

GOVERNMENT TO SPEND MORE ON FAMILY PLANNING

'CAN IMPROVE QUALITY OF DOMESTIC LIFE'—SIR KEITH JOSEPH

Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for the Social Services, answering questions in the House of Commons last week, announced substantial increases in Government expenditure on family planning services. He also told the House that a committee of inquiry had been set up to study the working of the 1967 Abortion Act. He said the inquiry will be concerned with the way the Act is working, and not the principles that underlie it. Mrs Justice Lane would preside over the inquiry. Sir Keith said the Government believed that family planning can often improve the quality of domestic life by preventing the unhappiness of unwanted pregnancies and reducing the need for abortion. He announced that the Government propose to encourage the growth of local authority family planning, including domiciliary services, particularly in areas of special need. Provision has been made, mainly in the rate-support grant, for expenditure in England and Wales to treble by 1972-73. Hospital authorities are also being asked to increase provisions for family planning. Sir Keith's statement has been welcomed by family planning and secularist organisations which have been advocating immediate increases in funds for family planning, and eventually a free and comprehensive family planning service as part of the NHS.

National Population Policy

Sir David Renton, MP (Con., Huntingdon) welcomed this extension in the family planning service which should help to relieve poverty and reduce the birth rate. He hoped the Secretary of State realised that much more will need to be done to stabilise the population over the next 30 years.

David Tribe, president of the National Secular Society, issued a Press release last weekend in which he said the second half of the twentieth century is likely to remain a time of rising population and rising expectations. Everywhere there is a demand for more and better homes, schools, hospitals, welfare services and other amenities. But we cannot catch up with these demands because of the surging birth rate.

"It is in these circumstances", said Mr Tribe, "that some religionists still bleat about inviting more guests to the banquet of life, denounce effective family planning measures and rave against abortion. Fortunately in Britain the Secretary of State for the Social Services is refusing to be stampeded by their representations".

He welcomed the increased financial aid to local authorities but added: "Only by implementing a national population policy with free and freely available birth control advice and facilities for all and legislation which is mandatory, and not just permissive, for local authorities, can the population explosion be dealt with adequately. Sir Keith Joseph and his Cabinet colleagues must stand firm against those who are trying to make it more difficult for unmarried people to obtain contraceptives, and to violate their right to confidentiality of medical treatment".

Mr Tribe commended the Secretary of State for setting up an inquiry into the working of the Abortion Act, 1967. He said: "It is clear that the Act is working better in some areas than others. This is not fortuitous. In some

cities gynaecologists who are opposed to abortion are not only exercising the conscience clause on their own behalf but are using their patronage of hospital beds to stop NHS abortions in their area altogether. Those pregnant women who are turned away are then obliged to continue with an unwanted pregnancy, risk the hazards of a possibly septic backstreet abortion, or look for a private clinic where it may be that some doctors are making a fortune by concentrating on this one facet of medical work".

Increased Grant for IPPF

A spokesman at the world headquarters of the International Planned Parenthood Federation told the *Free-thinker*: "The IPPF welcomes the expansion of family planning services anywhere in the world. It is very much hoped that the British local health authorities will take advantage of the trebled funds being made available to them from central Government to increase the availability of contraceptive advice".

The Overseas Development Administration announced last month that they were increasing their grant to the Federation which, in the next financial year, will be £250,000.

Positive Advance

The Government's decision to substantially increase financial assistance for family planning services has been described by the Family Planning Association as "the first positive advance by the Government to help local authorities to exercise their powers under the 1967 Family Planning Act. It is a milestone for family planners that exchequer money is at last to be used for family planning services".

The FPA said it was ready, through the National Family

(Continued on back page)

A FAIR DEAL FOR AUTHORS

CHRISTOPHER MOREY

Britain has the most highly developed library service in the world. Yet it lags behind all the Scandinavian countries in recognising the claims of authors and publishers for remuneration in addition to the purchase price in respect of the loaning of a book by libraries. Public Lending Right (PLR) has been the subject of controversy for some 20 years and recently Lord Eccles, Minister for the Arts, surprised a deputation representing the Arts Council, publishers, and authors by acknowledging that this claim should be recognised in law and by promising to call a conference to consider amending the Copyright Act, 1956, to this effect.

