

The Libertarian and the Churches -	p. 2
Gerard Winstanley -	p. 2
What is Russia? -	p. 3

Freedom

ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

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Threepence

"Politics is only in a slight degree the product of conscious reason."

—Graham Wallas

The Great Powers Decide in Washington and Moscow, but— WHAT ABOUT THE KOREANS?

The Common Struggle Against All Tyrannies Remains the Same

IN 1938 in Paris, during a trial blackout, an old man killed himself. He thought war had already broken out and left a note saying that he couldn't stand to go through it all again. That is what, in greater or lesser degree, the threat of renewed war does to anyone. But it doesn't prevent the newspapers from exploiting international clashes and exploiting men's anxiety about their consequences. Over Korea Reynolds News cried: "It needs only Russia to come in and succour the North—and anything could happen." Even the Tribune, a weekly, found it necessary to write, sensationally, "Into many minds flashed the question: is this the start of the Third World War?" In these matters the Socialist press is as venal as the right wing papers.

The war in Korea raises many questions of the utmost importance, and it behoves us, as anarchists, to try and define these questions in their true perspective, and to keep clear of the prevailing hysteria and policies of expediency. To maintain such an attitude is not easy because facts are few, bias is well nigh universal, and the propaganda of the cold war has already done much to direct hostile feelings into convenient channels for the main antagonists, so that objectivity is almost impossible. Nevertheless we can adhere to certain general principles with fair confidence, and so achieve a reasonably stable general opinion.

HIRING A BATTLEFIELD

First of all, it is only too clear that the Korean struggle is yet one more aspect of the world struggle between Russia and America. The governments of North and South Korea are mere puppets of these two great powers. As if to drive the lesson home, the U.S. government has announced its intention of defending Formosa from any attack by the Chinese Communists, thereby practically annexing it as an American sphere of influence.

As in the old days of the League of Nations, the press is full of "legal" justification based on U.N.O. On both sides these legality shows are based on a different version of the facts, each saying that the other puppet attacked first. Other commentators go somewhat further back; in 1948 the Russian army of occupation was withdrawn, but not the war equipment; the visit of John Foster Dulles to Seoul a week before the fighting began, and his speeches afterwards indicated American intentions

about strategic bases, etc. Once again the "evidence" can be selected according to which side one backs.

But surely this stuff about legality, "the rule of law", and the name-calling—"the Aggressor" or the "treacherous clique", etc., is now completely meaningless. The Russian American antagonism is not to be held in check by paper limitations, and it is quite ridiculous to be taken in by all this sanctimonious cant. In the face of such powerful antagonism, so-called legal issues, and even the facts of "who began it" are of trifling importance. To make them determine one's attitude is simply absurd. Having made it

clear that to us it is of little importance who is the nominal aggressor, it is necessary to say that one should be on one's guard against accepting either side's story without profound reservations.

In effect, we are witnessing the great powers hiring out the territory of a backward, divided puppet as a battlefield, fighting behind other men's lives. It is not the first time we have seen this pattern.

For us, as anarchists, there remains the question—what about the Koreans? In the context of the cold war, such a question appears almost an irrelevancy! We shall come back to it; for the moment it is necessary to point out that it is—purely academic. In Korea to-day, it is not what the Koreans want; the decisions are not made on either side of the thirty-eighth parallel, but thousands of miles away in Washington and Moscow. Propaganda cries about the aspirations of a people, or the establishment

PAGE FOUR

The Thaw Sets In What a Relief for the T.U.C.!

THE T.U.C., like the middle classes, must be very grateful to the Government for lifting so many controls and de-ratoning so many goods recently.

The Government's motives in doing this (destroying the basis for the main Conservative criticism in preparation for the next election, for one thing) we have already discussed, but for the T.U.C. it provides a wonderful excuse for getting out of a very awkward situation.

The wage-freeze policy has proved a very uncomfortable saddle for the old horse to wear. Not that it doesn't believe in saddles—or reins—or blinkers, but because its own internal troubles made it difficult to keep the saddle firmly in position.

Workers Never Liked It

The wage-freeze was accepted by the T.U.C. by a narrow majority of union leaders; it was never completely accepted by the workers. The rank and file, however, have shown a considerable degree of restraint, showing that the workers, when they believe the well-being of the community is at stake, do not follow the

"every man for himself" policy which distinguishes their employers.

When Trades Unions accepted the wage-freeze, it was on the understanding that every effort would be made to freeze prices and profits. We pointed out at the time how unlikely it was that restraint of this kind could be expected. Devaluation, for example, had been prophesied to raise prices in the Spring, and there is simply no means short of Government edict to limit profits—and the Labour Cabinet are wooing the middle classes so hard they would be loath to introduce measures against profits which would obviously be unpopular with the bourgeoisie.

It could never be said, however, that the workers liked the wage-freeze, in spite of their patience. Loyalty to the Labour Government and the specious arguments of its spokesmen and their union leaders sold them the idea that "the country couldn't afford" wage increases, but the steady rise of prices forced many of the lower-paid workers to a struggle to make ends meet that could only result in continuous distress—or wage demands. And although the unions have done their best to keep the brakes on, many groups of workers have forced the issue and won increases.

Couple this with the knowledge that, thanks to their efforts in increasing production, those who live on the profits from their labours are doing very well, and the present growth of unrest—the end of the patient period—is easily understood.

De-Ratoning a Fine Excuse

In these circumstances, the T.U.C. were quite obviously beginning to feel more and more uneasy. They realised they could not much longer hold on to the wage-freeze however much the Government might continue to demand it. When, therefore, the recent wave of de-ratoning came, it presented the union bosses with just the excuse they needed, and they have now declared the wage-freeze ended—but with stern warnings against "wages scrambles".

Appealing to individual unions to show "good sense and reasonableness" in the claims, the General Council will set up a special panel of its Economic Committee to "vet" wage claims in regard to the national economy as a whole.

The whole period has been a very interesting one. It has shown us very clearly how, in the running of a capitalist State, so-called Socialists and Trade Unionists are forced to maintain and even intensify the exploitation of the workers. For, of course, that exploitation is the basis of capitalist society. It is an absolutely inescapable necessity for the running of the State, and it makes no difference at all whether industry is nationalised or private—in fact the Welfare State itself may well call for greater exploitation, since all its cumbersome machinery has to be paid for by the efforts of the proportionately smaller number of productive workers.

P.S.

IMPRESSIONS OF GERMANY—I

ON my return from Germany I happened to read a rather familiar sounding speech—a former U.S. Ambassador to London (Mr. J. D. Davis) pontificated as follows:—

"I have been going through London this past week and surveying the devastation that it suffered. How, I asked myself, did these people stand all this and endure. It took something more... than the proverbial British phlegm. No, it was the 'art of hoping'—of hoping that the day would surely come when wrong would be punished and avenged, when right would triumph and prevail." (*News-Chronicle*, 27/6/50).

