

Freedom

ANARCHIST FORTNIGHTLY

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Threepence

Class 'Z' Impudence

HAMLET assured his fellow-student that it was motives of economy that persuaded the King of Denmark to marry his late brother's wife so soon after his death: "Thrift, thrift, Horatio! The funeral baked meats did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables." Similar motives of thrift have doubtless inspired the Labour Napoleons and lie behind the recent announcement that Class Z Reserve is being overhauled: addresses and occupations are being checked up so that it will be in readiness for the call-up to fight communism.

Thrift, thrift, Horatio! The docile British people were rounded up not by the whip and the press-gang, as in less civilised days or places, but by registration and persuasion; and they were all duly ticketed and labelled and sent off to fight Nazism. At the end of the war the baked meats at the funeral of Nazism were to be sure a trifle frugal, a bit charred round the edges, but at least one reward was that glittering prize the war Government dangled before everybody: *Demob*. We really fought the war for the right to get demobbed and no other reason was ever properly explained to the armed forces.

But of course it was only a half-and-half demob—unless one was good enough to qualify for a dishonourable discharge, which however difficult to get, certainly stays permanent—and the Services were transferred to this Class Z reserve. Of course, it could not be a complete release while the international situation was so tense, we were told. Most servicemen recognised that after all Germany might re-arm again (all the people who cried out she shouldn't now wonder how she could)—but everybody thought that when the danger of German militarism, which some ran down then, was over we would all really be demobbed.

Thrift, thrift! The second world war comes very close to the third—why disband the army raised for the second? Won't it make do for the third? They will soon be celebrating

A FRUSTRATED WORKER

I AM a member of the Transport and General Workers' Union.

Every time there is an unofficial strike somebody blames it on Communism.

Let me say that I have been in several unofficial strikes and have yet to come under Communist influences.

The workers are suffering from a sense of frustration. The "big boys" who voted for a wage-freeze want to go into some of the men's homes and hear the wives say they don't know how they are going to manage. But I realise that wages will not solve the problem, because of high prices.

As for working longer hours, plenty would—but for income tax.

Most men who strike do not wish to do so. It is the method of voting that causes strikes—the show of hands instead of secret ballot.

Personally, I think the worst thing we ever did was to make a closed shop. We consolidated the officials in their positions, and now they could not care less.

Letter in *Evening Standard*, 11/7/50.

RUSSIA'S WAR BUDGET

At the meeting of the Supreme Soviet in Moscow on June 13th, the Finance Minister, Arseny Zverev, announced that the 1950 Budget provides 70,400 million roubles (£6,965 million) for defence.

This is 18.5 per cent. of the total Budget.

It compares with 32.2 per cent. in 1940 and 23.9 per cent. in 1946.

the "marriage tables" of the next war—only this is quite a different war; this is not against the German "hereditary aggressor", this is not against Nazism; Prussian militarism, racism, international fascism, etc., this is against one of the Allies of last time.

To be sure it is just as bad in every way, but this was never mentioned then.

No need to raise a new Army this time. No need to go through the paraphernalia of asking people to register again. No need to keep up the pretence that they have any choice whatever in the matter. No need to hug an illusion that the people might decide for themselves whether they want a war or not, or whether they want to take part in it or not.

They're already on the register, and you just have to keep tab of their changes of address (very important, that!), make sure they haven't worked their way into a reserved occupation, and keep the records for next time.

The crime sheets, too, will come in handy. Sentimental old gentlemen in the Lords worry about little bills for protecting one against arbitrary authority but shy clear of such controversial measures. The majority of the population is now carefully tabulated.

IS WAR INEVITABLE?

School reports have for some time been passed on to the Army. The Army then keeps a check on the individual just as the police keep the records of his conviction, or the secret police keep dossiers as to political activity. We are moving step by step into servile dependence on the clique of authority, unless some lucky atom bomb does what a revolutionary people would do—"burn the documents".

It is natural for the Labour Napoleons to retain the Class Z Reserve and plan to call it back "in case of emergency". That is without doubt the most convenient thing to do in the circumstances. It merely demolishes effectively and absolutely any pretence of an ideological reason for the war and any illusion that the people have any say in the matter under the so-called democracy than in a dictatorship. Theirs is but to register and be recalled.

If they get the opportunity to rebuild after the destruction of an atomic war let them at least remember that when building a new society.

INTERNATIONALIST.

CERTAIN events in recent weeks have strikingly brought out the pattern of twentieth century life which we have often described as being fundamental to the capitalist structure. During the nineteenth century the apologists of the system of private ownership and production for profit used to point to the gradual improvement in living standards as the justification of their social and economic organization. But after the first decade of this century the increasing prominence of military needs in national economy has substantially reduced the force of this justification.

In Russia, during the inter-war years, the alleged need to build up military strength was the constant excuse given for the continued low standard of living and the scarcity of consumer goods. Under Hitler's regime in Germany the same process became clear for all with Goering's slogan "Guns before butter". That the lesson has been well learnt is shown by the general acceptance of the idea that austerity is patriotic, and that the demand for increased circulation of peacetime goods is unrealistic and an embarrassment to those who have the defence needs of the country at heart.

The governments of Britain and France have recently increased their general lessons of the war in Korea. The press suggests that this may not military budgets in response to the

necessarily mean an increase in taxation (since British economy is already "at full stretch") but it will mean "a diversion of manpower and resources from civilian consumption to armaments".

How far the world has moved since the 'thirties is shown by the discussions on American aid. It is generally expected that Truman will make an appeal to Congress to vote a huge sum of money (4,000 million dollars has been mentioned) not simply for American defence programmes (they are always called *defence programmes*), but for aid to European countries in their re-armament. Some of the implications of this proposed aid are made clear by a writer in the *Observer* (30 July, 1950).

"The situation is a delicate one in which it must not appear that the United States is putting pressure on Europe to match its own defence effort. In fact, it seems likely that Mr. Charles Spofford, chairman of the Deputies' Committee, was instructed by Washington to warn the meeting that if Europe did not quickly give much stronger proof than it has done so far of its determination to increase its own rearmament it could not expect Congress to grant the extra dollar aid for European defence which President Truman has said he will ask for."

Dominant World Pattern

We do not draw attention to this aspect of the resumed armaments race for the purpose of denouncing American Imperialism, or the interference of the rulers of the U.S.A. in the internal affairs of other countries. Such denunciations, directed solely against America or Britain, are usually made on behalf of the supporters of Russia in the cold war. Of course the truth is that the great powers have always interfered with the internal affairs of other nations, as anarchists have frequently pointed out in the past. Quite apart from the obvious interference of Russia in the affairs of other States—which make the argument used in the cold war a narrowly partisan and one-sided one—the immoral behaviour of the great powers should not be used as an argument in favour of one and against another, as is almost always the case in contemporary political discussion; it is an argument of general validity against power politics as such, against nation States as such.

Our purpose in drawing attention to America's intention of calling the financial tune (it applies equally to Britain's sphere of economic influence, or to Russia's) is to throw into relief the main tendency of our times. "Patriotism" as commonly understood is now synonymous all over the world with drawing in the belt, with "austerity", to use its fancy title, and with the cutting down of wage demands. It is not necessary to detail here the practical effect of such pressures on individual men and women; but it will be enough to recall that they mean lowered standards; the continuance of impossibly restricting housing conditions created by the war and now perpetuated by cutting down of building programmes; and the impossibility of

T.U. and the Atom Bomb

TRULY our Trade Unions work in mysterious ways, their wonders to perform. Can any readers enlighten us as to why one large trade union should have recently passed a resolution banning the atom-bomb, while another opposed a similar resolution?

