

Freedom

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NOTES.

Koltchak and the Allies.

The comedy in which Koltchak and the "Big Four" at Paris played the leading parts was most amusing. As this war has been boomed as a war to "make the world safe for democracy," the Allies decided that before extending official recognition to Koltchak they would ask him to make out a certificate to prove his own "democratic" leanings. So he was requested to say that he would call a Constituent Assembly as soon as he got to Moscow, and also recognise the other independent Governments in Russia which the Allies have been supporting against the Bolsheviks. He promptly replied that he would call the Constituent Assembly together when it suited his convenience, and that he would not recognise any Government but the one formed by his Constituent Assembly. His answer plainly meant that he would take the Allies' money, men and munitions, but that as to policy he would do as he liked. This answer would have been regarded as a refusal by most people, but the "Big Four" declared it quite satisfactory, and have now officially recognised him as representing the people of Russia. This is "self-determination" with a vengeance! As far as the people of Russia are concerned, the great majority are supporting the Bolsheviks against Koltchak and Denikin; and if the latter were to rely on the support they get from Russians they would be wiped out in a week. Winston Churchill's article in the *Weekly Dispatch* of June 22 shows that the Allies are definitely committed to a war on Bolshevism, with which, he says, "there can be neither truce nor pact." For our part, we say that with such forces as Churchill represents there can be "neither truce nor pact," and whether we fight openly or secretly, the war against slavery and authority must be fought out to the bitter end. The capitalists refuse to allow the workers to gain their freedom by peaceful means; therefore the only alternative is force—"force to the uttermost," as Wilson said.

Coal Commission Report.

Mr. Justice Sankey's report on the Coal Commission, which has been agreed to by the miners' representatives, advocates the immediate acquisition of mineral royalties by the State, "paying fair compensation to the owner," and State ownership of mines, after three years' working under a new system of administration suggested by Judge Sankey. The mine owners will also be paid the "fair value" of their property. To meet the miners' demand for joint control, local, district, and national mining councils are to be formed; but in the scheme advocated in the report the miners' representatives will always be in a minority. The Report has been hailed as a "great victory" by some of the miners' leaders, but in reality it is only another step in the movement towards State Capitalism which has been going on during the war. As the Report says: "Coal mining is our national key industry upon which nearly all other industries depend," and in the fierce commercial war between nations which begins with the signing of the Peace Treaty, this industry cannot be left to the haphazard methods of individual owners. The latter will exchange their stocks and shares for Government bonds, which will bring in the same income as they enjoy at present; the miners' leaders will become members of the mining councils, with nice fat salaries; and the miners—the men who dig the coal—will dig the coal as before. They may get better conditions, they may even have houses to live in and baths at the pithead, but they will still work to provide incomes for people who do no work, and they will still be slaves of the wage system, even though their wages be paid by a State cashier. And in return for all these "benefits" the miners will have to sign an undertaking that in the event of a dispute they will not go on strike until the question in dispute has been before the Local Mining Council and the District Mining Council, and then the National Mining Council! It may be a "great victory"—but not for the miners.

The War in Ireland.

It is well to remember that if the Peace Treaty was not signed by Russia or China, neither was it signed by Ireland. In fact, it is more than likely that the signing of the Peace Treaty may bring an intensification of the war in Ireland, a war which seems to be specially directed against the Labour movement. The *Voice of Labour* (Dublin) of June 28 reports many instances which might be noted by English Labour leaders now that they have destroyed Germany with their speeches. The *Voice* says:—

The week before last the regular weekly meeting of the committee of the Irish Transport and General Workers' in Golden, Tipperary, was broke up by a sergeant of the R.I.C. and a large body of military. The same week the Dublin Metropolitan Police forcibly suppressed a Labour concert in the Mansion House, Dublin. Last week a Transport Union concert in Waterford was proclaimed by a Brigadier-General, and a Transport Union meeting at Thurles was dispersed by police flourishing revolvers and threatening to shoot up the whole town. On May 14 at Rhode, King's Co., Transport Union strike pickets were taken out of their beds by military and sentenced for "illegal assembly" under the special Crimes Act by a court from which the public were excluded.

At the time the *Voice* was prevented by the censorship from announcing that the police all over Ireland had ordered that red flags were not to be carried or displayed on Labour Day. All speeches were prohibited at the Dublin gathering on May Day. At Castlereagh the printer of the Labour Day posters was prosecuted. At Killarney a number of girls were arrested for selling Labour flags on May 1. They were discharged on May 20, and then rearrested and finally sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment in Cork Jail. On Tuesday of last week at Mallow, Co. Cork, two members of the Transport Union were charged with unlawful assembly, and the illegal act of carrying a Red Flag, and found guilty by a special court sitting under the Crimes Act. Their "offence" had been committed at a Transport Union gathering on May Day. In Dublin a boy named Michael Douglas and Tom Farren, Vice-Chairman of the Irish Labour Party, were fined for the sale of Labour flags on Labour Day. A meeting called for the Mansion House to protest against the continued imprisonment of Pete Larkin and other industrial workers in Australia was proclaimed on May 3; two speakers from the Socialist Party of Ireland were arrested and fined £5 each for taking part in a Socialist meeting.

