

# FREE THINKER

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## LICENSING AND SUNDAY LAWS HARM TOURIST INDUSTRY

The British Tourist Authority recently called attention to the case for reforming Britain's licensing laws. The importance of our position as a tourist nation is now widely recognised, but if this favourable position is to continue we must provide what visitors from overseas want, not what we think they should have. Despite improvements, there are still many irksome regulations regarding the sale of drinks in public houses, hotels and restaurants. Tourist traffic both foreign and domestic, has increased dramatically during the last 15 years. Higher living standards and increased leisure have created a different society to that of a generation or two ago. The licensing laws do not reflect these changes, and, together with the ludicrous restrictions on Sunday entertainments, are a constant object of adverse criticism from overseas visitors. It is likely that the licensing laws will be changed during the next five years, and the Government should be prepared to sweep away the restrictions on Sunday entertainment and sport.



Lord Willis

who opposed the Sunday opening of parks, museums and cinemas have been able, so far, to prevent the proposed new reforms.

Mr Reginald Cornish, assistant secretary of the Society of West End Theatre Managers told the *Freethinker* that his organisation has supported attempts to reform the Sunday Observance laws so far as the live theatre is concerned. He says: "It may be that not all—or even any—West End theatres would open on Sunday, but we feel they should not be prohibited from doing so. And of course it would be a great boost for tourism if theatres were permitted to stage Sunday performances. At the present time many foreign visitors go off to Paris and elsewhere for the weekend because of restrictions on Sunday entertainment in this country". Mr Cornish went on to say that no artist would be expected to work every evening, and that theatres which open on Sunday would be closed or used for concerts or films on another day.

### Getting Round the Law

*John Parker, MP, writes:* One of the fields in which the restrictive hand of puritanism still operates is that of the British Sunday. Under Acts passed in 1625 and 1780 a large number of activities such as games, sports and theatrical performances are illegal on Sunday. The law has been increasingly brought into disrepute because it is not in accord with public opinion. A poll revealed that 64 per cent of the adult population in England, and 62 per cent in Wales to be in favour of the Sunday Entertainments Bill which I have been trying to get through the Commons.

Pressures to alter the law have become lukewarm in many fields because of the growth of subterfuges for getting round the law. Motor racing at Brands Hatch was declared to be illegal a few years ago following a test case, but racing continued with the substitution of parking fees instead of entrance tickets. County cricket has been saved from financial collapse by introducing Sunday play with similar subterfuges, and the Rugby Football League has recently followed the same line. Amateur football flourishes on Sundays, but professional matches are banned. It

It is deplorable that the last Government did not give full support to the Sunday Entertainments Bill. This reform was supported by the majority of people, and would have been of great benefit to the live theatre and the tourist industry. The battle has been going on at Westminster for 17 years. In 1967 a Bill promoted by Lord Willis went through the final stages in the House of Lords, but the efforts in the Commons of John Parker, MP, and William Hamling, MP, have been frustrated by the filibustering activities of the sabbatarian lobby. The killjoys

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## TOLSTOY IN RETROSPECT

RICHARD CLEMENTS

The question is often asked in the Western world: was Tolstoy a literary genius or just another religionist? Some 60 years have now elapsed since his death, and in the light of the best critical judgements available, it is now possible to answer the above question in positive terms.

As early as 1880, Gustave Flaubert, novelist and realist writer, read a French translation of *War and Peace*, and in a letter to Turgenev wrote:

It is of the first rank! What painting and what psychology! . . . It seemed to me at times that there were things worthy of Shakespeare! I uttered cries of admiration during the reading.

### The Master Novelist

In England Matthew Arnold praised *Anna Karenina*, but shook his head over the book as a novel, writing that it was not a work of art, but "a piece of life". Surely, there could be no higher praise. J. M. Robertson—no mean critic—writing in 1902 a closely reasoned and critical essay on Tolstoy as a man and a writer, said:

Taking his titanic output as we find it, . . . we have from his hand a mighty contribution to the love of the inner life, an imaginative and artistic achievement as decisively expressive of genius as the work of any man of our day.

E. M. Forster, when delivering the Clarke lectures under the auspices of Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1927, began and ended his course by striking references to Tolstoy. In the first lecture he said:

No English novelist is as great as Tolstoy—that is to say has given so complete a picture of man's life, both on its domestic and heroic side.