It is, of course, symptomatic of the chaos of ideas in the T.U. movement to-day—directly traceable to political jerry-mandering—and may simply denote the amount of opposition or support for Stalinist ideas, since such resolutions may safely be assumed to be proposed by C.P.ers. If that is so, then the disruptive rôle of the Stalinists is clearly to be seen, and the damage they have done to Socialist ideas becomes increasingly obvious.

One would have thought that reformists and socialists—and trade unionists should surely be placed in these categories—would be just the people to call on the United Nations for banning and control of atomic weapons, and such was the case at the recent conference of the National Union of Railwaymen. By a majority of 79 (representing nearly 500,000) to one, the railwaymen approved a resolution which called on the Government to appeal to United Nations to secure agreements to ban the hydrogen bomb and all atomic weapons; destroy existing stocks; secure international control and inspection; reduce all forms of armament and brand as an aggressor the first government to use atomic weapons.

The miners, on the other hand, at their recent conference of the N.U.M., rejected a similar resolution on a card vote by 421,000 to 261,000.

Now why should two such unions display such difference in attitude towards such a problem?

In the first place we should take into account the system of voting. Just as it is ridiculous to expect 600 men in Westminster to be able to represent 40-odd million people in this country and countless more in the Empire, so it is ridiculous to accept the ability of delegates to cast votes on questions which have probably not been discussed in the branches, by the card, or block vote system whereby one man can cast thousands of votes. This goes for both the N.U.R. and the N.U.M.

But the N.U.M. has been much more friendly towards the Government than has been the N.U.R. over recent months. The railmen have been stinging under the grievances engendered by the wage-freeze for some time and has a large section of badly under-paid workers. They are

therefore feeling out of sympathy with the Government and are in the mood to pass resolutions curtailing its powers of life and death.

The miners on the other hand, are better off than the railmen, and have been having an internal struggle against Communists in key positions (although Arthur Horner still retains the secretaryship) while Sir Will Lawther (President) vies with Arthur Deakin, C.H., for the position of the Government's Blue-eyed Boy of the Unions. N.U.M. delegates, therefore, have no wish to make the Government doubt their loyalty.

SYNDICALIST CONGRESS IN SWEDEN

Stockholm.

THE *Sveriges Arbetares Centralorganisation* (S.A.C.) which is the Swedish section of the International Working Man's Association held its 13th Congress last month, which was attended by 110 delegates representing 303 local branches. It was also the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the S.A.C. and to mark the occasion representatives of many other organisations were present on the first day of the Congress. They included the Workers' Cultural Association, the Co-operative Federation, three pacifist organisations, the Swedish Writers' Federation, the Federation for Sexual Education.

Besides discussing internal problems of the organisations, Congress sent fraternal greetings to all the victims of dictatorships, in particular to their comrades in Bulgaria, Spain and S. America and reaffirmed their unshakable solidarity and their will to continue the common struggle for the liberation of humanity from all forms of State domination and capitalist exploitation.

But is it not deplorable that considerations like these should sway workers' (or rather the workers' representatives') attitude to weapons of mass destruction? One cannot believe that the 421,000 miners concerned wouldn't wish to see the world free of atomic weapons, but their delegates are faced with the embarrassment which faces all of us when we find the Communists temporarily in agreement with us.

We who are against war have, in self-defence, to spend a considerable amount of our propaganda energy in making clear the difference between our consistent and honest opposition and the Communists' opportunistic Peace campaigns—which could turn into belligerence overnight if the party line demanded it.

But perhaps we should also make it quite clear here that we do not believe there is any value in passing anti-atom bomb resolutions to send to the Government anyway. It is a waste of time. Those who still have faith in democratic government may find consolation and the feeling that they are "doing something" in such activity, but its chances of influencing the Government are precisely nil.

Propaganda for the destruction or the restriction of production of atomic weapons should be directed to those who make them. The relatively small number of producers capable of this kind of work have only to stop making them to have more effect in five minutes than trade unionists will have by passing resolutions till they're blue in the face. P.S.

End of Literary Freedom in Germany?

Berlin

The June issue of *P.E.N. News* publishes a protest by the P.E.N. Centre in Germany against the proposal to revive the law against "smutty and dirty literature" (*Schundundschmutzgesetz*) which was in force during the Weimar Republic and suspended by Goebbels in 1935. The signatories declare themselves against "all measures . . . in whatever part of Germany, that could affect literary freedom," and state: "We are aware of the possible abuse of laws of this kind and fear the consequences."

There is, however, little doubt here that a law of this kind will find a large majority in the Federal Parliament. The *Bundesrat* has already decided in favour of it.

The Times, 14/7/50.

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SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR IN SOCIETY.

by Alex Comfort. Duckworth's Social Science Studies, 8/6.

MUCH interest and not a little controversy was aroused two or three years ago when the Freedom Press published Dr. Comfort's booklet *Sex and Social Barbarism*. In his new book, Comfort extends his argument without adding very much to it that is not to its detriment. Nevertheless, the present volume is better organised, and much better written than its predecessor. The language is still difficult and diffuse, and one often has the impression that the desire for detachment and scientific objectivity have possessed the writer to such an extent as to obscure his meaning altogether, leaving the reader wondering what opinion is being expressed at all. These blemishes, and certain other graver ones which I shall discuss later, seriously detract from the value of the book, which is unfortunate since it contains a great many excellent things as well. More than most English writers on sexual sociology, Comfort is critically aware of the kind of society in which we live:

"We are dealing with a society in which the family is the largest coherent social unit, a family whose members tend to drop off at puberty, and whose survival time is limited to one, or at most two, generations; in which the chief cultural focus is urban, and a large part of the urban population does not know the name of its next-door neighbour but two; in which human activities are increasingly limited to techniques, and the techniques to groups actively engaged in earning a living by them; in which the inflation of authority has virtually abolished coherent patterns of individual responsibility, and in which very nearly all the older activities which made up the background of human conduct and behaviour have been delegated to central authority—congested but lonely, technically advanced but personally insecure, subject to a complicated mechanism of institutional order, but individually irresponsible and confused for lack of communal sanction. The central features of such a society are an immense inflation of the authority of State administration, and a steady less by the individual of control over his personal relationships, and of his sense of position in a social group" (p. 43).

And he goes on to say, justly, that "the sexual problems of a society of this kind are largely manifestations of anxiety", and that "a permanent war economy, whether of the Fascist pattern, or of the type which shows signs of coming into existence in democratic countries, not only impedes normal patterns of sexuality—it precludes them".

I do not quote these passages (there are many others equally penetrating) because they happen to be in agreement with the social attitude of *Freedom*; it is because there are so few among sexual sociologists who take such obvious influences into account. The chapter on the social background to contemporary sexual behaviour is one of the best things of its kind yet written. One would have expected Comfort to make his chapter on "Remedies and Methods" more convincing, but although he makes clear that society must be made for men and women and not vice versa, and although he vaguely sketches the outlines of a freer society, yet it is all curiously mild, sometimes almost apologetic.

