

'Government is the great blackmailer . . . No good ever came from the law. All reforms have been the offspring of revolution.'
H. T. BUCKLE

What can one man do?

Now break down the prison walls!

YEARS after Andorra and way behind the smaller nations there seems a possibility that Britain may now end the death penalty for murder. (It will still presumably be maintained for treason and desertion in time of war). There is just the chance that the House of Lords will not rally its cohorts of backwoodsmen to defeat the bill when it reaches their chamber, also there is the chance that if it is defeated there, Mr. Wilson will show enough of the "Dunkirk spirit" to father this poor little bastard of a private member's bill to pass it in spite of the House of Lords.

However, a minority government, such as we have at the moment, cannot afford to go against public opinion—and public opinion—as any man in the street will tell you, if you're fool enough to ask him—is in favour of capital punishment for murder. So capital punishment may not end in Britain in spite of all those who voted Labour on the grounds that "even if they only saved one life by abolishing capital punishment, voting for them would be worth while." All they can do in these circumstances is to ask for their vote back.

But the support for the abolition of capital punishment grows even on the political side, even Henry Brooke, as is the wont of *ex-Home Secretaries*, is reported to be in favour of abolition. Criminologists

and penologists joined the ranks of abolitionists years ago without waiting for the House of Commons, the House of Lords and the great British public to catch up. The police and the warders are only agitating for their "most - favoured - category" clause to be inserted to give them a mythical protection.

The great British public claims that it has never been consulted on this matter and it should be. Was it ever consulted on the size of prison cells or on the consistency of prison porridge? There is no doubt that if it were; prompted by its strange fears, ignorance and superstitions it would vote for cramped cubicles and watery gruel. But these are matters on which no one would dream of consulting them and on which they would not wish to be consulted. Surely, the question of the treatment of murderers and other criminals like the treatment of diphtheria is not a matter to be decided by the vote.

Dingle Foot, only this week, gave this as one of his reasons for opposing the death penalty. It is indeed noticeable that juries have become more and more reluctant to bring in the death penalty in capital crimes and have been more than ever ready to give the accused the benefit of the doubt.

There is not a great deal of necessity to argue the pros and cons of the death penalty, this has been done before *ad nauseam* and we may hope it is not necessary to discuss it *ad infinitum*. Nevertheless, the problem remains, and it will be a problem even in a free society, how can we best protect society from the murderer?

Much of the discussion on the present Bill has centered round the alternative to hanging. It is possible that a deal may be made for murderers to be sentenced to a "life" imprisonment that is a *life*, and not the mere ten to twenty years which passes for a "life" sentence today.

This prospect has turned some "thinkers" over to supporting the death penalty as a "lesser evil" (Bernard Shaw for example).

It has been pointed out, by Mervyn Turner in *The Observer* (20/12/64) that "What I have seen is decline and deterioration in short-term men as much as in those who count in years. Prison by its very nature causes regression. It cannot make a man of the offender. But it does make him a child."

In this week's crop of criminal cases we have ample argument of this point, arguments which can, and will no doubt be used by retentionists for their case. First, we have a young man sentenced to death for murder with robbery, his fingerprints were recorded by the police when he was jailed in the Notting Hill riots. Secondly, we have a man sentenced to death for his second murder, ironically enough this was committed in Wakefield prison. Thirdly, a man who had served

twenty years for murder in South Africa who found he could not adjust to normal life and even a child rebuked him for being a murderer, he took to crime and is now, no doubt happily enough, back in jail for four years. This is only a week's sample but instances come to mind which amply verify Kropotkin's verdict on prisons as "universities of crime".

Anarchists are said by some (and in extremely pure specimens are); to be opponents of reform, and prison reform is said to be only a palliative. The question of prison reform is like the question of capital punishment one must push the point to its extreme limit, the limit in the case of prisons is their complete abolition.

Crime must be recognised for the sickness that it is. Murder is a very rare outbreak and rarely contagious (except in times of war when it is legalised).

Murder, by its very fascination, has been a subject of special study and interest, but save for its extremism it is no different from any other crime and the murderer will respond to treatment the same as any other man, better than many, for he is rarely a professional criminal.

If we do get the death penalty abolished, and it will not be before it's time, it will then be the turn of the prisons to go the way of the rack, the thumbscrews and the gallows.

JACK ROBINSON.

How Juries brought about abolition

SAMUEL BUTLER in his fantasy *Erewhon* had sickness treated as crime and crime as sickness. People were jailed for catching cold (with fixed sentences) and treated with sympathy for an "acute attack of embezzlement". The pattern of human thought is that an artist or a poet imagines a thing, then the legislators see that it is so, and years afterwards, the vast mass of the public accept it, since it is the law. By then, as Ibsen points out, it is time to pass on to other truths than the accepted ones.

There was no great outcry when a *Conservative* Government supported the Homicide Act which took away the penalty of death from some classes of murder. There were no lynchings when the arch-type murderer of fantasy the sex-fiend who rapes and kills a girl of six *only* suffered imprisonment, there was no overthrow of a government which *only* punished murder by poisoning with imprisonment. There was no demurring on a vast scale when the

demonstrably insane, the pregnant mother, the juvenile, the forger, and animal were all in their turn excused from paying the extreme penalty of death. Indeed, it was the great British public incarnate in the shape of the jury that made the death penalty unworkable in many cases, for they, conscious of the vile nature of the execution for which they had to take responsibility brought in verdicts of "Not Guilty" setting the law at naught. In the case of death for forgery it was the bankers that brought about its abolition because so many forgers were acquitted by juries who saw the injustice of so severe a penalty.



INDUSTRIAL NOTES

Employers and the White-collar Workers

In the post-war years, there has been a steady growth in membership of the white-collar unions. In fact it is from this section of Britain's working population that the unions are drawing most of their members. This reflects, in part, the increasing number of men and women who are employed in these jobs. Certain sections of these workers came in for a great deal of attack from the Tory Government when their pay claims exceeded the "guiding light".

At one time the white-collar workers thought that their position was a privileged one and that they did not need a union to protect them. Now this position is altering and they often find themselves on a much lower wage scale than the manual workers.

"We should not, however, begrudge the progress made by the industrial workers, but should seriously reflect upon our own position. What then is wrong with workers in insurance? Why are we content to allow our status to diminish year by year? Why has there been no concerted action to keep pace with our colleagues in industry?"

