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THE GREATEST ABORTIONIST OF ALL

—GOD ACCUSED BY N.S.S. PRESIDENT

Miss Barbara Smoker concluded her presidential address at the annual general meeting of the National Secular Society in London on Sunday 30 June by reciting a prayer for use by campaigners against the 1967 Abortion Act. Miss Smoker, a former Roman Catholic and ex-member of the Legion of Mary, said: "Nobody, of course, likes abortion. Nobody likes vaccination or dentistry either. But they are often the lesser of two evils. The National Secular Society does not approve of using abortion as a lazy method of birth control. But it approves of abortion where the alternatives would be worse and therefore supports the 1967 Act. The Lane Committee, after two years of collecting and considering evidence, unanimously concluded that the beneficial effects of the Act far outweigh its disadvantages. Their Report had been eagerly awaited by the anti-abortion lobby, organized by mainly Catholic front groups, in confident expectation that it would come out against the 1967 Act and give them ammunition for their campaign. Disappointed and infuriated by the Report they have renewed their efforts to sabotage the Act. We all uphold the right of doctors and nurses to opt out of any involvement in abortion on grounds of conscience. But the opponents of the 1967 Act, not content with safeguarding the rights of those with conscientious objections, want to impose their wishes on everyone.

Suggested prayer

"Who are these busybodies? They are Roman Catholics (including celibate priests and nuns) and fundamentalist Protestants who have no scruples about herding school-children to anti-abortion rallies. Absolute opposition to abortion, even when the foetus is known to be seriously defective, has no possible justification apart from religious dogma. It can be justified only by putting the supposed will of a supposed deity before humanitarianism. Ironically enough, however, the God that Christians worship and obey is, according to their own beliefs in his power, the greatest abortionist of all time, being deliberately responsible for spontaneous abortion, (miscarriages), the incidence of which far exceeds that of induced abortion, even today."

Miss Smoker then concluded: "I suggest that the anti-abortion lobby adopts this prayer: 'O, thou great Abortionist! Thine is the monopoly of righteous abortion, for ever and ever. Amen'".

The meeting went on to pass a wide range of motions, some on subjects of perennial concern to secularists, others arising from the events of the last six months. Among the former were three motions on the subject of church schools. One deplored the practice of Churches selling the sites of redundant church schools to the highest bidder, and urging that they be compulsorily purchased by local authorities and retained for community purposes. A continuing concern of the National Secular Society has been that the logic of sectarian Christian schools would be grasped by other religious groups who would justifiably argue that what is good enough for Christian is good enough for them. This was reflected in a motion which viewed "with alarm the possibility of the establishment of Muslim schools, followed possibly by Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist schools, thus introducing divisions within the Asian immigrant communities and between the host and immigrant communities". The motion proceeded to call upon the

British people to consider the reorganization of Christian denominational schools with a view to their early secularization.

Proposing a motion on behalf of the Executive Committee on segregated schools in Ulster, Mr. Bill Shannon, himself from Northern Ireland, said that unlike in this country in Ulster all but 100 per cent of Catholic children attended Catholic schools. As there are so few Anglicans in Northern Ireland there were few Protestant church schools, but that the state schools represented the protestant schools. Unfortunately, he said, there was no easy solution as since the population was living in ghetto areas community schools would still be *de facto* segregated. In both Catholic church schools and Protestant state schools the religious education was very dogmatic. The motion passed considered "that the system of segregated education in Northern Ireland helps to create, at a most impressionable age divisions which are the root of sectarian strife in the province. It went on to call for "children of whatever group to be educated as equals in a unified, secular system.

Women's rights

Motions were passed on the rights of women with particular attention to pension rights and equality for married women students. A motion was also passed urging that legislation be passed to secure the position of the foreign spouses of British women, which the Home Secretary has said he will do for the time being by administrative measures. The meeting also welcomed the proposals of the Charity Law Reform Committee which had reported in February, and whose category of non-profit distributing organization which would be tax-exempt would benefit a wide range of voluntary bodies, and rationalize the existing charity law which is arbitrary and chaotic.

Two motions were passed on censorship. One welcomed the lapsing of the Cinematograph and Indecent Displays

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Bill, which was considered a dangerous extension of censorship and unsatisfactory in its use of the test of indecency which is even vaguer than that of obscenity. However, the Bill has been introduced as a private member's Bill and is about to come up for its second reading at the time of writing. A further motion called for a tightening up of the censorship laws in general, so as to make it more difficult for bigoted individuals to harass authors, publishers and traders.

