

Freethinker

Registered at the GPO as a Newspaper

Founded 1881 by G. W. Foote

VOLUME 88, No. 50

Saturday, December 14, 1968

Sixpence Weekly

TOWARDS RACIAL HARMONY

THE LEADING EXPONENTS of the hippy movement and the now deceased flower children saw as an ideal a world where love held sway over all things, in short an anarchist paradise. Generally they accepted that utopias cannot be formed overnight, that to implement an ideal basis for a society too quickly is a sure way to guarantee the quick and total disruption of that society. Many leftists would say the same principle applies to the Russian Revolution. People who can easily visualise ideals have to be intensely realistic as well, if they are to have any hope of realising their ultimate aim.

An ideal state of affairs would be for blacks to be able to live with whites all over the world each accepting the other for what they are—humans. An increasing hysteria surrounds the race and immigration problems in Britain. Chiefly this has been caused by the outspoken Mr Enoch Powell, whose policies indicate that he either does not regard racial equality as an ideal, or that, as a defeatist, he sees it as a total impossibility not worth striving for. Amid the dangerous climate of public opinion induced by what can only be described as totally irresponsible speeches, a sane view combining idealism with realism has recently been put by Mrs Renee Short, in the House of Commons, the only place in which a responsible MP would express views on a subject so inflammatory as race.

Mrs Short, Powell's fellow MP for Wolverhampton, made the point that there were obligations to those immigrants already in Britain as well as to the indigenous population. She called for a cessation of the issue of work vouchers for immigrants wishing to go to Wolverhampton and also urged that immigrants should be diverted to other parts of the country. She also said she could see no reason why there should not be some sort of control on the number of dependants allowed to come in in any one year. There is not space here to delve into the detailed facts behind the situation and establish whether or not there is room for more immigrant workers in Wolverhampton. The main point is that a realistic view has been put without the ideal being thrown out of the window—that regrettably the time is not yet ripe to leave our doors completely wide-open to allcomers and this is in their interests as well as our own.

Those who advocate a free for all at the present time are allowing their hearts to rule their heads as Mrs Short ably demonstrated when clarifying her Commons speech on the following day. She said that large numbers of her immigrant constituents live in "seedy ghettos" and that there are at present "200 children of school age in Wolverhampton, who cannot get into schools: last year it was 400. Some of these are secondary school children who do not know English and have little chance of learning it before they have to go out and find jobs". She stressed that she did not want to keep families apart permanently. This would be "quite brutal and inhuman".

On this last point one would like to hear more as to why it should be necessary to keep families apart at all. However, the general tone of the speech should be taken not only as a warning to those who advocate total freedom of immigration, but also as a blow against the fanaticism of Powell whose speeches Mrs Short has attacked bitterly and whose suggestion for a Ministry of Repatriation she described as a "Fascist idea".

Thus Mrs Short tempers idealism with realism, and one hopes this faculty will lead her and her fellow MPs to ensure that where restrictions are imposed black and white immigrants are given equal treatment. The aim of restrictions should be to make certain that immigrants of either colour, who are admitted, should be able to live in relative comfort themselves and cause no discomfort to others. At the end of this road lies racial harmony. The aim of the restrictions should *not* be to keep out coloured people just because hitherto complete harmony has not been achieved. To take this road would ultimately lead to disaster.

DEPRAVITY AND STUPEFACTION

THE ULTIMATE in irony has been achieved by London Transport. They censored a poster advertising last Monday's Concert at the Festival Hall in aid of the campaign against censorship! The irony is duplicated by the fact that the concert is sponsored jointly by the Defence of Literature and the Arts Society, and the National Council for Civil Liberties and thus the NCCL is placed in the position of having to fight for its own liberties!



The first poster submitted was condemned outright. The second would be all right if a girl's hair could be made to cover her nipples. Alterations were made but still an official said it was unsatisfactory because it showed "a suggestion

(Continued overleaf)

Freethinker

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

Editor: David Reynolds

of a nipple, too much of a young girl's thigh and the words 'depravity and corruption' in the caption". The poster was rejected under Clause 4 of LT's advertising code, which says that posters will not be displayed which are "likely through wording, design or possible defacing to offend the travelling public".

The poster was drawn by Alan Aldridge, a well-established artist, who produces the designs which go on the covers of many Penguin books. The girl on the poster is far from lifelike and takes up a minute proportion of the whole drawing.

Now, ponder for a moment on the last time you had to travel down an escalator in a tube station. Do you recall such commodities as "Gripperknickers" and "Pretty Polly Hold-ups"—or a film entitled "Corruption"? The names may not register but is it not true that having been mentally assaulted by the view on the down escalator, including many posters which crying out for bizarre embellishment had received their due, it would be a pleasant surprise on reaching the platform to find an Aldridge print on which to rest the eyes?

Further is it reasonable to suppose that when live mini-skirts constantly reveal brightly coloured knickers to even a casual glance, anyone is going to be really offended by an aesthetically pleasing work of art? Surely if anything offends it is an unceasing barrage of women in corsets or less, pleading with us to buy products with cacophonous names.

No more need be said, except "Isn't it time that the supervision of posters for bodies such as London Transport was undertaken by a National authority with some degree of discernment and taste?"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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.

INDOORS

Croydon Humanist Society: The Gun Tavern, Church Street: Sunday, December 15, 7.45 p.m.: "Biology—Promise or Peril", Dr PETER LEWIS.

Leicester Secular Society: 75 Humberstone Gate: Sunday, December 15, 6.30 p.m.: "The Vatican and the Future", F. A. RIDLEY.