The above quote comes from the December issue of *Cover Note*, the journal of the Guild of Insurance Officials. From these questions, addressed to the

members of the G.I.O., it seems that they are by no means satisfied with their position in respect of wages and conditions. One of the things that has restricted the growth of unions in white-collar jobs has been, and still is for that matter, is the presence of staff associations which are backed by the management.

It seems that union organisation is having some effect after all. The employers have noted this and are on their guard, for in the same issue of *Cover Note*, the editorial tells of a 'confidential document' which was sent out to organisations who are members of the British Employers' Confederation. This document pointed out the dangers of the rising strength of the white-collar unions. The document says, "this is making it increasingly difficult for employers to resist pressure from staff unions for the negotiation of agreements. It is recognised that staff unions, because of the type of workers they represent, are generally more articulate, more militant and more effective than the manual workers' unions and that any development of staff unionism on a major scale will present serious problems for employers."

It goes on, "even where membership of staff unions is increasing, employers are under no obligation to recognize

union representation. The wages and conditions committee emphasized the difficulties which might arise from conflicting interpretations of the word 'recognition'. Even if recognition were granted to a staff union, this need not include the negotiation of wages and conditions of employment, but might be limited to informal discussions or to the laying down of procedure for dealing with requests and complaints."

"There is a danger however, that once a staff union has been recognized for any purpose at all as representing the interests of the staff workers, it will be encouraged to press for the full rights of negotiations."

The *Cover Note* editorial goes on to say that the G.I.O. encounters this 19th century attitude in the managements of insurance companies, although it does add that there has been a "modifying" of this attitude. They point out that this employer's "circular was confidential, the fact that by some accident it became public property is to be welcomed."

Of course this attitude of the employers is nothing new, but it does show that the organisations of the white-collar workers and their demands are having an effect on the employers. For too long now the staff associations have decided

upon the standards under which the employees should work. If white-collar workers are in fact facing opposition from the employers over recognition, then the recent recommendations of the International Labour Organisation about sackings without valid reason are very apt. Although these recommendations have on the whole been accepted by the Government, there are points of disagreement. The I.L.O. lists union membership or playing an active part in its organisations at work and outside working hours as 'invalid reasons' for dismissal. So they may be, but nevertheless they are still used for that purpose, not only in white-collar jobs, but in the manual industries as well. When these 'invalid' sackings arise, only the solidarity of fellow workers can defend the men involved. Unions may be accepted legally, but union organisation by the rank and file is still resisted by the employers. P.T.

Readers who are workers in industry are invited to contribute to

INDUSTRIAL NOTEBOOK

ANARCHY 47

ON SALE NEXT WEEK IS ON,

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'But what can One Man do?'

[The following is a condensed version of Milton Mayer's article which appeared in the September issue of *Fellowship*—Box 271, Nyack, N.Y., 30 cents].

ASKS MY NEIGHBOUR

I WAS a spavined old man of forty-three (this was ten years ago) when I realized that my Government was unlikely ever again to order me to pick up a gun and kill a man who has never offended me and who had been ordered by his Government to pick up a gun and kill me; each of us subject, if he disobeyed the order, to being set upon by his own Government. The last time my Government ordered me to perpetrate this abomination—for such it may be seen to be, on its very face—was in 1942.

On that occasion I had said No (as who wouldn't, to such a preposterous demand?) and the Government retired in instant confusion. I had not expected that it would stand up to me like a man rather, I had expected it to use its brute force on me. But I appeared to have taken it by surprise. Governments taken by surprise hasten to reclassify, supposing by this device they may escape their predicament. Mine reclassified me.

It reclassified me as "indispensable war worker" because I was beating my gums in the lower depths of the one remaining peaceable division of a university engaged in a great secret war project. (The university's motto was, Let Knowledge Grow from More to More, that Human Life May Be Enriched; and by August 6, 1945, its know-

ledge had grown to the point where it was able to enrich human life in Hiroshima.)

When I saw that all a man had to do was to say No to send the Government headlong, I lost my fear of it. I had long since lost my respect for it, as any man necessarily must for any such organization, be it Murder Inc. or Murder United. But the Government found other men to do its sorry work, and enough of them, I suppose, because it did not come near me again; not even in 1948, when it enacted universal peacetime conscription (which Woodrow Wilson had called "the root evil of Prussianism"). It sent me a classification card again, and I sent it back with a letter of regret and heard nothing more.

Others may have had another sort of experience with Government, or with Governments more purposeful than mine, but mine convinces me that Government, whatever it means to be, good government or bad, is something of a humbug. The good things it pretends to do are done by men—by free men, and even by slaves—and the one thing it is specially designed to do, and always promises to do, it never does, namely, keep the peace.

A humbug and, like all humbugs, a fourflusher. A few years ago I was invited to Hungary on a religious mission. My American passport forbade me—quite tyrannically—to go to Hungary. But my American Constitution forbade the Government to interfere with my religion. As between the passport and the Constitution, I held with the Constitution and so informed the Government before I went. The Government waited until I got back and threatened to take my passport away from me, and thus make me a prisoner of my own country, unless I immediately swore that I would never again disobey its regulations present and future. Again, all I had to do was say No. My religion forbade me to swear at all and my Americanism forbade me to agree to obey anybody's future regulations, and I said so. The Government ran away at once.

There remained one matter in respect of which I felt that the Government needed a really good licking and would not behave itself until it had one. That was money. If men for its abominations were, as it seemed, a dime a dozen, it wanted only to get the dime to get the men. I might be palsied and arthritic, but I could still hand over the dime and the Government would let me

go my wind-broken way. As long as I went on giving it its annual allowance, I could no more expect it to mend its ways than I could a reprobate son. I had to say No to the dime and see what happened.

The Government was even then—this was 1952—on a shooting spree and I was financing the spree. It was ordering men to kill other innocent men and burn down their shanties, and I was buying it the men. I was paying others to do what I would never do myself or, indeed, countenance in others in any other circumstances. This couldn't go on.

Such were my reflections when, that same season, in a German town, I saw the ruins of a hospital in which eighty-five people, their eyes bound after surgery, were burned up blind when a bomber missed the railroad station. I realized that my notion of war as two innocent men ordered to kill one another was a little refined. War meant killing people in hospitals, including whatever Jews in Germany Hitler had overlooked.