The deputation cheered: they seem to have forgotten the hope afforded them by Lord Eccles's predecessor, Jennie Lee, when the Labour Government came to power in 1964. Not only was nothing done, but by 1969 the Government even denied that it accepted PLR in principle. Furthermore, Lord Eccles proposes to amend the Copyright Act, 1956. In 1961, as Sir David Eccles, he was Minister of Education, and, following a vigorous campaign led by Sir Alan Herbert, a similar attempt was made but had to be abandoned when the Board of Trade pointed out the difficulty of tampering with copyright law which is subject to international agreement. I do not believe we are as close to change as the deputation imagined.

A Matter of Justice

The justice of the authors' claim is obvious. (I am here concerned primarily with the authors. Logically the publishers' claim is equally valid and many of the schemes proposed make provision for them. However, their position is not so desperate as the authors since they can fix the price of a book to cover what they fail from library borrowing.) The claim rests on the fact that as borrowers we conspire to evade paying the author for the service he gives us every time we borrow one of his books. Lending a book to a friend is not important, but when this is communally organised on the scale of the library service in this country it becomes economically significant. Nor is it a new principle since it is analogous to the performing right which has been recognised here since 1911.

That authors need all the financial assistance they can get was startlingly revealed in a survey of their income published in 1966. While 46 per cent were occupied solely with authorship, only one in six earned more than £1,000 per annum from his writing, and two-thirds were earning less than £6 a week. Clearly any income from PLR would not make the majority of authors financially independent, but this is no reason for withholding what is due to them.

Ways and Means

The difficulty arises when you try to decide how much should be paid to whom. However, the Performing Rights Society do a much more complicated job, actually collecting small sums of money and paying them to a greater number of recipients, so that this is not an overriding objection. It is undesirable that the money should be raised either by a charge to the borrower for each loan (the first PLR scheme proposed by John Brophy in 1951), or by an annual subscription (as proposed by Sir Alan Herbert in 1961), since having had free libraries for so long it would be foolish to abandon them now. Alternatively, the money could come from the rates, but this

would certainly lead to a reduction in the number of books bought by libraries. (The money for authors would be found by not increasing the amount spent on books at a time of rapidly increasing prices—98 per cent between 1960 and 1968.) Obviously the money must come from the Government either in rate-support or direct into a central fund.

Deciding how much of the money raised should be paid to each author is more difficult. In Sweden the number of times a given title is issued by libraries is determined by a continuous $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent sample. In Denmark it is obtained by a complete annual stocktaking. In 1968 the Arts Council proposed a scheme involving a sample stocktaking, but since the stocks of only three library authorities a year would have been counted, the accuracy of the sample was highly questionable. Moreover, any such scheme will be vigorously resisted by librarians since it comes at a time when more and more libraries are abandoning stocktaking as too time-consuming. The most acceptable way is that proposed by the Arts Council in 1970, by which the information is obtained from the library suppliers who are quite small in number. This is the scheme Lord Eccles recently rejected.

Under his alternative proposal librarians would pay more for their books so as not to be in breach of copyright in lending them. The Library Association has rightly condemned his scheme as it would lead to reduction in the number of books bought. This is true, but it sounds strange coming from them. They have been arguing for the last ten years that there is no need for any complicated scheme involving their members counting books since libraries pay the price fixed by the publisher and it is up to him to make adequate provision for the author. It is to be hoped too that they will refuse to participate in the proposed conference, as they have declined to co-operate with the Arts Council in the past.

Direct Action?

None of this, however, should prevent the authors insisting on immediate action. They have waited 20 years for this right to be recognised. If this Government puts off actually implementing any scheme the authors might consider direct action. In 1969, as a gesture in support of their claim for increased payment, Swedish authors removed their books from the shelves of libraries in four cities for a day: 500 authors; 20 tons of books.

SEX EDUCATION — THE ERRONEOUS ZONE

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WAS JESUS A REVOLUTIONARY?