We have heard it so often that we have come to believe it. But our ruins fade into insignificance when one has seen the cities of Germany, the great gaps of rubble still uncleared

that testify to night after night of bombing with nothing whatever to hope for. I do not know if there still remains anyone who still remembers that curious wartime phrase "pin-point bombing". It certainly does not mean that only military points were hit. Streets and streets of ruined houses—the marks still remaining where people were burned alive escaping from their cellars on to the burning asphalt—the obvious marks of newness in all the rows and rows of (often jerry-built) houses and shops—all testify mutely to wholesale annihilation.

But whether it is my cynicism or proof of an odd military trade-unionism I have often suspected (witness Montgomery's wartime lunch with Von Arnim, the post-humous glorification of Rommel, or the rush to defend Manstein), there is one thing that impresses me. The military barracks stand! In most cases these have, of course, when not used by the Occupation Forces, been converted into factories, offices, etc., but it stands out with force how so many barracks were left almost untouched in a wilderness of rubble. It is generally known, of course, that churches were spared—it was all right to bomb, blast, burn and suffocate the parishioners, but the places of worship were sacred. Most old churches are obvious landmarks, and the rubble goes up to but not beyond their portals. Christianity is an odd creed!

By one of those odd coincidences, too, the concentration camps were also spared, and likewise escaped damage in the midst of ruins; although in the case of France one prison wall was breached to allow prisoners to escape, it was never deemed necessary to liberate the inmates of Buchenwald and Dachau. My strongest

impression of Germany is seeing a police barracks standing firm, in the same condition as it was used by the Nazis, in the middle of a town full of rubble and new houses.

Militarism

Some visitors to Germany have spoken of their "disillusion" with Germany and the fact that they found the Germans were still militaristic. My impression is that the people who still have illusions to lose are those who tagged along with support of the war and believed that the Western Imperialists and their then Ally would bring democracy to the Germans, a fact which they often managed to reconcile with the inverted Hitlerite race myth about the traditionally guilty Germans.

It is hard to imagine why they think Germans should not be militaristic, when countries with so much less military tradition are well in the forefront of the coming war. Those who previously rated the Germans for their blind acceptance of militarism are now scolding them for not being more alert to the menace of "black fascism" as the Bonn Government is called, or "red fascism" as the Eastern Zone Government is called. There is no doubt that militaristic ideas are still strong although in many walks of life and among the most diverse political tendencies I found support for a proposition I have also heard in England but which is not to be thought of as practical even by rationalistic standards—why do not Germany and England ever come together? The idea that they should owes a bit to the belief in the Anglo-Saxon origins of England which were plugged by German schools for years (that evidently stopped short at the Norman Conquest, which nobody who talked about Anglo-Saxons to me had ever heard of). But even so, most people are sick of war and even those who talk about the two "Germanic" nations coming together usually suggest that "America and Russia should be left to fight it out together," an idea which is naturally tempting to

PAGE FOUR

NORTH EAST LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP MALATESTA MEETING

★

A meeting to commemorate the life and work of
ERRICO MALATESTA

will be held at the

TRADE UNION CLUB, Great Newport Street, W.C.2
(near Leicester Square Station)

on SUNDAY, JULY 23rd, at 7.30 p.m.

★

Speakers include:

S. CORIO MAT KAVANAGH JOHN HEWETSON

Miscellany

"As for the politician, this is his hour. Important as the clown in the ring, he struts about as though he had contrived the situation intentionally, instead of having merely precipitated it, and by his folly made himself and us its joint victims. No words are too large for his ambition. Just as a clown is clothed in trousers and jacket much too big for him, so does he parade the stage togged out, as it were, in words and sentiments that drag round his feet and encumber his limbs."

—Osbert Sitwell: Letter to my Son.

"The Englishman loves liberty as he loves his legal spouse; he owns her, and though he does not love her with exceptional tenderness, he knows how to defend her like a man in case of need, and woe to the red-coated fellow who penetrates into her sacred sleeping-quarters—be he a seducer or a sheriff. The Frenchman loves liberty as he loves his sweetheart. He burns for her, he is in flames, he throws himself at her feet with the most magniloquent protestation; he risks life and death for her, and he commits for her a thousand follies. The German loves liberty like his old grandmother."

—Heinrich Heine.

"The spectacle of a young and savage nation trying, hurriedly and for no clear reason, to remake one of the most civilised races on the earth to its own bizarre pattern must be, for the onlooker, a highly diverting one. But for a people like the Japanese, profoundly aware of its own worth and accomplishment, to be used as a guinea-pig in so frivolous and uncalled-for an experiment, must have been a cruel humiliation to them, and humiliation is what they can least forgive. It is possible, even likely, that they will harbour resentment longer against the missionaries of G.H.Q. than against the men who dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima after their Government had asked for talks on peace, or against the troops in the Pacific whose atrocities, though not so widely advertised, bore comparison with their own."

—Honor Tracy: *Kakemono; A Sketch of Modern Japan.*

THE LIBERTARIAN and the CHURCHES

IN writing of the rôle of the Church in the political and social development which is proceeding in the present century, it is important first of all to be quite clear in our minds what we are discussing. Clearly, the libertarian is not concerned with attacking Christian beliefs as such, since the first foundation of his own attitude lies on the assumption that every man should be free to believe what he likes and to express that belief freely. Without mutual tolerance there can be no liberty, and it is only where those who profess Christian beliefs abandon the principle of individual conviction and seek to establish authority that the libertarian can logically attack them. Therefore his quarrel is not with Christianity as a doctrine, or with those who profess it individually, but with those organisations which seek to institutionalise religion into disciplined patterns of thought and action, and hence to establish a spiritual, intellectual and even physical hierarchy. To a minority of Christians these criticisms do not apply, and some of these like the followers of Tolstoy can even be accepted as libertarian in their own attitude towards individual freedom.

Organised religion presents us with a bewildering variety of churches, sects, and other organisations, all seeking to establish their more or less limited degrees of authority over those who adhere to their creeds, all demanding some degree of doctrinal uniformity and obedience to the sectarian hierarchy. All these sects are dangerous, in so far as they weaken the sense of individual judgment and help to induce a form of institutionalised thinking which makes their members more amenable to authority in its physical forms. Each in its small way is a mirror of the State and, like faithful children, the great majority of religious organisations, as well as most of their members are ministers, support the State in its times of crisis. Some, indeed, like the Church of England, are openly and avowedly State churches, but even the nominally independent groups are hardly more backward in their support when the system of authority to which they are attached is endangered, either by external attack or internal rebellion.