The English Labour Movement has just declared its solidarity with the Russian workers—has it forgotten the Irish workers?

Insanity Plea for Officers Only.

At the Central Criminal Court last month an ex-private soldier named Perry appealed against a sentence of death for murder, the grounds of the appeal being that some years previously he had suffered from epileptic fits, and that the medical evidence clearly showed he was not responsible for his actions. In spite of all these arguments, the Lord Chief Justice dismissed the appeal, and the man will probably be hanged. This case shows how necessary it is for a soldier to hold a commission if he wishes to plead insanity in case of being charged with murder. Two or three months ago a Major Rutherford discovered that another officer had been making love to his wife during his absence. It was shown in evidence that the major put a revolver in his pocket, made inquiries as to the whereabouts of his rival, went to the house, and promptly shot him. When charged with murder, a plea of insanity was put forward, the principal evidence in support of that plea being that he had shown violent temper on one or two occasions on the parade ground. He had the best counsel that money could obtain, and his case was put most eloquently. The result was foregone, as Army officers are never hanged. He was found insane, and committed to prison during his Majesty's pleasure. Then there was the notorious case of Captain Colthurst, who shot Sheehy Skeffington during the Easter Rebellion in Dublin in 1916. Although it was known that Skeffington was a pacifist, and opposed to violence, and had nothing incriminating on him when arrested, he was taken out of his cell the morning after his arrest and shot by order of Captain Colthurst. Every effort was made to keep secret the name of this officer, but at last he had to be court-martialled because of public opinion. Although after the shooting he was promoted to the charge of the barracks where the shooting took place, and carried out other military duties, a plea of insanity was made before the court-martial, and accepted by that tribunal, and he was sent to Broadmoor Asylum. He has since been released as quite sane. Now if ex-Private Perry had been Major or Captain Perry, what a difference it would have made in the result of his appeal! To us, the fact that a man is in the army is sufficient proof of his insanity.

IN RUSSIA AND HUNGARY.

Probably most Socialists have long since ceased to take any interest in the doings of the politicians in Paris, and the disgraceful exhibition of the spirit of imperialist capitalism which is embodied in their so-called peace terms. Nothing else could have been expected from this League of Brigands, and they have justified to the full all the opposition to their war, with its secret treaties and the typical brutality, lying, and hypocrisy that was shown by all the Governments engaged in it. The revelations which are beginning to see the light about the conduct of the war show the politicians and military bureaucrats to be as ignorant and incompetent as usual; but this caste still possesses—thanks to the apathy of the mass of the people—an immense power for evil. Shiploads of soldiers are still ready to obey their orders to kill Russian or Hungarian workers and Socialists who are courageously defending their revolutionary conquests against immense odds. The Bolsheviks have recently been appealing to the soldiers' intelligence by manifestos stating very clearly the main facts of the position, and they seem to be having considerable success with this method of fighting, causing much anxiety to the reactionary officers. The following is an extract from one of these manifestos issued in Russia by English-speaking Communists and distributed amongst British and American soldiers:—

"This is a war between Socialism and Capitalism; between the old order and the new. The Russian workers are fighting to defend their young Soviet Republic, which holds out the promise of a full and free life for all. You are fighting to defend the power of the ruling class to live on our backs and yours." In another manifesto they say:—

"The workers and peasants in Russia have done what your rulers fear you will do. They have swept the whole class of parasites, courtiers, landlords, and capitalists out of power, and have taken possession of the land and the means of production for the use of the whole people. The Russian people refuse to be the slaves of the idle class any longer. They are constructing a new order of society, in which the products of labour will go to those who work. The spirit which animates the Russian people has spread westward, and now the Austrian, Hungarian, and German people have overthrown their rulers, and are rapidly travelling along the same lines as the workers of Russia. It is the awakening of the real democracy that we are witnessing to-day. The common workers in the field, factory, and mine are asserting their right and power to rule and be masters of their own destiny."

In Georgia, one of the parts of Russia where an Anti-Bolshevik Government has been established by men who were connected with the Kerensky regime, it has been found impossible to do otherwise than give in to the currents which are everywhere tending to bring about social revolution. The land has been declared national property. It has been taken by the State without compensation, and is being worked partly by Co-operative organisations of the cultivators under State control and partly by individual peasants. Former landowners are allowed under various regulations to retain from 14 to 24 acres. The landless and the poor get allotments not exceeding 4 acres per family. This the peasants have to buy on easy terms, but it cannot be sold to outsiders, it must either remain in the same family or be resold to the State. Soviets seem to be the most powerful organisations in the country, but they have been deluded into acknowledging a Constituent Assembly as the supreme authority. As a result their achievements, although following the same main lines, have not yet reached the Bolshevik high level.