Monogamy and Pre-marital Continence

More serious criticism, however, can be levelled at the chapter on "Monogamy and Sexual Conduct", in which some of Comfort's now familiar hobby horses appear, together with a deal of confusion and contradiction. Adolescent sexuality is, with modifications, told limbo R is, with modifications, to be limited to petting, full coitus being reserved for a permanent partner in monogamous marriage. Comfort adopts a strictly rational, non-moral attitude to extra-marital intercourse, but scarcely conceals his disapproval. This emerges in the use of words casting long emotional shadows—he speaks of "sexual exploits outside

marriage" (p. 103); or of clichés carrying very little real meaning as when he writes of the "replacement of institutional prostitution by the amateur variety" (p. 89). Now girls who sleep with men who take them out are not in fact prostitutes: to draw an analogy between "amateurs" and "professionals" is simply a not very well concealed and rather middle-class abuse of girls who show a certain sexual freedom.

Then there are false opposites: "Without over-rating the human desire for variety, which is at least partially counterpoised by a desire for stability..." (p. 101). These desires are not antitheses; they can, and usually do co-exist in every individual, and there is no reason (obscurantism apart) why both should not be gratified. Superficial also is the argument that "the rosy suggestions which have been made that in a sexually enlightened society children would be reared 'by the community'..." a cogent answer to many of these arguments is to be found in the institutional child... (p. 86). The argument is that in a better integrated society children are not made unnaturally and exclusively dependent on their family because they know personally the members of the community who adopt a responsible attitude towards them. By thus lifting children out of the unnaturally close dependence on the moods and whims and unhappinesses of their parents intra-familial disharmonies are rendered far less damaging. The benefit of such an arrangement is described by Margaret Mead in *Coming of Age in Samoa* (the title has become mixed up with another of her books *Growing Up in New Guinea*, in the bibliography), and although this is a primitive society, there is no reason why the principle cannot be carried out in more complex ones—it is already present to good effect in certain existing communities. There is no analogy whatsoever with "Institutions".

Perhaps enough has been said to indi-

cate a certain slipshod thinking, or the intrusion of prejudice under the appearance of detachment. More serious is the weight which Comfort throws into the already overweighted scales against adolescent sexual fulfilment... "the answer to the growing problem of adolescent promiscuity, which is undesirable on all counts..." (p. 99)—despite his earlier observation (p. 88) that "our conception of the sexual requirements of the adolescent makes no provision for mate-selection, or even for the fact that coital impulses exist long before the individual is emotionally or economically ready for parenthood" (italics are mine).

Bogey-Bogey about Birth Control

The key to all this is to be found in Comfort's extraordinary insistence on the procreative function of coitus. "Reproduction is, however, a logical consequence of coitus, or at least an important and frequent sequel, and to ignore it is very like discussing diet without reference to nutrition" (p. 85). And he goes on to say: "The advocates of wild life [what-ever that is!—J.H.] grossly over-estimate the efficiency of contraception, and even on those who specifically exclude the desire to produce children fertility is extremely likely to steal a march, often on several occasions. Until contraceptives can be devised which are fool-proof, every act of coitus carries the specific implication of possible parenthood and must be viewed in that light." This is simply nonsense. The trouble with contraception is not that it is inefficient, but that its proper use is insufficiently widespread. Those who have taken rational steps to provide themselves with adequate contraceptive knowledge are for practical purposes immune from the fear of undesired pregnancies. It is disquieting to find Comfort lending support to the superstition that contraceptives are faulty—it is not a very far

cry to the myth that every box of condoms or chemical pessaries contains one deliberate dud!

How important this misconception is to all Comfort's argument is shown by his remark (p. 112): "The case for pre-marital continence, in the sense in which we have used the term, rests on *ad hoc* arguments rather than on any general deduction from anthropology. *Advances in contraceptive knowledge might make it necessary for us to reconsider the problem if they removed the possibility of accidental conception altogether...*"

The Question of Abortion

Leaving aside the fact that, for practical purposes, contraceptive technique has already advanced thus far, accidental conception is already dealt with on a massive scale by induced abortion. In a rational society there seems no doubt that desirable abortion (made much rarer by universal contraceptive knowledge) could be surgically and psychologically safe; but Comfort nowhere mentions such a possibility, and it is difficult to escape the conclusion that this deliberate blindness about contraception really covers a prejudice against adolescent sexuality and in favour of a rigid monogamy.

When Comfort does speak of abortion he says that its prohibition "is circumvented by those who can afford it, while those who cannot are exposed to the extremely grave physical risks of 'back-street surgery', as well as to blackmail." Here again, the whole picture is distorted, as in his fears about birth-control, or his continual harping on the dangers of V.D., like any Ministry of Health poster. Abortion is unpleasant enough, but deaths from it are statistically insignificant, and morbidity arising from it quite rare. It is an enormously widespread practice, usually not conducted among Dickensian horrors as "back-street surgery", but by girls and women themselves with soap

and enema syringes. To speak of "the extremely grave physical risks" is simply to go in for more veiled anti-sexual propaganda through fear.

Failure to Draw Logical Conclusions

It is presumably these extraordinary blinkers which Comfort so perversely assumes, that prevent him from developing the logic of the best part of his book—the social analysis of sexual frustration. In actual practice, it is true, one has to take individuals as one finds them, in the circumstances in which they are living. But in a general survey one must not regard such circumstances as permanent terms of reference. The final chapter on "Remedies and Methods" tails off in a feeble and unconvincing manner, wholly failing to maintain the logic of the earlier social analysis. This failure is reflected in the bibliography where the author has marked with an asterisk those works which he considers of "greatest general interest". Among these one is astonished to see such superficial writers as Chesser, David Mace, and even Frank moralists like I. F. Mackenzie. This prominence is also accorded to J. D. Unwin, who held that sexual repression ("sublimation") was the motive force of civilisation. Amongst such a motley lot, it would surely have been fairer to the reader to have included works by A. S. Neill and Wilhelm Reich, who have championed adolescent and child sexuality and of whom Comfort can hardly be ignorant.

In his introduction, Comfort speaks of the influence of his prejudices: it is difficult to avoid the impression that despite the appearance of objectivity, he has more than given them their head. Altogether, this book's shortcomings more than outweigh its virtues, and the reader is left with a keen sense of disappointment.

J.H.

THE FAILURE OF MARXISM

THE very title of this article calls for an observation. A characteristic of the time in which we live is that the validity of everything—religious, ideologies, and established moral values is questioned. Thus it would be possible to speak of the failure of everything. But when one writes especially of the failure of Marxism ideas, it is because their essence is to consider themselves, and to be considered, as the *avant-garde* of humanity, working for the total emancipation of mankind. It seems therefore worthwhile to devote some attention to their present crisis. Marxist ideas and movements are both reformist and revolutionary. They believe in the continuous and straightforward progress of mankind (based on economic factors) which, through the destruction of all established social foundations, will bring about a new order of freedom without compulsion, equality without privilege, peace and well-being. This belief is common to both Social Democrats and Communists because their views are, consciously or unconsciously, and to greater or lesser degree, inspired by Marx's determinist doctrines and his belief in the messianic rôle of the proletariat. To-day, the undeniable fact that Marx's social science is false and that there is, in fact no mechanism which from the conditions of to-day builds the society of to-morrow, forces Marxism into a blind alley.

