

The Humanist World WeeklyRegistered at the
G.P.O. as a Newspaper

FOUNDED 1881 by G. W. FOOTE

Friday,
April 19, 1968**DRUG SYMPOSIUM FOR LONDON SCHOOLCHILDREN****Minister "never tempted"**

AT Daneford School, Bethnal Green, on March 27, Mr Dick Taverne, Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office, said in answer to a question that he had "never been tempted" to take drugs. His audience, schoolchildren from various parts of London attending what was billed as a "Symposium on The Teenager, the Drug-addict and Modern Society", seemed to wonder as well they might, just who was supposed to be educating whom. With pills and pot available within 100 yards, as one questioner remarked, many of those present could obviously speak from greater experience than the Minister.

Mr Taverne's answers to several questions seemed less than convincing. He was asked by a worried-looking mistress what the legal position was when drugs were found on a young person. Did he say that the courts have no alternative to a guilty verdict whatever the circumstances, and that a High Court Judge recently condemned this aspect of the law as immoral? He did not. He made woolly reference to people being "warned", presumably by the police.

In response to persistent questioning on the new Treatment Centres for addicts, he repeated several times that this was the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, and that he was not qualified to answer. This was probably wise in view of the fact that another contributor to the Symposium had referred to that Ministry's pronouncements on the subject as "ludicrous misrepresentations of the truth".

In the course of his speech Mr Taverne dealt at some length with the arguments for and against the legalisation of cannabis, or "pot" as he picturesquely called it. He appears still to believe the story (recently described by an authority on Islamic history as "almost certainly untrue") that the original "assassins" were so called because of their use of hashish. He admitted, however, that cannabis is not a cause of crime, and is not addictive. "We feel," he said, "that the laws should, on present information, be maintained", on two grounds: that cannabis is associ-

ated with an "anti-social way of life" and that it "may lead to heroin addiction. If there is anything in this, we cannot take the risk", he said. He agreed that this effect, if it exists, must be a purely social one, but denied that it was due to the present illegality of cannabis use. There is always a tendency to progress from one drug to another, he said. This contradicts the view of the Rev. Kenneth Leach, Curate of St Anne's, Soho, who has had considerable experience of drug users. He stated, in a document circulated to those attending, that it is "the illegality and harsh treatment of cannabis usage which encourages . . . escalation". (The only scientific study ever conducted on this point failed to find that the effect existed at all).

Rev. Leach also said that "smoking of cannabis in itself seems to be less habit-forming than smoking cigarettes, and perhaps slightly less harmful than drinking alcohol".

The other politician contributing to the Symposium was Mr W. J. Hilton, MP for Bethnal Green, who devoted his speech on 'meths' addicts mainly to an uncalled for and totally irrelevant attack on the Simon Community, the organisers of which he described as "rather stupid". "These are the people", he said, "who have been saying that we should put up with this public nuisance in our area because they are doing good work. . . . Is it possible that, without any experts at all,

they can do anything?" Furthermore, the organisers of this "small and marginal effort" have dared to oppose the Tower Hamlets Borough Council, and W. J. Hilton, MP, in "trying to get something done". In Mr Hilton's view, "community responsibility should be exercised by the appropriate government department" which should remove these public nuisances to some place in the country" far from Bethnal Green, where they could be incarcerated indefinitely. The Simon policy, by contrast, with its "free handouts" would "bankrupt the rating fund—the rates your mothers and fathers pay". As a last straw, the Simon Community has been known to "take both men and women and allow them to sleep together. The Police Superintendent soon stopped this".

In spite of this plague of politicians, the organisers of the Symposium are to be congratulated on their brave attempt to shed light in dark places. They have been criticised on the ground that such publicity may encourage drug-taking. Insofar as it is difficult to talk about drugs for five hours without mentioning that cannabis is harmless (and it would not take an exceptionally intelligent pupil to conclude that from what was said) this is probably true. I doubt, however, that any of those present can now be in serious doubt as to the effects of heroin and other dangerous drugs.

Undoubtedly, a serious attempt was made to inform, and to some extent it succeeded. An intelligent use was made of films like "The Connection", and the selection of books on display was outstanding. When asked what the aim of the Symposium was, one of the organisers replied "to find out". This is what education is about.

The day closed with these words: "I hope that, when you go back to school, you will think about these things, and that you will take them in a serious and responsible way". I hope so too.

Report from Don Aitken.

FREETHINKER

Published by G. W. Foote & Co. Ltd.

103 BOROUGH HIGH STREET, LONDON, S.E.1

Editor: KARL HYDE

FREETHINKER subscriptions
and orders for literature

... The Freethinker Bookshop
01-407 0029

Editorial matter

... The Editor, The Freethinker
01-407 1251

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

12 months: £1 17s 6d 6 months: 19s 3 months: 9s 6d.

USA AND CANADA

12 months: \$5.25 6 months: \$2.75 3 months: \$1.40

The FREETHINKER can be ordered through any newsagent.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Items for insertion in this column must reach THE FREETHINKER office at least ten days before the date of publication.