H. Brailsford, who has recently been on a tour through Hungary, has contributed to the *Daily Herald* and the *Nation* intensely interesting and informative accounts of the position there. The land has been socialised on all estates over 200 acres. The engines, steam ploughs, and modern farm machinery is made available for all. The larger estates are well equipped except on the human side. There is electric light and hygienic drainage in the stables and cattle sheds, but not in the labourers' cottages. Dr. Hamburger, a country doctor and an active revolutionist, just released from prison, was made Commissioner for Agriculture. Under his influence the local Soviets soon worked out new types of organisation. All employees on the large estates, which average from 10,000 to 20,000 acres, were formed into a Co-operative Society to work them, the only conditions of membership being that they should undertake to work at least 120 days in the year. These labourers elect their own council, with an executive of three members. The county Soviet nominates the steward, who has a power of veto. He sends independent reports on all plans and budgets of his committee to the county Soviet. The workers have the first claim on the produce of the estate. They are paid by receiving rations of grain, meat, dairy produce,

vegetables, fruit, etc., according to the number in each family. The surplus crops are sold to the district agricultural association. The district association purchases the seeds, manures, and machinery required, and sells the produce to the town population, or organises various subsidiary agricultural industries like dairying or beet sugar manufacture. The local societies are required to spend half of each year's surplus on improvements, including machinery and houses for the working members, the other half being distributed amongst the members in proportion to the time worked by each.

The land and houses of peasant cultivators are not being socialised except on the express demand of the villagers themselves. They may form themselves into voluntary Co-operative Societies or they may be attracted by the bigger results and better conditions on the national farms to join the agricultural guilds. Village schools are being made the great centres for spreading Socialist ideas amongst the small holders, instead of being, as hitherto, the strongholds of clericalism. Industry is being organised on similar lines. Industrial capital has been expropriated without compensation. Workers in mines and factories elect their own Soviet of seven members, who nominate a manager, but he is finally appointed, and can only be dismissed, by the Minister of Production. The standard maximum salary paid at present amounts to 3,000 kronen per month (at present prices about £15). Brailsford visited a great factory at Budapest engaged in making electric lamps, telephones, and telegraphic apparatus. Their Soviet consisted of three scientific and four manual workers. The manager was a former engineer, and three of the former directors were employed as consultative experts. All the men and women employed were doing their usual work with much more enthusiasm and spirit than ever they displayed when working for Capitalist exploiters.

As usual in all the Soviet Republics, great efforts are being made in the educational field to bring the higher culture and its pleasures within the reach of all. Teachers have suddenly become honoured servants of the State instead of overworked drudges. The village schoolmaster gets the maximum salary of 3,000 kronen per month. The school age is raised to 16, and will probably be made 18, and every boy and girl will have the opportunity of further technical or scientific education. Teachers are being recruited from university graduates and professional men who are being thrown out of work by the new arrangements, such as lawyers, whilst training courses are being organised to fit adults amongst the workers for this new occupation. Everywhere courses are being conducted for adults in engineering, agriculture, and chemistry for the purpose of introducing workmen to the more attractive side of their work. Theatres and cinemas have been socialised, and high-class plays and music are being provided for crowded audiences. Four hundred well-known pictures have already been transferred from private to public galleries.

Three weeks after the Soviet Revolution in Hungary, H. Brailsford says he was told on separate occasions, but in almost the same words, by two men of European repute, one a historian and another a statesman, both of them opponents of Socialism: "The era of Capitalism is over in Eastern Europe; it can never be restored." He seems to have found the Hungarian workers in town and country most enthusiastic about the advantages and possibilities of the new system, and determined that it should have a fair trial.

The franchise for the election of the workers' and soldiers' councils is conferred on all manual or intellectual workers, including women engaged in housekeeping. It disfranchises the clergy and all who live on the work of others. Only one death sentence has been passed by the Revolutionary Tribunal, and that has not been carried out.

F. C. C.

THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT— AND THOSE HE DID'NT.

The active journalistic mind has just made the tremendous discovery that, when applied to houses, the law of supply and demand refuses to justify itself. There is demand enough, in all conscience—every town and village in the country is short of houses—but no supply. Hence the scream of the press, which is about two hundred years late, as usual. There has not been, for the last two hundred years certainly, an adequate supply of decent houses in which working folk could live with proper dignity. There will never be an adequate supply as long as working folk waste their lives in building palaces and mansions for their parasites—the "insectoria" that live on them. These two facts I present, with proper courtesy, to the press. With a little thought, its writers may be able to bring themselves into the twentieth century in which this old world is living.

"Example is better than precept," says an old adage. So here goes. The guide-book to Berkshire describes the mansion built by the late proprietor of *The Times*, John Walter, as having accommodation for a hundred guests. There it stands derelict and empty. A million of money would hardly keep it going. It was built so large, says local rumour, in order that its philanthropic owner might provide work for the unemployed. Yet this philanthropist overlooked the fact that in the little town on the border of his estate these same unemployed were living in houses he would certainly have refused as stables for his horses. And at the present moment overcrowding is rife in this same place. There is a scarcity of houses, rents are going up in spite of the law, necessary repairs are not being done, while a mile away stands a monster of a house, "with accommodation for a hundred guests," empty and forlorn. Its building provided work for the unemployed. *Work!* Would not the building of a hundred cottages have provided just as much work? The unemployed were—and are—lacking in their supplies of grey matter. Twenty-five miles of a ring fence, a desolate mansion, shortage of houses, unemployed—all in one corner of Berkshire! Why not obtain work—and houses—by pulling the mansion down? For a sufficient answer, see shortage of grey matter.