Then, in his last lecture, Forster speaks of the use of *expansion*: "Not rounding off but opening out", and adds:

Cannot the novel be like that? Is not there something of it in *War and Peace*?—the book with which we began and in which we must end. Such an untidy book. Yet, as we read it, do not great chords begin to sound behind us, and when we have finished does not every item—even the catalogue of strategies—lead a larger existence than was possible at the time?

The emphasis in the critical writing quoted above is on Tolstoy the master novelist. And what emerges may be summed up in a pithy sentence in J. M. Robertson's essay: ". . . it is assuredly his art rather than his propaganda which will endure".

## BAN THE BABY'S BOTTLE

BARBARA SMOKER

A boy convicted of being in possession of marijuana and, perhaps, being sent to Borstal instead of going to university or starting a career, is such an every-day occurrence that it hardly merits an inch or two in the local newspaper. But when two young members of the Kennedy clan find themselves in court on a similar charge, even though the judge hastily rules "suspension of the charges" (apparently the American equivalent of a conditional discharge), it is world news.

Sympathetic though one may feel towards these two boys, exposed at a sensitive age to the glare of such publicity and made conscious of having besmirched the honour of their unique family (unique in both the degree of its honour and the frequency of its misfortunes, resulting from its ambition for power), it is hard not to feel some gratification at the discomfiture of the American Establishment.

### Change of Attitude ?

There are more creditable reasons, too, for gratification. Not least, that the case will help to bridge the generation gap. In particular, it will help to soften the attitude of

### Marxist Criticism

Finally, a glance at Tolstoy's standing in his homeland. The 90-volume Jubilee Edition of his writings, a truly monumental tribute, indicates the sway this great writer still exercises over the minds of people in the Soviet Union. It is clear that he is venerated there today both as a human personality and as a literary artist. Thus his works continue to be published in millions of copies.

The tone of literary criticism has been influenced by Lenin, who wrote with rare understanding and deep critical acumen about Tolstoy and his epoch. In a conversation recorded by Maxim Gorky, the Soviet leader said of Tolstoy:

What a Colossus, eh? What a marvellously developed brain! Here is a true artist for you! . . . You won't find a genuine muzik in literature until this count comes on the scene. Can you put anyone in Europe beside him? No one.

So, in the years which have since passed, Soviet scholarship has followed on the lines indicated in the articles written by Lenin in 1910-11, particularly in his three famous essays: *L. N. Tolstoy*; *Leo Tolstoy as the Mirror of the Russian Revolution* and *Leo Tolstoy and his Epoch*.

In these writings, as well as those of later Marxist critics, a clear distinction is drawn between Tolstoy the author of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*, which are warmly appreciated as works of art, and the Seer of Yasnaya Polyana, with his teaching on non-resistance to evil, asceticism, moral perfectibility, and pietistic attitude to human life and its problems, which doctrines have been (and still are) rejected with contempt.

The Marxist critics treat Tolstoy's *religious doctrines* as "a new refined, subtle poison for the oppressed masses, and look upon "Tolstoyism, in its real historical content", as "an ideology of an Oriental, an Asiatic order". The phrases are those of Lenin.

So, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, the Tolstoy who lives today is the matchless novelist and world figure.

many judges throughout the English-speaking world towards young people brought before them on drug charges. It may even help to get the laws reformed, especially with regard to the categorising of the relatively harmless drug cannabis (alias marijuana, hash or hashish, hemp, grass, weed, pot) as one of the "dangerous drugs"—a categorising that is itself dangerous in the false implication that it is comparable with hard drugs such as heroin. Many a youngster who has discovered that pot does him little harm has been led by this false implication of the law to try hard drugs, often with disastrous results. Moreover, because pot is not obtainable over the counter at the tobacconist's shop or public house, everyone who uses it must be in touch, directly or indirectly, with criminal sources of supply. And all too often these suppliers combine the relatively harmless trade with pushing hard drugs. Legalisation of pot would prevent many young people from starting on heroin.

### Advertising

Legalisation of a product is quite consistent with a ban

(Continued on back page)

## RACE AND IMMIGRATION

"Their women go for money, they leave one man and pick up another . . . they go off with each other even when married . . . their women like to have intercourse every night, they like to try different men . . . we don't want to get mixed up with *them* through blood . . . they're physically dirty . . . you should see them coming out of the pub, they make so much noise . . . they shout and swear in the streets for no reason at all . . . they're trying to destroy our culture, our language . . ."