National Secular Society. Details of membership and inquiries regarding bequests and secular funeral services may be obtained from the General Secretary, 103 Borough High Street, London, SE1. Telephone 01-407 2717. Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the NSS.

Humanist Letter Network (International) and Humanist Postal Book Service (secondhand books bought and sold). For information or catalogue send 6d stamp to Kit Mouat, Mercers, Cuckfield, Sussex.

OUTDOOR

Edinburgh Branch NSS (The Mound)—Sunday afternoon and evening: Messrs. CRONAN and MCRAE.

Manchester Branch NSS, Platt Fields, Sunday afternoon, 3 p.m.: Car Park, Victoria Street, Sunday evenings, 8 p.m.

Merseyside Branch NSS (Pierhead)—Meetings: Wednesdays, 1 p.m.: Sundays, 3 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.

Nottingham Branch NSS (Old Market Square), every Friday, 1 p.m.: T. M. MOSLEY.

INDOOR

Carlisle Humanists, Carlisle Technical College, Carlisle, Tuesday, April 23, 7.30 p.m.: Dr A. L. BROWN, 'The Vietnam Epic'.

Enfield and Barnet Humanist Group, Room 102, Southgate Technical College, Southgate, Wednesday, April 24, 8 p.m.: Discussion led by DEREK WILKES, 'A Humanist Viewpoint on Immigration'.

Glasgow Humanists, George Service House, Glasgow, Sunday, April 21, 2.30 p.m.: Annual General Meeting.

Redbridge Humanist Society, Wanstead House (Corner of The Green and Redbridge Lane West), Wanstead, Monday, April 22, 7.45 p.m.: J. MELTZER, 'Council of Christians and Jews'.

South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1, Sunday, April 21, 11 a.m.: RICHARD CLEMENTS, OBE, 'The Humanism of Maxim Gorki'; Tuesday, April 23, 6.45 p.m.: A. CHUEV, 'Soviet Technology and Science'.

South Place Sunday Concerts, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1, Sunday, April 21, 6.30 p.m.: Nemet Piano Quartet. Mozart, Brahms, Hindemith.

HUMAN RIGHTS YEAR DINNER

THE National Secular Society held its 62nd Annual Dinner, this year, in honour of Human Rights Year, at the Pavioir Arms, London, Saturday, April 6. Members of about a dozen allied organisations were among the hundred members and guests attending. The Guest of Honour was Renee Short, MP, to whom a toast was proposed by William Hamling, MP. Excellent speeches were also made by John Calder, publisher, and Jocelyn Barrow, one of the vice-chairmen of the United Kingdom Committee for Human Rights Year 1968. David Tribe, NSS President, took the Chair.

The speeches all related to Human Rights and while few fields in which these rights are not properly acknowledged were omitted, sexual and racial equality, and freedom of expression (artistic and literary) took priority in emphasis.

Jean Straker, who spent most of the evening nipping about with his camera, and attending to a tape-recorder, has contributed a personal impression of the Dinner which appears in these pages.

IMPORTANT NOTES

CENTENARY TRIBUTE TO CHAPMAN COHEN

This is to be held at Conway Hall, London, Saturday, June 29, at 7 p.m. A notice of this meeting which appeared March 29 was incorrect.

* * *

NSS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Conference will open at 10 a.m., Sunday, June 30, Conway Hall, London.

It is essential that all NSS members attending the Conference, who wish accommodation to be booked for them in London, should contact—without delay—the NSS General Secretary, 103 Borough High Street, London, SE1.

* * *

BRADLAUGH

The NSS hope to hold a public meeting, a demonstration and an exhibition in honour of their Founder, Charles Bradlaugh, later this year at Northampton.

* * *

NOTICE

TO ensure your announcements appear in the FREETHINKER, address all information to the *Editor*. Information should be posted to arrive at the editorial office not later than two weeks prior to the date of issue in which the announcement is to appear.

Notice of meetings should include (1) name of organisation convening the meeting, (2) *full* venue of meeting (not address of organisation if different), (3) time of starting, (4) name(s) of speaker (s), and (5) title or description of meeting.

Late notice, insufficient or wrongly addressed information may result in announcements not appearing.

QUOTES FOR POSTERITY

Jean Straker

ACCUSED by David Tribe of recording him for an unfortunate posterity with both camera and tape-recorder at the NSS Human Rights Year Dinner, I became immediately conscious of the conflict between detachment and involvement which suddenly flares when one realises one is also part of the scene, an actor on the stage.

The philosophic perspective, that rational objectivity, that academic examination of 'problems', *other people's problems*, meets the simple test of organic response when the affectations of human relationship are measured; among all the heady stuff that the theme of human rights must inevitably involve—the rights of women, racial discrimination, poverty, ignorance, freedom of conscience and expression, and all other human-made dilemmas—what this party (for it was much more of a party than a formal dinner) defined and confirmed was the reality of human friendship and the human hunger for co-operation.

This feeling of living is so little reflected in much of the 'didactic deadpan' (as J. W. N. Walkins defines it) of public statements, scholarly papers, broadcasting objectivity, and the social practices of presenting the right image, that the National Secular Society stands apart in providing a public platform for individualistic and congenial freethought, a sympathy that stretches hand and heart across the man-made barriers that isolate us from each other and create competing, warring, fragmenting social groups.