This is the house that Jack built—his baptismal name in full being John Simpleton. Those he didn't build make excellent scare headlines in the newspapers.

It is not pretended there is no clay, no stone, no timber, no iron ore, no lime, no human labour power. Of all these there is an abundance. Then why are the required houses not in process of construction? The answer is a simple one: The vast majority of folk are over-superstitious. They believe in the existence of something that does not exist at all. Robert Tressall, in "The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists," has described the "money trick." Simple-minded people believe in Money—oh, how they believe in it!—and unless there is money with which to pay wages, no houses can be built. It never occurs to them that they can smash up the State monopoly of money by making their own. It can be made of paper, just as the Bradbury notes are. I am not now advocating forgery or counterfeiting; I merely put the question, why should the making of money be the monopoly of the State or the banking interests? If the Bank of England can issue notes, how comes it that I am forbidden to do the same?

It is not my intention to pursue this matter any further in the present article. Let us get back to the houses which Jack did not build.

Here, of course, we arrive at the land. Once upon a time—this is the correct way of beginning a fairy tale—a strong man built a fence round a piece of land, and put up a notice board with the legend "Trespassers will be prosecuted—By order." (It is usually assumed the two last words have reference to the Divine Name). Thereupon the other people refrained from walking on or using this piece of land. The example set by one strong man—William the Norman, if you like—was followed by other strong men, until, at the end of nine hundred years, the whole of England was studded with fences and notice boards. For the privilege of being an Englishman, and living on this "sea-girt isle," the worker now began to pay rent, first in service, afterwards in kind, and finally in money. And even if the title-deeds—which no one has ever seen—were signed by God Almighty Himself, I, for one, should dispute the signature. These deeds were written out by the servants of the strong men—for charity's sake, we had better call them lawyers. Such are the miracles of faith. We believe most implicitly in those title-deeds, and squat on our plant-potful of earth, idiotically paying rent for the same.

By process of gravitation we arrive at the human element: Aldermen, councillors, architects, speculators, contractors, merchants, etc., etc. Before a sod can be cut, the permission of all these people must be obtained—permission which means the "mortifying of family pride." The local authority will not pass the plans unless they are prepared by an architect, and until their "salaried" officials have approved them. The speculator will not provide the money—credit is the proper word—unless he can put in his thumb and pull out a plum. Contractors will not contract until they see their profits clear. Merchants will not supply but on a twenty-five per cent. basis. And Jack cannot go ahead building because of his belief in his gods. *He pays the lot.* Men of England, I perceive that ye are too superstitious!

The thing becomes the more complicated the more we look into it. Does anybody know anything about the "Yorkshire agreement"? Does anybody care anything about it? Because by that agreement the building industry has closed its ranks. Employers and workmen have constituted a monopoly, and if you would have houses you must pay the price demanded by the monopolists. No blame attaches to the workmen. They have combined in order that they may get a larger share of the wealth they produce. Because no one believes in Freedom, the slaves combine, and the very combination makes slavery more extensive

and thorough. Money, Land, Houses, Investments, Beer, indemnities, Laws, all these are being demanded—the one thing which has no credit in the market is Freedom.

Let us conclude this thrilling narrative by taking the gentle reader into a beautiful Derbyshire valley. In that valley stands a deserted railway carriage. It was purchased by two working-men, who desired to live in it. Proper sanitary accommodation was provided, and then the local authority came down from its abode in the hills. The working-men were forbidden to live in the carriage, but they might live in it from Saturday noon to Monday morning each week. On the four other days of the week they were compelled to find habitation at a near-by farmhouse. If official stupidity can go further than this, I should like to know how much further it can go.

Perhaps someone will now oblige with the chorus, "Rule Britannia."

JOHN WAKEMAN.

Switzerland.

Bertoni was, as is well known, editor of *Le Reveil*; but he was much more than that. His influence as a writer, both in French and Italian, has been great, but the influence of his life still greater. One does not find every day a workman of the highest culture who has the strength of mind to stick to his bench and refuse to turn his culture into money. Born organisers are rare, but even rarer are those who, having that special talent, decline to barter it for official position, and sell their liberty to the machine. Bertoni was most conspicuously one of that invaluable type. He edited and, we believe, set up *Le Reveil*, an eight-page fortnightly, printed half in French and half in Italian, and published in Switzerland. Meanwhile he worked daily at his trade. Saturday evenings and Sundays he gave to oral propaganda. His vacations were conference tours. The man was a prodigy of energy, and the purity of his devotion was obviously beyond attack. So the Swiss bourgeoisie, notoriously timid over its moneybags, clapped him into gaol a year or so ago, and there he still remains. He is charged with having fomented revolution in Switzerland and Italy, thereby enfeebling the former's military strength. Particulars of the trial ought now to be available, but the latest papers from Paris state that, as yet, none has been received.

France.