Who do you think is saying all this? The whites in Wolverhampton? or Smethwick? or Brixton? In each case, you'd be wrong. These are the views of Asian and African immigrants to Britain recently interviewed by Dilip Hiro for *New Society*. To be fair, this jaundiced view of us seems largely to be confined to the Asians, and the West Indians are not nearly so hostile. Yet the point surely is that immigration and race relations need to be looked at in a more objective fashion than your typical Hampstead "progressive" would dream of doing. Prejudice and ludicrous displays of hostility to people who are "different" are not confined to the dockers or Smithfield porters.

### Racism and Racialism

We have to distinguish between "racism", or the notion that the observed physical differences between the races make one superior to the other, and "racialism", which is the practice of the doctrine in terms of discrimination and prejudice. Of course, those who are "racialists" in the practical sense need not be subscribers to the biological theory of "racism", and in fact usually are not; still less does it follow that those wishing to reduce or control the level of immigration into the UK, or to disperse the immigrants once they have arrived, are "racialists". Regrettably, this term is far too often applied to those, whether one agrees with them or not, who wish to curtail immigration, and is an example of the dangerous use of stereotypes.

Nor should we confuse the origin of racialist views with their functions in society. This at once disposes of the Marxist view that racialism is a device used by the capitalists to split and divide the working class in order to prevent revolution. Even if this were true, it would not account towards eliminating it. Nearer the truth is the view that race prejudice is a particularly virulent example of group hostility, or the antipathy all human groups tend to feel towards others who differ from themselves. When we come to consider what is meant by "integration", this is particularly important; people sometimes argue that "they"—the immigrants—will never integrate, or don't want to integrate, giving as reasons the fact that immigrants tend to use certain pubs, or live in certain areas, which the whites stay clear of. But of course it doesn't follow that immigrants can't therefore be integrated; there are working class pubs and middle class pubs, or different rooms and bars in the same pub, and white people who live in different areas according to their class—is it therefore true that working class whites are somehow not integrated?

There is a distinction between *integration*, which allows the minority group to compete on equal terms for jobs and housing and so on whilst preserving its own way of life, and *assimilation*, which entails the gradual dispersion of immigrants throughout the host society and the dropping of their distinct customs and languages. Assimilation, if it is ever achieved, will be a much more difficult thing than integration, which may still take place, painfully, even

though the native whites maintain their distance from immigrants as a group.

### Housing

The crucial difficulty is housing. The African and West Indian immigrants, particularly, tend to live in privately rented furnished accommodation in decaying city centres, where the natural process of decline is accelerated by multi-occupation and consequent overcrowding. The ratio of owner-occupiers to the total number of these immigrants is much lower than for the whole population, and very few immigrants are housed by local authorities. Indeed, a local authority such as Birmingham goes out of its way to segregate its immigrants by its policy of compulsory registration of lodging houses and refusal of registration where it feels local amenity may be jeopardised. Yet the really interesting question of the reasons for the council's policy, and the extent of popular backing for it, is not touched on. As Birmingham has a good housing record in general, there must be some explanation of the fact that immigrants are not housed—even given the five year residence qualification.

One policy recommendation now being made is that the Government should set up a series of housing corporations to redevelop the twilight zones in the city centres. This, of course, is not a new idea—there is anyway an overwhelming need to arrest the decay of our city centres—and one wonders just what this has to do with the problems of immigration. Do we wish to avoid the American experience of "ghetto" housing and schools? It is surely not much good to redevelop a city centre if all that happens is that the West Indians are just rehoused where they were before, leaving the whites in their comfortable middle class suburbs. If, on the other hand, we believe in dispersal, then should we just disperse immigrants and their children (e.g., by transporting them around between different areas, as is done in Ealing, to avoid all-black schools), or do we encourage local authorities to develop new kinds of housing policies which actively stimulate integration?