PHILIP HINCHLIFF

Ever since the beginning of historical criticism of Christianity, a great many "Lives of Jesus" have been written. Many of these, unabashed by the extreme paucity of reliable biographical information about Jesus in the gospels, have been highly imaginative and speculative. Others again, notably the works of Rudolf Bultmann, are characterised by their scepticism about the possibility of actual historical knowledge of the life of Jesus. During the long debate on Christian origins, there have indeed been a few scholars who have denied altogether the existence of Jesus, the latest of these being John Allegro whose notorious theory it is that Christianity is a "mushroom myth". But even if one discounts altogether the testimony of the gospels and the Pauline epistles, there are several references to Jesus in pagan writings; it is worth quoting the second-century Roman historian, Tacitus, who briefly mentions Christianity in his *Annals of Imperial Rome*:

In order to destroy the rumour (which accused him of having set fire to Rome) Nero invented a charge of guilt, and inflicted the most appalling tortures on those who were hated on account of their abominations, and who were called Christians by the multitude. This name comes to them from Christ, whom the Procurator Pontius Pilate, under the rule of Tiberias, had handed over to the torture (i.e., crucifixion). Repressed for the moment, this detestable superstition broke out anew, no longer simply in Judaea, where the evil arose, but at Rome, into which there flows all that is horrible and shameful in the whole world, and finds many people to support it.

These remarks of Tacitus, whilst they can hardly be said to put Christianity in a favourable light, nevertheless constitute a strong, indeed decisive, objection to the so-called "myth theory". This passage in the *Annals* does not seem to have been derived from either a Christian or Jewish source and witnesses to the existence of an independent pagan tradition concerning Jesus.

There are, moreover, certain internal stresses and strains in the gospel narratives which are difficult to reconcile with the view that Jesus was a wholly imaginary figure, chiefly the embarrassment felt by all four evangelists about the political aspects of Jesus' ministry. In particular, the strong anti-Jewish, pro-Roman perspective of the gospels is most easily explained on the view that Jesus himself was an avowedly anti-Roman figure of an insurrectionary movement directed against both the Roman government of Judaea and the Jewish establishment. This was later to cause great embarrassment to the early Christians seeking to practice their faith in the face of Roman suspicion of Christianity as a branch of messianic Judaism and therefore subversive. This thesis is brilliantly argued by a leading New Testament scholar, Professor S. G. F. Brandon, whose *The Trial of Jesus of Nazareth* has just been reissued in paperback form.

The Zealots

The question thus arises why Jesus should have become politically involved with the Romans at all. Traditional Christian apologetic, with its concept of the "pacific Christ" as the divine saviour of mankind, naturally rejected the idea that Jesus, the son of God, could possibly be implicated in Roman-Jewish politics at that time. The problem to which the four gospels address themselves is that Jesus, by ancient tradition, was executed by the Romans for sedition—for proclaiming himself "King of the Jews". Such a claim was necessarily political in its implications, for the nationalist Judaism of that time looked to the deliverance of Palestine from its heathen

rulers, the Romans, whose very presence in the holy land was an affront to God; and to the establishment of a theocratic Jewish state whose sole allegiance would be to Yahweh. This was to be brought about by the Jewish people acting under the inspiration of the long-awaited Messiah and by the divine intervention of their god.

The catastrophic Jewish revolt of AD 66-70 was led by the Zealots, the extreme nationalist party of the Jews, against both the Romans and the Sadducean aristocracy. Jesus's connections with the Zealots, whose origins are to be found in the revolt of Judas of Galilee in AD 6, are traced out in detail by Professor Brandon. He included a Zealot among his apostles, shared the Zealot's hostility to the payment of tribute to Rome, and seems to have instigated a serious insurrection in Jerusalem around the year 30 that directly led to his arrest, trial and execution. This is the famous "Cleansing of the Temple" incident found in all four gospels. Jesus is depicted as going single-handed into the Temple and, more or less by the force of his own personality, driving out the money-changers and petty traders whose sordid commercial activities violated the sanctity of this ritual focus of Judaism. When one reflects, however, that the Temple was an immense economic institution, providing facilities for the (wholly legitimate) buying and selling of sacrificial animals, and for a number of other transactions authorised by the sacerdotal authorities, it can be appreciated how implausible—as it stands—the gospel account of Jesus' activities is. As the most important religious and economic institution in the country, the Temple was correspondingly heavily policed, both by the Jewish authorities and by the Romans. The reaction, therefore, of many critics has been to deny the historicity of the event altogether; or to ascribe to the gospel narrative a purely "symbolic" significance.