London Young Humanists: 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, London, W8: Sunday, December 15, 7 p.m.: "The Future we Want", MAURICE GOLDSMITH (Director of the Science for Science Foundation).

South Place Ethical Society: Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1: Sunday, December 15, 11 a.m.: "Leadership and Democracy", Lord SORENSON. Admission free. Tuesday, December 17, 6.45 p.m.: Discussion, "Culture and the Cultured" (Israel Today), AHRON MEGGED (Cultural Counsellor). Admission 2s (including refreshments), members free.

WHICH PROVES?

AT FEAR of becoming boring on the subject of Enoch Powell I would like briefly to refer to my piece 'A Millstone for Christians' (November 30) in which I tried to imagine how Powell would reconcile his views on immigration with his professed Christianity. On the BBC radio programme 'Subject for Sunday' on December 1, Powell was quizzed on this very question. The elusiveness of his answers does nothing for the reputation of my imagination. He answered that there was a great divide between the world of Christ and the everyday world, that the former was "a world of impossibilities, in which flesh is bread and wine blood". He said he did not see how a policy of immigration could be deduced from the laws of Jesus Christ.

One could agree with him that the world of Christ is a world of impossibilities and then say that this in itself negates the rest of the argument. However, even if we hypothesise that a world exists where flesh is bread and blood is wine and that this is a world of impossibilities, this only goes far enough to prove that all flesh and blood is not the same in this, the everyday world. Presumably Powell means that people have different coloured skins in this world. So we are left with a platitude and Powell's assertion that he cannot see how a policy of immigration can be deduced from the laws of Jesus Christ.

He does not say that a policy of repatriation can be deduced from the laws of Jesus Christ and we know that he cannot see how a policy of immigration can be deduced from anything, which proves nothing except that religion can have no influence on politics, or the regulation of everyday lives.

ALL BECAUSE OF GOD

EVENTS in Northern Ireland over the past fortnight appear to emphasise the dangerous stopper which religion can place on the reason of entire ethnic groups. A predictable pattern has now emerged from the events since the Londonderry Civil Rights demonstration, on October 5. Compare the police treatment of the Londonderry demonstrators with their failure to carry out orders to disperse the recent paisleyite rally in Armagh. That the disturbances are fast becoming a distinct threat to law and order is indicated by the announcement from the Ministry of Home Affairs in Belfast on December 5 that special platoons are being created to help the Royal Ulster Constabulary keep the peace. It is well-known that bodies of this sort, who could perhaps loosely be described as riot-police, are made up entirely of protestants. Indeed this fact was testified to and the justice of it to some extent defended by a leading Belfast journalist in a recent TV programme. Many are members of the Orange Order, whose members are generally known to be sympathetic to the extreme Protestant fanatic, the Rev Ian Paisley.

Whether this machinery can maintain peace in Northern Ireland remains to be seen. What is certain though, is that if it succeeds it will only be the kind of peace maintained in police states where all dissident minorities, and in some places majorities, are kept quiet by force. Peace is to be maintained between Catholics and Protestants, by ultra-Protestants! As has already happened in Armagh there seems little doubt that the tub-thumping Paisley will be allowed to hold his rallies while any demonstrations by

(Continued on page 400)

CHRISTIAN FORGERY

KHAMIS A. BUSAIDY

THE CHRISTIANS, though divided into nearly four hundred churches, all opposed to the others in varying degrees, can be credited to have one thing in common. They all ground their religion on the Bible. It is the bedrock of their churches. On it they base all their hopes of heaven and hell—salvation.

For almost two thousand years now, they have, one and all, been at pains to gain the confidence of the world in the belief which they share, that the Bible contains the truth.

But education, which we all have to be thankful for, has come to the timely aid of mankind. It has shattered blind faith to nothingness. Scholars have delved into the matter and have come up with the inevitable verdict that Christian assertions no longer carry conviction. The Bible may be the best-seller, but it is in many ways the greatest forgery the world has known.

A devout Christian, in an attempt to save his religion, would only utter a flimsy challenge in the face of this accusation. He would ask for an example, of any portion of the Bible which is forged or interpolated. Well, here are some:

It is perhaps best to begin with that portion of the Bible which is most beloved by zealous Christians, that which says: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature".¹ All Christian foreign missions whose sole aim is to convert the world, take those words as a basis, a divine command. In fact they are a colossal forgery. The words appear in St Mark, chapter 16; in fact a total of eleven verses, from verse ten to twenty in which the order to convert and save appear, together with a sweeping condemnation of those who refuse to be converted and an account of the mythical ascension into heaven, are a forgery. The first English translator of the Bible under James I declared openly that the verses did not exist in the Vulgate, nor in the Greek manuscripts.

The fact that this and many other passages are forgeries is realised by the British Bible Society itself, but it has never cared to remove the error. To dwell on the same gospel, the first verse of chapter 1 is an addition aimed to elevate the alleged founder of Christianity to Godhead.²

From Mark we jump to Luke. Here we find in chapter 1, verses 34 and 35 interpolated. The words 'son of God', all scholars agree, have been substituted for a simple word 'holy'. The object is unchanged: to establish the mythical divinity of Jesus.³ Again in chapter three of this gospel, verse 23, the words in the bracket 'as was supposed' are so obvious an addition that they need no comment. Loisy justly admits that the insertion of the words is "to abrogate the idea of natural sonship which the text of this passage originally suggested".