The majority of Protestant churches are the outcome of various stages in the development of capitalism. They were originally the organisations which sanctified the rise of the middle-class, from the

16th to the 19th centuries, and gave it a sense of divine mission. To-day, they remain like tide marks of the historic movements which produced them. Calvinism, in particular, with its teaching of predestination, gave the wealthy a comforting belief that their condition of material superiority was ordained by God and that they had no fundamental responsibility to the underdog, whose abasement also was fore-ordained. Similarly, the various Erastian religions, like Anglicanism and Lutheranism, sanctified the new national States which arose out of the break-up of the semi-international society of the Middle Ages.

It is characteristic of the Protestant churches, except for a few visionary sects of slight membership and influence, that they have always been in a subsidiary position towards the ruling economic and political interests. While they have served such interests—as Anglicanism, Calvinism, Congregationalism and Methodism have all done in their turn—they have often been endowed with a kind of translated vigour, but they have never thriven independently, and where the Protestant churches remain of any importance to-day, they are so by virtue of their integration with the existing system of domination.

But the actual power and influence of Protestant sects has declined radically from the last century. Protestantism, based on doubt of Catholicism, was itself particularly susceptible to doubt, and the ruling classes quickly tended to lose reliance on it as their main means of ideological support when it was subjected to damaging forms of criticism. Parallel systems of thought began to give that support in theory and myth which every system of authority finds essential for its continuance. Scientific materialism, itself the most important enemy of Christian thought, gave its own support to capitalism, and the State through Huxley's extreme preaching of the inevitability of the struggle for existence. Nationalism, blossoming to full vigour in the period after 1848, gave new ideological symbolisms. The rise of pseudo-scientific racial doctrines prepared the way for a situation in which Hitler could create a national

ideology that had no need for Christianity, while the messianic element in Marx's historical doctrines was later to provide a synthetic religion for the rulers of Russia.

In these conditions, surrounded by so many more potent systems of symbolism, the Protestant tradition has declined in most countries to a secondary servant of the ruling class, of little intrinsic power or danger. Occasionally an individual Protestant or a small group within some Church will become uncomfortably aware of the import of some of the original Christian teachings and take a radical course of action, but such rebellions have little weight, and in general the Protestant Churches can be taken as wholly subsidiary to ruling-class interests, and dangerous only as servants of political authorities.

The case of Catholicism is, however, somewhat different, and here the libertarian faces an institution of vast experience and a power which, far from being impaired, is steadily increasing. The Roman Church, throughout its history, has always fought to make itself an independent temporal power; in the Middle Ages, using the potent weapons of interdict and excommunication, it maintained a struggle which was usually successful against those rulers who tried to challenge its extra-territorial authority within their own realms, and it succeeded in keeping its place throughout this long era as an international body wielding temporal as well as spiritual authority.

During the Reformation the Church indeed lost strength as a result of its own inner corruption and the combined assault of philosophical scepticism and the political alliance of nationalist kings and rising middle-class financiers. But the success of the Reformation in Northern Europe had the effect of causing a toughening in the Roman attitude; the Counter-Reformation and rise of the Jesuit order purged away the rot that had entered the old mediaeval structure, and closed the ranks of the Church for a struggle that was to be waged by every means at its disposal. The immediate result was the consolidation of Catholicism in Spain and Italy,

and the winning back of France and Ireland, where the Protestants had triumphed temporarily. Incidentally, in the process, the Church introduced into European politics a method of international infiltration by a group of zealots which is to-day used by the Communist Pope of Russia.

From the Counter-Reformation the policy of the Church of Rome became clear, and it has remained unchanged. It has been to consolidate and expand the Church as an international organisation with complete spiritual and temporal power. For this purpose the Church has entered into every alliance that appeared convenient, and, possessing an adoptive instead of an hereditary hierarchy, has contrived to retain a resilience and a continued efficiency which more rigid systems have lacked. Monarchies have died, dictators have fallen, but the Catholic church has continued, and to-day, once again, is strengthening its hold in most parts of the world. In England, for instance, long a stronghold of Protestantism, the Roman Catholic Church now possesses a larger number of effective members than even the Church of England, and many distinguished intellectuals have entered its fold in recent years.

The spread of Catholicism, and hence the temporal power of the Vatican, can only be countered if it is understood that the sole object of the Roman Church is the furtherance of its own international authority. The Church of Rome may support various political rulers, but only for its own convenience; it is never wholly committed, will fight against any ruling-class creed, like Nazism or Communism, that appears a major threat to its own powers, and will desert an ally without hesitation, as it did Fascism in Italy when the Allies triumphed.

Nor is the Church of Rome even committed necessarily to the support of political conservatism. In Spain Catholicism is reactionary, in France and Italy it is "Christian Socialist", in England it even assumes a kind of fake libertarianism, talking in broad terms of the inalienability of the individual. In French Canada it can be seen in the state of transition from advocacy of the reactionary Quebec capitalists to support of the radical movement among the French Canadian workers. Justification for a pretended radicalism was thoughtfully provided as early as the latter years of the past century, in such ambiguous pronouncements as *Rerum Novarum*.

Because of its adaptability, because it is an international organisation, because it represents the one living and independent religious body, because it is sensitive to social tendencies and able to assume protective colouring, because it is quite capable of advocating fascism in one country and some parody of free socialism in another, the Roman Catholic Church is the most dangerous single institution in the world to-day, and the libertarian should always remain conscious of this fact. A Catholic writer once remarked to me that he thought the day would come when Fascism and Communism alike would be things of the past, and when the last struggle for the soul of man would take place between Catholicism and Anarchism. His vision was perhaps over-simplified, but at least it did recognise the fact that the Catholic Church represents the prototype of human authority and that its pretensions are incompatible with the hopes of those who seek the fullest and most fruitful freedom of relationships between man and man.

GEORGE WOODCOCK.

Gerard Winstanley

THE only period of Winstanley's life about which much is known is that in which he was leader of the Digger movement; namely the years 1649 and 1650.

Winstanley was born in 1609 at Wigan. At the age of twenty he went to London and served an apprenticeship in the cloth trade. Fourteen years later he left London and went to Cobham in Surrey. At some time prior to 1648 he met William Everard, an ardent leveller (the levellers were a group of men who, at the time of the English Civil War, advocated Political Democracy on the basis of universal manhood suffrage). Everard was probably an important factor in turning Winstanley's thoughts from religion, which had once monopolised them, to politics. In January, 1649, Winstanley published a tract which combined religious ideas of a struggle of reason and righteousness against selfishness, with the Anarchist-Communist theories which are characteristic of his later writings. In this tract Winstanley says:—

"I have now obeyed the command of the spirit which bid me declare all this abroad. I have declared it and I will declare it by word of mouth. I have now declared it by my pen. And when the Lord doth show unto me the place and manner, how he will have us that are called Common People to manure and work upon the common lands, I will then go forth and declare it in my action, to eat my bread with the sweat of my brows, without either giving or taking hire, looking upon the land as freely mine as another's . . . I have an inward per-

suation that the spirit of the poor shall be drawn forth ere long, to act materially this law of righteousness."