Other motions passed concerned Sunday Observance in the light of Sunday football during the three day week, the bias shown by the previous government in granting asylum only to the refugees of Left-wing dictatorships, environmental protection from North Sea installations and the use of a proportion of the wealth we are led to believe will be generated thereby for the benefit of the Third World. Finally, an emergency motion arising from the Flixburgh chemical works explosion called upon the appropriate authorities to take action to prevent such a recurrence.

ABORTION REACTION

The General Secretary of ALRA writes:

No doubt you have seen reports of the current activities of the anti-abortion lobby. Large numbers attended a rally and march in London; meetings to which M.P.s and local councillors are invited are being held up and down the country and, despite the factual and favourable findings of the Lane Committee, distortions, half truths and false statistics about the working of the Abortion Act are still being widely disseminated.

Additionally, a broad-based campaign of pressure on Members of Parliament and Ministers is being mounted. It is reported that some M.P.s have received 2,000 individual letters supporting repeal of the Abortion Act. Roman Catholic journals are urging their readers to withdraw votes from politicians who support legal abortion. Instructions have been circulated for the infiltration of candidate selection committees in order to exclude the choice of those sympathetic to the Abortion Act.

With a minority government, uncertainty about the date of a General Election, and when each vote counts for even more than usual, these activities must be taken seriously.

NEWS

Some M.P.s have already publicly announced their change of allegiance. Others, not yet committed, are likely to be influenced by the letters and delegations they are receiving. The Minister could gain a false impression of feelings about legal abortion if she looks only to her recent postbag.

The forces of reaction have become organized and articulate. The Catholic Church is now split on both contraception and divorce. It must be expected that the campaign against legal abortion will be intensified. Your support must now be made obvious to politicians; otherwise we could be in danger of losing all we have fought for in the past four decades.

Like most government reports the Lane report is a formidable document running to three volumes and costing £4.69 in all (see The Freethinker April 1974). ALRA are to be commended in having published a summary of the report. This will prove most useful to those of us "non-specialists", who while active supporters of ALRA would find difficulty obtaining and digesting the full report. The document entitled The Abortion Act Inquiry comprises a summary of the conclusions, some of the Committee's findings and a list of its recommendations. Among the Committee's findings are sections on the patients, the doctors, other professional workers, Who should decide?, N.H.S. abortion, private abortion, What sort of service? methods, safety, and some common fallacies. This must surely be an imperative purchase for Freethinker readers, to enable them effectively to foster the cause of abortion and resist from a position of knowledge its obscurantist opponents. Copies are available at 25p each from the General Secretary, Abortion Law Reform Association, 22 Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, Herts.—Ed.

N.S.S. ANNUAL EXCURSION

The Society's annual excursion on Sunday 8 September will be to Kent and the programme will include visits to places of historic interest. The first stop will be at Sunhill Place, Pembury, where the Humanist Housing Association's latest project is nearing completion.

The route to Tunbridge Wells passes through the valley of the River Derwent, a picturesque area much appreciated by the Romans and the Normans, of whose settlements many traces remain. Eynsford, one of Kent's most attractive and historic villages, has a ford and a fifteenth-century bridge over the river. William de Eynsford, whose castle ruins are visible from the road, was one of Henry II's men excommunicated by Thomas à Becket, an action which occasioned the royal outburst resulting in Becket's assassination. Becket, as Archbishop of Canterbury, lived at Otford, further along the valley from Eynsford, in a palace of which a large fragment survives. Henry VIII, always jealous of other people's palaces, took a fancy to Becket's old home. Its then occupier, Thomas Cranmer, protested in vain that it was too small for a king. Henry making up the deficiency by taking nearby Knole (with its 365 rooms) at the same time. Whilst at Otford, Henry prepared for his meeting with the King of France, an affair whose extravagance earned it the name of The Field of the Cloth of Gold. It was at Otford that Canute fought the English.

IS

AND NOTES

PANIC IN THE PRESBYTERIES

B. R. BENSLEY writes:

After seventy-three years of prayerful cogitation, the Presbyterian Church of Australia has agreed to merge with the Methodist and Congregational Churches, to form the Unting Church of Australia. The merger was first mooted in 1901, but a diminishing conservative group of Presbyterians has delayed unification for more than twenty years.