This is caused in the first place by the Marxist doctrine itself. From the appearance of the Communist Manifesto in 1848, until the First World War in 1914, hundreds and thousands

of intellectuals, and thousands and millions of workers, thought that the internal contradictions of the liberal capitalist world inevitably carry in themselves the seeds of their own decay, and that just as the bourgeois French Revolution of 1789 destroyed the feudal aristocratic order, the victorious proletariat would replace the socially and economically worn out bourgeoisie by setting up, once and for

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all, in freedom and equality, an international social republic.

This belief was first put into doubt by the outbreak of war in 1914, when the workers fought for the bourgeois states. Then came the Bolshevik revolution whose achievements nearly all the leaders of western socialism attacked and rejected. Marx's dream has in this way brought about the realisation of the first modern totalitarian state with a reality completely opposite to all that the Socialist had hoped for.

The Soviet system, or rather the Stalinist system, should not be considered as a perversion of Marxism but as its practical realisation. Marx, if he were alive would probably be startled by what Stalin had done in his name. Stalin, however, could answer that the whole structure of the Communist world is based on the prescriptions which Marx gave: the bourgeoisie has been expropriated; nationalisation has far surpassed the demands of the Communist Manifesto and youth has been educated by the State. And if an orthodox Marxist pointed out the real face of the regime, Stalin could reply with a clear conscience: "Marx and Engels have taught me that economics is the basis of society and that by the abolition of private property, transfer of the means of production into the hands of the collectivist State, the whole society is fundamentally changed, and the chief injustice of the bourgeois world, the exploitation of man by man, is prevented. I have only put into practice their theories. If it is my fault as an executor, it is only the result of a fundamental error of my teachers." Here lies the key to it all, for if the Marxist theory is false, then all its results are wrong.

The tragedy of the Left in Western Europe is that, no longer being mainly Stalinist, it has remained Marxist in spirit. Recently, two well-known French intellectuals, J. P. Sartre (the existentialist) and Merleau-Ponty, analysing with great acumen, and attacking the Soviet system, ended their study with the statement that if the proletariat really cannot carry out its mission of the emancipation of mankind, then

all history up to now has no meaning. This theoretical fatalism and messianism is a purely Marxist product, and to be an anti-Stalinist and remain Marxist means to want the cause but to oppose the consequence. Infected a patient and then weeping over his agony!

In the same category falls the policy of the Social-Democratic parties whose phraseology has remained Marxist, whose policy has become bourgeois and whose social-political perspectives are reduced to ministerial manoeuvres and demagogic tirades. This impotent socialism which is weakening daily, has been well described by a member of the French Academy, Chasenet. He says, "Socialism has served more to disorganise partially the liberal-capitalist regime, than to put in its place something effective and lasting." This diagnosis seems right since socialism with its Marxist criticism has contributed to the destruction of the old liberal world. When in Russia in the name of that destruction the Bolsheviks

came to power, the Social-Democrats in the West found themselves in a difficult position. Their ideological allies the Communists, declared war on them because they refused to fall into line; to join with the bourgeois world whose destruction they had desired so much, was the second alternative, for the Social-Democratic republic nowhere became a reality except in Germany, and then only as brief interlude before Hitler. The only thing that remained for them was to embrace what they had previously attacked and this could not be done without an ideological disorganisation and a moral capitulation.

So we are all witnesses to the fact that in the East, socialism has become totalitarian while in the West, as the French intellectual D. Rousset (author of *L'Univers Concentrationnaire*) has pointed out, "the Left is paralysed everywhere and what often looks like an incapacity for action or moral cowardice, is above all an intellectual impotence."

It seems therefore that even Stalin's zoological regime and the impulse of socialism in the West have some value: they free men from myths.

M.D.

Post-War Building in Britain

PLAN 7, 1950 (Journal of Architectural Students' Association). 2/6.

WE recently reviewed (*Freedom*, 10/6/50) *Plan 6*, a most stimulating polemic on building architecture and education, and we are happy to see it followed by another particularly good issue of this Journal with a very wide general interest. There is an able and disquieting Progress Report on post-war building in Britain, discussing Physical Planning, Housing, Community Services, the Building Industry and the Architectural Profession. This is the situation of the much publicised programme for building new towns: "Five years after their inception Stevenage has still to have its plan accepted, Hemel Hempstead has laid a foundation stone, and Crawley will move its first factory and workers from London by the end of this year—and of the others, building work has scarcely begun."

It is pointed out that the famous County of London Plan is being ignored in every direction.

The same might be said of many other stop-gap building developments on London's outskirts; for example, the L.C.C.'s new housing estate at Fairlop on the fringe of Epping Forest. Another example is given of the flouting of rational planning, in the new government-sponsored office blocks in Central London (criticised in *Freedom*, 4/2/50), photographs of which appear in *Plan 7*.

The failure of the housing programme, in the face of the countries' enormous needs (see George Woodcock's *Homes or*

Hovels, F.P., 6d.) is illustrated by the fact that:

"... the current number of marriages per year (450,000) is roughly three times greater than the number of houses to be built this year. The housing waiting lists are growing steadily, and families reaching the top of the housing lists have found that their troubles are not at an end. High building costs, inadequate subsidies and high interest rates have combined to produce such high rents for new houses that in the case of one London borough no fewer than 70 per cent. of the urgent priority cases had to refuse accommodation offered to them."

"Progress in the construction of schools, hospitals, and health centres has been as slow as that of housing. Other types of community buildings, with the exception of factories, have not even been considered. ... To make the new Health Act effective, 2,000 health centres are required. One only of these is now under construction. The only health centre operating in Britain up to now, at Peckham, has just had to close down because of lack of money. No new hospitals have been built and there is a waiting list of 10,000 people with infective tuberculosis for whom the hospitals and sanatoria at present have no room."

The Peckham Health Centre is itself the subject of an illustrated article which examines the building itself as a background to the new pattern of life which the Peckham experiment engendered.

Altogether *Plan 7* is to be recommended to everyone interested in the physical surroundings of life.

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July 19.

Sunday, June 25.

My father awakens me and tells me there is a war in Korea. 10 years ago he did the same thing. I shake him off as I shook him off 10 years ago. It is probably just a border skirmish. I want to go back to sleep.

Mon., Tues., Wed., etc.

Pres. Truman has suddenly decided to send U.S. air and naval forces to the aid of the "embattled S. Koreans". He decided this by himself he tells newsmen, "thinking it over one fretful night in Blair House." The s.o.b. is getting us into war all by himself. The country slowly, cringingly falls into line. This is the era where one man decides and forces the life of millions into new and beastly patterns. Various "leaders" applaud his courageous action. "Everyone" slowly and suddenly, that is one by one but instantaneously begins to realise that this was what they wanted. One gets the unalterable feeling that had Truman decided not to send one farthing of support, the whole country would have fallen in line quietly agreeing with his sensible and anti-provocative, his peace-seeking action.

On the one hand he has "put a stop to Communist aggression and expansion". "Taken the first real step to preserve our way of life from the Communist hordes," etc., etc. On the other hand he (would have) "saved American lives from a useless foreign war in an untenable military and political situation", etc., etc.

It can be turned on and off like a tap.

Proof positive of this is the fact that just a few days before, Secretary of State Acheson had held that the defence of Formosa with U.S. troops was not contemplated.