In April, 1649, this programme was put into action on St. Georges Hill, near Cobham. Here twenty to thirty poor men, under the leadership of Winstanley, began to dig and sow the wasteland. They invited the local populace to come in and join them, promising them food and drink and clothing. From the very beginning of their experiment, however, the Diggers met with hostility. In the first week they were attacked by a mob, of over one hundred people, which destroyed the tools of the Diggers and burnt down a house which had been built by them.

Despite this hostility, Winstanley's followers continued with their work; but soon their activities were brought to the notice of the Council of State and the Surrey J.P.'s were ordered to take measures against them.

Two troops of horse were dispatched to St. Georges Hill to investigate what was happening; the Diggers were Pacifists and allowed the soldiers to carry off Winstanley and Everard to London, in order to explain their action personally to General Fairfax. An interview between Winstanley, Everard and Fairfax took place; a few days later the Diggers were driven from their land, although they soon managed to return. They were, however, subjected to continual acts of violence from the local landowners who saw that the Digger movement was a direct challenge to the 'rights' of property. Time and time again the Diggers' seeds were uprooted and their tools destroyed.

The Diggers struggled on through 1649 but in March, 1650, they were finally driven away; so they removed the entire settlement to a nearby heath. The forces of order were determined, however, that the Diggers should be given no peace, and a week before Easter a local clergyman, Parson Platt, led several men to the Digger settlement. The men set fire to the Diggers' houses and furniture and scattered their belongings. The Diggers were threatened with death if they returned. It is significant that the clergy were the greatest enemies of the Diggers.

This ended Winstanley's attempt to introduce primitive Anarchist-Communism into England. From then onwards Winstanley devoted himself to spreading his opinions by means which did not include direct action.

A moderately clear idea of Winstanley's political, social and religious views can be obtained from his writings.

In Winstanley's Utopia, government was to be retained. But his ideal government was so different from any government that has, or does exist that it hardly deserves the name. Parliament was to remain, but it was to be a body elected by universal suffrage, little more, in fact than a judicial and administrative committee.

Winstanley believed that a new social order would greatly reduce the incidence of crime, but he was under the impression that all types of society had to be governed by law. The laws were to be so simple, however, that they could be applied by the community as a whole, without the intervention of judges, juries, and all the other trappings of 'justice'.

Winstanley believed in the abolition of private property; he thought it would end social division, for no man would be compelled to become another's wage-slave in order to maintain his own existence. The cultivation of the waste-lands was intended to be the first step towards this abolition of property. Winstanley believed however, that it was a step which could be accompanied within the framework of the existing order, and without prejudice to the landlords.

In common with other men of the 17th century, Winstanley at first saw the world from a purely religious point of view. For Winstanley, however, God was not a personal deity but a "First principle through the recognition of which men may become aware of the essential unity and harmony of the universe. That spirit manifests itself in men as the spirit of love and righteousness which enables them to live in love and harmony with their fellows. An individual becomes conscious of the presence of God in himself when he has conquered his desire for material pleasures that nurture selfishness

and greed . . ."

Winstanley also identified God with reason; towards the end of one of his pamphlets, "The Saint's Paradise", he says:—

"The spirit that will purge mankind is pure reason . . . Though men esteem this word reason too mean a word to set forth the father by, yet it is the highest name that can be given to him." However, he never supported organised religion and was always bitterly anti-clerical. He clearly saw that state-supported religion had always been one of the strongest bulwarks of the existing order.

As time went by, Winstanley slowly abandoned the theological framework in which his social theories had at first been contained. In his last work, "The Law of Freedom", his attitude is almost purely materialistic.

FRANCIS KING.

ALL the same, it would hardly be correct to consider Winstanley's *The Law of Freedom* as an anarchistic work, with its *Overseers, Soldiers, Taskmasters, Executioners, Judges and Parliament*.—EDS.

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What is Russia?

"What is so sad as an old revolt
Or men without teeth?
They bit the world with their teeth
But their gums bled to death
Say, what is so sad . . ."
—from a poem of the early forties.

I

ON March 30th, at 8.30 p.m., in New York's Webster Hall, before an audience of around 2,000, an historic event took place. Earl Browder, general-secretary of the CPUSA from 1930-44 met Max Shachtman head of the ISL (formerly WP), Trotskyite and theoretician of bureaucratic collectivism in debate on open platform: the subject: Is Russia a Socialist Community?

What was phenomenal about this was that for the past 20 years Stalinists have had a policy of never debating Trotskyites. (A sure sign of courage and conviction.) But, of course, Browder was no longer a Communist (a Stalinist, that is). He had been kicked out of his post and expelled from the party and finally relieved of a minor non-party job as book agent for a Russian press. He was in disgrace, a "tool of the imperialists". He was the scape goat of the right-oriented strategy of the war years. The thing is, he probably believed it and to hold to ones beliefs in the CP means to pay for them.

Why, anyhow, Browder should want to debate Shachtman after all these bitter years (and in view of the anticipated drubbing we expected him to get) was variously explained. The most interesting explanation being: Browder had a death wish and before passing on, wished to tar himself with the Trotskyite brush as a last service to the party—a la the Trials at Moscow.

II

Browder began by giving the classical points in the Marxian scheme of the relationship between development of technology and the unfolding of socialism. He showed in %s how Russia had "leaped ahead". He apologised for the fact that the standard of living has lagged by saying that "All Russia is an Army". And economic gains consequently take three forms: (1) Accumulation of New Capital; (2) Education (!); (3) Security: i.e., Artillery, Planes, Tanks, Atom Bombs. He interjected the Cold War (not on the topic of the night.—Shacht-

man later offered to debate this on another night), and said he was for the Co-Existence of the two systems. He pointed to the co-existence of American slave-holding and capitalist society for 100 years. (He forgets it was a co-existence based on a mutual agreement to exploit each his separate tract. He also seems to have forgotten that the co-existence finally ended in a gigantic and terribly bloody war.

"Every new factory is a step toward socialism," said Browder. (And what about the A-bomb plant at Oak Ridge, Mr. Browder?)

III

Shachtman began: "I've waited a long time for this." He regretted the fact that it was not the present general secretary of the CP but "Beggars can't be choosers."

Shachtman gave his definition of socialism:—

1. Communal ownership of the means of production.
2. Democratic control.
3. Abolition of classes.
4. Production for use.
5. Abundance as a pre-requisite for the freeing of man.

He granted a growth in industry but showed that rates in the U.S. and Japan had been just as high, higher or almost as high. Did this make U.S. or Japan socialist?

He claimed real wages had declined.

He showed that the ratio in the workers' camp alone between lowest and highest paid was 50 or 60 to 1.

He told of Lenin's principle of wages: bureaucrats, technicians and functionaries to be paid the average wage.