### Jewish Immigrants

Many of the current arguments about coloured immigration into Britain were foreshadowed before the first World War, when in the forty-year period to 1914 some 120,000 Jews settled in this country and concentrated overwhelmingly in the slums of the East End. Then, as now, the fears were expressed that this "invasion", and the "appalling" social problems it was alleged to create, would "destroy" the English way of life and turn the country over to the foreigners. However, over time, the immigrant Jews seem to have been accepted, Mosley and his marches notwithstanding, despite the fact that the Jews appeared content to barricade themselves behind their clothing trade and mix as little as possible with the host population; and today it is simply not respectable to show signs of anti-semitism. One would like to know, therefore, what relevance the Jewish experience has to the current attempts at integration.

Finally, one interesting fact which, unfortunately, can only be of small comfort to President Nixon trying to tackle a much graver problem than we have in this field. The rate of negro-white intermarriage in the United States, whilst apparently increasing quite quickly, is still so slow that when they achieve complete integration, and thus wipe out the colour problem so that Nixon can retire and write his memoirs, he could be as much as 27,000 years older.

PHILIP HINCHLIFF

## FREETHINKER

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## 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 St., London, SE1. Telephone 01-407 2717. Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the NSS.

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

Humanitas Stamps: Help 5 Humanist Charities. Buy stamps from or send them to Mrs A. C. Goodman, 51 Percy Road, Romford, RM7 8QX, Essex. British and African speciality. Send for list.

## EVENTS

Humanist Holidays. Family Centre, Aberystwyth, Monday, 17 August until Tuesday, 1 September. Full board just over £2 per day with reductions for children. Details from Mrs Mephram, 29 Fairview Road, Sutton, Surrey. Telephone: 01-642 8796.

The Progressive League. Summer Conference at Haldon House, near Exeter from 29 August until 5 September. Charges are very reasonable, and children under 13 are accepted free. Details are obtainable from Ernest Seeley, 38 Primrose Gardens, London, NW3.

Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds, 24 August—20 September. Exhibition of paintings and drawings by Oswald Blakeston.

### MEMORIAL EDITION

## WHY I AM NOT A CHRISTIAN

BERTRAND RUSSELL

Preface DAVID TRIBE

Introduction Professor ANTONY FLEW

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NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

# NEWS

## DIVIDED ULSTER

The situation in Northern Ireland has escalated to nightmarish proportions with the killing of two young policemen last week as another horrifying incident in the saga of blood and death in the province. Those responsible for the bobby-trap at Crossmaglen were rightly described by Northern Ireland's Prime Minister as foul characters, and the fact that Protestants and Catholics can display any kind of solidarity only when confronted by a crime of this magnitude makes one despair.

Within hours of the outrage two Ulster Unionist politicians, Brian Faulkener, MP, and Rafton Pounder, MP, expressed their belief that the Irish Republican Army was responsible. A thorough investigation may reveal where responsibility for the crime lies. But the IRA should not be automatically blamed. Protestant extremists have also been responsible for explosions and acts of terrorism. Faulkener's and Pounder's remarks may be the prelude to even more strident demands to arm the police and bring back the "B" Specials.

The British Government must not succumb to Right-wing pressure on this question. The "Specials" have traditionally been recruited from the lumpen elements of the Orange lodges, and were, in fact, the armed wing of the Order. To give them arms now would endanger the lives of innocent citizens and British soldiers. For despite protestations of loyalty, Ulster's Orange fanatics would turn their guns on British servicemen if it suited their purpose. And sympathy for the two young policemen who died and for their families must not obscure the fact that the Royal Ulster Constabulary is probably the most brutal and vicious police force in the United Kingdom.

On the day the two policemen died the *Daily Sketch* delivered itself of this mealy-mouthed inanity: "The churches have far more influence in Ireland than in Britain. So why are there no Bishops and Cardinals walking the streets of Belfast and Londonderry, trying to bring the people to their senses".

Clergymen have often been seen walking the streets in Ulster, usually in Orange and other sectarian processions. The message they preach has, throughout history, divided nations, communities and families, Ulster is a classic example of the way in which Christianity pervades and poisons all aspects of life. Thousands of churches, chapels and mission halls flourish. Millions of prayers and Hail Marys are mumbled every day. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in the ear of almost every citizen. But hatred, bitterness and intolerance are nowhere more rampant in the British Isles than in that unhappy province.