I want to record something of this statement from what was said by the guest speakers; I want to give quotations which are not the expression of planned and reasoned argument, but rather the emotions which were generated by the occasion; not what was intended to be said, but what the moment commanded to be said; for in this spontaneity I think we find an individual quality, a character insight, some evidence for personal evaluation.

David Tribe: "I'm an immigrant from Australia and Miss Barrow is an immigrant from the West Indies, so we seem to be nicely integrated here".

William Hamling, MP, on proposing a toast to Renee Short: "Olive said to me earlier today, 'You can move this with tremendous sincerity because you like Renee'—this is true, I think she's a great woman—in all respects".

"I'm a Lancastrian myself; our Prime Minister is a Yorkshireman; watch it!"

"Mrs. Calder and I and my wife have tonight laughed the Castle for Prime Minister movement".

"I'm a teacher and I can remember working for a woman headmaster".

"I was thinking of putting on a red tie, and Olive said 'No! Don't do that—they won't all be Labour you know'".

Renee Short: "I won't tell you how long ago I drifted to the South-east".

"I am afraid that, as Will said, our own government isn't very quick off the mark in doing some of the things that it ought to be doing".

"I've got great sympathy, of course, for young people—I've got two of my own—and I know that they feel utterly disgusted at the attitude of many of the people of my generation".

"I met Yuri Gargarin when he was here in 1961—and when I went to Moscow in 1963 I met Valentina Tereshkova, who was the first woman to travel through space; our admiration, of course, for these feats is enormous but we also have, I think, a tinge of fear in our admiration".

"Thank goodness we've got a new Minister of Education—I think that Ted will be very good".

"What about the rights of women? Well, David mentioned these. It's true we've got only twenty-six women members in the House of Commons out of a total of 630. It really is absolutely appalling; I can't really make my mind up who to blame for this".

"I've never ever met another woman at a selection conference. I've always met five or six men and on a few occasions licked the men, which gives me great pleasure; not that I'm vindictive towards men, I like men very much indeed, in fact I adore some of them—Andrew and Will".

"It's the men, I think, who say 'Yes, a good woman takes a lot of beating'".

"When I raise this question of equality for women in the House of Commons, as I have been doing fairly frequently, you know—the men just roll in the aisles".

"We must use the churches because they have possibilities—they reach people, and I am willing to use any organisation in order to achieve the ends that I want".

"I must say that when I came in I was feeling really down in the dumps because, for one thing, I was very hungry—I hadn't eaten since breakfast—I had about four-and-a-half hours of my surgery today in Wolverhampton from half-past ten until about quarter to three, or something, and then I dashed and got the train and came here—but the good company around me, and in front of me, and the nice meal really transformed me and I feel really on top of the world".

John Calder: "Although my name has been linked by Mr Tribe with obscenity, the attacks that I have had as a publisher, during the nearly twenty years that I have been publishing books, have come really very much more for the political books that I have published".

"I feel very guilty because other publishers—most publishers are fairly stuffy people—come up to me and say 'You are very courageous, you know, not to have just said "guilty" and paid a £50 fine but to have gone on fighting', but in almost every other country I would be in prison".

"I don't think Sir Cyril Black, or Robert Maxwell or Mrs Mary Whitehouse are fascists".

"I can understand Sir Cyril Black because I had a grandfather who was in many ways very like him and who, I am sure, would have approved of every effort that Sir Cyril has made against me in the last year or so".

"What intelligent person—what aware person—what person with any kind of respect for democracy, for freedom, for the basic human liberties that this Dinner is meant to celebrate would ever vote for a man like Sir Cyril Black?".

(Continued on page 128)

THE FIGHT FOR ARTISTIC FREEDOM

David Tribe

AT a recent press conference John Calder, Chairman of Calder & Boyars Ltd., announced that it has been decided to appeal against the conviction last year for 'obscenity' brought by an Old Bailey jury against Hubert Selby Jr's *Last Exit to Brooklyn*. Despite the testimony of some thirty expert witnesses that the book's portrayal of violent drug-taking and homosexuality in a seedy part of New York was too horrifying to be likely to corrupt anybody, and that it was of serious intent and literary and sociological interest, the jury convicted under what was drawn up as a liberal measure, the 1959 Obscene Publications Act. The resultant fine of £100 was a minor burden compared with the costs of £12,000 and ban on further sales.

To meet this serious blow to a small publisher, a Free Art Legal Fund, of which I am proud to be one of the sponsors, was set up and has already raised £3,000. A further £5,000 is urgently needed, for besides outstanding debts a fresh expenditure of £3,000 is envisaged by the appeal. So Mr Calder has announced the creation of a Defence of Literature and the Arts Society (18 Brewer Street, London, W1), whose annual membership of one guinea (ten shillings for students) will afford everyone an opportunity of making a continuous contribution to the cause of liberal culture. Educational and lobbying work will be done and it is hoped that enough money can be collected to provide a defence fund in support of all victims of censorious activity. This is likely to increase rather than diminish.