This really couldn't go on. I notified the Government that I was cutting it off without a nickel of my dime until it straightened up. It was spending at least half of its allowance on criminal debauchery and I did not see how I could be a God-fearing American and go on paying its upkeep.

Taxes are inevitable. So is death. But suicide isn't inevitable. I intend to die unwillingly and without giving death any help. The inevitability of any evil is not the point; the point is my subordination of it. Why should I, on receipt of the Government's demand for money to kill the innocent, hurry as fast as I can to comply?

My neighbor says that the Government will take the money anyway, by force and violence and other lawful means. He is right, but what's that to me? If a robber ties me up and robs me, I have not become a robber. If the wicked Russians kill me and my little ones in my (or at least in my little ones') innocence, I have not become a killer. I have become a killer only if I kill wicked Russians (or, more likely, their wicked little ones).

My neighbor says that my refusal to pay half the tax begs the question, since the Government will use half of what I do pay to kill the innocent, and, in the end, with interest and penalties, get more from me than if I had paid the whole tax with a smile. Agreed. But the point is unaffected; the point is the smile.

I am told that the Government doesn't need my piddling nickel to get on with its abominations. Agreed again. But I need it. The year I first refused to pay it, the tax came to \$33.94. I could buy myself a champagne supper with \$33.94. Or I could send it to the American Friends Service Committee, which could buy 1,697 dinners with it for hungry children in Orissa Province in India. One way or another, the Government doesn't need the \$33.94, and I do; and its characterization of the amount, when I went to court for it, as "this small tax" was contemptuous.

Of course the Government can get along without my money. If it gets less from me, or none, it will get more from my neighbor. Or more from me, then less from him. It will get the money and buy the guns and give them to the Portuguese to defend democracy against the Russians by killing the innocent in Angola. Good enough. I am not the government; I haven't the power to put a stop to the abomination, but only to put a stop to my being willing to perpetrate it myself. . . .

If I need not pay my taxes because I am squeamish about the killing of men, then, says my neighbor, the vegetarian need not pay his for inspection of the killing of animals, etc., and, in the end, no one need pay his taxes for anything he doesn't much fancy, and this is Anarchy. My neighbor is not alone in saying it. When the Circuit Court of Appeals was hearing my complaint against the Government, one of the Judges said to my learned counsel, "Is the plaintiff aware that this Court, if it held for him, would itself be laying the axe to the root of all established Government?" And learned counsel said, "I think he is, Your Honor."

Is a man who is worth anything at all to be diverted from positive horrors by putative horrors? I have no primary obligation to save established Government from the axe, but to save myself from the fire. I will pay for the conveniences of Government, including those conveniences I don't use. I will pay for its inconveniences, because prudence dictates that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes. But why should I pay for its madness—or my neighbor's, if you will—because the madness is established? All the more reason for cutting it off at once; all the more. The Government is anarchical, not I. It, not I, denies the kingdom of God and throws its anarchical bombs into the midst of the family of man.

I am not first of all a doctor of political philosophy, with no better business

than to set terms like Anarchy in order (though I may say that if there were only one other term, and that Slavery, I, like Locke's judicious Hooker, would know how to order the two). I am first of all a man; not much of a man, and getting no better; but still a man, born with a set of terms to live by and an instinctive apprehension of their validity. My neighbor says "Anarchy" as if he were affirming the Eleventh Commandment instead of denying the Second and the Sixth. He wags his head and says that there is no other way than established Government—or even than *this* established Government—to manage human affairs.

Who said that human affairs are manageable?—Not I. Perhaps they aren't. They do not seem to be just now, nor for a long time since. If they aren't, then a man who may not live until they are must manage his affairs as best he can. The burden of proving manageability is on the managers or, as they are known in election year, the rescals. Neither my neighbor nor the *rascals* can relieve me of my responsibility by thumbing through their index of terms and threatening me with Anarchy.

But all this is by the bye. I do not mean to argue Pacifism here (another of my neighbor's terms). I mean to abide by the Aesculapian oath to do good if possible, but in no case to do harm, whether or not the doctors of medicine (or of political philosophy) abide by it. And if I can not once in a while try to be righteous without succeeding in being self-righteous, I am sorry that I am offensive and that my neighbor is diverted by the offense.

My neighbor is forever saying that the situation is pretty bad (or at least hopeless) and asking, "But what can man do?" He means to answer his own question with, "Nothing." I tell him what one man can do, almost nothing, perhaps, but not quite nothing, and do at no more effort than it takes to keep his golf clubs polished. But when I tell him, he says, "But one man is ineffective."

I know that one man is ineffective. I know that Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower were ineffective. They all hated war—so they said, and I believed and believed them—and they all made war. And these men are managers, and my neighbor and I are not even managers. How, then, should one of us be effective? But one of us can try to do the right thing, all by himself, and, maybe, even be effective. The United Nations has not been able to disarm the world by one man; I, all by myself, can be more effective than it has been.

"But someone must take the responsibility for Society." Is there no other way than public preferment to taken responsibility for Society? If there is none, a man may have to be irresponsible. Too bad; but not as bad as being responsible for the offenses the men-turned-Government are obliged to commit in Society's name. Society, grumbling at

Continued on page 3

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THE SAN DOMINGO REVOLUTION

THE revolt of the Negro slaves in the French colony of San Domingo at the end of the eighteenth century has been a favourite for the sex-and-sadism school of historical novelists and popular historians. But *The Black Jacobins* is the only really good history of this revolt which exists. Usually it is regarded as a side-show of the French Revolution, being of no great importance in itself. This is strange, because although the French half of San Domingo, where most of the fighting took place, was about the size of Wales, it was incredibly rich, and the economy of France was to a great extent dependent on it. The colony's wealth was based mainly on the production of sugar, and this minute country was as important in the eighteenth century to France as Bengal was to Great Britain. The loss of this colony to France was a severe blow, so that this revolt was by no means unimportant on the world scale.