Bureaucracy, whether of the Trade Union or the political brand so fatally popular with Socialists, has had no more resolute opponent than Bertoni. He has always been keenly alive to the insanity of encouraging official parasitism. He has always insisted that the first duty of the propagandist is to remain in the ranks, and not clamber into the seats of special privilege which workingmen still insist on reserving for the further demoralisation of their worshipped leaders. Recent events in Paris appear to have opened the eyes of some, at least, of the French workers, and the columns of such papers as *Le Libérateur* and *L'Internationale* are crowded with articles and letters denouncing the cowardly selfishness with which Trade Union and Syndicalist officialdom looks after the safety of its own skin, and ostracises those who venture to step an inch outside the authorised programme. For example, Comrade Veber, described by the Secretary General of the C.G.T. as "not mandated," has been censured publicly by that gentleman for having told the metal-workers, then on strike, that they should struggle less for an increase of wages than for the obtaining of an amnesty, demobilisation, and the withdrawal of the troops from Russia. The Trade Union and Syndicalist placemen threw all the cold water possible, of course, on the recent strikes. "Action, to be successful must be international," is still their parrot cry. Give them a century or two in which to organise the world, at so much per month and perquisites, and then see what they will do!

Sébastien Faure has a fine letter in *Le Libérateur*, and gives the true reason for regarding his own imprisonment as a blessing in disguise. He has discovered that, in the calm which is wont to accompany old age, his hatred of existing social institutions had been cooling without his recognising it. Now it has flamed into life once more, and he insists that it is not good for any Anarchist to pass the years unpersecuted. "To him persecution is useful; to him it is necessary."

United States.

We rejoice to see that, in America, the I.W.W. is in high revolt against all this leadership-authoritarianism. The State has been persecuting the I.W.W. remorselessly, and it now understands, by experience, that to centralise revolt is to play into the State's own hand. In America they are fortunate in having Gompers and his machine-rigged A.F. of L. as a gigantic object lesson in reaction. However, in this matter, we English, with our Big Three and our threatened Bigger Four, should be the last to boast. It takes lots of events-education to stir us into thought.

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DIRECT ACTION.

On June 28 the delegates to the Labour Party Conference at Southport instructed their National Executive to consult the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress with the view of "the unreserved use of their political and industrial power" to enforce their demands for the cessation of Allied intervention in Russia and the removal of the censorship. The resolution was carried by 1,893,000 votes against 935,000, but only after strenuous opposition from men like Tillett and Clynes, who were paid supporters of the Government during the war. We never put much faith in resolutions; many were passed against conscription, but the workers accepted it like lambs. But the agitation against capitalist attacks on the Russian Soviet Republic has been steadily gaining ground, and if the war against Russia continues there is likely to be an outburst sooner or later. The workers of Europe are beginning to recognise that their struggles with their oppressors and the struggle of the Russian workers are parts of the great war between capitalism and Labour, and that if the Russian workers are beaten by the Allied intervention, the rest of the workers of Europe will be defeated and reaction be triumphant.

At the Southport Conference some speakers opposed industrial action for political ends. This is a democratic country, they said, and if the workers would only vote properly they could get anything they wanted. Besides, the Labour Party was a constitutional Party, and direct action was unconstitutional. Now, it is not true that the workers can get what they want by voting. If a majority voted in favour of taking the land from the landlords without paying for it, the House of Lords would throw out the Bill; and the only way to defeat the House of Lords would be to threaten a revolution. So even as a matter of practical politics direct action is the only way to get the land. As regards Russian intervention, the question was never raised at the last general election; and if the workers wait until the next election the capitalists will be delighted, because in the meantime they hope to crush the Bolsheviks.

All this talk about constitutional action is a sign of ignorance or worse. There is no such thing as constitutional action. An action is either legal or illegal. The masters made the laws to protect their interests, and anything likely to upset them is "illegal." Even if we were to find a way to attack them "legally," they would soon pass a law to make it illegal. The truth is that the exploiting class—the bankers, merchants, landlords and others—have gained their power by force and fraud, and they will use that power ruthlessly to maintain their position. No action on their part can or will be "illegal," as they make their own laws. Therefore the workers whom they exploit will have to use so-called "illegal" methods—that is, unconstitutional methods—to overthrow them, if they wish to gain their freedom.

The greatest difficulty that confronts us in an international revolutionary movement is that all the means of communication between the various countries are in the hands of the Governments. We cannot send a letter or a telegram to comrades abroad without it passing through the hands of our enemies. Comrades cannot travel from one country to another without a passport, and if one Government grants a passport another Government refuses to recognise it. Of course, letters and comrades do pass backwards and forwards, but only by secret and tiresome methods. But the fact that Governments insist on holding these powers proves that they recognise the war between capitalists and workers; it is only the workers who do not recognise it. Revolutionary ideas, however, jump frontiers and seas; even the Press spreads them without wishing to do so. Much as they have tried to isolate the Russian Revolution they

have failed; and much as Labour leaders may try to prevent the spread of direct action, they will fail, as the people are striving to be free, and having found by bitter experience the uselessness of voting, they are turning to direct action as the only alternative.

In using direct action to save the Russian Revolution, however, we must remember that a general strike will not be sufficient. Unless other countries, including Great Britain, overthrow the capitalist system and adopt communism, the Russian Revolution is sure to be overthrown. There are many ways by which the capitalists can support the Denikins and Koltchaks as long as power and wealth remain in their hands, and if we really wish to show our sympathy with the Russian workers and peasants we must do as they have done. There is no necessity to copy their methods; as conditions vary in each country. But direct action and revolution can alone save them and bring freedom to us. A similar opportunity may not occur for many years. Let us grasp it while we may. Ignore so-called leaders. We can win if we have hope, faith, and audacity; and the greatest of these is audacity!