## BLACK POWER

In a press release issued last week, David Tribe, president of the National Secular Society, comments on the deep concern that will be felt by the Government and all the citizens of Britain at statements made by Black Power and the West Indian Standing Conference. It is tempting to regard such statements as a national emergency and to take drastic security measures against "extremists", or to regard them as kite-flying propaganda which can be safely ignored. Both these attitudes would be wrong.

# AND NOTES PUBLICATIONS

Mr Tribe says: "From my own observations I am convinced that police attitudes to black and brown immigrants vary enormously from area to area, officer to officer. I have seen the police give very able addresses on behalf of unrepresented black defendants in magistrates' courts, and clearly harassing groups of black teenagers on street corners. Immigrant spokesmen have themselves referred to this diverse pattern. The police reflect the community at large both as citizens and as agents who tend to react favourably or unfavourably to particular groups according to the views they believe society holds."

The Police Federation's claim that the police simply uphold the law is largely true, and Black Power spokesmen should guard against hysterical reactions. "A chip on the shoulder grows faster than a sapling", says Mr Tribe. It is pointed out that the immigrant community needs confidence that the minority of hostile policemen will be properly dealt with by their superiors or the Home Office, and that complaints against policemen are investigated by independent tribunals.

The police, in enforcing the law as it stands, are likely to come into conflict with the black rather than with the white community. Immigration legislation, particularly the iniquitous Commonwealth Immigrants Act, 1968, is colour-based and can clearly cause personal problems. Similarly, drugs legislation, which is directed against that range of chemicals preferentially taken by immigrants (because these preparations are legal in their countries of origin), is likely to lead to police harassment of blacks rather than whites. Just as patience must be expected of the immigrant community, so tolerance and law reform must come from society at large.

## OUTING

The National Secular Society's annual outing takes place on Sunday, 13 September. A coach will leave London for Richmond, and a visit will be paid to Pembroke Lodge, birthplace of Bertrand Russell. The afternoon will be spent at Downe House, where Charles Darwin lived.

The cost (including return fare, lunch and admission to Downe House) is 27s 6d; bookings to the NSS, 103 Borough High Street, London, SE1.

## SURVEY

Some years ago the National Secular Society sponsored a survey into the amenities provided at register offices, and found that an appreciable number of them were seedy and unattractive rooms which had been converted for wedding ceremonies. There were also complaints at unfriendly and unaesthetic weddings. The great increase in numbers of couples getting married in register offices is evidence of the improvements which have taken place since then. Nevertheless, there are still register offices whose standards are not acceptable, and a survey of these offices in Essex and parts of Hertfordshire has been organised by *Essex Forum*, quarterly journal of the Essex Council of Humanist groups. Their comprehensive questionnaire should be obtained by other groups which may be organising similar surveys. Write to Christopher Pettitt, 3 Dean's Court, Dean's Road, Brentwood, Essex.

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## BOOKS

### EVER SINGING DIE, OH! DIE

by Oswell Blakeston. Hutchinson, 25s.

Oswell Blakeston's three most recent books have been hard to classify. Their subject matter has been that of the thriller, their treatment that of the psychological novel, their style that of progressive art literature. This, the latest, is the hardest to classify and, perhaps consequently, the best. The entire book consists of a conversation between a youngish woman and a psychoanalyst. From this we learn the woman's life story, which leads to a crime, the reason, or motive for which the psychoanalyst is employed by the state to discover. The girl's story can best be described as an exercise in determinism. She is the younger and uglier of two daughters of a broken home, and nothing happens throughout her life to redeem this fact. At school in a convent, and later as a nun in a convent, she lives subject to her own fears, to others, and some of the time to God. The greater part of the narrative is set in convents, excellent pasture for Blakeston's uniquely incisive style and approach. He portrays the eerie, uncomfortable and repugnant life which is led by a nun with as much macabre panache as he lends to the pathetic helplessness of this girl, who chooses the life of a nun because to her it represents, in a strange non-religious way, freedom.

The book will delight all who enjoy the unusual, and it will appeal especially to freethinkers. Blakeston explores the meanaderings of a young mind, beset by religion, and its tortuous development into an agnostic nun is emphatically plausible. The book makes a most penetrating onslaught on religion, the author frequently coming up with ingenious and amusing slices of irreverence. It deserves to be read by freethinkers for this reason alone, but a still better reason is that it displays a unique author at his most subtle best.