Despite a final vote of 230-143 in favour of unity (only six votes more than the required three-fifths majority) the anti-unity Continuing Presbyterian Church will undoubtedly go to litigation over the dividing up of \$A200 million of assets. The Congregational Church's hitherto insistence on the necessity of baptism by immersion is only one of the many doctrinal differences yet to be hammered out.

Churchmen have also been disturbed by the domination of unity talks by lawyers. Although legally elected members of the Church assembly, their courtroom tactics have been resented by some of the faithful. A statutory commission under a non-Presbyterian—a Q.C. member of Sydney Anglican Synod—as an impartial chairman, has been formed to deal with the problems encountered during the final moves towards union.

A joke amongst delegates was that only a Sydney Anglican would have a knowledge of ecclesiastical infighting superior to that of the Presbyterians. How these Christians love—and trust—one another!

D.L.A.S. GENERAL MEETING

Mrs. Enid Wistrich, chairman of the Greater London Council Film Viewing Board, was guest speaker at the annual general meeting of the Defence of Literature and the Arts Society which took place at the House of Commons on 18 June.

Mrs. Wistrich told the meeting that of all methods of censorship used in relation to the media, film censorship was the most repressive and archaic. She outlined the history of film censorship in Britain, recalling that the early shows were usually given in old halls, which, together with the highly inflammable celluloid film, constituted a considerable fire risk. The Cinematograph Act of 1909 gave councils the power to license buildings in which the shows were held and to attach conditions to licences. This led to the ludicrous situation where the fire brigade committee was often responsible for viewing films and deciding if they were suitable for public showing. Mrs. Wistrich concluded by saying that she was becoming increasingly radical in her outlook on the question of film censorship.

William Hamling, M.P., was re-elected chairman of the D.L.A.S., with Antony Grey and Eric Smith as joint honorary secretaries and Ian Wells as honorary treasurer.

THE COST OF CHURCH SCHOOLS
By DAVID TRIBE
Foreword: MARGARET KNIGHT
20p plus 3½p postage
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After taking lunch at Tunbridge Wells, the route will be to Small hythe Place, Smallhythe, for nearly thirty years the home of the celebrated actress, Ellen Terry. Smallhythe Place was built about 1480 and purchased by Ellen Terry in 1899; she died there in 1928. The building now houses a marvellous collection of pictures, costumes, photographs, posters, programmes and stage properties.

Finally a visit will be made to Sissinghurst Castle with its magnificent gardens which were the creation of Victoria Sackville-West and Harold Nicholson. The story of Sissinghurst can be summarized as one of Tudor and Elizabethan grandeur; neglect and deterioration; rescue and restoration. (During the period 1756-1763 it was used as a prison for French prisoners-of-war; Edward Gibbon, author of *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, was one of the guards.)

VIOLENT DEMONSTRATION

On Saturday 15 June a violent clash occurred between police and demonstrators in and around Red Lion Square, London, as a result of which one demonstrator died and a policeman was seriously injured. What actually happened is subject to a public enquiry and is probably of less importance than the principles involved. Elsewhere in this issue we publish two articles on students, freedom of speech and violence. The arguments for and against freedom of speech were also rehearsed in a statement issued by the South Place Ethical Society, the proprietors of Conway Hall, where both the demonstrators and counter-demonstrators had booked rooms. This statement which was issued before the demonstrations took place is in large part reproduced here:

Conway Hall is one of London's most popular meeting places. In our view the freedom of speech and association is fundamental and we do not discriminate in any way against those who hire rooms in our premises provided they respect the building and the rights of others in accordance with their contracts.

We are persistently assailed by the Left or the Right (more commonly now by the Left) for defending the freedom of speech of the other side. All the organizations concerned meet here regularly.

It is pointless and irrelevant to compare the England of today with the Germany or the Russia of the 'thirties. We have enjoyed religious and political toleration for three hundred years and it is on that record, not the record of other people's tyrannies, that we stand and build. Our own Society, ever since its foundation in 1793, has taken this position and vindicated it.