Scholars have also proved that in verse two of chapter 23, the word 'Christ' is a forgery. The original text simply read: "We found this fellow perverting the nation and forbidding men to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself was an anointed king".⁴

To enumerate all the forgeries in the book on which the Christian's crumbling faith is based would be a long process. But the fact is that the Bible is nothing more than a book full of spurious information; a religious bird in bor-

rowed pagan plumes. Some of the eminent Christians themselves bear witness to this charge. Rev. Dummelow, to give but one example, says: "It must be admitted that the Pentateuch reveals many features inconsistent with the traditional view that in its present form it is the work of Moses. For instance, it may be safely granted that Moses did not write the account of his own death in Deuteronomy 34".⁵

If the Bible is the word of God, why does it not clearly state the name of its author. On the contrary the Book was written by various people, who were influenced by the current pagan mythology of the time. The names of the authors are clearly indicated in the recurring phrase, "The Gospel according to . . .". And even the original writings of these men could not be allowed to remain original.

In fact the Christians were not content with the forgery of their Book only. They extended their interpolations even to the historical works of the great Jewish writer Josephus.

In his famous work *Antiquities*, two passages, one in XVIII:3 and the other in XX:9, which mention Jesus, his alleged crucifixion and resurrection, have both been forged by the Christians. Moore, in his *Judaism in the First Century of the Christian Era*, referring to these passages, says that the style is a clever imitation of Josephus.⁶ Plotius, writing in 860, referring to the same passages, says: "However, I have found in some papers that this discourse was not written by Josephus, but by one Caius, a Presbyter."⁷

The first ancient author to note these forged passages was Eusebius, who lived in the fourth century. It stands to reason, therefore, that a copyist in the third century, could not bear the painful idea that Jesus should not have a place in the great works of Josephus, who lived in the first century and knew the history of Galilee very thoroughly. He therefore inserted the passages to glorify his pagan God. Even Dean Farrer, in his *Life of Christ* could not but admit that these passages were subsequent forgeries.⁹ Farrar having made this observation, with that Christian spirit of hatred and intolerance branded Josephus as 'a renegade and a sycophant', just because the Jewish writer did not mention Jesus.

Thus the Bible can only be accepted as a work of literature and nothing more. Christians cannot write the Book with their own hands and then palm it off as the work of the supernatural. They have no right to cheat the world and try to convert it and make it share in their crimes of the past.

¹ St Mark 16: vv. 10-20.

² St. Mark 1: v. 1 (see Revised Version p. 1098).

³ St Luke 1: vv. 34 and 35 (see Revised Version p. 1126).

⁴ St Luke 23: v. 2 (see Revised Version p. 1163).

⁵ Dummelow: *Commentary on the Bible*, p. XXIV.

⁶ Moore: *Judaism in the First Century of the Christian Era*, 1: 20.

⁷ Plotius: *Cod. Lile.*, XLVII.

⁸ Eusebius: *Ecc. Hist.*, 1: 11.

⁹ Farrar: *Life of Christ*, 46.

TOWARDS HUMAN RIGHTS

Free copies from

103 Borough High Street, London, SE1

Annual report of the
National Secular Society

THE CASE FOR CANNABIS

ROBERT BROEDER

BARONESS WOOTTON recently urged that the law should go easy on 'pot-smokers'. John Lennon has recently been fined £150 for being found in possession of a quantity of cannabis resin. Cases of a similar nature are constantly before our courts, and because of this the argument as to whether 'pot' should be legalised or not is growing in intensity.

Having read an enormous amount of literature about cannabis in the past year—some of it accurate, some of it written clearly on hearsay, I feel prompted to add my own comments. I believe that when writing on such a subject one must have direct experience of the matter in question. Too many writers have part-gleaned their facts from available literature, dubious contacts, and not from a genuine 'pot-smoker'. That these authors are entitled to their opinions is one thing, and I do not doubt their sincerity or motives. In the main they have given their efforts freely without financial gain and their purpose in writing, to educate the uninitiated to remain so, is commendable. There is a very good selection of literature on drugs which can be bought from any large bookshop—one I would particularly recommend is *Drugs and the Mind* by R. S. de Ropp, which discusses in great detail most of the common 'hard' and 'soft' drugs. I would like to see this book adopted as a standard textbook for all sixth formers and school-leavers. I would also like to see it in all public libraries and made available without personal expenditure on their part to Social workers.