True, it broke all the rules. Slave revolts are usually supposed to fail. Black men are usually defeated by white. The losses of both France and Britain, for Britain at one stage in the game tried to grab the colony, in trying to conquer the revolted slaves were so phenomenal that it was thought best to hush the whole matter up. San Domingo was allowed quietly to drop out of history. In a certain sense this was what the inhabitants themselves wanted. After the expulsion of the European armies the new state of Haiti, after a brief period of trying to be a centre for

"THE BLACK JACOBINS", by C. L. R. James, Vintage Books, 15s.

slave revolt throughout the West Indies, a sort of early nineteenth century Cuba, lapsed into the status of the perennial "banana republic". The country was too small, and once the sugar industry was given up, for sugar requires the labour of masses of men to be profitable, on large plantations, which in that time and place meant only one thing:—slavery, the economy could not support any great degree of national power. It was enough to be left alone. To be peasants but not slaves, to be ruled by generalissimos but not slave-owners.

The Black Jacobins was originally published in the thirties, but it seems to fit the sixties much better. For this small-scale but unbelievably bloody war constitutes a microcosm of the anti-colonialist struggles that are now proceeding all over the world. A system similar in many respects to South African apartheid existed in San Domingo. The history of the revolt is incredibly complicated because there was both a class struggle and a racial struggle going on at the same time, as well as a struggle of the planter ruling class against the home government. The whites were bitterly divided against each other, along economic lines, but so were their opponents. The half-Negro people formed a separate grouping, hostile (with

some reason) to both white and black, and of course the whites did all they could to foster this antagonism, on the principle of "divide and rule". The so-called Mulattoes eventually threw in their lot with the revolted slaves. They were better educated than the Negroes, and with the expulsion of the Europeans they came to form the ruling class of the new state. They still do, and the antagonism between the two groups remains to this day.

San Domingo of course differed from Africa in that the Negro population were no more aboriginal than the whites. But all that is left of the aboriginal population, a race of gentle, primitive, near-anarchist Indians, is the name of the republic, Haiti. Apart from this however the resemblances to the modern African situation are pretty close. For while chattel slavery is in most parts of Africa a thing of the past, second or third-class citizenship in a modern setting produces much the same effect on its victims.

The Black Jacobins should be read by everyone interested in the anti-racialist struggle. History may never repeat itself exactly, yet it often follows roughly similar lines, and repeats certain patterns over and over again. Roughly the same sort of people make their appearance again and again, and are responsible for the same kind of actions. This makes it possible to predict in general outline what will happen.

This sort of revolt, however much

anarchists may sympathise with the rebels, is no anarchist struggle. A man trapped in a cave and suffocating has no time to worry about being hungry. The first thing he has to do is to get out! Everything else can wait. If there were a large number of anarchists at the time the struggle began it would be a different matter. They could make their influence felt. In San Domingo, as in Africa, there was no revolutionary thought, as we would understand the term, before the revolt began. The Negroes were peasants, coming for the most part from medieval or tribal societies. (Very few were born in San Domingo). This meant that they had the typical outlook on life of the medieval man, that the natural order and the social order are one and the same, and cannot be changed. One may rebel against a cruel or unjust master, but one cannot do away with mastery itself. Not even to the extent of setting up a democratic republic.

The various revolts which took place from time to time during the period of slavery all had the slightly impractical quality of peasant uprisings, which seem somehow doomed from the start. The title of C. L. R. James' book is not just a catch-phrase. The final and successful revolt was inspired by news getting through, garbled of course, that the white slaves in France had thrown off their masters successfully, and would help their black brothers to do the same. The Negroes became Jacobins, just as their counterparts in Africa today are modern Jacobins. There was no other philosophy of revolt available, just as there is no other in Africa now.

A.W.U.

VERNON RICHARDS

ANARCHISTS being what they are, the task of editing an anarchist paper is not an easy one. You can say 'More kicks than ha'pence' and you can say it again and still it would be an understatement. Nobody gets any ha'pence at all for writing or speaking or publishing anarchist propaganda, in Britain at least and it is often a thankless task—except for the satisfaction of saying what you think. And even in the anarchist movement there can be pressure on the editor of an anarchist journal to say what somebody else thinks.

Any editor worth his salt must resist such demands, even at the risk of personal unpopularity. The man who has been editing FREEDOM for many years past is not so much unpopular as unknown, and the name at the head of this column is no doubt a strange one to many readers of this journal. Yet Vernon Richards had been editing or associated with the editing of anarchist journals for the last twenty-eight years!

He has not become known among the movement, because he is not a public speaker, he does not go to meetings or conferences, he is not a committee-man, he is in the best sense of the words, a 'back-room boy'. This means that he has licked stamps, marked subscription cards, wrapped up parcels, sent out bills, paid the rent, argued with landlords, carried type, collected and delivered loads of literature and at the same time, week after week after week has written to fill the front page and this editorial column.

It was in 1936 that VR launched himself into anarchist journalism with the founding of *Spain and the World*, a brilliant paper devoted to telling the English-speaking world of the achievements of the Spanish anarchists in the revolution the Spanish people were making. This journal continued until the military victory of the fascists in '39, and then with the outbreak of the World War, a group around the revived Freedom Press began the publication of *War Commentary*, which provided a rallying point for revolutionary opponents of war and of the capitalism which causes it.

VR's association with this work led him to prison by the time 'peace' broke out, and at the same time as he was imprisoned by the British government for urging revolutionary action by the working class against war, he became the target for scurrilous attacks by a group of syndicalists who had split away from Freedom Press because its line was 'too bourgeois'. These lies and calumnies took, ironically enough, the typically bourgeois line that VR had been peculating the funds of the movement, a charge which was particularly absurd in his case since a glance at the Press Fund List of that time shows a consistent generous donation beside his initials while the movement's own printing press had been bought in 1942 by a 'loan' (never repaid) from his family! (His Italian father had been an active anarchist and anti-Mussolini militant before and after exile.)

With the end of the war, the anarchist journal changed its name to *Freedom*, the traditional name for the anarchist journal in this country, and VR has stayed with it ever

since, through the apathetic years of the post-war Labour Government, through the tragic death of his wife, comrade and fellow-editor, Marie-Louise Berneri, through the falling off of once-consistent writers (including, I guiltily admit, the present writer), the dismal 'change of heart' of erstwhile editor George Woodcock, through to the very recent upsurge of interest in anarchism and influx of new activists into the movement.