If some people have bad and vicious notions, as is sometimes the case, they put themselves self-evidently in the wrong when they make them public. Sectarian fanaticism has always got short shrift in England. If, however, they are denied the freedom of speech they simply capitalize on that denial and in the name of civil liberties secure extra publicity for their cause. Opposing fanaticisms thus provide free publicity for each other while truth and tolerance are put in jeopardy. This is something that we, for our part, will not countenance.

IN GOD WE TRUST PARTY

American followers of Krishna are forming a political organization to be known as the "In God We Trust Party for Purified Leaders". They plan to "put God in the centre of political affairs and promote God consciousness".

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HUMANIST POLICY ON "RELIGIOUS EDUCATION"

HARRY STOPES-ROE

The Humanist movement is now being presented with two opportunities, and a challenge, to do something effective in the reform of religious education.

The most dramatic factor is the situation in Birmingham. Here the National Society for the Promotion of Religious Education According to the Principles of the Church of England has claimed that Birmingham's newly prepared Agreed Syllabus is illegal; and Counsel for the City has confirmed this opinion. At present, this is merely Counsel's opinion, but if it is upheld in the Courts we have a clear basis for arguing with great power that "Religious Education" is, of its essence, educationally invalid. For the central reason given by Counsel is that the Syllabus treats the "non-religious stances for living" (namely Humanism and Communism) as subjects in themselves; they are taught for their own sake, not to advance religious knowledge. That is what *Religious Education* requires. In other words, because the Birmingham Syllabus has taken this small but critical step towards fairness and balance, it is declared illegal.

Progressive activity

A second opportunity arises from genuinely progressive activity within religious education. A "National Council for Religious Education" has been formed, with Edwin Cox as chairman. He is very concerned that R.E. shall completely lose its old "confessional" quality. To secure that the N.C.R.E. should have a broad basis he ensured that the British Humanist Association was invited to join, and it has. James Hemming and I are the B.H.A. representatives. It is clear that, though all shades of opinion are represented on the Council, as a body it is very prepared to think afresh and consider what the issues of importance really are. It remains to be seen how much can be achieved in practice, but the non-religious view has here a powerful opportunity to press its case, with no strings attached.

The particular challenge to Humanists arises from the conviction of the leading practitioners and experts in R.E. that they have substantially solved the old problems of R.E. They sincerely believe that R.E., as conceived by its best exponents, is now in essence educationally valid—and that the atheists and secularists who still oppose it are just obscurantist, and ignorant of what has been happening in R.E. And they have an extremely plausible line, which could easily convince educationists in general, and allow R.E. to establish itself permanently in a secure position in British education, whether the religious provisions of the 1944 Education Act continue or are repealed.

Modern R.E. is based on very advanced thinking in the philosophies of education and religion. But the whole is worked out within a framework of conceptions which is religious, and thereby annihilates the possibility of fair discussion. The religious point of view has so dominated western thought that it is difficult for even those who are not religious to be free of its influence; it borders on the impossible for those who are "religious", even in a broad and loose sense.

A key example of the modern founding of R.E. derives from the work of Professor Hirst of Cambridge. For him,

a fundamental aim of education is to initiate pupils into distinct and unique "forms of knowledge". And (it is said) religion is a "form of knowledge"; so Religious Education is an autonomous and important part of education. Its purpose is to initiate pupils into a sympathetic understanding of religion. The flaw in this argument is the unresolved complexity in the concept of "religion". Religion deals (amongst other things) with the interlocking between one's overall view of the world, and one's implicit basic values: this may be granted. But it is the prejudice of the religious to presuppose that these matters are to be handled in terms of God or the supernatural. Thus they pass over, without recognizing what they are doing, the secular alternative: that this world is all we have, that the world is the vehicle of natural processes, that our basic values are those appropriate to the satisfaction of man the social animal, product of evolution. Meaning and purpose are in the world because we have purposes and we create meaning, not by courtesy of "God". The discussion of these questions—the choice between the religious and secular views of the world and how each might be worked out—can plausibly be said to be a "form of knowledge". (Hirst, actually, leaves this concept very unclear; but that is not my present concern.) One might say that such discussions are a proper part of education—for children old enough and with the ability to benefit from them. But what is hereby justified is not *Religious Education*. To make this interpretation is to show crude religious bias.