Revolutionary Activity in the Temple

However, it is very doubtful that the early Jerusalem Christians, from whose tradition, among others, the synoptic gospels were compiled, would have gratuitously invented such an episode. According to the synoptic account, the chief priests and scribes feared the "teaching" of Jesus in the Temple, and even more the popular support he commanded. It was only the previous day, moreover, that Jesus had triumphantly entered into Jerusalem as Messiah, acclaimed by the crowd gathered in the city to celebrate the passover. The suggestion is that Jesus' activities in the Temple were much more revolutionary than the colourless gospel accounts would have us believe; they were designed to gain control of the Temple and depose the high priest, the nominee of Rome, as indeed the Zealots were to do in the year 66. As a pious Jew, Jesus would hardly campaign against the Temple or its cultus as such; indeed, one of the main concerns of the early Jewish Christians was to rebut the slur that he had tried to destroy the Temple, as we see in the Markan account of the trial. But it is quite intelligible that Jesus should share the Zealot's hatred for the priestly aristocracy, execrated as the ally of Rome, and this in turn makes sense of the otherwise inexplicable opposition to Jesus of the Jewish establishment which we see in the Sanhedrin trial.

Mark's description of the initial Sanhedrin trial depicts the Jewish leaders as condemning Jesus for blasphemy, though it was not an offence against the Torah to claim

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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.

EVENTS

Brighton and Hove Humanist Group, Salisbury Hotel, King's Road, Brighton, Sunday, 7 March, 5.30 p.m. F. Stark-Murray: "Doctors and Social Responsibility".

Guildford Humanist Group, Rayleigh, 37 Mountside, Guildford, Thursday, 11 March, 7.45 p.m. Poetry Reading.

Humanist Holidays. Easter Holiday at the Belgravia Hotel, Bournemouth. Details from Mrs. M. Mepham, 29 Fairview Road, Sutton, Surrey. Telephone: 642-8796.

Leicester Secular Society, Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester, Sunday, 7 March, 6.30 p.m. 90th Anniversary meeting. Speaker: Collin Coates.

Nottingham and Notts Humanist Group, Adult Education Centre, 14 Shakespeare Street, Nottingham, Friday, 12 March, 7.30 p.m. E. L. Rowenthal: "The World is out of Joint".

South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1, Sunday, 7 March, 11 a.m. Geoffrey Ashe: "Reason and Myth". Tuesday, 9 March, 7 p.m. Peter Cadogan: "Marxism as Revealed Religion".

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NEWS

SEGREGATION

A year ago Rhodesia's Roman Catholic hierarchy made a firm stand against proposed segregationist legislation, and turned their dispute with the Smith Government over the Land Tenure Act into a major issue which received international attention. But the news that the bishops had now agreed to the Government's request to limit the quota of African pupils attending predominantly white Church schools to six per cent, was not surprising. And their statement that the "temporary concession would remain in force pending negotiations with the Government" was merely a face-saving gesture.

The surrender of the Rhodesian hierarchy has been expected for some time by lay Catholics and others. It was reported last December that a senior prelate from Rome had been in Rhodesia on an unannounced visit. He was Father Schutte, a former Superior General of the Society of the Divine Word. He had little or no consultations with laymen or Africans, and the view was widely held that some form of compromise was being worked out between the Church and the Government.

FUNNY PECULIAR

Mrs Mary Whitehouse, the leading lady of Britain's "cleaner-uppers" has not been deterred by the unhappy experience of Lady Birdwood, whose unsuccessful prosecution of Eleanor Fazan and Jack Gold added to the gaiety of this nation a fortnight ago. After seeing a performance of the television programme, *Where Do I Sit?* in which comedian Peter Cook claimed to be God, Mrs Whitehouse said: "I have laid a complaint under the Blasphemy Act against Peter Cook and the BBC".

Mrs Whitehouse was "quite sure the programme must have given offence to a lot of viewers. One sketch was quite blasphemous, and Peter Cook used an obscene expression". The cheeky thing!

Peter Cook retaliated by saying that God had a better sense of humour than Mrs Mary Whitehouse. He may be right; the behaviour of some of the more enthusiastic defenders of Christian morality forces one to conclude that if God created them he must be a proper comedian.

LITTLE CHILDREN SUFFER

A priest and a seminarist working in orphanages were arrested on charges of corruption of minors and obscene acts, and criminal proceedings are to be instituted against 20 others. This was announced by the judge who is investigating the treatment of children in orphanages in the Rome area.

Judge Luciano Infelisi declared last week that conditions in reformatories were much better than in most of the orphanages. He said: "These children would be living better if they had committed some crime. But they are innocent and so live as subhumans, abandoned by everyone, defended by no one, already destined at the age of eight to be banned from society".

Priests and nuns have been involved in scandals arising from the running of children's homes in Italy. Now moves are being made for a complete overhaul of the system of the care of orphans and abandoned children.