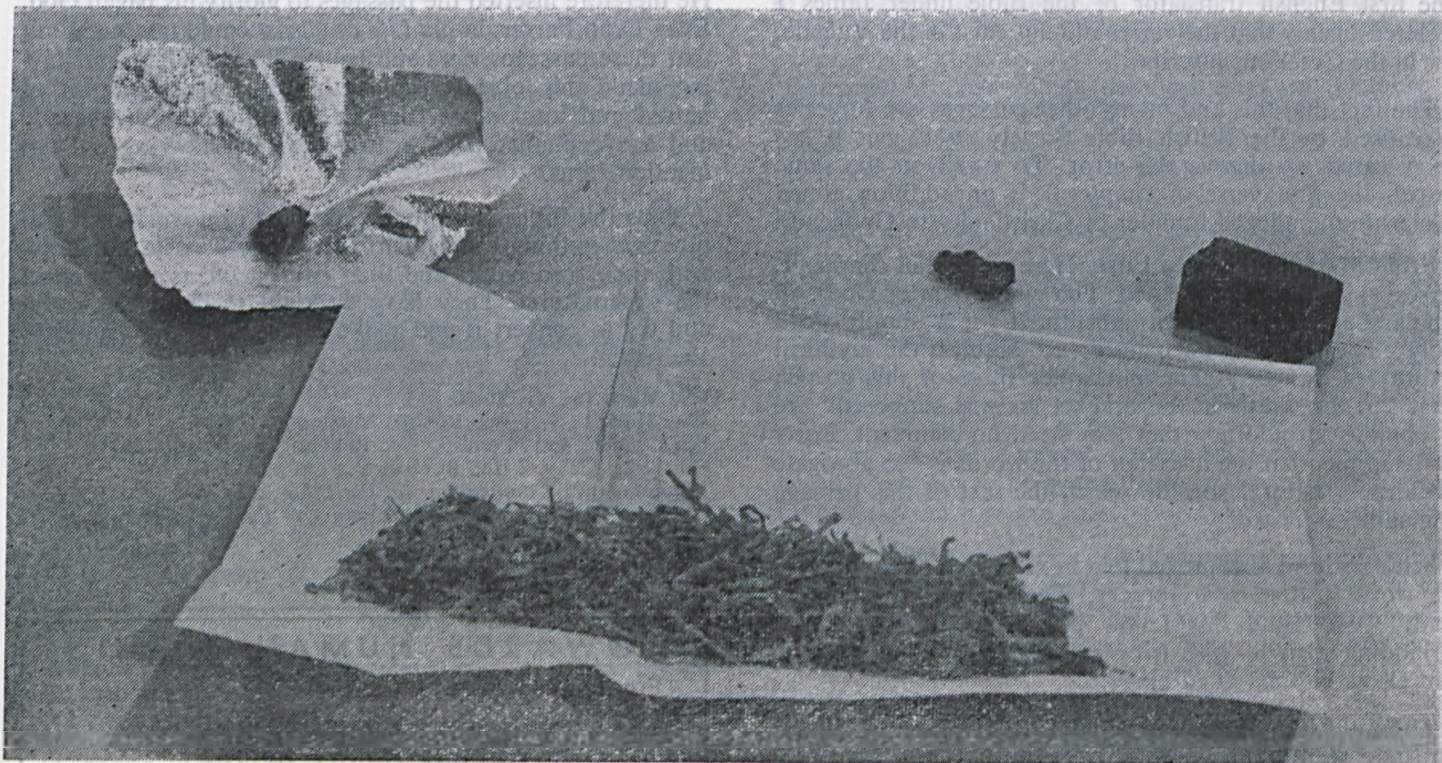
Briefly, hashish, marijuana, cannabis, cannabis resin, reefer, joint or 'the leaf' amounts to very much the same thing, 'pot'. Cannabis in its natural form is a green weed which is mixed with cigarette tobacco, made into a cigarette, lit and smoked. Cannabis resin is currently more popular as it is less bulky, and can consequently be hidden

more easily. Cannabis resin can be either smoked, sniffed or chewed, the popularity of these alternatives being in that order. The quantity required for a reefer is quite small, normally one-tenth of an inch square will make a satisfactory cigarette after melting and crumbling and then mixing with cigarette tobacco. The amount depends very largely on the individual—the more one puts in, the more one inhales and the grater will be the effect.

The effects can only be described as pleasant. It would take pages to describe them fully. *Drugs and the Mind* does an excellent job on this score. I can only say that the drug made me feel very light-headed. I laughed easily and said anything I felt like saying. I am by nature over-tense and perhaps in general inclined to be a little anxious. The drug relaxed me a great deal, a sensation I had never encountered before. Time seemed to stand virtually still and so many thoughts went through my mind that what in fact were minutes seemed like hours.

I am not ashamed to have smoked the drug I have done so since and would do so again—so would my wife. Before any reader passes sentence by labelling me an irresponsible student may I say that I am thirty years old, and have been married for ten of those years. We have a daughter aged four and a half, who has just started school. We have no 'social problems' due to a considerable amount of hard work. In fact for fourteen years I have held a well-paid and responsible job, and with a certain amount of forethought and planning have bought a house without a mortgage. Though my bank balance is just about in black figures, I am by no means rich. Now, you may ask, what on earth is a man like that taking drugs for, and this is the crux of my article.

I smoke 'pot' because I like it. With the greatest respect may I ask the reader who has not tried it, not to condemn



The Ingredients for a Joint.

it—but to consider the following argument sincerely, and honestly and to cast pre-conceived opinions to one side.

Medical evidence supports the fact that tobacco smoking is injurious to health. It is addictive where 'pot' is not. It has been established as a contributing factor to lung cancer—'pot' is in no way such a factor. Alcohol plays havoc with internal organs, such as the liver. 'Pot' does not. Alcohol is a poison, which in time abuses the bloodstream to such an extent that in many cases the ultimate is achieved—death. It can also become addictive. It is also a major ingredient contributing to crimes of violence. Tobacco and alcohol are freely available over the counter. Vast amounts of money are spent on advertising them. The gullible public is bombarded with propaganda heralding the arrival of yet another brand of cigarette with gift coupons, or stating the superior qualities of a certain brand of beer, brandy or whiskey. Social snobbery is encouraged by a special brand of rum.