DAVID REYNOLDS

### NOT OF THIS WORLD

by Peter Kolosimo. Souvenir Press, 35s.

The notion that highly advanced extra-terrestrial beings have visited our planet is usually dismissed as an extravagance of science fiction. It is easier to think of ours as the first and only technological age. Occasionally, however, discoveries are made which do not fit the accepted historical pattern. A prehistoric bison skull has a bullet wound inflicted during life. Coins are found in strata which were on the earth's surface at a time when no humans were around either to make or spend them. Ancient ruined cities in India bear the marks of nuclear explosion. And Stonehenge turns out to be an astronomical computer. In *Not of This World* Peter Kolosimo gives a fairly objective account of these and many other strange facts which together form a persuasive argument for the thesis implied in the title of his book.

Strangers who arrive from the heavens in fiery chariots in order to impart new knowledge to mankind, and then depart by the same means, feature in the folk-lore of many peoples. In more than one account the Pleiades are indicated as their place of origin. The Old Testament Elijah, thinks Kolosimo, may have been such a visitor.

One of the many remarkable photographs in the book is of a space rocket, with the pilot, respirator clamped

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to his nose, lying on his back at the controls. Beneath him are the rocket's motors and flame jets. A familiar picture today, but this was carved on a sarcophagus in a Mexican pyramid of unknown antiquity. There are illustrations, too, of models and drawings apparently of space-suited creatures.

The men from the Pleiades, it seems, have never entirely abandoned their interest in earthly affairs. Unidentified Flying Objects come in for detailed examination, though one notes that their occupants now appear only to one or two people at a time, and not, as formerly, to multitudes. Regrettably, flying saucers have yet to land in Trafalgar Square.

I found this an intriguing collection of bizzare facts and traveller's tales. Surprisingly, there is no index. With such a wealth of material, one ought to have been provided.

R. J. CONDON

## PAMPHLETS

### THE CONQUEST OF CRIME

by W. R. Rees-Davies, MP. Conservative Political Centre, 3s.

### LAW AND ORDER

by Donald Wade and John MacDonald. Unservile State Group / Liberal Publications Department, 2s. 6d.

Almost any pamphlet about crime and the problems of law and order merits attention, and these two are certainly well worth reading. Neither of them strikes any very special line that has not already been traversed and retraversed by other writers on the subject. On the other hand, while neither of them is an official party statement, each carries considerable weight.

The first pamphlet for the Conservative Party for example, carries an introduction by Quinton Hogg (now Lord Hailsham, the Lord Chancellor). He is careful not to endorse any categorical proposals of Mr Rees-Davies, but he does commend the pamphlet as putting forward proposals that will need careful consideration by the Government.

Mr Rees-Davies is blissfully unaware, at least so far as one can judge from reading this document, of the importance of social conditions in the causation of crime. Similarly, the vexed question of the treatment of complaints against the police, a subject which the National Council for Civil Liberties has kept prominently before the public, receives no mention at all in the Conservative pamphlet. It does receive support, without of course any attribution to the NCCL, in the Liberal pamphlet, although the subject is dismissed in one sentence: "We think the time has come when outside complaints against the police and serious disciplinary charges should be heard by a lay tribunal".

The major proposal in the Conservative document is the advocacy of the formation of a special Criminal Investigation Force for the whole country. It would be divided into

# REVIEWS

regional areas or command centres, each of the local areas being under a commander whose primary function would be the co-ordination of the national effort.

This proposal is interesting in that it treats CID work as something quite different and apart from ordinary police activities. Whilst wanting this part of police activities nationalised, Mr Rees-Davies is strongly in favour of continuing the present local organisation of ordinary police work. It obviously envisages a good deal better pay in this field for members of the CIF and envisages recruitment of "accountants, biologists, chemists, photographers, anti-que dealers and new graduates". Mr Rees-Davies says: "The new detective force will seize the advantage associated with a newly-formed dynamic undertaking, and the aspirations of joining the new detective force will carry the flavour of belonging to an élite occupation". This sounds to me very much like the creation of a special force that could be a very great danger to democratic and Left-wing organisations in this country, even though its purpose as set out in this pamphlet is primarily aimed at criminal investigation.