AND NOTES

DISAGREEMENT

Spanish bishops have rejected the terms of the proposed concordat between the Vatican and Madrid to replace the one signed in 1953, and now generally regarded as obsolete. The stumbling blocks to agreement are General Franco's veto on the appointment of bishops, and the State subsidy to the Church. It is this subsidy—said to be at least £9 million—which is making the Vatican keen to renew the concordat. The Catholic Church has got round the veto by appointing auxiliary bishops and temporary administrators. But the text of the proposed concordat was "leaked" two weeks ago, and this revealed that the Vatican wanted to abolish the veto but retain the subsidy.

Other important clauses of the proposed concordat concerned marriage and religious education. The new agreement would have recognised the legality of marriage outside the Church, but divorce would still not have been permitted. The Church would have maintained its privileges in broadcasting and education.

It is believed that many Spaniards, including some bishops, are prepared to abolish privileges on both sides. It is felt that it would be worth sacrificing even the State subsidy for a greater freedom in running their own affairs.

ILN MONTHLY

The *Illustrated London News*, which was launched 129 years ago, will not be published weekly after May when its format will be altered and it becomes a monthly. Rising costs and falling revenue are part of the reason for the change.

The journal's distinguished readers included Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, who was furious when it published Paxton's final designs for the Crystal Palace. On that occasion Queen Victoria was amused; at least she recognised a splendid scoop and pacified "dear Albert".

Many weekly publications have bit the dust in recent years, but the *Freethinker* soldiers on. It started as a monthly in May 1881, but after a few issues was published weekly. There will be a celebration in London on 14 May when the speaker will be Renée Short, MP.

NOT GOING TO MARKET?

Enthusiasm for joining the Common Market continues to wane. There is now a political crisis in Norway where, until recently, the decision to seek membership had the overwhelming support of Government and opposition parties. Now there is increasing concern about the effect of Norway's entry on her agricultural and fishing industries. It is feared that it will, among other things, lead to even greater emigration from the farming areas.

Here in Britain the British Peace Committee's campaign against entry has got off to a good start. The BPC will be organising teach-ins and meetings, and conducting opinion polls in a wide range of defined areas.

Anti-Marketees in the Labour Party are now confident that the party conference next October will go on record against entry on terms negotiated by the Conservatives.

THE IMMIGRATION BILL

David Tribe writes: Like the Industrial Relations Bill, the Immigration Bill gives every promise of being a paradise for lawyers. It will also be a paradise, or perhaps a hell, for registrars throughout the British Commonwealth faced with the sometimes insuperable task of deciding whether someone is "the child or grandchild of a person having at any time had citizenship of the UK and Colonies by his birth in the United Kingdom or in any of the Islands" (s.2(I)(c)). This tortuous provision is not some minor regulation appended to the Bill but is the crux of it. It is an oblique (not too oblique) racialist provision calculated to give a "right to abode" to members of the white but not of the brown or black Commonwealth and is a sorry yielding to extremist views in the Conservative Party. In the same spirit are other sops to anxious—one might almost say hysterical—rumours about immigrants. "A person who is not patial shall be liable to deportation . . . if another person to whose family he belongs is ordered to be deported." (This is presumably based on the assumption of high male delinquency and family dependence on welfare services among the immigrant community.) Smuggling in illegal immigrants becomes punishable by "an unlimited fine and up to seven years' imprisonment, with power in the court to order forfeiture of any ship, aircraft or vehicle used in connection with the offence" (page 4). (This is presumably based on the assumption that this has become a major industry.) For neither of these assumptions do I know of any solid evidence.

I hope I am right in believing the East African Asians will now be allowed in by virtue of the repeal of the iniquitous Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1968 (brought in by the former Government), without any amendment of the Tanganyika Independence Act 1961, Uganda Independence Act 1962, Kenya Independence Act 1963 and Zanzibar Act 1963. If this is so it is one bright spot in an otherwise gloomy Bill. For, while it is unreasonable for a crowded country like the United Kingdom not to have an immigration policy when far sparser regions have, it is a great pity that a nation with Britain's liberal traditions should proceed further on the path of racialism.

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BOOKS

THE ENGLISH JUDGE by H. C. Leon. Stevens, £1.75.