(A shout from the audience: How much did Trotsky get?)

He showed how the Bureaucracy received 100 times the average worker's wage (throughout he used only official Stalinist sources: *Pravda*, *Izvestia*, etc.—Browder never challenged one of his statistics), "100 times the average wage," Shachtman shouted, "Is this Socialism?"

"Go peddle your Socialism to the Pentagon Building!"

He mentioned the Labour Book, Internal Passport on which even the individual's divorce(s) are mentioned. Things that Hitler started.

Speaking of the workers and the slave labour camps he said that the Soviets operate on this slogan: Make your life a paying enterprise or give it up.

He mentioned the abominable housing, described a prospect of new apartment construction in Moscow featuring servant's room in the apartment.

He cited the sharp decline in the position of woman's freedom. The reactionary reform of the divorce laws, the mother medals.

He spoke of the fetish of Nationalism and reminding Browder that he (Browder) himself had on two separate occasions (as IWW in World War I and as CP'er in early World War II) spent some time as a fellow worker in a nationalised enterprise, namely the Federal penitentiaries at Leavenworth and Atlanta, Ga.

He said that over 95% of the CEC of the Bolshevik Party in 1917 had been liquidated and that even if (which we don't) accept the traitor-spy explanation of Stalin, that if we accept Stalin's explanation then there must have been something awful rotten in the Kingdom of the Russias to cause tried revolutionaries to betray in that extent.

Shachtman ended with a question direct to Browder as to what if Stalin-boy did come over here: "Who would be the first to get a bullet in his head. You or I?"

"That," he said, "would be a sporting proposition."

He then cited the fates of the former general secretaries of the CP of Hungary, Roumania, Albania, Bulgaria.

He leaned sideways, he stretched his arm and pointed a taut finger at Browder: "There, but for an accident of geography, stands a corpse."

IV

In his rebuttal Browder pointed to progress in Poland compared with decay in Italy. He spoke of France and showed how the standard of living was declining in Western Europe. Shachtman had talked about tea and soap, showing there was less produced *per capita* in pre-WWII Russia than in pre-WWI Russia. Browder countered with some contrary figures on shoes and textiles. (Maybe

The New York Debate - BROWDER

Vs.

SHACHTMAN

Browder is right about the shoes and textiles. Who can tell in the welter of lies than Soviet statistics are? (And then there was that story about a bowl of lentils (but again why be so smart in the face of suffering).

Browder denied that immediate consumption could be the only rule of an advancing economy. He said Shachtman for wanting this was a reactionary, Utopian, clerical Christian socialist. He said the means to socialism was being created in the USSR, and that socialism leads to democracy.

In his rebuttal and in his answer to the questions about Italy and France, Shachtman told this story:

"An American visitor went to Russia. In Moscow he was shown the subway. He looked. 'Look at the tiled floor,' said the guide, 'Wonderful, eh?'"

"I'd like to see the trains. When is the next train due?"

"Look here at these murals—"

"Where are the trains?" said the visitor.

"Look at these toilets," said the guide, "flush toilets."

"Yeah, but where are the trains?"

"Trains, trains," said the guide—

"What about the sharecroppers in the South?"

Shachtman said Socialists should ask two questions when they talk about progress toward socialism: (1) Is standard of living of the masses going up? (2) Is State coercion going down?

V

In his Re-Rebuttal, Browder said that the USSR is 1,000 times more democratic than the so-called democracies of the West and urged us to look upon and forgive the sins of the USSR as those of "a mobilised army".

"Shachtman is in the service of the war mongers."

"The NAM would be pleased with my opponent's speech to-night."

VI

What can one say to all this? Blood under the bridge. Where stood Trotsky

at Kronstadt? Shachtman and others in the WP have admitted that perhaps some "mistakes" were made. Of course, the WP (ISL) is not even the official Trotskyist party. The Old Man himself having read them out in 1941. Their independence of the "old men" and their emphasis on democracy, and their concern with the problem of bureaucracy are encouraging factors.

On the other hand, what of Browder? Gray and worn, he clings to his ideas and his life-long hope—seemingly he will go down to the grave with them and if he has his wish—possibly it will be dug by Stalin's slave-labourers.

The crowd at the meeting was like "a class reunion of the left communists of the past two decades." Yup, it was old home night (but there was no home to come home to, was there?)

Thus, even in the world Trotskyist movement (an infinitesimal sect), the theory of supporting the USSR as "a degenerated workers' state" is the major point of view. In the U.S. this fraction is at least twice as strong (numerically). The Trotskyist movement of England and France seems to be declining.

These new ideas of the importance of democracy and personality as opposed to technic and "history", seem inevitably to burst the shell of Marxism.

Shachtmanites claim that Marxism means that one must be ready to scrap old hypotheses and accept new better ones even if these are anti-Marx's writings and predictions or go into areas Marx never considered. If one wishes, I suppose one can still call this Marxism. (Browder, too, was a Marxist—and to me with his straight technical line he sounded more like one) but, of course, it matters not what one calls it. What matters is what we do, think and feel.

Perhaps if we asked ourselves what we want to do to-morrow, we'd get a better idea of what socialism is.

VII

Everyone had come with great expectations. I left disappointed. After all, what did it matter: one Stalinist still kept his illusions, in spite of everything (that was kind of terrifying though). Yet one felt that the real problems lay elsewhere.

JACK GALLEG0.

REPORT ON NIGERIAN MASSACRE

THE Commission of Inquiry which was set up to investigate the causes of the shooting at Enugu in Nigeria, last November when the police opened fire on a crowd of African miners, killing twenty-one, has now published its report.

Two points in the report are of particular interest. The first is that the Commission does not accept police evidence that the crowd was armed:

"We are forced to the conclusion that the only weapons possessed by the miners were sticks, which they always carry for walking on the sloping ground, and the implements of mining, such as pick-handles and picks.

"That crowd was assembled there for some hours, and yet there appears to have been no attempt to use force against the police. Not one policeman was injured, not one missile was thrown at them.

FOREIGN COMMENTARY

Near the magazine door there were three policemen cut off. It is true that there is some evidence that they were struggling, but if the crowd were bent on using force against the police, nothing could have saved those police from grave injury, whereas in fact they were not injured at all. Yet this was one of the main contributory factors which decided Mr. Philip to open fire. We feel bound to state that the report made by the police to the Chief Commissioner that the police were attacked by a lot of armed miners was not substantiated by the evidence."

What an unfair blow at the infallibility of the police, who the report, politely, of course, calls liars and perjurers!

The second point of interest is an attack by the Commission on the infallibility of the workers' leaders. They were satisfied that a great deal of the industrial tension at Enugu was caused by "the utterly unscrupulous manner" in which Ojiyi used his position as secretary of the union to increase his influence and improve his personal position. It says:

"We are not at all impressed by the evidence which he has submitted concerning the sums of over £1,500 which he received personally out of a levy of little more than £2,000 subscribed by the miners when the union was without funds.