'Pot' has none of these defects, yet this fact is not widely publicised—nor is it advertised—because it is illegal. I venture to say it is condemned mainly on moral grounds—by those who either have not had direct contact with it and those who have completely distorted picture of the issues involved. Having conducted my own research in this field questioning scores of people I have drawn the following conclusion. Generally speaking cannabis is thought to be evil—the picture conjured up by most of the people I spoke to consisted of sexual orgies—jazz musicians *all* smoked it because without it they couldn't play so well—coloured men seduced white girls with it in dimly lit rooms. To laugh at these statements would be wrong because this is what most people seriously believe to be 'the true facts about pot'. Cannabis, as any medical practitioner will bear out, has a tranquilising effect. Consequently, under its influence a jazz musician could not concentrate well enough to be able to play in time to the music, neither would he be able to play with the spontaneity that makes jazz what it is. Sexual intercourse is extremely difficult when its exponents are intoxicated with alcohol. The same applies to 'pot'—"The mind is willing but the flesh is weak" holds very true here—orgasm is in most cases practically impossible. The imputation against coloured people is therefore utter rubbish. Proportionally as many if not more whites smoke cannabis. The commonly held arguments against the

drug are thus complete nonsense—popular opinions based upon prior popular opinions.

Now, it is not my intention to say categorically that there is no danger in legalising the consumption and distribution of cannabis. On the contrary, there is one point which the advocates of the Legalise Pot Campaign do not mention, namely that whilst many of us are content to have an occasional smoke—enjoy it and leave it at that—there are those who without a doubt abuse it, smoke themselves into a stupor (as do many who drink to excess) and there are those who find cannabis a stepping-stone towards the fatal hard addictive drugs such as LSD and heroin.

Obviously legalisation would involve very great problems, notably in administration and distribution though if it were to be tackled with honesty, integrity and enthusiasm I feel sure the problems would not be insurmountable. The government could for instance ask those celebrated and able people, who freely gave their names to the by now famous pro-pot advertisement in *The Times*, for their ideas on a possible solution—it might even be worth seeking the opinions of students—I feel sure that among the thousands of them who advocate its legalisation there must be many sensible, level-headed ones who could come up with practical suggestions. To guard against abuse of a reform in the law, I would suggest much stronger penalties for those caught selling the hard drugs, much more effort on the part of the Police and Customs in terminating illegal manufacture, smuggling of illegal shipments and their distribution. Admittedly these bodies are successful in some cases which receive wide publicity, but judging by the vast amount of illegal drug traffic which still thrives—almost openly—it is obvious that the net must be closed more tightly and more stringent measures taken to prevent its spread.

One sincere wish I would like to see materialise in my daughter's lifetime, if not my own, is that one should be able to go to a centre from time to time and pick up a small quantity of cannabis, smoke it in peace without worrying about the ring on one's doorbell being the police. To me this does not seem unreasonable and I feel certain that there must be many responsible people who share the same dream. Of those who do not at present agree with what I say I ask, please think honestly about it, casting aside preconceived notions which may have been put there by others—but above all please *think*.

ART

LYNN ALLEN

Centenary Exhibition of Charles Rennie Mackintosh.
(At the Victoria and Albert Museum until December 29.)

THIS EXHIBITION which celebrates the centenary of the birth of the Scottish architect and designer (1868-1929) vividly portrays what is recognised to have been an important influence on twentieth century architecture and design. It has been said that Mackintosh was the most creative designer of his time, a leading exponent of Art Nouveau, and that his original architectural designs developed into what was known as 'the Glasgow style'. These statements are by no means contradictory as Mackintosh was, in his work, both *fin de siècle* and prophetically modern.

He trained as an architect in Glasgow and, during this period, was the leading figure in a group of four which included Herbert McNair and the two sisters Macdonald. This group was interested in and influenced by certain

continental artists, in particular the Dutch artist Toorop whose painting "Three Brides" hangs in a section of the exhibition devoted to the early influences upon Mackintosh. Also in this section are two works by Aubrey Beardsley and several by C.F.A. Voysey.

The most important architectural work by Mackintosh is considered to be the Glasgow School of Art regarded as a milestone in the history of contemporary architecture. It is seen as the product of the two strands of his genius, his orthodox architectural training and his personal experiments in Art Nouveau design. It appears as a combination of traditional Scottish architecture, the long drawn-out curves and pastel shades of the Art Nouveau, with a straight angular framework containing large, regularly spaced windows. The interior was equally original, two of its most striking features being the library and staircase. Part of the exterior was decorated with wrought iron supports, their functionalism culminating in attractively curved

(Continued on page 400)

VIETNAM IN PERSPECTIVE

G. L. SIMONS

THE BOMBING over the North (but not over the South) has stopped, and the four factions have at last sat down at the Paris Peace Talks. What would a morally and politically correct outcome be? How much can be hoped for? To assess the possibilities it is necessary to look at the historical significance of the various Vietnamese leaders and the significance of the division of Vietnam into North and South.

For decades Ho Chi Minh has been regarded as the leader of the Vietnamese. His popularity in Vietnam (all Vietnam) has been widely recognised, even by Americans. The most frequently used quotation to demonstrate this point is from Eisenhower's *Mandate For Change* (p. 372):

"I have never talked or corresponded with a person knowledgeable in Indo-Chinese affairs who did not agree that had elections been held at the time of the fighting possibly 80 per cent of the population would have voted for the communist Ho Chi Minh as their leader . . ."

Following Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy said in the American Senate (1954):

"Despite any wishful thinking to the contrary, it should be apparent that the popularity and prevalence of Ho Chi Minh and his following throughout Indo-China would cause either partition or a coalition government to result in eventual domination by the Communists."