S. Korea, always a military trap for a power like the U.S., had never been given first-class military equipment. "What's the sense of giving them arms that the North will get anyway by capture or desertion." (The S. Korean police reported 20,000 guerillas destroyed in the last year of its activities). And while the N. régime is a Stalinist puppet régime, the S. is a kind of anachronistic ancient oriental landlord-clicque despotism, which literally assassinates all opposition including even all

Foreign Commentary

CHANGING MASTERS

THERE are still workers who pin their hopes for a better future in the coming to power of a workers' government, or in the overthrow of the existing social order and its replacement by a workers' State. We have always tried to show that nationalisation, or the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as the Russian system is called simply means, so far as the workers are concerned, a change of masters. It has a weakening effect on the militancy of the Trade Union organisations since they now have a stake in both camps, with the result that almost all agitation among the workers is condemned by the leadership and is declared to be "unofficial" and "irresponsible". And in countries like Russia where the State is the sole employer the Trade Unions exist only in name.

How this operates is shown in the case of one of the "satellite" States. During the past fortnight the Hungarian Workers' (Communist) party has launched violent attacks on the rank and file workers, and more recently against the Hungarian trade unions and their leaders for what the party describes as "wage swindles", by which they mean that workers received higher earnings than those to which they are entitled. The trade union leaders' attitude to production in general, the endeavour to keep down output norms for workers and to increase their wages "was correct when applied against the exploiters of the Horthy régime" before the war, but to-day it was "intolerable and impermissible" because it weakened the power of the working class—meaning the State—and slowed down the advance towards Socialism. It was now the paramount task of the trades unions, the party statement said, to serve as "the party's main support in the development of production and socialist industry."

All the trade union newspaper, *Nepszava* could say in reply was to express its thanks to the party for the criticism!

It will be argued by Communists that the workers should work harder for the realisation of Socialism etc. . . . but what many workers find difficult to understand is why in a country where the capitalists have been driven out the workers themselves should not take over the management of production instead of the Party. They are becoming suspicious of these political organisations which are so vocal in their criticisms of the capitalist system yet only to apply it with more vigour when they themselves come to power, since, unlike the individual exploiter, the State has all the backing of force, and no opposition from the workers' organisations (Trade Unions).

The workers in the Communist countries are still the pawns and "the dignity of labour", "the workers' State", "equal-

other extreme rightist cliques.

At once the sex-distorted idiots of this country breathed "a sigh of relief". This phrase was spontaneously brought forth by all strata. At last "the battle had been joined." "Now we know where we stand." "This is the kind of fight America is best at." The calm after this first burst of excitement was "like a post-orgasmic calm"—quote: Harold Isaacs, erstwhile Trotskyite supporter in an article in the *N.Y. Post*.

From various small younger sections of "our" citizenry came burst of glory and real enthusiasm to die. Somewhere a whole air force reserve group volunteered to a man for active service. A slight spurt in recruitment all over the country.

(A bigger spurt the day after the draft is announced). "Experienced, Dependable, Expendable," one officer telegraphed the *Pentagon*. The price of bread went up one cent in N.Y. Panic buying of sugar, stockings, tyres, coffee, etc., etc. Tin and lead commodity prices leaped up. But the ones who really got grimly excited were the old pompous grey-head boys who aren't going to do any of the fighting.

"National unity," said the lean governors. "Sacrifice without stint," said the fat elder statesmen. "Me too," said the labour leaders, demanding . . . jobs for labour in the councils of war and industry planning. "We are ready to offer . . . etc."

The army representatives at this conference displayed a really adolescently stupid bill board idea of what was going on. The business men were simply inane, etc. In other words all those who are hot for the fighting simply do not know what is going on.

Step by step, statement after statement is made and retracted.

We won't defend Formosa. We will. We won't send ground troops. We do. Draft.

"It is not contemplated calling up the reserves." Reserves will be called.

Above all, the eagle-nosed father figure of MacArthur, a seventy-year-old man who walks with a cane. 3 hours in Korea and he tells everyone not to worry. "I have supreme confidence." "Situation not serious." Tell it to the dead, General.

ity" simply slogans with no possibility of realisation.

Italian Government Sees Red Light

The widespread agitation of the landless peasants in Southern Italy, in occupying some of the large uncultivated estates has considerably shaken the Italian Government into taking some action to appease them and to avoid much more desperate action by the peasants, consequences of which, might have created a situation which Home Secretary Scelba and his *celere*, military formations except in name, might have found impossible to control.

De Gasperi, the prime minister, toured the province of Lucania to formally open news dams and land improvement schemes. It is reported that this is the first time for more than fifty years that an Italian Premier has visited these towns. (The living conditions in these parts are described elsewhere in this issue of *Freedom*).

In the first village South of Naples where De Gasperi stopped on his tour the Mayor met him and said, "Here we are always thirsty and always dirty. There is no water." And elsewhere millions of landless peasants could have added that they toiled long hours and were always hungry.

But do these people really expect anything from Government departments, or do recent events show that they only hope to get results when they force the Government into action by the fear of widespread revolt?

... And So Will The Indian Government!

SOME Left wingers thought that India's problems would be solved once the British were cleared out of that country. They saw in such personalities as Gandhi, Nehru and other Congress leaders who had suffered at the hands of British injustice a guarantee that the new India would be based on ideas of freedom and justice. But Nehru and his colleagues have proved once more that power and the ideas of freedom are not compatible. And those who thought that the privileged minority would disappear have also been disappointed. But as in Italy the landless and homeless in India are taking matters into their own hands, perhaps in a small way at present, but it is a beginning, of an awareness that the same methods of disobedience must be applied to their native rulers as against the British Raj.

The incident that prompted our comment occurred recently near Bombay, where the palace of the Maharaja of Gwalior was stormed by 300 homeless people who squatted for an hour in a luxurious drawing room. Police rushed to the palace and cleared it by force, arresting 200 of the squatters.

LIBERTARIAN.

CHANGING MASTERS

ZBOROWSKI DEPORTED

A small news item reveals an individual tragedy occasioned by the cold-blooded actions of government departments—the deportation to Poland of Stanislaus Zborowski. Originally sentenced to one year's imprisonment in 1947, Zborowski escaped and became an almost legendary figure during the prolonged period when he eluded police cordons on a number of occasions. Like all fugitives, his very means of existence could only be secured by further breaches of the law. But when he was caught the judge seemed more anxious to rehabilitate the reputation of a police force which he had successfully eluded for so long than to see justice done. In 1948 Zborowski was sentenced to seven years.

In June, 1947, in an article entitled "Odd Man Out", *Freedom* gave some account of this man. After his first trial an officer of the Polish Air Force described how he had first met Zborowski during his imprisonment in Russia—in the labour camps of Siberia. "He was arrested because he was the son of an ex-soldier of the Balachowitz army fighting against Bolsheviks after the first world war, and in the opinion of the secret police was dangerous to the Soviet Union."

The government shows that the hysterical sentence of 1948 was unjust by releasing him after two years. It shows its callousness by sending him back to Poland where his past makes it nearly certain that he will once more come under police persecution.

ANARCHISTS IN KOREA
COPIES of *Freedom* for 15/4/49 containing an article on the Korean anarchist movement, with a message from the anarchists of Korea, can be obtained from Freedom Press at 3d. (postage 1d.)