If you walked into any of the higher courts on any day you choose, you would almost certainly hear a case being argued in much the same way as it would have been in 1871. The atmosphere and the procedure of the High Court and the Court of Appeal have changed so little in the last century that if your great-grandfather was a lawyer, he would find nothing to astonish him there today. This is a sombre thought; and it is true of no other profession.

British social scientists have only in late years begun to explore and to try and explain the deep-seated conservatism of the judiciary. If they are not too proud to look across the Atlantic, they can get much inspiration and assistance from the United States where lawyers and courts are more socially conscious.

The best place to begin might be the writings and dissenting opinions of that great man, Mr Justice O. W. Holmes. It was he who said in 1881 that "the life of the law has not been logic: it has been experience. The felt necessities of the time, the prevalent moral and political theories, intuitions of public policy, avowed or unconscious, even the prejudices which judges share with their fellow-men, have had a good deal more to do than the syllogism in determining the rules by which men should be governed".

Unfortunately, as Holmes also pointed out, the training of lawyers is mostly a training in logic. The processes of analogy and deduction are those in which they are most at home. The language of judicial decision is mainly the language of logic. And the logical method and form flatter that longing for certainty and for repose which is in every human mind. "But behind the logical form lies a judgment as to the relative worth and importance of competing legislative grounds, often an inarticulate and unconscious judgment, it is true, yet the very nerve and root of the whole proceeding. You can give any conclusion a logical form".

Henry Cecil, the author of humorous novels with a legal background is really H. C. Leon, who was, till he retired, a county court judge for 18 years. The best thing in his book is the confirmation it offers of the fact that with rare exceptions, English judges come from a narrow, well-to-do social class who have had little direct contact with the working class or even with the lower ranks of the middle class. The overwhelming majority went from one of the major public schools to Oxbridge and then to the sheltered life of the Bar. They are all proud to be prisoners of one of the toughest social traditions you can imagine. All the judges (excluding the county courts) have been through the same mould. Not even an outstanding professor of law has ever been put on the bench. And the judges remain members of the Inns of Court and so help to run the legal profession and to protect it against the intrusion of the public interest.

It is necessary to recognise the social background of the judges for a reason that Mr Leon has failed to perceive. Everyone knows that corruption in the ordinary sense plays no part in the work of the courts. But there is a subtler form of corruption which is the more poisonous because it is wholly unconscious. As American judges like Holmes, Cardozo, and many others have pointed out, we must beware of the fallacy of logical form. We must be

FREETHINKER

alert to notice the "inarticulate major premise" whereby many a judgment reaches a conclusion by no means acceptable to conservatives and radicals alike. (Readers of this journal, by the way, would enjoy the judgments, including the dissenting one by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Finlay, in the memorable case of *Bowman v. Secular Society* in 1917, when the House of Lords held that bequests left to the Society are lawful.) It is, of course, in the interpretation of statutes and of the common law that the political preconceptions of the judges are most clearly revealed; seldom in their conduct of criminal trials. Regrettably, Mr Leon encourages the popular idea that the most important segment of the legal system deals with criminals on trial. In fact, to most lawyers the criminal law is a comparatively unimportant part of their work or income.

A sociological analysis is, however, far beyond Mr Leon's horizon. He is content to wander through some of the by-ways of the lawyers' fairy land, admiring its coloured lights and the costumes worn by the players. He is at heart so well pleased with things as they are that one feels afraid that on any page he might simply get lost in admiration of their lordships, the judges. Nor does he make sharply enough for unwary readers the distinctions which should be drawn between magistrates' courts, county courts, and the topmost courts. His minor proposals for reform are derisory. If the structure of English law and courts is ever radically reformed, it will assuredly not be at the instance of professional lawyers.

JULIUS LEWIN

TIME SMOULDERS and Other Poems

by Kit Mouat. Mitre Press, 60p.

Kit Mouat, a former *Freethinker* editor and the author of *What Humanism is About*, has ventured into a different medium with the publication of *Time Smoulders and Other Poems*

The most substantial piece in the collection is the title poem which occupies ten of the 58 pages of actual poetry. This is autobiographical, taking us from the author's earliest recollections, through her experiences of war, to marriage and motherhood, with serious consideration and evaluation of all these aspects of life. The striking metaphors of the wartime sequence, such as those describing the aftermath of an air-raid:

Surrealistic cities scar the land
after the nightmare's dread
to prove the nightmare real,
the dreamer's dead.

are perhaps the most memorable of the collection.