Similarly, in his *North from Malaya* (published in 1952) Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas had written that "there is little doubt that in a popularity contest Ho Chi Minh would still lead the field". Such quotations could easily be extended, and it is important to realise that they apply to South Vietnam as well as to the North. For example, in *Air War—Vietnam* by Frank Harvey, an American major is quoted as saying to his pilots on the aircraft carrier *Constellation*: "If you are shot down in South Vietnam, boys, don't badmouth Uncle Ho. He's the boy who threw out the French—and they love him down here".

By contrast, the South Vietnamese leaders sponsored by the Americans have enjoyed no mass support. The first was Bao Dai who collaborated, first with the Japanese in the Second World War when they occupied Vietnam and then with the French colonialists. Dai was followed by Diem who soon dissipated any popular support by his savage suppression of the peasants and his support for the cruel absentee landlords. Diem was followed by a procession of fascists/generals who used the US-backed army to gain power. The present Ky/Thieu "government" is reactionary and unpopular. As everyone must know by now, Ky declared that his "only hero" was Adolf Hitler.

For several hundred years Vietnam has been one country. In 1954, when the Vietnamese People's Army had finally defeated the French occupation forces, a temporary demarcation line was drawn across Vietnam solely to facilitate the disengagement of the Vietnamese and French forces, prior to the subsequent withdrawal of the French from Vietnam. It is worthwhile looking at the text of the Geneva Accords—Article 1 states that "A provisional military demarcation line shall be fixed, on either side of which the forces of the two parties shall be regrouped after their withdrawal, the forces of the People's Army of Vietnam to the north of the line and the forces of the French Union to the south . . .". Paragraph 6 of the Final Declaration stresses that "the military demarcation line is provisional and should not in any case be interpreted as constituting

a political or territorial boundary" (my italics). Paragraph 7 states that "general elections shall be held in July 1956" to unite the country.

Under the conditions of Article 1 the sections of the Vietnamese Army which had been engaged in fighting the French in the South withdrew North of the demarcation line. Many of the Vietnamese who withdrew were southerners, and many had family ties. In *The Last Confucian* Denis Warner writes (p. 142):

"All over the South before the Viet Minh evacuation late in 1954, hundreds, even thousands, of weddings took place. At the worst, it seemed, the separation would be for two years. In Quang Ngai . . . more than 500 of these weddings were celebrated, and some 20,000 families there have close relatives in the North."

It was assumed by the Vietnamese that they would be able to rejoin their families after the French withdrawal and the holding of the all-Vietnam elections scheduled for 1956. America had other plans. Despite her pronouncements that she would "not use force or the threat of force" to upset the articles of the Geneva Agreement, she never intended to allow the elections. Diem and the Americans united to prevent the elections from taking place, for they knew that Ho Chi Minh would easily win. This duplicity on the part of the US is being acknowledged more and more in the West. Consider the following quotations. (They are important since they are all written by non-communists.)

"Thus faced with an overwhelmingly popular opponent, the United States embarked a course to prevent the elections . . ." —Horowitz, *Free World Colossus* (pp. 151/152).

"It was the refusal on the part of the Diem regime and the subsequent 'governments' of the South, supported by the United States, to participate in such elections, that opened the door to the present conflict."—*U.S. Lawyers Committee on American Policy Towards Vietnam* (p. 23).

"It was the refusal of the Diem regime, supported by the United States, to agree to all-Vietnam elections in 1956, which had been provided for in the Geneva Agreements of 1954, that was largely responsible for the present conflict."—Richard Scott, *Guardian*, 2/3/66.

"The Diem government, with American support, refused to discuss with the North the free elections . . . provided for in the Geneva agreements."—*Observer*, 6/2/66.

"1955: Diem becomes president and, with United States support, refuses to hold elections."—*Observer*, 10/11/68.

"As the deadline for elections neared, Assistant Secretary of State Walter S. Robertson lined up the American Government fully behind Diem's decision not to hold them."—*Vietnam* (p. 170), Gettleman(ed.).

In this way the US government tried to create two countries where in fact and law there was one. It is clear from the Geneva Accords that the existence of South Vietnam as an independent sovereign state has no legal basis. Nor can its sovereignty be claimed on a *de facto* basis: the "government" is not in control of even a majority of South Vietnam. It is clear that the Vietnamese who are supported by the Americans control only a few cities and a number of the towns: the bulk of the villages and virtually all the countryside are controlled by the National Liberation Front. Hence South Vietnam can claim neither a *de jure* nor a *de facto* sovereignty.

In view of the fact that Vietnam is one country it is staggering to hear the Americans talking of North Vietnamese aggression. Vietnamese, apparently, do not have the right to move about their own country unless the Americans approve—imagine an inhabitant of Manchester having to get permission from, say, the Chinese before he is allowed to travel to London!

To some extent the North Vietnamese have come to accept the partition of Vietnam. The immediate requirement, according to them, is for the holding of free elections in South Vietnam in accordance with the NLF programme (which, incidentally, permits the contending of various political parties). The government that would emerge would almost certainly be an NLF government which would then discuss with the Ho Chi Minh administration the path to Vietnamese reunification. This scheme is clearly just, but it is difficult to be optimistic about the realisation of such a plan in the immediate future.

What the Americans may try to achieve at Paris is a South Vietnamese coalition, a curious amalgam of Ky/Thieu and the NLF. The present South Vietnamese "government" has said it would not have a coalition "forced upon it". It may, however, be induced to accept one if America turns the screw. The Americans would hope, with this formula, to preserve an "independent" South Vietnam, i.e. one prepared to be milked by American capital. But there is no guarantee even with a coalition formula, that US investment would be safe. The popular NLF, with its well-organised political base would soon be justly urging nationalisation of South Vietnamese resources for the good of the South Vietnamese. The only way that

the Americans could prevent this would be through the continued presence of combat troops—as in fact, in contravention of armistice agreements, America has done in Korea.