THROUGH THE PRESS
POLITICAL PROGRESS

(1)

"Who ordained that a few should have the land of Britain as a perquisite? Who made ten thousand people owners of the soil and the rest of us trespassers in the land of our birth?" If the Chancellor of the Exchequer to-day used words like these of Lloyd George's in 1909 there would probably be a demand for a special debate in the House of Commons.

New Statesman, 22/7/50.

(2)

More than one hundred years ago the Austrian Grillparzer coined the pregnant aphorism: "From humanity through nationality to bestiality." In the 1860s the more sober Acton foresaw that the course of nationality will be moral ruin. To-day these once provocative paradoxes seem no more than prosaic commonplaces.

Times Literary Supplement, 21/7/50.

Is it because they are "prosaic commonplaces" that they are consistently ignored?

ACTIONS AND WORDS

"War itself is immoral," said General Omar Bradley at the October, 1949, hearings before the House Armed Services Committee. But he made it clear that his job was to prepare for modern total war. "As a practicing warrior for many years, I am convinced that war is completely futile." This from Major General Claire Chennault, but he still supports war preparations.

General Carl Spaatz wrote in 1948 that he was "a professional soldier who had made the disquieting discovery . . . that his profession has become almost too dangerous to be tolerated. The problem before us is not to prepare for war, it is to prepare to avoid war." But the General went on to tell how to prepare for war.

Roy C. Kepler in
Dynamic Peacemaking, (U.S.A.)

AMERICA GOES TO HELL

The draft bill is rushed through in a minute. War is declared by a cheap little machine politician from Kansas City, who could just as well have undeclared it. But of course the whole of "our" stake in Asia is now up for gamble.

Credit restrictions go up. Building restrictions. \$5,000,000,000 is going to be asked for. A colonel who has spent 4 years in Korea says it will take one year and 100,000 men to turn the trick. "Koreans don't like white men," he said.

The *Mirror* advocates the immediate imprisonment of 15,000,000 Communists and their sympathisers in "concentration camps".

Spies, counter-spies, aliens, trials, appeals, firings of scores of teachers (157 at the University of California), loyalty, oaths, Senator McCarthy all follow each other in a pattern too stupid and repetitious to be interesting.

★

But, after all, America is just joining a state of shooting war that has existed since the end of World War II. Indo-China, China, Malaya, Indonesia, etc.

The 1984 character of the war itself becomes apparent. Atrocities are reported on the part of the N. Koreans all over the front page. A small 4 inch item reports that S. Korean police have shot about 1,200 Communists and suspected Communists. (The reporter feels that in the rush some mistakes may have been made).

America's political programme is one blunder after another. "No U.N. Mem-

bers Offer To Send Men", says a *Times* headline of July 18.

"The soldiers said they felt the entire Korean countryside was either passive or actively hostile."

"We don't even know who the enemy is," one soldier said."

N.Y. Times, July 19.

"Villagers and peasants who remain refuse to direct Americans toward Red hiding places or give them food, the soldiers said."

Reports have come of Americans shooting indiscriminately at times at any Korean moving near them and "asking questions later". Guerilla activity even if America "wins" can prolong this war almost indefinitely.

In face of the immense tragedy overtaking us, the anti-war forces in America remain a handful of pacifists, religious and/or radical, Trotskyites, Libertarian Socialists, a few other Socialist sects and individuals and a fingerful of anarchists.

Wallace, Waterman Wise, I. F. Stone, Frank Kingdon: all the liberals, the labour fakers, the old "Social Democrats" are lined up solid behind their government."

J.G.

Impressions of Germany-3

A FELLOW-PASSENGER on the train related to me his impressions of Germany—from his experiences the land might well be composed solely of Gothic cathedrals, picturesque historic ruins (as distinct from the less romantic ruins occasioned by more recent history) and houses in which the famous once lived. His interests lay in re-creating for himself the distant past; the interests of a revolutionary lie also in the future, and his experiences, therefore, move in quite a different sphere. They are no more, however, the whole picture than that of the romanticist.

When one deals with the revolutionary movement in Germany one is describing a very small minority but one which has its significance for us especially. Naturally they have no influence on political life to-day, because the main pattern of politics in Germany is that of the cold war and is merely a struggle between the puppets of rival powers. Some politicians, even parties, may wish to draw away from this struggle, but there are effective deterrents, mainly in the fact that in so doing they are confronted with—if no longer active Governmental persecution—at any rate constant police harassment, loss of any possibility of financial support from those who can spare the money to-day, and the withdrawal of licensing facilities by the Occupation powers. One can therefore generalise and say that there are only three currents in political life in both zones—Russian and hangers-on; Allied (with differences between the parties as there are differences also between the Allies) and the revolutionary minority. Has the revolutionary minority reached the masses? Certainly not. In every case the various factions reach at best those whom they already reached before Hitlerism; the later generations have not responded except so far as individuals are concerned. But of course the temper and quality of those individuals is profound, and the hope for the future rests now upon the quantity.

The Difficulties

Why has the revolutionary minority not reached the masses? The difficulties were overwhelming: after the war came the terrible effects of starvation, inflation and suppression of the uprisings against Nazism. The militants had suffered many years of privation, loss, imprisonment, torture; in many cases it was impossible for them to begin again, and where they did, they endeavoured to re-create the old factions that had influenced the workers before Hitlerism. Thus even a Spartacus Bund was at one time floated. The various Marxist factions all endeavoured to re-create themselves; this was possible chiefly by help from the many émigré groups of Marxists, and most Marxist factions have a small paper and some groups once more (one naturally excludes the Social-Democrats and Stalinists from this category—they of course are influential). They appear in the main to have learnt very little from the Hitler period; the line is in most cases the same one that they had before, and where it is modified it is invariably towards reformism—such as the groups which in the teeth of all evidence wish to elevate England into the

Utopist position once held by Russia (the Social-Democrats tend to do this, too, except that they divorce Bevin from the rest of his fellow-Ministers and hold him the personal devil responsible for foreign policy, which comes a bit near home).

Germany is, of course, the natural home of Marxism and the Social Democratic Party was the party of Marx and Engels, from which they never parted. The schisms that took place in later years, and more particularly the schisms which took place after the Communist Party was formed, led to a large number of groups and parties which are often grouped together as "opposition communist". There is in some of them a healthy tendency towards the ideas of workers' control and anti-parliamentarianism but although they invariably accuse the Anarchists of being starchy-eyed idealists, etc., one is amazed to see how little these ideas are in reality worked out, because workers' control logically leads to rejection of the idea of the State and thus either means Anarchism or nothing whatever. These groups are usually a foot or two away from orthodox Marxism but their feet are suspended while they wonder whether to plunge them into the water or not.

Anarchist Theorists

To some extent, of course, their rejection of Anarchism comes from the fact that they do not know what they are rejecting. The development of Anarchism in the twentieth century is a closed book to some theorists. One often hears criticism of "nineteenth century Anarchism" from those who have yet failed to learn what twentieth century Anarchism is. This does not only apply to Germany, of course; it seems to apply to all those countries (including England as well) where Anarchism is really a new idea. In such cases (it is not at all a bad rule but it is certainly a general rule) the Anarchists publish Kropotkin first of all and do not manage to get round to anyone else, and we then hear the complaint that "Anarchism has produced no theorists since Kropotkin" or "Anarchism has not progressed since Kropotkin" when all the trouble is that the critic has not managed to read any further about Anarchism. I believe on the contrary that Anarchism produced few theorists before Kropotkin other than those who are also common to revolutionary socialism; the majority are more or less contemporary or later.