Mr Rees-Davies lends support to the idea that those guilty of vandalism, hooliganism and general malicious damage should not be sent to prison, but required to pay damages by way of instalments from earnings to the person whose property has been damaged: the earnings of the person convicted being the subject of an attachment order.

The particular proposal in the Liberal pamphlet is that of the need for a Bill of Rights. This is a proposal which is receiving increasing support over a fairly wide area. It is supported because it spells out basic rights and freedoms. I doubt whether the case is as clear as that, and I fear that specification in a Bill of Rights, limited as it inevitably will be and hedged around by safeguarding clauses, may well in the end prove to be more restrictive than our present situation without such a Bill. The pamphlet commends the Bill introduced into the House of Commons last year by Mr Emlyn Hooson, QC, MP, which included proposals to:

- (a) introduce a right of privacy;
- (b) provide that information acquired from or about a person should not be used for any other purpose than that for which it was supplied without the consent of the person from whom and about whom it was given;
- (c) entitle every citizen of the UK and Colonies to a valid passport;
- (d) give the Courts power to grant injunctions against Government Departments;
- (e) prevent the imposition of retrospective liabilities;
- (f) provide for the payment of full, fair and prompt compensation for the compulsory acquisition of property.

The Liberal pamphlet, it is gratifying to note, recognises the necessity for freedom to question authority. It says:

Protest may also arise because some people feel that the need to eradicate social injustice is not being taken sufficiently seriously. We create Universities where people are encouraged not only to learn but to question. It should not be a matter of surprise if some question the moral basis of modern society or refuse to accept the values which their parents took for granted.

The two pamphlets are a useful if not striking addition to the quite considerable literature that is now building up on this subject. *The Conquest of Crime* is obtainable from the Conservative Political Centre, 32 Smith Square, London, SW1, and *Law and Order* from the Liberal Publications Department, 7 Exchange Court, London, WC2R OPR.

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## LICENSING AND SUNDAY LAWS HARM TOURIST INDUSTRY

*(Continued from front page)*

may well be only a matter of time before theatres open and sell highly priced programmes instead of tickets to audiences.

### Safeguards

The greatest opposition—apart from that of sabbatarian fanatics—to changes in the law so far as sport is concerned, comes from those who live near large football grounds, because of the noise and disturbance that follow a week-day match. But it is unlikely that any first class club would normally play on both Saturday and Sunday the same weekend. My bill allowed magistrates, on appeal from local residents, to lay down conditions to reduce or abolish such nuisances. It would therefore depend on local conditions whether a game took place on Saturday on Sunday.

The case for changing the law is overwhelming. No group—however devoutly and sincerely holding particular religious views on Sunday observance—has the right to try to use the law of the land to impose its views on those who do not agree with them. There is no room for such religious intolerance in the 1970s. The present state of the law and the subterfuges for getting round it can only bring law enforcement over a wide field into disrepute. Such national hypocrisy disgraces our nation and makes us a laughing-stock to many foreign visitors and tourists. Parliament must come into line with public opinion.

## LETTERS

### The Ulster Problem

As the son of an Ulsterman I should like to reply to Nigel Sinnott's letter (*Freethinker*, 1 August). Ulster is not a colony but an integral part of the United Kingdom, as much as Alaska is of the USA. Like any other part of the UK (the Highlands of Scotland) for instance—it is entitled to its share of public funds for development. A plebiscite is unnecessary in Ulster as its people have repeatedly returned the party dedicated to keeping the province within the UK. If, as some seem to imagine, it is unjust to have 400,000 Roman Catholics under Protestant rule, surely it would be a greater injustice to place one million Protestants at the tender mercies of the priest-ridden Dublin Government. Eire, it must be remembered, has no legal claim to Ulster, and is a foreign state—even its first official language is not English but Gaelic.

Incidentally, is it entirely forgotten that earlier freethinkers honoured the Orange hero William III as his victories over the Catholic tyrant James II saved parliamentary government in these islands?

Mr Sinnott mentions the Protestants in Eire. After 50 years of "Rome rule" from Dublin these have dwindled to four per cent of the population. In the Dublin *Sunday Press* (2 August) Conor Cruise O'Brien, a Labour TD in the Dial, gave details of the use the Government party made of bigotry to defeat non-Catholic candidates in Eire's last general election.