Flushed with triumph over his success in the *Last Exit* case, Sir Cyril Black is looking for fresh fields to conquer so that the next time Bill Graham comes to Soho the shop windows will be full of concordances. Now that the BBC (after suitable maidenly protests) has yielded to the Clean Up TV campaign's importunate advances, Mrs Mary Whitehouse, with time on her hands, is looking round for new scope for her talents and is said to be starting a drive to make the philosophy shelves of every public library in the land fit for her teenage daughter. Depressed for a time after the *Ulysses* decision, Lady Dartmouth has recently rallied her friends on the GLC to ban a film she didn't approve of or didn't understand (if there is any difference). Mr Calder said that two days before the press conference he was at a private preview of Edward Bond's new play *Early Morning* at the Royal Court. Detective Chief-Inspector Alton was ominously in the audience. And sure enough, within a week the police had intervened to take the play off. Jean Straker is threatened with gaol for unpaid fines in one of the numerous actions against his allegedly obscene nude photographs. The latest plays by Harold Pinter and John Osborne cannot obtain a licence even for the Royal Shakespeare Company. Many publishers are postponing the publication of frank novels in their prospective list till they see how the *Last Exit* appeal gets on. A leading paperback publisher has just withdrawn a threatened title freely distributed for over two years. It is likely that the Lord Chamberlain's precensorship role in the theatre will disappear this parliamentary session with George Strauss's Bill, but the stage will then be at the mercy of the nation's common informers. And they are fast becoming more common. Though life is far from permissive, the mere currency of the phrase 'permissive society' has alarmed previously liberal citizens and even the editor of the *Humanist* has been steam-rolled into dropping Jean Straker's advertisements.

After many years of isolation and fragmentation, members of the cultural community, by nature individualistic and more inclined to looking critically at their work than anxiously over their shoulders, are moving closer together in self-defence. At John Calder's conference there were Peter Hall of the RSC but turning freelance, William Gaskill of the Royal Court, Robert Fraser, the art gallery director, one of whose recent exhibitions shocked the tender sensibilities of a passing West End Central police officer and figured in a court action, Jean Straker, Professor Frank Kermodé and many other personalities from hitherto scattered arts. Ostensibly representing the opposition but privately sympathetic, John Trevelyan, Secretary of the industry's British Board of Film Censors, came along. He explained his duty to safeguard the interests of his clients and the vigilance with which he has to peer for tabu wisps of public hair in the shortest nude sequences since court rulings in the Straker cases.

The Royal Court was obliged to cancel its scheduled evening showing of *Early Morning* on April 7 and stage instead a teach-in on censorship and the arts. A family affair dress rehearsal was secretly put on in the afternoon so that the play will at least live in the recollection of a few people. Artistically, it is not without fault. It is rather crammed with zany incident while lacking the pace of a Whitehall farce, and the satirical burlesque of the first one and a half acts gives way suddenly to more gnomie and pretentious material. But at its best the wild surrealism is splendidly funny. When not knitting Union Jacks, presiding over mock trials and hoisting monstrous cannibalistic picnics, Queen Victoria has a tempestuous affair with Florence Nightingale, who turns out to be John Brown on the side. The Princes George and Arthur are ineffectually bisexual Siamese twins, Albert and Disraeli double-crossing contrivers of palace revolutions, the Grand Old Man a cross between an American union boss, a sentimentalising undertaker and Sergeant Challoner. The Lord Chamberlain is no worse than a humbugging lecher. Oscar Wilde isn't present in the flesh though there are echoes of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The last scene takes place in heaven without the appearance of any divine persons. There is much anachronistic detail guying modern news-hound techniques and the political exploitation of a young thug and his bird who murder and eat a cinema queue-jumper. Compared with much of the commercial theatre and films (inside or outside Soho), television and even comedy shows on steam radio today, there's very little in the play to raise a blush in a young lady's finishing school: few four-letter words, no taking of Our Lord's name in vain, a beating-up organised by Mr Gladstone with choreography fit for Covent Garden. Perhaps it's those nasty references to Royal Personages.

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A FORMULA FOR JUSTICE:

J. J. Thompson

Part II—The Justice Ratio

LET us now consider the concept of justice as that of equal treatment for people insofar as they have equal rights, but unequal treatment for people insofar as their rights are unequal. The nature and source of human rights were discussed, in the light of the Social-Survival theory of ethics, in an earlier series of articles in the FREETHINKER, September 29 to October 20, 1967.

It is a fiction that all men are equal, for in fact they are not; they differ in a thousand ways. It is a legal fiction that all men are equal before the law; they are equal only to the extent that they are not beyond the law, favoured or oppressed by it. It is obvious to everyone that different persons occupy different stations in, and receive different treatment from society. Aristotle based his system of ethics largely on the inequality of people—master and slave, parent and child, husband and wife, ruler and subject. The Communists idealised a society with strict equality of people, but it has become apparent to them that all members of society cannot be treated alike. The Marxist principle, "to each according to his needs" must be modified to "to each according to his merits", that is, to his rights.