THE BURDEN OF THE SANE.

Above all, the understanding that mankind, with only such violence as the emergency requires, is shaking off illusions! Above all, the set determination to preserve our own sanity, and proclaim it! From the insanities now strangling him Man must get free.

Religious insanity is passing. The Church's fairy tales receive to-day, at the most, but lip-belief. Science has eaten out the heart of them, and only the lifeless husk remains. Thus far we have progressed, and the progress is permanent and great. We shall not go back to childhood. Never again shall we imagine that the world was created in six days, that the sun stood still for the convenience of Joshua, or similar absurdities.

In politics we still refuse to see, despite the bitterest lessons. In politics we still dream insanely that we can group men and women by the tens of thousands, and say to them:—"On such and such a day, once in so many years, you shall decide which of two sets of men, both utterly unknown to all of you, shall be your rulers. For so many years to come these men shall pass and impose on you what laws they choose. For so many years to come they shall decree what you may say and print, what you may eat and drink and wear, where you may go and where you may not go, with whom you may exchange the goods you have produced, and, above all, whether you shall be allowed to live and die in peace or perish miserably while endeavouring to kill your brother workman."

This is our political system as it actually is, and we are still insane enough to think it sane. We call it the "Representative System," and apparently we still are proud of it! Yes; even such progressive and intellectual leaders as the Socialists profess themselves to be, apparently are proud of it. We call the nations who have adopted that system "civilised" and "advanced," and we congratulate them warmly on having won their Freedom. So dangerously insane are we in this respect that we are now endeavouring to exterminate with fire and sword those who will not accept this freedom, and are forming, in its stead, Soviets and kindred organisations by which they hope to regain the management of their own lives.

But what shall one say of those Economic Insanities which still hold every one of us in chains? What can one think of those who fervently believe that chaos can be avoided only by allowing this island, on which some forty millions live, to be the pocket-property of a few thousands? At what do you rate the business level-headedness of a nation that hurrahs for those who have swept all its resources into their own private treasure-box, and thinks it would die of starvation if they were to flit to other lands?

Is it not insane to suppose ourselves incapable of digging our own coal for our own warmth and comfort; of building out of our own woods and quarries our own houses; of using, freely and without paying tribute to anybody, our own brains and muscles and materials, to satisfy our own proper wants?

These Economic Insanities must go, or we ourselves shall go under, as surely as the night succeeds the day. The Religious and Political Insanities that support them must be shaken off, if life is to be worth living. They must be attacked without mercy, and they must be attacked effectively; that is to say, by clear thought expressed clearly and fearlessly on every possible occasion and by all means within our reach. Half lights only dazzle and confuse, as can be seen in the condition of the entire Labour Movement at this most critical of moments. If we lack the courage to speak out plainly, and without reticences, we are mere politicians, and had far better hold our tongues.

BOLSHEVIKS ARE ANTI-ANARCHIST.

At last we have a clear statement from the Bolshevik side as to the relationship of Bolshevism to Anarchism. Writing in the *Call Magazine* (supplement of the *New York Call*) on June 1, S. Nuorteva (who is announced as "Secretary of the Bureau of the Representative in the United States of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic) says:—

"The average American public always mix Anarchy and Bolshevism. Now the fact is that the Communist party, which is popularly called the Bolshevik party, is absolutely anti-Anarchist."

That is certainly definite enough, even if Lenin's speeches had not already settled the point.

REAL ORGANISATION.

In this month's issue of *FREEDOM* there is an inserted leaflet published by the new Propaganda Group. The utmost attention should be devoted to this, as it may mark a great change in the hitherto slipshod methods of organisation we have adopted. The contents of the leaflet may be condensed thus:—

(a) All groups in existence—however small—will communicate immediately with the Secretary of the Propaganda Committee, giving the name of their secretary and any other particulars.

(b) They will levy themselves a definite sum monthly, which should be paid without fail.

(c) Individual members should send their addresses to the Secretary of the P.G., who will let them know their nearest group, or the addresses of comrades likely to form a group.

The P.G. will then keep all groups in touch with each other, and perform the function of a linker-up. It must not be supposed that the Secretary can do all this as with a magic wand; all must give a share of their labour and cash—and keep on giving both.

The greatest failure in all and any organisation is that when a body of persons gets together it elects officials, and unloads all the work on these few, and then, sitting at home, wonders why these do not bring in the revolution, like Lloyd George's head, on a charger. Anarchists—or anybody else—have no use for people who are always "in haste" or "too busy, see you to-morrow!"

There are comrades who wonder why *FREEDOM* isn't on sale at all railway stations or at the barber's. If *FREEDOM* isn't at the barber's, leave him a copy. Your postman will be delighted to find one in his favourite pillar-box. If you go to the dentist's, the doctor's, or to the "Pig and Cucumber," there is nothing—not even in "Dora"—to prevent you leaving a copy of *FREEDOM* there.