But clearly, US troops on Vietnamese soil would not be tolerated by the NLF, and if it is the American intention then the war will continue. And Vietnam is a harder nut to crack than Korea for several reasons: the Vietnam war has no United Nations sanctions, as did—though in bogus fashion—the Korean war; America is virtually isolated from her most important allies on the issue; the Vietnamese terrain is ideal for continued guerilla warfare; Korea, as a peninsula, was more easily isolated from supplies of guns and other war materials, whereas the Ho Chi Minh trail, through Laos, cannot easily be blocked; and America itself has more internal problems than it had in the early fifties.

In time America will come to recognise the impossibility of creating two Vietnams and of suppressing one of them permanently (indeed it may already be recognised). When this happens Vietnam will have truly won its independence. The only just outcome from the Paris Peace Talks would be for the Americans to agree to leave Vietnam—without delay and without conditions. In such an event the Ky/Thieu clique would collapse in five minutes.

THE AGE OF FAITH

KATHLEEN BAL

ABBOT HAIMON, in 1145, wrote a letter to the Abbot and monks of Tutbury Abbey, in England, describing how Chartres Cathedral was built and told how men and women of the higher as well as the lower walks of life, "bent their necks to the harness of carts and—like beasts of burden—have dragged to the abode of Christ, wagons loaded . . . for the construction of the church". He states that as they halt on their journey the only sounds to be heard are the confession of sins and suppliant prayers for pardon. Anyone who rejects the advice and admonitions of the priest is "ignominiously and shamefully excluded from the society of the holy".¹

In the same year Archbishop Hugo of Roven writing to Bishop Thierry of Amiens makes mention of areas outside the Church's own extensive regions to which the excommunicated and interdicted are banished. Knowing from numerous historical sources the extent of the Church's temporal and psychological power it is left to our imagination as to how the excommunicated and interdicted survived. Their social ostracism was complete. Perhaps they poached from the Church's preserves or roamed the lands in nomadic fashion as beggars. Maybe they submitted to their clerical masters from sheer desperation, or perhaps the freethinkers of integrity and courage slowly starved to death—the unsung martyrs of the Age of Faith—rather than give in.

Abbot Suger, in his description of the rebuilding of the Church of St. Dennis early in the twelfth century, mentions numerous 'small miracles' and deplures the doctrine according to which "Chance wanders aimlessly, Brings and brings back events: and Accident rules all that is mortal".² Surely this is the voice of common sense, if not actual freethought, which raises a clear head out of the morass of religious engulfment.

The bishops of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were good businessmen who were trained in the royal service. They seldom, if ever, visited the cathedral to which they were attached. Some of them even occupied the office of sherriff although this was contrary to canon law and was expressly prohibited at the London Council of 1175. The

parish priests of the time were lax, immoral, and fond of the flesh-pots. But the wealthier bishops indulged their fancies (and fantasies) whether in building or hunting, or in keeping extravagant open house for their friends, with an opulence that rivalled that of many a rapacious baron. They loved, as they still do, their purses better than their Bibles. When they travelled they quartered themselves and their multiple retainers, plus horses, hounds and hawks, on the parish or the local monastery, impoverishing it to such an extent that in some cases it took a number of years before solvency was achieved again. So many complaints were made about this that some reforms were made but which still allowed a fairly lavish entourage.

We are glad and grateful for the existence of the magnificent gothic cathedrals of Europe. They are a lasting memorial (or so we hope)—in spite of future hazards from supersonic bangs) to the soaring brilliance of the architects, masons and artists who created them. Yet the clerics of the time gave most of the credit to God, ignoring man's genius as being something incidental to the Divine purpose in allowing the construction of the cathedral.

King Edward III of England as a Christian king exercised his right of impressment, which was originally intended as a means of obtaining free board and lodging but was changed to suit the monarch's purposes. Through it, he was able to obtain what was in fact slave labour for his palaces including Windsor and Westminster, and also Westminster Abbey. Masons were scarce in the fourteenth century and press gangs compelled them, under pain of imprisonment, to leave home and family and work at whichever place the king's building supervisor should appoint. Those who ran away were subjected to a man-hunt and on capture were imprisoned then again forced back on the construction job.

Catholic historians smooth the rough edges, fill in the cracks and attempt to repair the crumbled foundations of their church in the period of history known as the Age of Faith. Whoever first used the term Dark Ages, however, came much nearer to the reality of the matter.

¹ & ² *Documentary History of Art* by Elizabeth Holt.

FILM REVIEW

LUCY DANSIE

Wild in the Streets

TO DESCRIBE any film as a cross between two other films is to give a low estimate of its qualities of originality. *Wild in the Streets* is very much a cross between *Privilege* and *The Graduate*. All three are films about 'the younger generation'. The only service rendered by *Wild in the Streets* is to demonstrate that the idea of age is only meaningful if understood relatively and therefore 'the younger generation' is a mythical concept.