"Ojiyi pretended that he alone was responsible for the improvements in the wages and conditions of the men, and he permitted (if he did not himself initiate) a lavish expenditure on purposes entirely for his own advantage. We are quite satisfied that a person who would allow the membership of his union to make

such disproportionate and extravagant gifts, while he may still enjoy their confidence, is utterly unworthy of the trust and responsibility which must be given to a trade union leader."

★

NO FREE DISCUSSION IN RUSSIA—BY STALIN

WE are always being assured by Communists that in Russia there is complete freedom of discussion at all levels both in the factory as well as in the more exalted scientific circles. They still maintained this position in spite of the Lysenko *affaire*. But what do they now say since no less a person than comrade Stalin himself has spoken—and to the effect that there is no freedom of discussion in Russia on scientific questions?

The *Daily Worker* did not publish Stalin's article, and only passing reference to it is made in their Moscow correspondent's report of another article in an issue of the *Bolshevik*, "the leading theoretical journal of the Soviet Communist Party". But even this report makes certain interesting admissions.

"*Bolshevik* says that certain scientists, instead of using arguments and scientific truths against those who disagree with them, 'prefer revenge on them through administrative channels.' And he comments that 'It will certainly blow like a fresh wind through the corridors of those scientific institutions where, according to *Bolshevik*, free discussion between partisans of different schools has been shunned.

"The article says that some professors appear to lack the courage to state their point of view on subjects concerning their speciality, merely because in some paper another opinion has been expressed—often by someone insufficiently qualified."

★

Stalin's article was a personal attack on the Russian philologist, N. Y. Marr, but it is generally felt that it is intended to have a much wider impact, as such statements as the following indicate:

"It is generally recognised that no science can develop and flourish without a battle of opinions, without freedom of criticism. But this generally recognised rule was ignored and flouted in the most unceremonious fashion. A group of inflexible leaders, having ensured themselves against all possible criticism, began to act arbitrarily and high-handedly."

Of course, one has to exclude Stalin himself from these attacks, for the very fact that his statement will have the effect of upsetting the existing "line", without discussion, is surely proof of comrade Stalin's continued infallibility!

Of the existing conditions of sciences

and the arts in Russia, Stalin wrote:

"A regime has prevailed which is alien to science and men of science. The slightest criticism of the state of affairs in Soviet linguistics, even the most timid attempt to criticise the so-called 'new doctrine' in linguistics, was persecuted and suppressed . . . Valuable linguistics workers and researchers were dismissed from their posts or demoted for being critical of N. Y. Marr's heritage or expressing the slightest disapproval of his teachings. Linguists were appointed to leading posts not on their merits but because of their unqualified acceptance of N. Y. Marr's theories."

What a damning admission by the Red pope himself! And to have made such a statement, which must seriously jeopardise the propaganda efforts of Russia's fifth column throughout the world, is surely an indication of the extent to which the rot has set in, and how widespread is corruption in Russia to-day, and the fear amongst men of science to state honestly what they believe to be the truth.

Stalin, somewhere in his statement, writes: "Save us from N. Y. Marr's Marxism!" Who knows, perhaps one day the Russian people will wake up and save themselves from Stalin's infallibility.

★

DEFINITION OF A TERRORIST

A REUTER report from Singapore (23/6/50) states that "The first woman to be sentenced under Malaya's emergency regulations was sentenced to death to-day at Raub, Pahang. She is Ho Mun-wah, aged 33, the daughter of a wealthy Chinese merchant, and was accused of possessing a hand-grenade.

"Five other Chinese were executed at Pudo to-day. An official communiqué said they were caught after a sharp fight with the police on May 4th."

Is it too late to protest? And who are the terrorists; those who possess a hand-grenade or those who condemn to death a woman for possessing (she was not even accused of using) a hand-grenade?

★

ORWELL'S "THOUGHT POLICE" AT WORK, 1950

THE *New Chronicle* (26/6/50) reports that "More than 800 displaced persons were detained aboard the ship in New York harbour until they had signed declarations that they were not Communists, as required by new United States law.

"They also had to swear that they had never belonged to any of the more than 100 organisations listed as subversive."

LIBERTARIAN.

In Brief:

Two Explosions in Spain

A military powder magazine exploded near Valladolid ten days ago. A week before, a similar dump blew up near Barcelona.

Head-hunting in Albania

Eight alleged Yugoslav Trotskyite spies, including one woman, went on trial before an Albanian military court in Durres on June 10th, the official agency ATA reported from Tirana.

The eight were charged with espionage and sabotage, specifically in connection with the railways.

—and Formosa

June 10th.—A military firing squad executed four persons, including a woman, convicted as ringleaders of the Chinese Communist underground on Formosa.

The four were arrested in a spy round-up last February and March, and the executions came less than half-an-hour after the group had been sentenced.

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THROUGH THE PRESS

STANDARDISATION

A huge, fat man told of an advertisement the day before asking for 300 women to sew parachutes. When hundreds of applicants arrived they sorted them out and hired 25, which was all they wanted in the first place. Any who were over 30 or under 20 or weighed more than 120 pounds were not wanted. He added:

"A fat woman I know who is about my size and has had thirty years' experience in sewing could not get a look in there. Getting so people's got to be all one size and one age and I suppose pretty soon they'll want them to all look just alike."

—Ammon Hennacy in *Catholic Worker* (U.S.A.), June, 1950.

GOING TO THE OTHER EXTREME

Lord (Bertrand) Russell said to-day the world's population was increasing too quickly.

There should be universal insistence on birth control and penalties for those with too many children.

News Chronicle, 27/6/50.

NOT IN RUSSIA ONLY

What I find most depressing and disconcerting about the Soviet elections is not the amount of compulsion which Governments nowadays apply to people to make them do what they want, but the ease with which, without compulsion but by straightforward methods of modern propaganda, they persuade people to want exactly what they want them to want.

—E. H. Carr in *The Listener*.

THE AMERICAN WAY

Three workers were shot to-day at the American Enka Corporation works at Morristown, Tennessee, where a strike is on.

Evening Standard, 22/6/50.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE!

I believe, and I am of course expressing my own personal view, a prison to be the worst place in the world in which to reform anyone, particularly a young person.

—Mr. Justice Humphries in *Illustrated*.

EVER SINCE SOCRATES

Seven professors charged with politically corrupting the youth of Portugal have been gaoled at Coimbra.

News Chronicle, 24/6/50.

THE FREE LOVE CONTROVERSY

What is Immaturity?

UNLESS one defines one's terms there can be no scientific basis for argument. It is becoming fashionable to regard any form of family set-up other than the strictly monogamous one as "immature" or adolescent. What is maturity? And what are the characteristics of the adolescent phase? Also is the alternative to confining coitus to one single permanent partner necessarily a frequent change of partners?