In *Reflections in Praed Street* and *From the Rose and Crown in the Cricket Season* she is highly successful in creating character. One almost feels one knows her prostitute, who

saw herself as some receptacle for waste
for men with no amenities at home
or those who have a secret nonconformist taste.

REVIEWS

and the man in the pub whose enjoyment is spoiled by the recollection of his quarrel with his nagging wife

catching his breath and missing the bus
and wishing like hell he could just go back to his wife
without any more fuss.

The 44 poems include statements of Kit Mouat's own philosophical position, such as *A Matter of Life and Death*:

But death deserved or undeserved
is but eternal sleep,
dreamless and undisturbed,
and sleep comes easiest on a living day.

Women-O'-War expresses resentment at men "from the Press (or was it TV?) who sneer at women's emancipation.

"You with your fatuous talk of equality, rights and more pay",
they went on,
give us the women who know how to strip and wriggle their
hips." . . .

"Oh masculine God, what a farce, how they hate us", we said,
"out of bed."

Don't we all know men to whom a women is either a sex object or an object of derision?

Other poems are descriptions of personal experiences or moods, revealing, the author's deep love for her family, and concern for unhappy people and for animals. I particularly like *At Waterloo* (on seeing her son off to boarding school) and *The Frozen Bird*, which achieves real beauty.

Kit Mouat has produced an interesting and varied volume of poetry, which becomes more satisfying at a second and third reading. The ingenious cover design is by Louis Mackay. Altogether at 60p this book is excellent value.

MARGARET McILROY

strating some personal aesthetics? Marilyn Monroe's lips look marginally nicer in some colours than others. Hollywood and Madison Avenue mass-culture is such that many people, including myself, often find tedious to the point of actually being offensive. Thus it could be deduced that in Warhol's reproductions there is an implied criticism. However in one of his rare moments of comment he has said: "I love Los Angeles, I love Hollywood, they're beautiful. Everybody's plastic, I want to be plastic" (1963).

The other main theme evident at the exhibition is tragedy. In the silk-screened enlargements of Press photographs of a suicide's corpse, road accidents and the electric chair; the size, the repetition and even the use of colour genuinely does increase their impact on the spectator. This is done mostly of course by the fact that the pictures appear in the circumstances of a work of art and not in the context of a newspaper where such images are commonplace. The electric chair, with its straps and electrodes and the "Silence" notice behind it is truly horrific. But it is equally possible to develop a taste for the horrific as it is to like Hollywood. Lord Russell of Liverpool's books proved that. If any of Warhol's work is intended to be critical of the society from which it emerges, it is as ambiguous as a mirror. A mirror attacks the paranoiac and charms the narcissistic. Warhol merely presents the image without comment and it can be read in as many different ways as it has spectators.

Owing partly to the size of Warhol's works, the exhibition at the Tate does not display a representative quantity, but he is also currently exhibited at two other London galleries.

Warhol's work is only a little less silent than his mouth. Much of the exhibition reflects the tedium and superficiality of the things which inspire him. If his pictures cannot be admired for their images, then the totally impersonal manner in which they are produced makes it difficult to admire the mind behind them, if only because the spectator learns nothing of it.

LOUIS MACKAY

ART

ANDY WARHOL

The Tate Gallery, London, until 28 March.

Warhol, when questioned about his intentions in his work, is notoriously uncommunicative. "No meaning", he says, or he merely grunts. It has been said on his behalf that he wishes the only important thing in his work to be the image itself, that the techniques he uses or his own creative personality should be entirely subordinated to the content. Walking round the exhibition at the Tate with this in mind it was clear that there was nothing to be marvelled at in his perception or his skill, but if that's as he wants it, then to the images themselves.

Elvis Presley, Marilyn Monroe, Brillo-Pad boxes and Campbells soup tins are the sort of images which in the age of TV and supermarkets we are all bombarded with as a matter of course. Here they were, enlarged and multiplied. Enlargement and multiplication certainly concentrates attention on the image. But why does he play around with different colour combinations—is he actually demon-

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(Continued from front page)

Planning Agency Scheme, to help local authorities to provide the sensitive and responsible service needed to reduce the appalling misery, as well as the cost to tax and rate payers, of unwanted pregnancies. Already well over half the local authorities in England and Wales have appointed the FPA their agents for family planning for the next financial year. The Association, which is unique in providing training in contraceptive techniques for doctors and nurses, is already expanding its training resources to meet the growing demand for its services. It has taken the FPA 50 years to establish the highest standards of medical and patient care.