But what is more to the point is that it was only at the end of Kropotkin's life that Anarchism made its big activist and theorist impression on the working class, in the Latin countries especially, that led to anarcho-syndicalism and the form in which Anarchism has developed since in most countries. Thus when one hears a critique of Anarchism based on Kropotkin, Mackay and so forth, one must be a little impatient, knowing that this is only a critique of individuals; we are not bound by their lives or their works and Anarchism takes from these pioneers what they have contributed to the idea and the movement, and has fashioned a philosophy and a programme of action out of its traditions, its battles and its theorists.

A.M.

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★

27, Red Lion Street,
London, W.C.1.

THE BROADER VIEWPOINT

DEAR COMRADES,

Regarding Korea and "A Broader Viewpoint" in *Freedom*, July 8th, that viewpoint cannot be repeated too often.

If we recall Catherine of Russia's words ("Whenever the people have social aspirations start a war and rouse national passions.") and thoroughly digest them we need not try to unravel the subtle plots and counterplots that confuse the ignorant and sidetrack the main issue.

The truth of the inner workings of the betrayal of the common man (as in the secret treaties of the 1914-18 war for how many would have been willing to fight in order to give Constantinople to the Russian Czar?) arrives too late to save him.

Red herrings, prepared long ago, gull the unwary and are poured forth daily by State-backed papers and the B.B.C., while the truth is suppressed wherever it struggles to arise.

Meanwhile those who would rob the people of their hard-earned rights continue their cruel economic warfare at home, backed by the military, showing they care as little for their own people as for their enemies. The military has its finger on the pulse of the nation and knows that if a direct attack was made on Russia now many would refuse to fight.

We refuse to side with either party, realising that all wars between governments end in disaster for the people and strengthen the very power and ideas they pretend to destroy—beginning and ending in a struggle for world trade and power.

The United Nations is the old League of Nations over again; fine words hiding evil deeds, and to my mind a self-elected body.

CLARA COLE.

Letters

Glasgow Meeting

DEAR FRIENDS,

J. Gaffney's report (*Freedom* 22nd July) on the meetings in Glasgow was sickening. His blind hatred of "these Christians" and utter contempt for ways of thought different from his own is the negation of libertarianism.

Why should not Christians disagree about the atom bomb? Christianity, like Anarchism, ceases to be valid as a way of life so soon as it denies individual responsibility and personal belief.

It is an unpleasant thought—and a sad thing for Anarchism—that men of Gaffney's low mentality and totalitarian outlook should advertise themselves as Anarchists. A close study of both the Bible and of Anarchist writing, together, together with some humble heart-searching (if he were capable of humility) would make our Glasgow friend a better man.

The world needs better men—whatever they choose to call themselves.

MICHAEL SHAW.

[We regret that our correspondent found Johnny Gaffney's report "sickening"; but we think he is altogether too partisan. He ignores the fact that our Glasgow comrades (who have regularly occupied the Maxwell Street pitch for five and a half years) requested the Christian loud speaker van to move to a neighbouring pitch—and has no criticism for their refusal to do so. They must not be criticized for muscling in—but our comrades are "sickening", "of low mentality", and

Those Christians

DEAR COMRADE,

May I say how much I agree with R.M.'s letter on the question of religious freedom. I don't see why we shouldn't attack religion even if it is not an organised institution. I understand that anarchism could never be a militant anti-god movement like bolshevism since an anarchist society would have no State apparatus to dissolve religious bodies, but I cannot agree that as anarchists we are limiting anyone's freedom by criticising and attacking religion. I am opposed to the religious-bolshevik outfit that calls itself the Church of Rome, but I also attack the hypocritical free churches as well. I don't see that this limits their freedom, at all. I don't think we should pull down the tin chapels—that would be the opposite of anarchism where these tin chapels do not represent a political force—but no man with a free spirit can help attacking the cant and humbug associated with them.

It seems to me George Woodcock makes the same mistake in his article on religion as the editor of the *Socialist Leader* in his controversy with you over Yugoslavia. You attacked Ballantine's article; instead of answering the point he talks about freedom to publish what he wishes as if

you proposed a mass march down Regent's Park Road calling for Ballantine's blood. Of course he is quite free to publish what he likes so far as you are concerned, and if the Party does not take responsibility for what they say in their paper that is also their affair. However, why then should they object to criticism of it? It is not as if the criticism said Ballantine should be banned, bound or burned; it merely attacks him for supporting dictatorship and calls for dissociation from Tito (which incidentally the *Socialist Leader* eventually if timidly did).

If you follow my argument, the same goes for religion as for publishing such articles. As Anarchists it is not for us to suppress religion where it is not active despotism, political power under another name. But George Woodcock says, "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." Contrarily, I say the libertarian is bound to attack Christian beliefs for their fraud and hypocrisy, but his attitude will be that people should be free to believe what they like and express that belief freely however much he dislikes it. In a libertarian society there will be no coercive machinery to prevent people believing the old legends, but we shall doubtless go on criticising these honest beliefs.

K.A.B.

★

It seems to me that R.M. in her letter commenting on George Woodcock's recent article on "The Libertarian and the Churches" (*Freedom* 8/7/50), lays herself open to criticism from Christian readers on the grounds of inaccurate generalisation, and since *Freedom* is a paper for propagating anarchism and not for airing the views of the religious, I would like to forestall them in pointing this out.

Woodcock, rightly, wrote of "the Churches", dealing, in his article, with the attitudes of a variety of them, but R.M. writes of "the Church", ignoring the fact that the beliefs and practices of different churches are poles apart, and that within each church, in many cases, there are people whose interpretation of Christianity is completely unlike. What, for example, has the Rev. Michael Scott in common with the Archbishop of Canterbury (apart from his dog-collar), or can one regard the venomous American fascist

THE CONTENTED CITIZENS OF MATERA

THAT imposing newspaper *The Times* is famous for never overstating its case. Indeed its staff were once alleged to have held a competition among themselves for the dullest possible headline. The winning one was said to be "Small Earthquake in Ecuador. Not Many Killed". But even *The Times* excels itself in its issue for 24/7/50, where the Rome correspondent in an article on southern Italy, says:

"In the town of Matera people have been living for many generations, and to outward appearances, contentedly, in the extraordinary rock dwellings which are such a feature of the place."

How quaint it sounds! But perhaps it would be as well to remind *The Times* and its readers of this description of Matera, and the rock dwellings which are "such a feature of the place". It comes from what *The Times* itself once described as "one of the finest books which has appeared in Europe since the war", Carlo Levi's *Christ Stopped at Eboli*:

"In these dark holes with walls cut out of the earth I saw a few pieces of miserable furniture, beds, and some ragged clothes hanging up to dry. On the floor lay dogs, sheep, goats and pigs. Most families have just one cave to live in and there they sleep all together; men, women, children, and animals. This is how twenty thousand people live."

"Of children I saw an infinite number. They appeared from everywhere, in the dust and heat, amid the flies, stark naked or clothed in rags; I have never in all

my life seen such a picture of poverty... I saw other children with the wizened faces of old men, their bodies reduced by starvation almost to skeletons, their heads crawling with lice and covered with scabs. Most of them had enormous dilated stomachs and faces yellow and worn with malaria."