Contrary to popular belief, VR welcomed these new militants, where they had something constructive to offer the movement, and over the past couple of years the Freedom Press Group has been enlarged, the editorial board re-established and others encouraged to take on some of the editorial responsibility.

Now in case our readers are wondering why this is all being said at this time, we hasten to assure you that no cult of personality is being developed here. It is simply that this month VR has retired from the editorship of FREEDOM.

It was not a sudden decision; it has been planned for, and he is not resigning, but retiring. And not from anarchism, from work for Freedom Press nor from writing for the paper, but simply from the editorship and the responsibility of filling these columns every week.

During VR's editorship, FREEDOM has been committed to *anarchism* not to any single facet of anarchism. This has been the strength of the paper, but it has of course frustrated those who narrow their anarchism down to a part instead of the whole. Ironically, it was the generosity of his attitude in allowing full expression to all points of view (while retaining the right of full editorial reply!) that gave rise to criticism from those who think that an anarchist paper should plug a line (their line), not give space to argument and discussion.

On the personal level, VR's very qualities of being able to treat with dignified contempt personal attack and ill-will were bound up with what (in my opinion and in the context of work in a propagandist movement) were his defects of not being extrovert enough to meet and talk and relate with people in a public way. But then, he has never wished to project himself in a personal way. A belief in anonymity, a desire to be just a back-room boy, led to VR being almost unknown in a movement in which, by virtue of his work, he has had great influence. Because he was so little known, it was easy for his traducers to traduce. Those of us who know him are frustrated by this, but we know the lies and the liars for what they are worth.

And we know VR for what he is worth and has been worth to Freedom Press. It is perhaps not too much to say that if he had not been prepared to shoulder the onerous burden for so many years there may not have been a FREEDOM today.

NOTE: *The above has been slipped into the typesetters office without VR's knowledge. Had he seen it in advance his famous censorious blue pencil would certainly have struck it all out!*

A FRIENDLY POLAR-BEAR replaced the 'capitalist reindeer' helping to distribute gift vouchers in Schwedt in East Germany. The vouchers were dispensed by 'Farmhand Ruprecht' assisted by 'Kosmonaut Juri'. The vouchers are good for anything to be found in East German shops. Frankincense from Dhufar Province in Muscat has been sent to the church of the R.A.F., St. Clement Danes, in London, as a gift from Flight-Lieutenant R. W. Gibbard, the Commanding Officer, and the airmen of R.A.F. Salalah, a staging post on the South Arabian coast. It will be placed in the Christmas crib in the church. A 'Father Christmas' who drove a sleigh into Trafalgar Square for a concert in aid of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was threatened by a policeman with a ticket for over-staying his time at a parking meter. In British Guiana, Santa Claus dropped in by British helicopter to Amerindian children in a primitive village. The Governor of British Guiana installed Mr. Forbes Burnham as Premier after an order signed by the Queen ejected Dr. Cheddi Jagan, who received a majority of votes in a proportional representation election but who couldn't co-operate with a minority party. . . .

THE QUEEN expressed his displeasure through the Press Council at the *Sunday Express* and *The People* for intruding upon the privacy of herself and Princess Margaret by taking photographs of them when water-ski-ing. Her Majesty's secretary wrote: "The Queen consider that behaviour of this sort, which has continued throughout the summer months, constitutes an unreasonable intrusion on the private lives of both Her Majesty and Her Royal Highness, and that the subsequent publication of the photographs, no longer justifiable even on the grounds of news interest, only encourages further abuse." The *Sunday Express*, relegating this story to page seven, has, by a diabolical coincidence, a criticism by John Gordon of Princess Margaret's complaint to the Press Council that the most important national newspapers quoted and commented upon seven words which she did not say in a speech delivered to the R.A.F. in Germany. They were a reference to the German aircraft shot down in the Battle of Britain. John Gordon went into a tizzy about the freedom-of-the-press at this point. Elsewhere the *Sunday Express* urges that the Duke of Windsor be allowed a convalescing cruise in the



Royal Yacht Britannia. Princess Margaret's personal press officer denied suggestions that she had asked for any further alterations or additions to 1a, Kensington Palace, on which £85,000 of public money was spent before she and Lord Snowdon moved in. A man whose hobby is writing to the Royal Family, is giving up after Christmas. He says: "I don't bother with royal dukes or royal children. Only Kings, Queens, Princesses of the first line over the age of 17. I did make an exception when the Duke of Kent married a Yorkshire lass, and I wrote to King Hussein, when he became engaged to an English girl." Now he has decided to quit. "When I heard about economies in the royal household I decided to do my bit by helping the Queen to save on stamps and notepaper". . . .

MR. ODINGA the Vice-President of Kenya told Jomo Kenyatta (one-time contributor to *War Commentary*), "You are a living legend. God's masterpiece, the incarnation of all that is best in man." Fenner Brockway, who has decided to call himself plain Lord Brockway, said of Mr. Wilson's speech at Brighton, "I have never heard a more inspiring speech by a leader." The *Daily Mail* quoted from the 'inspiring speech'. "I believe that the spirit of Dunkirk will once again carry us through to success", and contrasts it with Harold Wilson in the House of Commons, July 26th, 1961. "I myself have always deprecated—perhaps rightly, perhaps wrongly—in crisis after crisis, appeals to the Dunkirk spirit as the answer to our problems". . . .

THE CROWN is seeking to pass into law a bill protecting it from claims to compensation for wartime damage and destruction by British forces. This has

been prompted by claims for £60 million by the Burmah Oil Company for property destroyed by British forces in a 'scorched earth' retreat from the Japanese in 1942. The bill will be retrospective and end all claims. The Burmah Oil Company has so far won certain appeals in the House of Lords by majority decisions. . . .

THE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE of the Privy Council dismissed the appeal of Richard Mapolisa, a native of Rhodesia, against the death penalty for setting on fire residential premises. Mapolisa is only alleged to have assisted in transporting the fire-bomb (which was thrown out by the occupant of the house before it exploded), nevertheless the Judicial Committee dismissed the appeal so Richard Mapolisa must die. . . .