I propose that justice or equity should mean, not equality, but proportionality. A proportion, in mathematics, is an equality of two or more ratios: thus, the actual length of the road may be to its length drawn on the map as five miles is to one inch. On this conception, equity would demand that the ratio of the treatment accorded to one person, in relation to the rights of that person, should be equal to that accorded another person in relation to the rights of that other person. In every case, the ratio which social treatment bears to individual right should be equal. If treatment is deficient, or right superior, this fraction diminishes, indicating deprivation of justice; if the fraction in any case is greater, it indicates either special privilege or absence of rightful claim or both. Our task is twofold: to settle upon the ways in which people differ, and upon the ways in which treatment by society should differ in consequence.

These quantities are, to some extent, measurable. It is hence possible to construct a formula for justice in accordance with which fair treatment for all persons may be estimated. Such formula could be applied to economic affairs, for it could disclose fair levels of prices and wages with which economic stability of the nation could be possible.

How can we set up a standard ratio of social right to personal quality, which will indicate how much a member may claim from his society because of his particular attributes, as the scale of miles is shown on a map? Society usually compensates with material goods, for which money is the established medium of exchange, although rights to other things than material property are sometimes awarded, which can often be equated into money. Actual standards of value, for the purpose of this formula, are as much a matter for economics as for ethics. It is not a matter of economics only, for uncontrolled operation of laws of supply and demand cannot be allowed to override social necessity; the surgeon who is the only man in the nation who can perform the operation that saves from blindness should not be permitted to extract for this operation every bit that his patient can beg or borrow.

The numerator of this ratio, the number or quantity above the fraction bar, can thus easily be declared, however difficult may be its accurate determination numerically. The denominator, the quantity below the fraction bar, requires consideration of a tremendous diversity among human beings. The ways in which people differ, which may or may not be relevant to their rights, but which present themselves to the mind for consideration, are the following: (1) by birth—by race, nationality, "native" intelligence, "native" endowment, congenital defect or disability, inheritance of material possessions, social status, title, physical constitution, physical attractiveness, voice, strength, manual dexterity, sensory acuity, quickness of movement, etc.; (2) by sex or age; (3) by education, training and experience; (4) by employment and achievement; (5) by moral character and deeds, honourable or criminal; (6) by special contribution such as courage, invention, wisdom; (7) by contract, purchase or service; (8) by need.

People are often prone to consider difference of rights associated with these personal differences to be a matter of existing law or custom only, rather than of principle or reason: he who pays the dog-license fee may keep a dog, others may not. But there exist natural or reasonable bases for differences of rights and hence of treatment by society. This however is a tremendously large subject with which it is not possible to deal in a few pages. All that is possible here is to indicate the way in which it could be done, and to leave the matter to those who wish to take it further. Very much discussion, by very many people, would be required in establishing an agreed set of numerical values for the denominator of the justice ratio based on the validity of the claims of people with different attributes.

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MIKHAIL BAKUNIN

Eric Glasgow

AMONGST the various international revolutionary movements which were operating or beginning to operate in Europe a century ago, mention should be made of the efforts at organisation in social democracy which were made by the Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin. He belonged to the vocal and varied group of those who, in the typical nineteenth-century fashion, had reacted vigorously and extremely against the solid, scarcely mitigated oppression of the Czarist Russia and so had driven themselves into a Stateless exile as malcontented, rather melancholy wanderers, across the face of Europe.

Like so many of these Russian revolutionaries, Tolstoy included, Bakunin, born near Moscow, came from a very good family, and he was educated for the Russian Army at St. Petersburg. But before he was 21, he became absorbed by often highly metaphysical speculations, about the nature and the functions of the State, and deeply influenced by the thought of Fichte (1762-1814) and Hegel (1770-1831). Later, after he had wandered to Paris, he fell in with the Socialist ideas of Proudhon (1809-1865) who strongly opposed the institution of property—"property is theft", he asserted in 1840—and looked forward to the time when, with the moral improvement of mankind, all government would become unnecessary. In Paris, too, Bakunin met Karl Marx (1818-1883) although he did not like him.

During the perilous "Year of Revolution", 1848, Bakunin was embroiled in the disturbances at Dresden in Germany; for which he was handed over to the Russians who sent him to a prison in Siberia, for seven years. He escaped, however, to Japan, and he came to England in 1861. There, in London, the traditional and hospitable centre for political refugees, Bakunin continued to work to help the cause of revolution in Poland and in Russia; and then, wearying of the inactivity, he sallied forth to the Continent once more, going principally to Italy and thence to Switzerland.

In the hospitable atmosphere and the engaging scenery of Switzerland, Bakunin enunciated a great many different schemes for various forms of international organisation; all of them full of the best of intentions, but generally quite lacking in any salutary sense of the hard realities of the international situation in Europe at that time. Thus he initiated a "league for peace and freedom", turning this in the year 1868, exactly a century ago this year, into the "International Social Democratic Alliance", or, as he called it in French "Alliance Internationale de la Démocratie Sociale". This may seem to be vague and tenuous enough, but it did eventually become the famous "First International" of 1869, so the event of 1868 does have some claim to our remembrance.