Dimensions of religion

Another approach to R.E. is based on the philosophy of religion of Professor Smart of Lancaster. He distinguishes various "dimensions" of religion—the mythical, the doctrinal, the ritual and so on. He claims that the objective study of these matters is important; and valid, because of its objectivity. This Religious Education is valid and important. The inadequacy of this approach is already implicit in their own arguments. One can be entirely "objective" and yet give a totally distorted picture of a field—by the simple process of omission. They recognize this, in that they argue that it is not sufficient to study Christianity, for it is but one among the range of world religions. But the religious view of the world is but one among the range of possible views of this world. Any so-called "objective study" is prejudiced if it does not cover the range of religious and non-religious alternatives. "Objectivity" is a necessary condition for an acceptable "Religious Education", but it is not sufficient. What is required is a fair and balanced treatment, and this is incompatible with the very conception of *Religious Education*.

Perhaps the most shatteringly irresistible foundation for R.E. is the theology of Tillich. This view of Religious Education is based on his sermon on the Depth of Existence, "He who knows about depth knows about God". So what one does is to develop the pupil's sensitivity and awareness, his capacity for love and understanding. This is the task of Religious Education; and obviously it is vital. This is irresistible, for it has the power of a good sermon—it presupposes what is being proved, so conversion is automatic. As Tillich himself notes: "You cannot then call yourself an atheist or an unbeliever. For you cannot think or say: Life has no depth! Life is shallow!"

Of course, we (you and I) are not "shallow", for we are sensitive to the depths in the nature of man; are we therefore *religious*?

Stance for living

At every turn, the religious point is made because a conception that really is broader than religion is identified with "religion". The followers of Hirst identify a person's view of the world, and his basic values, as "religion"; Smart says the study of ways of life must be "objective", but discounts the non-religious ways of running one's life; the followers of Tillich identify love and sensitivity as "religious". The very language with which we might protest is taken from us! We cannot let the religious people take over the whole area of discussion of the nature of man and the reality of God, the whole foundation of one's approach to life; above all, we cannot let them take over the source in us of our love and sympathy. They cannot be allowed to identify our humanist "stance for living" as a "religion", for if they do that they will, before long, have taken God for granted. The arguments from Hirst, Smart and Tillich have some power. But what

they justify is *Education in Stances for Living*. If this is the subject under consideration, we have the possibility of a rational and fair discussion of what should be done, and when. If we try simply to reject the arguments, because the conclusion is *Religious Education*, we will forfeit respect and achieve nothing. The concept of "education in stances for living" has proved very useful in the discussion at Birmingham.

But "Religious Education" has a very, very long way to go. The progressives are self-satisfied, for they look back to the vast distance that has been travelled since the old confessionalism. If we could but persuade them to turn round and face the way they are going, they could be humbled, for they would see the enormously vaster distance yet to be travelled. The new Birmingham Syllabus does make a great step forward; but it is still *riddled* with religious bias. And even so it is being shot down as illegal on the basis of the 1944 Act.

The false appearance of respectability shown by the modern R.E. represents a very real challenge to the secular view. But we have very real opportunities for achieving a radical reform.

STUDENTS IN REVOLT

SAM CASH

There is a frightening tendency amongst students today to advocate the use of violence as a weapon to be used in the struggles in which they participate. Those who urge violence and seek to find justification for its use are making a rod for their own backs. There is evidence of an increasing tendency to provoke situations in which violence is let loose, all in the name of some pseudo-revolutionary so-called theory. Those elements are largely influenced by Marxists of different hues, Trotskyites and their near relations. They are believers in the rights of minorities (albeit their own particular minority) to impose their will on others, in the name of some half-digested theory. When interviewed on television and radio, and asked why they are taking part in demonstrations, in many cases they reveal themselves to be completely barren of ideas. Most of them trot out old, worn-out clichés, and talk in slogans.

Violent base

Amongst the advocates of violence, one can perceive three main trends.

Firstly there are those who hold in some nebulous and vague manner, that if we can reveal to the masses that society is based upon violence, they, the masses (sic), will automatically go over to the side of the revolution, because they abhor violence, and perhaps they will learn the true rôle of the state. Put this way the whole proposition is patently absurd, nevertheless, this is the type of thinking that characterizes many so-called leftists from Stalinist "commos" to every variety of Trotskyite.

Secondly there are those who argue that society is basically a class-structured arrangement, and find sanction for the use of violence on the grounds that, "all hitherto existing ruling classes have conquered power and held it by the use of force, and therefore, comrade, we must use force, however reluctantly".