If one were able to make observations on all forms of human society past and present, it might be possible to throw some light on this free love controversy. At present, however, we are presented with tiny observations on both sides—e.g., Margaret Mead's studies of Pacific Islanders, the Kinsey Report on the

American male, findings of psychiatrists, wardens of remand homes, and so on.

That marital fidelity may be the characteristic of the immature (defining immaturity as a regression to an earlier phase of life) can scarcely be denied—one is always coming up against "stable" married people (one's aunts, perhaps) who are almost infantile, and unmarried anarchists in free unions devoid of possessiveness who seem to have reached a more advanced stage of evolution.

Jealousies, temper, tantrums, etc., are often characteristics of the faithful partner of a marriage, who is unable to bear the sight of the serene vitality of the one who is having other contacts.

M.

The International Congress

We continue below publication of translations of the resolutions of the International Anarchist Congress held in Paris last November.

ANARCHISM AND MARXISM

THE reasons for the predominance of marxism, rather than anarchist influence among the working masses, and among many intellectuals, are, we believe, of two principle types: those which result from certain deficiencies in our own activities, and those which result from the tactics employed by the marxists. In order to clarify our examination and the conclusions which can be drawn from it, we begin with a consideration of the second reasons.

1. *The authoritarian character of marxism coincides with habits of obedience of the masses.*

Since its appearance as a social doctrine, marxism has offered to the masses a solution of the social problem through a "peoples" or "proletarian" State, and later, through a socialist government. The individual man is considered incapable of this task. He prefers to obey those who will think and organise for him. This Statist spirit coincides with marxist authoritarianism.

2. *Tendency towards the least risk and the least effort.*

The revolutionary tactics and direct action envisaged by the anarchists, imply struggle, repression and suffering. The conquest of public authority (parliaments, municipalities, etc.), as envisaged by marxism, rapidly becomes reformist, pretending to realise socialism while avoiding the danger of repressions and suffering. Inevitably this tactic has attracted many supporters.

3. *Positive results, even though deviationist and reformist.*

It is indisputable that, in those countries where the psychology of the masses has not been revolutionary, North and Central Europe and Britain, for example, there have been ameliorations in the condition of the workers. The "rights of labour", the shortening of hours of work, the five-day week, better conditions in factories, workshops and mines, social insurance and various social services, are of great value to those who have benefited by them. These things, particularly in the countries mentioned, have been, to a more or less important degree, the work of reformist socialism, often of a marxist tendency.

Reformist marxism thus has the appearance of giving positive results in immediate gains, however limited they are. Moreover, through their activities in the

unions and in the co-operatives, the marxists have assisted in this constructive work, and have gained the greatest support among the masses who have not realised its reformist character.

4. *The multiplicity of tactics and slogans which are often reformist and revolutionary at the same time.*

French socialism has, for a long time been composed of many tendencies, some revolutionary (i.e., Guesde and Allemane), and some reformist (i.e., Compère-Morell and Jaurès). The same thing is true of almost every country. This has resulted in a great number of revolutionary workers being, in good faith, drawn towards marxist parties, without taking into account the fact that their revolutionary elements are completely submerged by their reformist ones.

5. *The Machiavellian and opportunist nature of marxism has been one of the principle factors of its success.*

In the First International, the most dishonest tactics were applied by Marx and Engels against the anti-authoritarian and federalist tendencies—a campaign of calumnies against Bakunin, the falsification of documents, a "rigged" majority in the Federal Council, the surprise expulsion of their principal adversaries of the Left. This initial Machiavellianism set the pattern for what followed. Thanks to it, Lenin and his friends seized control of the soviets which had arisen in the principal towns of Russia, swamped or eliminated the other revolutionary factions, and created with improvised police and armies, a state with which they killed the soviets and imposed the rule of the Party. Through its worship of power and authority, marxism leads directly to fascism. The statism and contempt for the individual contained in essence in marxist theory lead to the modern slavery of fascism whether red, brown or white.

[The second part of this resolution will appear in the concluding article in this series in the next issue of Freedom.]

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP
SUMMER SCHOOL
1950

Trade Union Club, Great Newport St.,
W.C.2 (near Leicester Square Station).

AUGUST 5th—7th

IMPORTANT
CLOSING DATE

In order to facilitate arrangements for meals and accommodation, we find it necessary to make the closing date for application
FRIDAY, 21st JULY.

Any comrades applying after that date will have to arrange for their own meals. We are sorry but the caterers will not extend the date.

We would be grateful if, whenever possible, comrades would send the full fee (£1) when making application, or if this is inconvenient, 5/- booking fee, as our immediate outlay is considerable. A programme of lectures will be circulated in due course. Speakers so far include Alex Comfort, Albert Meltzer, John Hewetson, Sam Fanaroff.

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Pat Cooper,

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★ FROM PAGE ONE

IMPRESSIONS OF GERMANY—I

those with experience of the arrogance of the military representatives of both nations, but which really does not take much account of military probabilities.

What the War did

It is natural that people should be sick of war when one sees how terrifically it has hit Germany and brought down with a crash the whole edifice of Central Europe—the aftermath persists; trains still bring in P.O.W.s back from Russia and Poland (I saw a dozen get off at a station on the Danube; they were back from Albania and looked as if they were back from hell). The Communists have, of course, no greater opponents than those who have seen what life is like in Russia and survived; this may account for the reluctance of Stalin to allow more to return. Forlorn posters on the stations ask the homecomers if they have heard of a son or husband, "last heard of in..."

We have nothing to be proud of in contemplating the desolation that has struck at the heart of Europe. We spent six years of "blood, toil, tears and sweat" hacking away at the pillars that held up our house as well. Could Hitler have been overthrown any other way? There does not seem to be any doubt about it

WE are glad to note that the *Socialist Leader* have taken up the criticisms made in the article "Yugoslavia and the English Socialists" in the last issue of *Freedom*. By omitting any editorial comment, the *Freedom* article claimed that the *Socialist Leader* tacitly underwrote Ballantine's praise of the Tito regime and especially of the typically Communist-type trade unions. In their comment in the last issue of the *Socialist Leader*, they draw our attention to their regular disclaimer that signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the editor, and accuses *Freedom* of "peddling a line which is the very negation" of freedom.

By confining themselves to this red herring about freedom of expression, the S.L. only strengthens our "assumption" that they—the "weekly paper of the I.L.P."—has in fact underwritten Ballantine's support for Tito. The S.L. is the official organ of a political party, and we are entitled to assume that it is not primarily an open forum for the expression of any views. Surely therefore it is not unreasonable to expect the Party's organ to state its own position on the Yugoslav regime, even if at some time it extends the hospitality of its columns to other points of view. But the article to which we referred was prominently displayed, and was by a leading member of the I.L.P.—if we are not mistaken, a sometime Chairman of the Party. We reiterate that in the absence of editorial comment, a reader would

reasonably expect the views expressed to represent the views of the official organ of the party of which the writer is a prominent member. And we do not think this impression can be lightly effaced by backchat about freedom of expression.