In 1870, Bakunin strayed from the theoretical to the practical side of European revolution; in the chaotic aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War, he took part in an abortive insurrection at Lyons, a preliminary explosion to the great and disastrous rising of the Paris Commune. That being over, Bakunin returned to Switzerland, where he was soon to become engaged in a bitter conflict with Karl Marx over the organisation of the "First International".

He was much too wild and individualistic, too quarrelsome and ego-centric, ever to take kindly to the rigid categories, the massive assumptions, of Marxist thought; and he was quite unsuitable for any effective or harmonious co-operation with this, a highly-disciplined sort of Com-

munist. Today, in retrospect, it is possible to realise that the victory of Karl Marx in this unfortunate conflict, was inevitable as well as probably desirable: thus, there could have been no future for international Communism in the free, anarchist, visionary terms, in which Bakunin himself accepted it.

Bakunin was too much of a rebel, too idealistic, too self-engrossed, ever to be able to formulate the sort of political or social doctrines which would be forceful and practical enough to change the world: he should have realised that fact himself, and withdrawn to his books and his theories, many of which are still extraordinarily interesting, for the student of political ideas. Unfortunately, however, like so many other genuinely original thinkers, he failed completely to understand and to allow for his own deficiencies, and he became unreasonably angry and personally peevish when there was any disagreement.

Expelled from the "International" in 1872, Bakunin died in Berne in Switzerland, a lonely and apparently defeated exile on July 1, 1876. Like so many of his kind, he was apparently an utter failure and not even, in any real sense, a "splendid failure". And yet, despite his complete and absolute incompetence in the practical affairs of life and politics, Bakunin was, and he has remained, outstanding as a creative thinker about the problems of society and politics, and so his essential message can still reach us as one which belongs to a stirring and eloquent preacher of the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity, whose utterances and writings have not been without their effects, at any rate in relation to Europe's total experience of change, in the many years which have passed since his death.

Bakunin's very lack of compromise, his arrogance of tone and standpoint, which served to torpedo his achievement as a practical politician, should render him the more memorable at this length of a hundred years as a social prophet and visionary, a seer, in the Old Testament guise, but without the supernatural sanctions or pre-occupations of the Bible.

It is certainly true, therefore, that Mikhail Bakunin (1814-76) has a secure niche in the much-recessed wall which represents the long and devious development of European Socialist thought; and also that his activities and his ideas should not be forgotten, least of all in the year 1968, which marks, after the passage of a very eventful interval, the centenary of the attainment of his greatest actual achievement, the "International Social Democratic Alliance" before that was taken over by Karl Marx for his own and largely very different purposes.

Bakunin tends to be overlooked even by the professed students of socialist or radical ideas; probably because his life, once he had left his native Russia, seemed to become an unfruitful and useless process of beating against the wind. In any case, he was seen smothered by the larger figure of Karl Marx, and he managed to do so very little which was practically effective. Nevertheless Bakunin must remain, if we consider justly his place in the history of European ideas during the nineteenth century, a memorable and seminal thinker, whose ideas do still warrant some careful attention. Now, there is less justification for his neglect by British students; because we do have the very concise, thorough, and evaluative study of his life and significance written by that distinguished University teacher, E. H. Carr, and published from London in 1937.

BELIEFS AND FEARS

Gonzalo Quiogue

THE charge of some *Philippines Free Press* readers that "atheists are in the dark and, for this reason, see no God", deserves serious consideration. When some people neither see God, nor feel Him in their hearts, they think there is no God. Let us see if there is one. Not long ago, Speaker Laurel was "saved by God" from being murdered. Radio Commentator Rafael Yabut was also "saved by God" from being killed. President Laurel (father of the Speaker) of the Japanese occupation was also "saved by God" from his killers. But what strikes me is that the good Lord failed to save presidents Lincoln and Kennedy from their assassins. Also, God failed to save Rizal from unscrupulous religious leaders who caused his execution. God failed also to save the eight student nurses in Chicago from the hands of a murderous psychopath, Richard Speck. It is not easy to see the "inscrutable ways and motives of God". Some prayers are apparently heard favourably, but some other prayers are ignored. "Mere humans cannot know His nature. Only theologians know everything about God by means of religious metaphysics and theology." Theology is the "knowledge" about God and His relations with Man. Religious metaphysics is the "knowledge" about something beyond matter and physics. This something is neither matter nor energy, nor a vacuum. It looks like nothing, but it is claimed to be a "Spirit" with a capital S, and it is called "God" with a capital G.

According to learned and scientific atheists, theology consists of speculations about the God-idea, based on a belief-hypothesis that there is a deity; that theological arguments are tailored to fit God-belief. Please read the article, *THE ABC OF THE TRADITIONAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD*, July 30, 1965.