This is the Government which, under the cloak of "Civil Rights", Ulster's Catholics (many of them immigrants from Eire) are trying, by violence, to make the Government of all Ireland. No wonder the Ulster Protestants are alarmed and determined to use all means to resist.

The only solution to the Ulster problem is to make it clear to the Catholics that they must accept the Constitution, as Eire's Protestants have done, or move south. The Stormont Government must also be allowed to take a much firmer hand with Catholic thugs and rioters. As earlier freethinkers knew to their cost, the Church of Rome is never satisfied with concessions, it always wants complete domination.

JAMES MCMAHON.

### The Role of Church Schools

Thank you for sending me the *Freethinker* with David Tribe's review of *The Heretic*. This was the only perceptive and just assessment of the play I have read from a London critic.

It was surprising therefore to note on your front page the biased vehemence of his assault on church schools. May I, who was educated at a Catholic school to the age of 18, explain the aim of its education? It is to keep the learning against the background of who we are and why we are here. The Christian belief—that every human being is created by God and redeemed by Christ—pervading the formative time, gives to each person a unique importance, and imposes on every one the necessity of showing to his fellow man the utmost courtesy and concern. Is this not an end of which Mr Tribe would approve?

I believe it is time Christians and Secularists stopped clapperclawing one another and realised how much they have in common. The Secularist position can fairly be put in Arden's line "we must love one another or die". The Christian would say "we must love one another and live". Supremely important is the common factor, the necessity of love.

I should point out that the Secularist attitude to Christian education is dangerously like that of a 16th-century inquisitor to heresy. Mr Tribe is against church schools, we are told, because of the cost in terms of psychological and communal harm. Torquemada was against heresy because of the cost in terms of spiritual and communal harm. Where is the difference in terms of basic intolerance?

JOSEPH O'CONNOR.

### Herbert Cutner

I find it regrettable that John L. Broom found it necessary to denigrate the memory of a freethinker and scholar of the formidable stature of Herbert Cutner. I knew Cutner personally, corresponded with him frequently and chaired several of his public debates in which he trounced credulity whether displayed in religion or politics. In saying that he was not a serious scholar, Mr Broom is perhaps deceived by Cutner's individual and forthright style of speech and writing.

ARTHUR E. CARPENTER.

### Oh! Mysore!

The Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General are to be congratulated on declining to prosecute *Oh! Calcutta!* or allow the Dowager Lady Birdwood to claim a place British legal palaeolithic history.

By all accounts the cultural life of the nation could survive the absence of this 'erotic revue'. What it might not survive is any continuance of the folly of prosecutions whose squalid torrent has engulfed (or tried to engulf) *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, *Fanny Hill*, *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, *Saved* and the rest.

No one, after the ballyhoo, could stumble into *Oh! Calcutta!* imagining it to be a sort of *Passage to India*, and the box office prices are a sturdy disincentive to youth and the masses. If any spectator were to be depraved or corrupted he—or she—would be quite untrustworthy as a prosecutor or witness. If not depraved and corrupted, no spectator should have the impertinence to claim that other people will be so affected.

It is clear that, as the Arts Council report declared, laws against 'obscenity' in the arts are ridiculous, unworkable and oppressive and should at the earliest opportunity be repealed.

DAVID TRIBE,

President, National Secular Society.

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### BAN THE BABY'S BOTTLE

(Continued from page 266)

on advertising it. (For instance, the sale of cigarettes is legal in Britain, but they cannot be advertised on television.) There is something to be said for a ban on advertising (at least on television, and probably in the other media too) of all forms of alcohol and tobacco; and marijuana would naturally be included if its sale to adults were legalised.

In a parliamentary debate on drugs which shortly preceded the Kennedy case, Mr Reginald Maudling, speaking against the legalisation of pot, repeated the old charge that most of those who succumb to hard drugs are found to have started on marijuana. Apart from the connection between the two that is created by putting them into the same criminal category, there is no reason at all why pot should lead to heroin any more than that Coca-Cola should lead to beer, or beer to methylated spirits. Indeed, the analogy is an exact one, for ask any down-and-out meths drinker what he (or she) drank before starting on meths, and the answer almost certainly will be beer. And what before that? Why, probably coke. And before that? Quite certainly milk. So, taking to an absurd but logical conclusions the line that the law should ban not only what is dangerous but whatever precedes it, babies' feeding bottles should definitely be made illegal!