MORE UNCERTAIN is the fate of Ronald Cooper, a croupier, who was sentenced to death for capital murder. Cooper had previously been convicted of assault during the Notting Hill riots. Uncertain too is the fate of Peter Dunford who is condemned to death for the murder of a fellow-prisoner at Wakefield Gaol. Dunford was in prison for having murdered a man by stabbing. Harvey Holford, jailed for three years in 1963 for the manslaughter of his wife, was released from prison. A man released from prison after twenty years for murder in South Africa, claimed that when he came back to Britain his family rejected him, his six-year-old niece saying: "I must not play with you because you are a murderer." He claimed that because of this he wanted to go back to prison and so committed offences in 'the bewilderment of freedom'. The Recorder said, "I think 20 years in jail is enough to remove the spirit from anyone. Your problem is basically insoluble. You have spent almost half your life in prison." The man was jailed for a total of four years. . . .

IN SOUTH AFRICA five men were jailed for twenty years, life, eighteen years, eighteen years and twelve years for conspiring with Nelson Mandela and others to commit sabotage and furthering the interests of Communism. Dusty Springfield, a pop singer, was deported from South Africa for singing before a non-segregated audience in Cape Town. The South African government claims that it was provoked and that it was all a stunt by Miss Springfield to get publicity for her American tour.

JOHN QUIXOTE.

What Can One Man Do?

Continued from page 2

the offenses, but assenting to them, has compelled me to choose between a bad course and a worse.

Thoreau imagined a State which would recognize the individual as a higher and independent power. He may have been whimsical then. He would be much more whimsical now. Two victorious world wars for democracy have not extended democracy even among the citizens of the victorious nations. Two victorious world wars for democracy have extended, not the blak man's, but all men's enslavement to war and its preparation.

The State that Thoreau, so whimsically in his time, so much more so in ours, imagined "would not think it inconsistent with its own repose if a few were to live aloof from it, not meddling with it, nor embraced by it, who fulfilled all the duties of neighbors and fellow-men." Some of us who once pitied the Forgotten Man would like ourselves to be forgotten now, but the State insists upon remembering us each and several; not to be sure, as men, but as cards to be slipped soundlessly into a computer. But

when one of the cards does not slip soundlessly out the other end, the computer may not know, for a moment, what to do, and so, for a moment, do nothing. The only thing a man—a man, not a card—can do now is to obstruct and pray for obstruction.

"Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." When Mr. Kennedy spoke these words at his inaugural, I knew that I was at odds with a Society which did not immediately rebel against them. They are the words of totalitarianism pure; no Jefferson could have spoken them, and no Khrushchev could have spoken them better. Could a man say what Mr. Kennedy said and also say that the difference between us and them is that they believe that man exists for the State, and we believe that the State exists for man? He couldn't, but he did. And in doing so, he read me out of society.

Shall we say "Yes" to a Government, no matter what it asks of us? If so, men are freer in Prague than they are at home; and this would seem strange unless you hold that ours is a Government that, unlike any Government that ever was before, never asks anything of us. Our government is certainly better than many in many respects, but in the one respect of mortal wrong, the killing of the innocent, it is identical with all the rest.

There is something to practice's making perfect. I may say, "I would say No to Communism," or, "I would have said No to Nazism." But if I can not say "No" to a Government whose pains are light, what makes me think I would say No" to a Government whose pains are heavier?

It is excruciatingly easy for me to say "No" to Communism and I say it. I would not rather be red than dead; I would rather be neither. But I would rather be either than have the blood of the innocent on my hands. Wouldn't you? The Russians will have to answer to their Government's abominations, you and I only to ours. What our Govern-

ment requires of you and me, in our dotage, is only that we give it the money to buy the gun and hire the man to carry it. What say you?

The world may end next week, or next year, and the last flash will light up the darkness in which we stumble now. We shall be able to see then, in an instant, that the Government, like us, wasn't itself very good or very bad but only, like us, enchanted, and, in its enchantment, like us in ours, turned everything it touched to iron. Between now and then we shall none of us change our wonted ways very much or very fast, and we should not expect to. But then, in the last flash, instead of saying, "What little can I do?" we shall say, "What little could I have done?"

MILTON MAYER.

£143 DOWN!

FINANCIAL STATEMENT AT 19th DECEMBER 1964

Week 50		
EXPENSES: 50 weeks at £70		£3,500
INCOME:		
Sales & Sub. Renewals:	£	£
Weeks 1-49	£2,251	
Week 50	60	
		2,311
New Subscriptions:		
Weeks 1-49 (228)	266	
Week 50 (3)	5	
		271
		2,582
		DEFICIT £918

DEFICIT FUND

Wolverhampton: J.K.W.* 2/-; J.L.* 3/-;
Harlow: M.R. £1/5/-; Cheltenham: L.G.W.*
10/-; Todmorden: G.B. 10/6; Auckland: An-
archist Group 6/-; S.E.26: M.C. £1; S.E.3:
M.W. 8/-; Chessington: J.M. 5/-; Buxton:
A.A. £1; Rochford: C.D. 4/-; Deddington:
C.V. 15/-; Belfast: W.G. 6/-; Chicago: J.K.
£6/16/7; Leeds: G.L. 3/-; Knockholt: B.R.
7/-; Liverpool: H.J. £6/17/-; Woldingham:
F.B.* 5/-.

TOTAL £21 3 1
Previously acknowledged £754 5 8
1964 TOTAL TO DATE £775 8 9

*Denotes Regular Contributors.

Where are they now?

DEAR FRIENDS,

In an article in FREEDOM (Dec. 12) R.J. raised some interesting points on the apparent apathy and lack of protest when he put forward 'Some Thoughts on Violence'.

The problem seems to me to be, how can one make an effective protest within the framework of present-day society? I remember, along with many other active participants, being in a state of permanent protest during the two years of the National Council for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapon Tests, and later the C.N.D. Sundays and Easters were given up to marching against specific actions, the H-bomb tests, the H-bombers, the bases, we organised petitions, film shows and meetings, lobbies to the House of Commons, deputations, we published leaflets, and inundated the press with our protesting letters. We were on the alert continuously. Our effects were largely to educate the public and to create a public image of the C.N.D. The fact that an M.P. returning from America could corner the front page of newspapers when then proceeded to ignore a large Trafalgar Square CND demonstration, may have made some people feel that their actions had to be more and more sensational to get any publicity at all. Because publicity meant letting more people than those who were there, know about the demonstration. The suffragettes faced the same problem, legitimate protests about the failure to give women the vote had gone on in Liberal circles for fifty years. Their activities became more and more daring until one threw herself under the king's horse. Historians today doubt whether the suffragettes' activities brought about the subsequent granting of the vote for women, it is thought to have been the fact that women proved their capacities during the first world war. But I would suggest that their activities drew attention to their cause, in the same way as CND has drawn attention to the evils of power politics and 'the bomb'.