Logical positivists and scientific empiricists condemn all kinds of metaphysics as poetic nonsense; as a hodgepodge of empty speculations wherein there is more nonsense than sense. Consider the following so-called metaphysical "propositions": "Space is unreal"—"Time is the moving image of eternity"—"Matter is the principle of individuation"—"Contradiction is the principle of all movement". Please read the books, *Elements of Analytic Philosophy* by Professor Arthur Pap of the University of Oregon, and *Logic Without Metaphysics* by Professor Ernest Nagel of Columbia University. George Santayana, the great American philosopher and author of the books, *Reason in Religion*, *Reason in Common Sense*, *Reason in Science*, etc., says in his book, *Skepticism and Animal Faith*:

"Metaphysics, in the proper sense of the word, is dialectical physics, or an attempt to determine matters of fact by means of logical or moral or rhetorical constructions. It arises by a confusion of those 'Realms of Being' which it is my special care to distinguish. It is neither physical speculation nor pure logic nor honest literature, but (as in the treatise of Aristotle called by that name) a hybrid of the three, materialising ideal entities, turning harmonies into forces, and dissolving natural things into terms of discourse."

There is a belief among the masses that monsters, half-beast and half-man, inhabit dark forests and devour careless passers-by.

Another belief is in the *aswangs*: demoniac people who can change themselves into any animal like a big dog or a

fat hog, or a flying bat; that the favourite food of the *aswang* is the unborn child of a pregnant woman.

Another belief is in the *mangkukulam*; a malevolent person with a supernatural power used to cause the illness of his or her enemies.

But the most persistent and propagated belief is in a "supernatural" person who dumps bad "souls" into "fire-land" and guides good "souls" into "heaven" and sends unscrupulous "souls" into "purgatory" to be cleansed of minor sins, like stealing some peanuts or an apple, or evading a bus fare, or stealing a kiss, or hiding a secret money from the wife, etc. This "supernatural person", although neither matter nor energy, was the "creator of a universe of matter"; that is, by "supernatural" means. The most useful and most wonderful invention of primitive men is the word "supernatural". With this word anything is possible, man's reason notwithstanding. In the United States alone, Protestant properties amount to \$28,000,000,000; Roman Catholic properties, \$44,500,000,000; Jewish, \$7,000,000,000. Please read the book, *Church Wealth and Business Income* by Dr Martin A. Larson (Ph.D.).

Theologians admonish us, for the sake of our religion, to suppress our reason and let our faith flower and bloom with the fragrance of heaven! But theologians forget that they also assured us that our reason was given by God to be used for our own good. One God cannot be three Gods at the same time, and three Gods cannot be one God.

"One can be three, and three can be one," say theologians if we can only suppress our reason and call the operation, "Mystery of the Holy Trinity"!

A self-evident nonsense called a "mystery" for obvious reasons.

Jehovah is the name of the Jewish-Christian God. It is not nice to think that He caused, even with a good motive, the impregnation of Joseph's virgin wife, Mary. Jehovah could have chosen an unmarried woman, to avoid dishonouring her husband. No husband wants to be made a cuckold, even by a god. However, theologians tell us that husband Joseph felt honoured when his "virgin" wife Mary became big and pregnant with the coming Infant Jesus. "Joseph had received a divine message" that God the Father would bless Virgin Mary with God the Holy Spirit, the secret agent Who would cause the incarnation of Infant Jesus as God the Son. A bit complex, this "three-in-one" God. But as I said, there is nothing the "supernatural" cannot do. Amen!

Some theologians, however, want to simplify the complexity of the "three-in-one" God. They say:

"God the Holy Spirit, Who went into the body of Virgin Mary, became Infant Jesus, God the Son. And so, God the Holy Spirit and God the Son were one and the same! Therefore, there should be only two Gods; God the Father and God the Son. God the Holy Spirit is a surplus God!"

Some theologians, indeed, have common sense!

JOURNALS WANTED — JOURNALS RECEIVED

THE FREETHINKER would like information upon—or, better, copies of—all the world's freethought journals. We receive a number which are included below, though not all these are received on a regular basis. We are particularly interested in freethought periodicals printed in English. Copies, lists of names and any other information would be most gratefully received.

In the meantime, we thank all those responsible for sending the journals listed below to this office during the past six months.

<i>Age of Reason</i> (USA)	<i>La Raison</i> (France)
<i>American Rationalist</i> (USA)	<i>Liberal</i> (USA)
<i>Anarchy</i>	<i>Masurashram Patrika</i> (India)
<i>Argumenty</i> (Poland)	<i>Messenger</i> (Holland)
<i>Awake</i>	<i>Methodist Recorder</i>
<i>British Weekly</i>	<i>New Christian</i>
<i>Bulletin du Cercle Ernest Renan</i> (France)	<i>Oz</i>
<i>Cahiers Rationalistes</i> (France)	<i>Peace News</i>
<i>Catholic Herald</i>	<i>Plan</i>
<i>Church and State</i> (USA)	<i>Progressive World</i> (USA)
<i>Churchman</i>	<i>Poverty</i>
<i>Church Times</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
<i>Der Kirchenfreie</i> (Austria)	<i>Rationalist</i> (South Africa)
<i>De Vrijdenker</i> (Belgium)	<i>Rationalist and Humanist</i> (New Zealand)
<i>Ethic</i>	<i>Realist</i>
<i>Ethical Record</i>	<i>Religious Humanism</i> (USA)
<i>Faith</i> (Malta)	<i>Science and Religion</i> —trans. (USSR)
<i>Farm News</i> (USA)	<i>Secular Subjects</i> (USA)
<i>Freedom</i>	<i>The Word</i>
<i>Freidenker</i> (Austria)	<i>Truth Seeker</i> (USA)
<i>Gacetilla Austral</i> (Uruguay)	<i>Universe</i>
<i>Humanist</i>	<i>Unservile State Papers</i>
<i>Humanist</i> (USA)	<i>Vietnam Bulletin</i>
<i>Humanist News</i>	<i>Vietnam Courier</i> (N. Vietnam)
<i>Iconoclast</i>	<i>Voice of Freedom</i>
<i>Indian Rationalist</i> (India)	<i>Volcano</i>
<i>Inquirer</i>	<i>War Cry</i>
<i>International Times</i>	<i>Where</i>
<i>Islamic Review</i>	<i>World Forum</i>