I am not saying this because I am madly in love with *FREEDOM*. Indeed, I differ from the Editor on a good many points. But I have seen them at work: a small band of comrades who do all the dirty work, and don't brag about it. They don't even get money from Lenin and Co. for the good work they do. The point is that *FREEDOM* is a paper that is supposed to speak for an organisation, a movement, a cause. It depends on this movement for its existence. It is chronically driven to make "Appeals" which make me physically ill and heartily ashamed of the organisation, the movement, the cause.

FREEDOM is either your paper, or it is not. If it is, pay for it; and, for sake's own sake, pay regularly—and handsomely. Work for it, push it, sell it. If you believe it is pushing Anarchism in the right direction, help push it. At a Trafalgar Square meeting recently only two comrades could be found selling the paper. Come along to the office on Saturday and get your share of the dirty work. It won't dirty your hands—and, anyway dirty hands are better than a dirty soul. This is some language; but if you believe in *FREEDOM* you will just wire in and shove the cart along.

If not, get outside.

L. A. M.

THE ANARCHIST PROPAGANDA GROUP.

have arranged a

RAMBLE AND FRUIT TEA.

to take place at

ROSERVILLE RETREAT, HIGH BEECH, LOUGHTON,
ON SUNDAY, JULY 20.

Tickets for Tea (Adults 1s. 6d., Children 1s.) can be obtained from comrades or from *FREEDOM* Office, on receipt of cash and stamped envelope. String instrumentalists would be welcomed.

Bus No. 10a from Elephant and Castle and No. 38 from Victoria Station, or by train from Liverpool Street, 11 a.m.

Meet Loughton Station at 12 o'clock. Tea at 5 o'clock prompt.

THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE.

To the Editor of *FREEDOM*.

Dear Comrade,—I was attracted to reading the letter on the Communist League in this month's *FREEDOM*, because, being a member of this organisation, honest criticism naturally would interest me. And when I read that "the individual who unites . . . honesty of purpose . . . with sincerity of action . . . in the revolutionary field attempts to throw off all petty prejudices and jealousies," I hoped that at last I was going to read a criticism from one who was about to throw off his "petty prejudices and jealousies." But, alas! upon reading further on, my hopes were dashed to the ground. For not only has Comrade Hopkins not succeeded in his high aspirations, but in the attempt he has evidently sacrificed clearness of thought. We are told, for instance, that our attempt to abolish all classes is futile, since, in advocating the control of industry by local councils, linked up with a Central Administrative Council, we are but erecting another class! And this is put forward as an argument against Communism!

Surely my friend can recognise the difference between *occupations* and *classes*. Under primitive Communism, for example, classes were unknown. Why? *Because the means of production were held in common*. It was only when these were developed to that stage where they could produce a surplus, where their private ownership yielded a profit to the owners, and where, consequently, the means of production became private property, that society became divided into classes. And since then the classes have been—(1) those who possessed the means of production, and (2) those who did not. And only so long as this state of affairs continues will there be classes.

But under Communism these things would be *socially* owned. Hence, the class division of society would no longer exist. There would still be, however, division of labour. This is essential, since man's economic needs can best and quickest be satisfied by employing machinery; and, after all, true freedom can only come as a result of economic freedom. There would still be, therefore, the engineer and the coal miner, the "superintendent" and the navy, the conductor and the orchestra player. Machine production implies organisation, and organisation requires administrators. And here comes the point at issue between us. The economic administrators, managers, and organisers of to-day are considered to be above the "common" worker, and domineer over him. But why? And will this continue under Communism?

Under Capitalism, labour-power is regarded as a commodity. Its price (i.e., wages), as with all commodities, is determined by the labour-power expended in producing it. But it is more expensive, and takes longer, for one to become a qualified doctor, engineer, manager, conductor, etc., than to become a "common" or "unskilled" worker. The former are, therefore, more valuable to the capitalist than the latter. They are, therefore, better treated, are paid better (on the average), dress and live better. All this produces a psychological reflex on the people at large, who look up to them, respect, and fear them.

But under Communism, where the commodity status of labour-power will be abolished, one man's useful labour will be as good as any other man's. The conductor will be just as essential as the orchestra player, the engineer as the coal miner, the "superintendent" as the navy. The administrator would be regarded as much a necessary cog, though not a more important one, in the production of use-values as the actual producer himself. The whole mental outlook of man would be changed with a change in the economic relationship of man to man.

Under Communism those in the elected workers' committees would not "dictate the conditions of labour" against the wishes of the workers. There would be no economic need for them to do so. The committees and the Central Administrative Council would be as essential in machine production of goods as the conductor is in an orchestra of, say, a couple of hundred players.

There would be no army, no navy, no police, no State. These things are only necessary when there are classes; when one class has something it wants to prevent the other class from obtaining. Hence, "an administrative body without power" would *not* be "a laughing farce."

I, too, desire freedom, and as passionately as does friend Hopkins. But where I differ from him is that mine is not only a pious desire. I have my feet firmly planted on mother earth. I realise that true freedom can come only with economic freedom; that economic freedom can be obtained only by using machinery for the good of, instead of, as hitherto, to the detriment of the many; and that this again implies organisation. That is why I am a Marxian Socialist. That is why I am a member of the Communist League.