Wild in the Streets is about an American boy, Max Frost, who leaves a middle-class home and quickly becomes a millionaire pop singer, with a palatial home in Beverley Hills to boot, at the age of twenty-two. He lives there with his backing group and various other people, including a fifteen-year-old boy with an IQ of 186, the youngest person ever to have graduated from Harvard. This character plays guitar in Frost's backing group and also handles his financial affairs. The oldest of the entourage is twenty-four-year-old Carol Leroy. She is an ex-child-star who has become an 'acid-head' or LSD user, and now plays an electric organ in Frost's group standing up to do so in a selection of exceptionally revealing clothes.

Frost's group is hired by a candidate for the US Senate who is running on a votes at eighteen ticket. A true democrat, he is horrified when before a nation-wide TV audience Frost changes his tune and demands votes at fourteen! From this point on Frost, who throughout the film addresses his followers as 'troops', scarcely looks back. Hysterical record-breaking demonstrations of teenagers paralyse the whole country. Carol Leroy is elected to congress on her twenty-fifth birthday, twenty-five being the qualifying age for a congressman or congresswoman. Her inaugural speech to the assembled grey and emphatically middle-aged congressmen was for me the most amusing scene and the best bit of acting in the film. More demonstrations and a dose of LSD in the drinking water secure Frost the presidency at the age of twenty-four. Early on in the film he had said, 'The only thing that blows your mind when you're thirty is killing people'. On attaining the presidency he sets up camps in which everyone over thirty-five is interned and kept happy tripping on LSD. His foreign policy is not to have one, though they do start to ship grain to underdeveloped countries. Reports come in that in Russia youth has taken over as well. Everything seems to be going well. However at the end Frost is brought to an unexpected realisation.

One would imagine *Wild in the Streets* is meant to be entertainment and nothing more, in which case it succeeds up to a point, but something is lacking. One feels that Carol Leroy is the only member of Frost's consortium who even remotely fits into the plot. Frost and the others are all far too clean-out and conformist. Frost himself is little more than a showman. The plot is fantastic. So should the characters be. A hand-clasping, really long-haired, peace and beauty loving, mystic character would have created a better film both in the realms of aestheticism and futurism. As it is? Just a little above average, mildly interesting entertainment.

(Continued from page 397)

and twisted forms. The buildings are displayed by plans, notes and excellent photographs.

Mackintosh's interior design and decoration is shown by the re-construction of several rooms. One of the most interesting being the Willow Tea Rooms run by a Miss Cranston. Here, Mackintosh used the theme of the willow to produce a most original scheme. His attention to detail is evidenced by the fact that he designed everything himself, the furniture, fabrics, the cash desk, and even the coat rack and umbrella stand. Hanging on the wall is the menu from which it appears that one could, in those days, get an excellent meal in artistic surroundings for about tenpence.

In other sections of the exhibition can be seen drawings, fabric designs and paintings by Mackintosh and his wife, the former Margaret Macdonald. In later life, his friends included members of the De Stijl Group, and of the Bauhaus, also the American architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

In his book *Charles Rennie Mackintosh*, Robert Macleod describes him as "a lonely genius, whose work suddenly emerged as a prophecy of the new century".

LETTERS

HENRY MEULEN'S latest letter demands some comment. The suggestion that the teaching and research functions of Universities should be rigidly separated runs counter to Mr Meulen's view, as expressed in his earlier letter, that scholarship and teaching should be linked. It is to the benefit of teaching that the teachers should be in touch with the latest developments in their fields. In science at least this implies that they should be engaged in research. Also it is surely the case that the separation of teaching and research would cause the less qualified to avoid teaching. It is, unfortunately, the case that Universities today conform more to Mr Meulen's suggestion of "specialised colleges" than to that of "places where scholarship can be pursued". It is for this reason that the paying of grants to students from the Exchequer is justified. The training given by Universities pays off for the country as a whole through the application of the skills so gained in industry and commerce (or so the government would certainly argue).

Neither do Henry Meulen's comments on the uselessness of graduates to industry bear a very close scrutiny. It is clear from the fact that all major companies recruit graduates in considerable numbers that they consider this procedure preferable to the alternative of training graduate-level personnel themselves. It is difficult to believe that they are all wrong. On the more general issue of the practical utility of academics I am sure that I need only remind Mr Meulen of the very many science-based companies founded by scientists from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology whose growth has greatly changed industry in that region.

DAVID FLINT, *Secretary*, Student Humanist Federation

(Continued from page 394)

Catholics for their civil rights will be brutally squashed by the police. In this light it seems extremely dubious whether the special platoons, formed it is said by the Northern Irish Minister for Home Affairs "to preserve the peace", will not rather serve to aggravate the increasing hostilities.

Many people feel strongly that certain minister in the Unionist government — two in particular cometo mind — are using the Paisley bandwagon as a means of ousting the relatively liberal prime minister, O'Neil, in aid of their own advancement.

The entire now highly precarious situation calls for an immediate enquiry by a Royal Commission.

OBITUARY

IT IS with regret we have to record the death of Mrs Sarah Ann Warner at the great age of 96 years. With her late husband and family of ten children, all Freethinkers, they were well known throughout our society. Mrs Warner is survived by two daughters and five sons to whom we extend our sincere sympathy. The simple service at the City of London Crematorium was taken by Mrs E. Venton a Vice-president of the National Secular Society.

FREETHINKER subscriptions

and orders for literature . . . The Freethinker Bookshop
01-407 0029

Editorial matter . . . The Editor, The Freethinker
103 Borough High Street, London, SE1 01-407 1251

POSTAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES

12 months: £2 1s 6d 6 months: £1 1s 3 months: 10s 6d

USA AND CANADA

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

The FREETHINKER can be ordered through any newsagent.