"... The thin women, with dirty, undernourished babies hanging at their flaccid breasts, spoke to me mildly and with despair. I felt, under the blinding sun, as if I were in a city stricken by the plague. I went on down towards the church at the bottom of the gully; a constantly swelling crowd of children following a few steps behind me. They were shouting, but I could not understand their incomprehensible dialect. I kept on going; still they followed and called after me. I thought they must want pennies, and stopped for a minute. Only then did I make out the words they were all shouting together: 'Signorina, give me some quinine!' I gave them what coins I had with me to buy candy, but that was not what they wanted; they kept asking, with sorrowful insistence, for quinine."

What was it *The Times* said? To outward appearances contentedly...?

"incapable of humility" because they defeated this discourteous and provocative interference.

The editors of *Freedom*, like our Glasgow comrades, are not Christians; but we think we are being more respectful and tolerant than our correspondent towards Christian ethics when we ridicule their difference of opinion about the "rightness" of the atom bomb. The question: "Why should not Christians disagree about the atom bomb?" seems to us very much more insulting to Christianity than anything Johnny Gaffney wrote.

Quite apart from all this, we find our correspondent's plea for tolerance and humility sorts ill with his ill-informed remarks about our Glasgow comrade, being both insulting and patronizing.

Eds. *Freedom*].

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP SUMMER SCHOOL 1950

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

AUGUST 5th—7th

LECTURES ON:

Saturday, Aug. 5th at

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Sunday, Aug. 6th at 10.30 a.m.

Hyde Park at 3 p.m.

SOCIAL at 7.30 p.m.

Monday, Aug. 7th at

10.30 a.m. and 2.30 p.m.

These lectures are open to all.

Full details in last issue of *Freedom*

FROM
PAGE ONE

IS WAR INEVITABLE?

planning individual activity, or family activity, for any distance ahead. It means in short that human life, in "peacetime" as in war, will remain geared to short term perspectives which make a mockery of any hopes of human achievement.

Not a New Pattern, However

It is important, nevertheless, to recognize that this pattern of life is not in any way a new one. To cherish such an illusion is to foster another one—that such a pattern is only temporary, and that "after the crisis" we shall be able to return to "normality". Before and during the last war, anarchists stressed the existence of the war pattern throughout the twentieth century. The determination of the Imperial German government to create a navy in 1898 which would reduce British sea hegemony—a determination itself made necessary by the inevitable need of capitalist economy to expand—led to the arms race of the "Dreadnought" era ten years later, and, of course, to the 1914 war. The same pattern was discernable in the arms races of the thirties—with the difference that it also became obvious that armaments production also provided a way out of economic depression and its attendant social evils of unemployment, etc. Frequently during the war we declared our belief that the post-war "normality", if it existed at all, would very soon be replaced by the cycle of arms production, both for internal economic and

for competitive reasons in international rivalry, leading inevitably to yet another war.

What is happening now only confirms our view that this is the dominant social pattern of the century.

Practicable Alternatives

We have stressed these points for the practical reason that only by understanding a situation can one seek effectual means to modify it in a favourable direction. At present two views dominate the picture, the most widely held one (though despairingly) is that to safeguard the peace we must prepare for war. Let us frankly admit that what is really meant is that we must prepare for another war without any real hope of avoiding it. The second view, held only by a tiny minority perhaps, is that anything is preferable to another war, even "to be overrun by Communism."

There is no point in going into the relative merits or otherwise of these two opposed viewpoints—for the reason that they are both, in our view, counsels of despair, and are both hopelessly impractical. Both accept the bases of our social and economic position; neither exploits the dissatisfaction of the peoples on both sides of the cold war frontiers with those economic and social bases. The acceptance of our present pattern of life, as we have seen, is to accept a future for ourselves and our fellows which is absolutely sterile and destructive.

The proposition facing mankind can

be reduced to this: that our governmental system, with its division into nation states, its poverty and social injustice, also leads inevitably to a succession of wars separated by periods of war preparation which utterly defeat all human aspirations. Hence the way forward, the way of progress, involves the abandonment of the governmental system, with its social and economic foundations, and the substitution in its stead of a rational and just social organization based on the complete autonomy and freedom of every individual. Such an organization may have, in the past, been regarded as utopian; but there is sufficient accumulation of scientific evidence now to show that it corresponds with the basic tendencies of man as well as with his manifest contemporary needs. That is all we can briefly say about it here by way of providing a contrast with the prevailing human pattern.

It is commonly held that the social revolution weakens those who make it in the field of national rivalries. Such was clearly not the case in the Great French Revolution. To-day the most active counter-revolutionary force ever since the early twenties has been the Communist International, and Stalin's fear of revolution abroad has been repeatedly demonstrated. We touch on these matters here to show that a revolutionary approach to the impasse of modern conditions is by no means a counsel of despair. On the contrary, it is a constructive and positive attitude.

FREEDOM

Father Coughlin as having the same beliefs as the near-anarchist group who publish the *New York Catholic Worker*?

R.M. states that "he will invariably regard whatever calamities befall us as an act of God". I have not met many Christians of whom this is true. They usually blame it on the wickedness of man!

Most of the churches seem to have a libertarian and an authoritarian wing, exemplified by the emphasis they place on the doctrine "Love one another" (Jesus), and the doctrine "Slaves obey your masters" (St. Paul). I think we must judge them by their deeds, and when Christians act as an obstacle to the freedom of others, as does the Catholic church, as an institution, and those busy-bodies among the Protestants who hate the spectacle of people enjoying life, let us attack them. But when Christians are impelled by their beliefs or by their common humanity to defend human liberty, why should we waste our time and theirs in telling them about "the fallacy of looking to a higher power" to change society?

As for the bible-punchers mentioned in Johnny Gaffney's report from Glasgow in the same issue of *Freedom*—they just asked for it!

C.W.

PROJECT FOR AN ASIATIC LIBERTARIAN REVIEW

A PROJECT for an Asiatic libertarian review has been contemplated by our friends in India. Their idea has been a paper in the English language circulating in Asia generally. Our indefatigable comrade in Bombay, M. P. T. Acharya, whose articles are well-known to readers of *Freedom*, and have also been produced in India, in the anarchist *Indian Sociologist*, also other papers such as *Kaiser-i-Hind* and the left and liberal press, has suggested this for some time.

A practical proposition for such a review has now come forward, and our comrade D. N. Wanchoo, of Lucknow, is hoping to start the magazine. He asks comrades to let him have articles and translations for reproduction, and also original material. It is hoped to have a broad basis of appeal, with Anarchist writers and those of other tendencies.

Please write to: D. N. Wanchoo, 12 Radice Road, Lucknow, U.P., India. (Anarchist papers abroad, please copy).

CHURCHILLIAN OMISSION

Winston Churchill's third volume of war memoirs, running in the *Daily Telegraph* recently dealt with his moves to prevent Japanese imperialists from joining the Berlin-Rome Axis. There was an interesting omission—Mr. Churchill's remarks on February 24th, 1933, after Japan's seizure of Manchuria:

"British interests require us to keep out of the quarrel which has broken out in the Far East and not wantonly throw away our old and valued friendship with Japan. It is the interest of the whole world that law and order be established in the northern part of China."

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