I would make a distinction between apathy and indifference. I feel as strongly as ever about atrocities, tortures

LETTERS

and injustices, but I have learned that legitimate and illegal forms of protest are like banging my head against a brick wall. When we march or write letters to the press, we just give voice to the 'non-conformist conscience' but this does not stop the atrocities from happening. When much enthusiasm is met by no success I think it is human to stop using these forms of protest. CNDers may have felt that if they protested enough and had right on their side, it would be inevitable that they would win in the end. But there is no certainty of this, and they are naive to think it. The government probably laughed at them wearing themselves out in marching, and thought it a useful safety valve.

Of course the next step was to realise that protest within the existing society changes that society a little, but it is

Letter in the form of a parable, or Are you sitting Comfortably?

ONCE upon a time there was a revolutionary called Victor Botkin who never could understand why his friends called him the Armchair Warrior.

For in fact, Botkin was an indefatigable champion of the Cause.

Any Cause. Always out there on the front line was Botkin; you never saw a photograph in the Sunday papers of a Saturday demonstration, but Botkin's face was in the foreground. Always on his seat was Botkin; not in an armchair at home—oh no; but on a historic paving-stone in London, W.C.2. He had a secret conviction that if he could only sit there long enough, the Revolution would surely come, and Truth, Peace and Freedom would reign upon earth. But alas for Truth, Peace and Freedom, whenever Botkin sat down, some tall men in blue suits appeared and picked him up and carried him off in a van.

But Botkin, as I have said, was indefatigable. His motto was: When you are beaten, bet up and sit down again. So when one day, out walking, he came upon a high wall with a notice on it saying:

POSITIVELY NO ADMITTANCE BY ORDER

the light of battle came into his eyes. "Am I a slave or a minion," he cried, "that the threat of the tyrant can rob me of that freedom of movement which is my birthright?"

"Never!" he replied, and so saying, he scaled the wall, ripping the seat of his trousers on the barbed wire, and looked around for a suitable place to register his protest.

Now Botkin had always been a middle-of-the-road demonstrator. "No half measures for me," he used to tell the marshals. So when he saw a broad flat stretch of tarmac with lights along either side, he never hesitated but sat down squarely in the middle of it in a posture of defiance, and erected the only banner he happened to have on him at the time, which was a CND lollipop bearing the slogan: Botkin says NO!

After he had been there a few minutes (feeling rather cold underneath as a result of the barbed wire), a man in uniform came hurrying towards him with a troubled expression, calling out: "Hey! You can't sit here. Get off! Get out of the way!...QUICKLY!" But Botkin replied calmly, "My friend, I am a free and sovereign individual, and your petty officialdom cannot terrify me. Now tell me one good reason why I should not sit here if I wish to?"

"BECAUSE THERE'S A RUDDY GREAT..."

But his words were drowned in the roar of a large freighter coming in to land.

The pilot said afterwards that he had mistaken the waving of Botkin's lollipop for a signal to land, and that he was very sorry. He even came to visit Botkin in hospital, and listened sympathetically as he expounded through his bandages the necessity for Individual Direct Action against the Forces of Repression.

But the pilot was not converted.

ANNE MARIE FEARON

limited, and one has to think about how to replace the 'democratic' system with a more anarchistic one. But as anarchism isn't just around the corner, one's choice is to continue in futile forms of protest, or to express one's opinions against the actions of governments to one's friends. What has happened to all the other CNDers who used to protest at 'the drop of a hat'?

DOROTHY FORSYTH.

Walton-on-Thames, Surrey.

Automation and Freedom

F.B. (FREEDOM, 19/12/64), claims that through automation "for the first time anarchist principles reach the possibility of acceptance". I seem to remember that Kropotkin was already claiming fifty or sixty years ago that if the technology of his day were applied sensibly there could be abundance for all, and I am quite sure that if the technology of the ancient Egyptians had been applied sensibly, instead of so much of it being devoted to gods and governments, the same could have been true even then. The trouble is that men are not sensible, why should automation suddenly change them?

The economic developments of mankind have in the past brought disaster and benefit in about equal measure. Possibly the balance has been on the side of disaster.

A brief survey of human history shows us:

(1) Men living in small bands of hunters, a society pretty free and egalitarian, like that of the Eskimoes.

(2) With the development of agriculture on a fairly small scale comes the settled village, probably dominated by the mothers of families. The women did the agricultural work while the men still hunted. So far as one can piece this phase together from myth and legend and traditional practice it appears to have been a "feminine", rather nervy world, dominated by magic and the tie of blood and the worship of mother goddesses. It was probably not a warlike society, but it was also probably not so frank and free and easy as stage (1). Taboos and ritual murders probably formed an important part of life.

(3) With the development of large scale agriculture in the river valleys, and the domestication of flocks and herds on the grasslands, society becomes noticeably more "masculine". Father gods dominate in many countries. War becomes a permanent feature of life. Slaves are taken and in time the economy of large parts of the world becomes dependent on them. Empires arise, based on Slavery.

(4) Restricting ourselves for the sake of brevity to Europe, we now come to the glorious Middle Ages. Feudalism was an economy based on the labour of serfs tied to the soil. Whether this represented an advance in economic and technological terms over stage (3) is a matter of opinion, but at least the de-

Contact Column

"The Anarchist"

Internal Bulletin of the movement still requires articles, letters, etc. to complete fifth edition. Send to Peter Neville, 12 South Grove, Erdington, Birmingham 23 as soon as possible as we wish to publish before Christmas.

West Croydon

Help wanted to sell "Freedom", "Anarchy", "Direct Action", etc., outside West Croydon General Library. Saturday mornings 10.30 to 1 p.m. Want to cover Fairfield Hall too.

Posters

"You cannot make peace by preparing for war".

"International co-operation for peace not multi-lateral force for war".

