert Hill is also chairman of the parent firm of Birfield Ltd., among several others. He has shown his attitude towards his employees in no uncertain way. Here are some of his comments:—"They are all being much overpaid . . . Some of us have got to fight and really for our workers in the end, because the poor dears have pretty poor mentality, most

of them . . . They have a pretty poor level of intelligence . . . we would be doing much better if we did not have restrictive practices rife . . . They have refused to work the new machines and the new methods."

Mr. Hill's image is very different from that which is now being fostered and projected with the help of public relations men, industrial psychologists and others who consider that management and workers should work together in harmony. The "public relations" minded management may try to smooth over the divisions that exist between the employers and employees, but these nevertheless remain and Mr. Hill in his outspoken way has only served to emphasise this.

The *Guardian* has taken Mr. Hill to task for his attitude and says that he "sees strikes in simple terms. If only 'they' would pull their forelocks and accept that 'we' are always right, there would be no problem." Although the *Guardian* may deplore what Mr. Hill says, basically they are the same, for when have they ever given their support to any strike action? No, it has always been a call to go back to work while negotiations take place or accept arbitration.

Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd, Conservative candidate for the constituency which includes Hardy Spicer, has quickly pointed out that Mr. Hill "resigned from the Conservative Party many years ago." But Mr. Hill is a member of the central council of the Economic League. This organisation, while claiming to find out about the activities of the Communist Party in industry, also keeps tabs on anyone or any organisation which it feels are a threat to the employers.

But for Hill's outspoken remarks, Mr. Harold Wilson's accusations that these election strikes were a "Tory plot"

would seem to have misfired, for he seems very unwilling to bring forth his evidence. The 1959 strike at British Oxygen plants was given as a previous example, but it seems to me that as both this and the Hardy Spicer strike were unofficial, Wilson is only trying to turn things around. Just as the 1958 official bus strike and the present possibility, now very slight, of official action in the docks, have been used by the Tories and are thought to be against the interests of the Labour Party at election time.

The British Oxygen strike was as much a show of dissatisfaction with the union, the Transport & General Workers', as with the management. The rank and file members were not satisfied with the 2d. per hour increase gained by the union and so they demanded more. However, the unions were reluctant to re-open negotiations for more money

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