DAVID BLOOM,
Stepney Branch Communist League.

ANARCHISTS & THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE.

On Sunday, June 15, at the rooms of the Communist League, at Peckham, a conference of London Anarchists and members of the Communist League was held, with a view to finding ways and means of co-operating in revolutionary activity. Comrade Walmsley, of the Communist League, opened the discussion, and took their manifesto point by point, explaining their standpoint. He said the chief item of controversy was the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat." Although as much opposed to dictatorship as the Anarchists, he declared that it was vitally necessary during the transition stage after the Revolution. Counter-revolution could only be fought by the Communists taking and controlling all the means of production and distribution, and he insisted on this point on behalf of the League. As soon as possible the "Dictatorship" would be abolished, and free Communism take its place. Several Anarchist comrades took part in the discussion, which was very friendly in tone, the desire on both sides being to find points of agreement rather than points of controversy. Eventually, on behalf of the Anarchists, it was stated that they were willing that their groups should affiliate with the League, provided they were granted autonomy. In reply, it was stated that it was not possible for the Executive of the League to allow autonomy under the present constitution; but a national conference was to be held in the near future, and those Anarchist groups that wished to do so could send delegates and state their point of view, and it would rest with the conference to decide. The present constitution was purely tentative, and could be altered as the branches and groups desired.

As soon as the invitations to this national conference are received, another meeting of London Anarchists will be called to consider the points at issue.

THE ANARCHIST PROPAGANDA GROUP.

Comrades,—At the Anarchist Conference held in London on April 14, it was decided that the efficient consolidation of propaganda work could best be carried on through a special Propaganda Bureau (a group formed of voluntary workers as other groups) financed by and in direct co-operation with groups and unattached comrades. We came into being in answer to a recognised need. The work we intend to accomplish is service in harmony with the local, national, and, ultimately, we hope, international, needs of the Anarchist movement, in accord with suggestions from comrades throughout the country.

Revolution electrifies industrial, social, and ethical spheres. The expression of discontent arises out of a half conscious idea that matters might be better than they are, combined with righteous, but mainly ignorant, irritation at authority's impositions and encroachments. Revolution is the climax of discontent, an economic urge; its idealism, to be true, must be economic. With this in mind, palliating reformers are able to utilise the discontent of the masses, who hope for a free life. The revolutionist's task is clear: to make discontent, and to educate through the eager inquiry there manifest, each critical tendency towards a thorough understanding of present conditions, the most direct means of changing such, and towards an idealism based upon economic security for all—not a governmentally dominated collectivity, but a federation of groups or communes, each freely associating with the rest. To make discontent means agitation. Agitation is educative, thought stimulating; agitation means propaganda. "Agitate, propagate, and educate" is our rally cry.

We need the whole-hearted co-operation of every comrade to make us financially secure, and so able to give a practical urge to our aspirations, and to intensify the work of all. Many comrades have responded to our appeal before the issue of this manifesto. We must get into touch with our affinities in groups and elsewhere if our appeal and our endeavour are to be continuously fruitful.

Our purpose is to collect information regarding the activities of comrades throughout the country for publication, and also to aid groups to publish literature locally needed, as well as to help in the formation of new groups. We propose to print leaflets and pamphlets dealing lucidly and tersely with every phase of present-day society in relation to Anarchism, and which shall also indicate direct revolutionary methods the workers may adopt towards creating and maintaining successfully a social revolution based on Anarchist Communism. Such literature shall be offered at as near

cost price as can be, in order to enable propagandists to place it in the hands of as many as possible.

We suggest that some-group comrade should make himself (or herself) voluntarily responsible for collecting regular contributions, which shall be forwarded, in separate envelope, to the Secretary, Propaganda Group, Freedom Press, 127, Ossulston Street, London, N.W. 1. As the A.P.G. is working independently of the Freedom Press, all communications should be kept quite separate to avoid confusion and delay.

So rally, comrades, to our aid, and help to advance the cause. Anarchy is the necessary condition for social order in human life, and for the free evolutionary progress of all our relationships. Communism is the answer to the true social needs of human kind. Disseminate the ideas that shall both create and educate discontent, and thereby bring about a fuller, freer, and more radiant life.

ANARCHIST PROPAGANDA GROUP.

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(May 28—June 28).

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NOTICES.

"FREEDOM" OFFICE is open for sale of books and pamphlets every Saturday afternoon from 3 to 5-30.

"FREEDOM" can be obtained (wholesale and retail) at National Labour Press, Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, E.C.; also at Henderson's, 66, Charing Cross Road, W.C. Anarchist books and pamphlets are on sale at the latter bookshop.

CARDIFF.—"FREEDOM," books, and pamphlets can be had from A. Banks, 1, Carmarthen Street, off Market Road, Canton, Cardiff. Call and have a chat. Group being formed.

RHONDDA VALLEY.—Would anyone in the Rhondda Valley like to start a Group or a Sunday School, based on showing how happily we could live without Government? If so, write or call. We have a speaker—A. Banks, 1, Carmarthen Street, off Market Road, Canton, Cardiff.

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