QUOTES FOR POSTERITY

(Continued from page 123)

"Last Tuesday a press conference was held at the offices of my firm in Brewer Street which was attended by a number of distinguished people from different arts—Bill Gaskill from the Royal Court, Peter Hall of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Professor Frank Kermode from London University, Robert Fraser, whose art gallery was under attack a year ago for exhibiting the works of a very distinguished contemporary American artist, and our friend Jean Straker, here, who has had probably more difficulties than all of us put together—a press conference at which we tried to put up a solid front to say that we are not any longer going to be divided".

Jocelyn Barrow: "If I could find a man who would guarantee this money for me every month I wouldn't need an insurance. In sixteen years he would have given me the money that I would be getting from the insurance, so the insurance would be valueless".

"What would a male guarantor do for me?"

"He began to realise that I wasn't being easy".

"As an individual one ought to be treated with equality, with dignity, with respect—and one isn't if one is a woman".

"As a professional woman—and as a reasonably articulate professional woman—I am able probably to cope with some of the indignities that I have to face".

"Now I don't hold this out as a threat to the members of this audience—nor do I hold it out as a threat to the people of this Society, in general, but I do say that we've got to be realistic".

"It is necessary for societies such as the National Secular Society to be vigilant".

"I promised myself that I would be terribly brief".

David Tribe: "You mightn't feel that you had the best dinner in the world—you mightn't feel that you had the best wine from the best vaults in the world—I hope you feel that you enjoyed the dinner—I think that when you stop to think about it, you'll realise that what you have been eating and drinking has been rather better than half the world's population enjoys".

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NOTE: Letters exceeding 200 words may be cut, abbreviated, digested or rewritten.

Question of significance and emphasis

YOUR correspondent E. G. Macfarlane (March 29) misses the point, I am not disputing that "true nudes" are better than "false nudes". The question is one of significance and emphasis. Could he persuade the homeless, friendless, limbless refugees of Vietnam that a significant part of the energy of British rationalists should be devoted to freeing nude photos? Let us have well-directed dynamism.

I am pleased to hear that Jean Straker's motives are not mercenary. I hope I can be forgiven for wondering. It is the emphasis in his writings on "gynaccography" which seems so sadly misdirected. His article (March 29) was a great improvement though I do not agree with it all.

I stand by "logical control over emotion". It is obviously to achieve a purpose, and Mr Macfarlane's distinction is empty. Reason is the basis for logical control. For example, one may decide, logically, in order to achieve greater effect for human happiness, not to yield to the emotional temptation to get away with aggressive anti-prudery.

M. J. O'CARROLL

A Gambling Debt

IN his article Mainlander on Suicide (March 1), Mr Ron Smith said that it is absurd to suppose that anything but complete annihilation awaits us after death.

I am willing to bet Mr Smith £20,000 that the soul survives death.

If I lose, I shall be none the worse off, but if I win, I shall be quids in, assuming that Mr Smith finds a means to transmit the money from the astral sphere.

However, as he is a Scotsman, he will probably decline my offer.

JOHN SUTHERLAND

[Perhaps someone quite certain of an afterlife may be willing to lend me £20,000 now on the understanding that I will repay double the amount as soon as we both enter the 'other plane'; I understand communications between the higher and nether realms are quite good.—Ed.]

Cain's wife

IN reply to S. V. Jarvis's assumption (March 29), in his criticism of my article GOD'S TRUTH (February 23) that Cain married one of Adam's late children, I would like to point out the absurdity of such an observation.

If, as he asserts, Cain married a sister, the inhabitants of Nod would have had to be a community formed through Adam's resumed family-making. But Adam was a hundred and thirty years old before that resumption, and the offerings to God which resulted in Cain slaying Abel are scripturally indicated as their earliest cultivations, in which case they were fairly young men. Immediately following God's inquest on Abel, Cain, we are told, went into the land of Nod. Therefore, Adam's late progeny, unborn till many years later, could not have furnished him the wife that God's word states he found there.

It follows that God's inspired scribe made a dreadful bloomer, as there could have been no one in Nod save Cain. It's all really very simple, and Mr Jarvis's remark that I had not read the Bible properly appears to be more applicable to himself. F. H. SNOW.