The FPA declares that it is important to persuade people to use the available birth control services. "We hope, therefore, that some central money will be made available soon for extensive contraceptive education and public information".

A Good Start

Alastair Service, chairman of the Steering Committee to set up the Birth Control Campaign, told the *Freethinker* it was a great relief that in setting up the inquiry into the working of the Abortion Act, Sir Keith Joseph obviously realises the importance of increased financial provision for birth control. The decision to treble the rate support grant for family planning to more than £2 million was a good start. But the Government must not be allowed to think this will solve the problem, and it seems doubtful whether we can get all local authorities to provide full contraceptive services unless the Family Planning Act, 1967, is made mandatory.

Mr Service said: "According to Sir Keith, this increase is specially intended to encourage domiciliary services and areas of special need, i.e. those women who are least likely to attend a family planning clinic or to seek professional advice from their GP. But it has been authoritatively estimated that a domiciliary family planning service will cost between £10 and £13 per woman, per year. At the most optimistic costing (£10) this would mean help for little more than 200,000 women".

Mr Service added that the BCC believed that domiciliary services throughout the country are necessary, but any available cash should be shared between these services and others which can prevent many more unwanted pregnancies per £1 spent. "As just one example, much more should be spent on the Health Visitors' services which can play an invaluable part in bringing information about birth control to women in their homes.

"In general, the domiciliary service should be just one part of an integrated organisation under the NHS to provide a full range of facilities. The news that hospital authorities are also being asked to increase provision for family planning is certainly welcome, since such facilities in hospitals will form an essential part of the integrated service we have in mind".

The timidity with which Roman Catholic MPs accepted the announcement that more public money was to be spent on family planning was significant. No doubt they are saving their fire for the Abortion Bill, but as it is not so long ago since Catholics were sabotaging family planning work in Britain, and the Pope has just made arrogant statements condemning contraception. It is encouraging to note that the climate of opinion is now so strongly in favour of

planned families that Roman Catholics at Westminster had to swallow hard when Sir Keith Joseph made this important announcement.

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to be the Messiah, and then delivering him to Pilate on a quite different set of charges of which the main one was revealed (by Luke) to be sedition. The reluctance of Mark to specify the exact charges brought against Jesus is doubtless to be explained by the fact that this, the first gospel, was written in Rome just after the Roman triumph over Judaea in AD 70; Christianity was already widely suspect as a subversive movement, and following the Neronian persecution the "political" aspects of the new sect had to be carefully toned down. Mark was thus faced by the "scandal" of the Roman cross on which Jesus died, and was compelled to explain away the execution of Jesus as a rebel by showing the Jews as responsible for his death. How absurd the subsequent gospel accounts of the trial before Pilate were did not worry the evangelists, since for them truth was truth about their divine saviour, not truth about what actually happened that passover in Jerusalem.

Pilate and the Jews

The most outstanding of these absurdities is the abject weakness, and indeed outright stupidity, attributed to Pilate. This tough and experienced Roman governor, who as we know from outside sources was not given to undue conciliation of his Jewish subjects, is shown in the gospels as bargaining with a Jewish mob for the release of a prisoner in his custody, whom he publicly acknowledged to be innocent. Supported, as he was, by a strong military force quite capable of enforcing any decision, Pilate's alleged inability to withstand Jewish pressure becomes incredible. Moreover, if he had really desired to save Jesus' life, he would hardly have offered the crowd a choice between Jesus and Barabbas, who may have been a Zealot involved in the "insurrection" against Rome to which Mark casually refers; when one reflects that Jesus is shown by Mark to endorse the payment of tribute to the hated Romans, the crowd's choice of Barabbas was inevitable. The action of Pilate in offering the crowd a choice between the patriot Barabbas and the pro-Roman Jesus is therefore quite inexplicable. In fact, the whole episode is highly questionable, as there is no independent evidence that the custom of releasing a prisoner chosen by the crowd at the passover ever existed; and it is on this alleged custom that the Barabbas episode rests.

Mark, and the other evangelists, is concerned to show that Pilate recognised the innocence of Jesus and to place the blame fairly and squarely on the Jews for his execution. Such a purpose is understandable when we consider that the gospels were written at a time when the infant Christian church was hiving itself off from its parent Judaism, and had to guard against the threat of Roman persecution.

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