"Say no to the M.L.F.". Crown 6d, D/Crown 1/-. Enquire for special orders Reading YCND, 22 The Drive, Earley, Reading.

Freedom from the Establishment, the Employer, the Landlord, the Supermarket? How? Learn the techniques at the 'Social Engineering' sessions. Every Wednesday, 7 to 9 p.m.

13 Prince of Wales Terrace, London, W.8. Admission 5/-.

Wanted to buy

large house (one or two families) Within London area. Write Box 4, Freedom Press.

London

Accommodation Wanted Student couple with two-year-old seek furnished accommodation, any sort, anywhere in London. Reply: Jenny James, Caravan 53, Hawley Manor, Hawley, near Dartford, Kent.

If you wish to make contact let us know.

velopment of a bourgeois trading and manufacturing culture began in the city states, which led to

(5) a secular, industrial, scientific, and ultimately managerial society. This society was, and is, utilitarian, practical, non-magical, religious only in a limited sense, unlike most earlier societies which were dominated to everybody's hurt by the supernatural. But it still has its cruelties, and is still authoritarian. People are no longer sacrificed or enslaved or tied to the land or burned for heresy, as in stages (2), (3) and (4), but they are economically exploited. The horrors of the Industrial Revolution need no enlarging on here. It is a very sorry record. Probably humanity would have done better never to have left stage (1), but obviously it is no use crying over spilt milk.

Each new development in economics and technology has so far abolished old cruelties (or some of them) only to institute new ones. Why should automation be any different?

A disturbing development of this century has been a tendency for bourgeois society to revert (presumably as a result of economic developments), to stage (3). Such pioneers as Hitler and Stalin point the way back to the god-kings of old. Is there some connection between this and our teeming cities and modern methods of mass-production? Our skyscraper office-blocks have a disturbingly Assyrian quality. Our art seems created by Mayas. Our clanking metallic music sounds like war drums in the forests. With a bit of luck we may get back still further to stage (2), to the old witch-matriarchies, and, after a few more nuclear wars, the survivors may enjoy stage (1), before starting on a new cycle. But that is to speculate.

I believe the Christians are right to this extent. Men must change their attitudes. They cannot wait on technical inventions to save them. We have drifted long enough on the stream of events, waiting for saviours. And in consequence have gone from one horror to another.

I neither fear automation nor welcome it. Like the aeroplane it can be used to help or to harm. Some people's lives will doubtless be improved by it. Others will suffer. But why should it be any more a fairy-godmother than the iron plough or the steam engine?

A.W.U

Notting Hill Anarchist Group

Secretary N.H.A.G., Flat 3, 5 Colville House, London, W.11.

Meetings 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at above address.

PROPOSED GROUPS

BRADFORD

Anyone interested in Anarchist discussion group and folk-singing contact Sid Frisbee, 100 Bierley House Avenue, Bierley, Bradford.

NORTH WALES

Anyone interested, get in touch with Richard Graham, c/o 26 Bryn Llwyd, Caernarvon Road, Bangor, Caernarvonshire.

SOUTH WALES

Irregular meetings held. Enquire Peter Raymon, 300 Whitchurch Road, Gabata, Cardiff.

OFF-CENTRE LONDON

DISCUSSION MEETINGS

3rd Wednesday of each month at Jack Robinson and Mary Canipa's, 21, Rumbold Road, S.W.6 (off King's Road), 8 p.m.

Last Thursday in month:

At George Hayes', 174 McLeod Road, S.E.2.

2nd Friday at Brian Leslie's, 242 Amesbury Avenue, S.W.2 (Streatham Hill, Nr. Station).

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Anarchy monthly

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ANARCHIST FEDERATION OF BRITAIN

Co-ordinating Secretary: Tom Jackson, 10 Gilbert Place, London, W.C.1.

London Anarchist Group

"Lamb and Flag", Rost Street, Covent Garden, W.C.2. (near Garrick and King Streets: Leicester Square tube), 7.45 p.m.

DEC 27 No meeting Pagan rites.

JAN 3 Schleim Fanaroff on:

Another look at Reich.

JAN 10 Philip Sansom

Just Speaking.

REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND GROUPS

Birmingham Group

Peter Neville, 12 South Grove, Erdington, Birmingham, 23.

Bristol Federation

Irregular meetings—enquiries to c/o Martin Howells, 7 Richmond Dale, Clifton, Bristol 8.

Dundee Group

Contact Rod Cameron, 6 Westfield Place, Dundee.

Edinburgh Group

Monday, December 21st, 13 Northumberland Street, 7.30 p.m. Bill Jamieson "The Anarchism of Aldous Huxley".

Glasgow Federation

Enquiries to Ronnie Alexander, c/o Kennedy, 112 Glenkirk Drive, Glasgow, W.5.

Hayes and District

Contact Mike Wakeman, 12 Hoppner Road, Hayes, Middlesex.

Manchester Group

Meetings alternate Tuesdays. Details from Graham Leigh, 5, Mere Close, Sale, Cheshire.

Merseyside Federation

Enquiries: Vincent Johnston's, 43 Millbank, Liverpool 13.

Tunbridge Wells Group

Meets 1st and 3rd Thursday in month at J. D. Gilbert-Rolfe, 4 Mount Sion, Tunbridge Wells, Sussex, 8 p.m.

Tyneside Federation

Enquiries: David Douglass, 6 Laski Gardens, Wardley, Gateshead, 10.

BRENT, MIDDLESEX

Enquiries to Jeff Nichols, 115 Slough Lane, Kingsbury, Middlesex.

BEXLEY, KENT

Enquiries to P. J. Wildish, 2 Cumbrian Avenue, Barnehurst, Bexley Heath, Kent.

CANADA

VANCOUVER, British Columbia

Monthly Forum—Last Sunday of each month. Enquiries to Bill Fletcher, 104 West 11th Avenue, Vancouver.

3rd Friday of each month at 8 p.m. at Donald & Irene Room's, 148a Fellows Road, Swiss Cottage, N.W.3.

Orpington Anarchist Group

Knockholt, Nr. Sevenoaks, Kent. Every six weeks. Next meeting, Sunday 6th December, 2.30 p.m. at "Greenways", Knockholt. Phone: Knockholt 2316. Brian and Maureen Richardson's.

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