At the present moment the interests of the ruling-class of the Western Powers lead reactionary sources to seek to whitewash Tito—because of his quarrel with "the other side". It is therefore doubly important for socialists to state their position regarding Tito's regime with the utmost clarity. That the editorial position of the S.L. was ambiguous occasioned us concern enough to call forth the article in *Freedom*. Our concern is only increased by the fact that even now, even in their comment on the *Freedom* article, the *Socialist Leader* still do not state whether or not they support Tito's regime. The editor still does not commit himself to refute or accept Ballantine's views. We therefore put the question to him: Does he, in fact, endorse Ballantine's article, and if so, would he answer the question which we put to him and which he omitted from his quotation from the *Freedom* article, viz.: "is one to assume that socialists... are going to underwrite this murderous regime of Tito's? What have they to say about the fact that the men now coming up for a show trial in Belgrade, charged with 'treason because they attempted to flee illegally to Hungary', were arrested in August, 1948? They have been held without trial for 20 months."

disastrous. As it happened, Hitlerism collapsed in war. After so many years of mouthing about the "German people", the Nazi leaders left them completely in the lurch. The Führer was determined to have all or nothing; he led them to a point from which there was no escape for him, so he continued to the bitter end, until everything was in ruins, and when there was nothing further possible, he committed suicide. On the other side, what has been the final result of the alleged anti-Hitlerite war? Nothing whatever has killed the Nazi myth—anti-Nazis now have the power to speak, so that one hears the general condemnation of it. But war and totalitarianism may give the Nazi minority power again (many are reinstated in both sides, and certainly Eastern Germany is not the slightest degree better—most consider worse—than it was under Hitler). And meanwhile the insane policy of wholesale bombing, which was decided from above by the Government that came into power by the back-door in 1940, has left Russia the master of Europe.

It would take less than a month for the Russian Army to be in the Channel ports, a situation which British Imperialism will never tolerate, and which was evidently not taken into account by the war strategists whom the Press assured us were so brilliant and inspired. Churchill having repeated at Yalta and Potsdam precisely the same mistakes Chamberlain made at Munich (which the Labour Government having assented to and followed, cannot capitalise on for electoral purposes, so that he escapes the same ignominy) the ground has been prepared for the Third World War that broods over Central Europe to-day like a carrion crow.

(To be continued)

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every Sunday, 7.30 p.m.
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COLNE & NELSON DISTRICT
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at
Twisters and Drawers Club,
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Open-air meetings will be held at White-
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JULY 11th Open Discussion
"THE ABC OF ANARCHISM"
JULY 25th Don Taylor
"TRENDS OF MODERN CAPITALISM"
Enquiries c/o Freedom Press

KOREA

The Powers Use the People in Their
Struggle For Bases

of effective democracy become quite meaningless from this perspective.

A BROADER VIEWPOINT

Let us step back a little and look at the problem from a broader viewpoint. In 1910, Korea was annexed by Japan. Before then its people had lived under a stable, static agrarian society of the kind that is called feudal in the west. Property divisions were absolute and almost changeless. The mass of the people were peasants, and like most peasants in our epoch, were miserably poor. Shackled by poverty the Korean population had no control over their destinies.

The Japanese treated the country as a colony, and exploited it efficiently. No doubt Japanese publicists, like the apologists of other imperialisms, found occasion to dilate on the benefits of bringing capital, developing industry, and all the rest of it. But the Koreans were still not their own masters.

As early as 1943, the great powers (not, be it yet again noted, the Koreans themselves) were discussing the future of Korea, its separation from Japan, its division into spheres of occupation and influence. The Japanese were replaced by the Americans and the Russians, and then by their puppets.

Now it is important to realise that dividing a country along a parallel of latitude does not divide the opinions of the inhabitants. The 8 million northern Koreans are not heart and soul Communists, nor are the 20 millions in the south fervent democrats on the U.S. model. Peasants the world over have endured tyranny for long enough to have developed a certain stoical apathy, and no doubt this is the

prevailing mood among the Korean population. But the more ambitious—also as elsewhere—seek to utilise the struggles between the great powers to what they conceive to be their own or the country's advantage. Such people gravitate towards the Russians or the Americans without much care for ethical considerations, or for the alleged ideological structure of either. Needless to say, such "utilisation" is reciprocal; these are the people whom the occupying powers use as their puppets and agents. In the upshot the general population remains poor, crushed down and oppressed. Now they are having their lands ravaged by a war.

IMPERIALISM IN ASIA

What is happening in Korea is something which is happening all over Asia. The capitalist press sees only the cold war. For them Asians are either "agents of Russia" or "loyal to America"—or to Britain. Actually, imperialism in Asia has entered on a new phase; the peoples are more or less consciously aware that they don't want any kind of imperialist domination and are less tolerant of traditional domestic tyranny. Native politicians identify themselves with one or other of the conflicting class and economic interests. Russia and America back whichever seems to further their own interests.

The U.S. support the economic status quo, and offer the "advantages" of democracy and elections. The Russians seek peasant support by land reforms and thereby strengthen their own hold. In colonial territories like Malaya, it is quite fantastic to suppose that all who oppose British rule are Communists or care a damn about Russia. But it suits the Kremlin to infiltrate these opposition elements,

woo them with military equipment, and turn revolutionary aspirations to their own advantage while harrying the Western imperialisms. What is happening in Korea has been happening in China, is going on in Malaya. The powers utilise forces of reaction or of unrest, while keeping their eyes on the question of strategic bases. It is they who dispose; the Asiatic millions endure and suffer. It is these people that we are interested in—not the "rights" and "wrongs" of imperialist competitors—for us they are all wrongs.

THE WAR SCARE

If we insist on this question of the right of the peoples of Asia to order their own individual lives without the machine-like intervention of this or that local tyranny, or which ever imperialism is for the moment in control; if we insist on this, it is not only because of the intrinsic justice of such a standpoint. It is also to lift us in Europe and America (and we wish we could add, in Russia also) out of the parochialism of the war scare. It is not enough to see the war in Korea as simply a threat to our security, our "peace". To limit our viewpoint in this way, is one step on the road to accepting the specious arguments of the main antagonists, and line up behind one or the other of them in the war preparation propaganda. The peoples of the world have an interest in common, to secure for each and every individual the right to order his own life in concert with his fellows, and without any kind of tutelage from whatever quarter. Fear of war must not make us forget our common struggle with the people of China, of Japan, of Korea and of Malaya—the struggle of oppressed people everywhere against those who would rule, and therefore, exploit them.