Thirdly there are those who claim their right to impose their minority by force upon the majority, because the

avenues of propaganda, etc., are closed to them and that force is the only way open to them. Oh: and of course all the self-styled leaders and lovers of freedom claim the right to speak for the workers, because the Trotskyites and communists, "know what is really good for us; . . . the poor, deluded, working-class masses.

All three of these propositions overlap each other, and all of them are cliché-ridden. The propositions are put forward as if they were self-evident. I suggest that they are largely unsupported hypotheses, and none of them has been proven.

Let us take a look at them. Take the first. So vague is the proposition in the minds of most of its proponents, that when called upon to argue, they quickly become reduced to a hysterical, slogan-chanting mob! Sorry, comrade; I've seen you on television and in Hyde Park. You say that society is based upon violence—have you ever stopped to really think about what you are saying? Firstly, what do you mean by "society", when used in this context? and furthermore, what do you mean by the word "based"? To talk in this way is to engage in a tautological religious discourse. . . . "All life springs from the source known as God". Society is not based upon anything. Society is an organism. It is a dialectical relationship of being and thinking. If what is meant is that violence is an important part of class-society, all right. But so is the acquiescence of large numbers of people; in fact the overwhelming majority. Why not say that society is "based" upon the support of masses of people?

Further, the proposition suggests that if only the workers understand—become class-conscious—that the state is an organ of violence, they will rise up and attack the state. Fiddlesticks! Yes, the state is an organ of violence; in fact it is probably a tenable proposition that the state is violence organized. What is not true is that mass of the people are against violence, or for that matter that they care one way or the other. Most of these ideas flow from Marxism, with its theories of class struggle, and to some

extent are drawn from some of the earlier anarchists. Unfortunately, many who mouth Marxist slogans have read little or nothing of his writing, and certainly very few have bothered to examine these theories in the light of modern criticism.

Minority rights

Except for very limited purposes, violence is out from now on, it cannot help to bring about a fraternal society. On the contrary it is much more likely to play into the hands of fascist types. There are other considerations too, I deny that any minority has the right to take it upon themselves to tell me what's good for me and try to impose their will upon mine. We have had enough of "Big Brother", Stalin, Hitler, and 1984. I want to suggest that with all its faults, democracy is the most useful way of ensuring the will of the people. There is no better way known to us as yet.

Now, democracy means not only that the will of the majority should prevail, it also must acknowledge the rights of minority. In fact, real democracy involves a situation in which all rights can be contained. Like everyone, I belong to a minority group. I think I know what is good for other people, therefore I will try to win over people to my side. It is as simple as that.

We should stop kidding ourselves—do not do things that will drive a wedge between ourselves and those who are against us. Demonstrate by all means, but make sure

that you yourselves know what it is you are demonstrating about, and that others are getting the right message. There are many things that one can demonstrate about—it is good to tell people about the idea of a new world, a life affirmative world, a fraternal society. Call it socialism, anarchism or what you will. Your slogans and banners can proclaim some of its character, but you will not get the notion of a classless and fraternal society across, by provoking violent collisions. Where violence is used against you, it is because people have the wrong idea of what you and I stand for. On the level of social action, violence will do no good. Most people are more or less reasonable. The trouble is that they lack knowledge, and they have been conditioned to be afraid of us. Our job is to get rid of these fears.

So much for demonstrations, but these are of very limited value. Our real job should be the one which can show others that we mean business. This can best be done by direct non-violent action, directed towards those in need. We will often be involved in situations that will mean acting in a militant way. All right—let us make our own scene and take steps to ensure that since we will try not to hurt others, we will do our damnest to resist those who would try to stop us. There is much to do from willing hands. In the field of education let us build our own schools and develop our own techniques. Where there are slum landlords, much can be done along the lines of the Notting Hill Project. The field is unlimited.

Finally, why not make a greater effort in the direction of building fraternal communities now?

THE CLOSING MIND: STUDENTS THREATEN THE OPEN SOCIETY

ANTONY A. MILNE

The founding father of modern post-war Humanism, H. J. Blackham, has spelt out quite clearly where the faith of the Humanist is to be found. "The Humanist," he writes, "puts his faith in reason, in the reliability of tested evidence". It is the *open mind* and the *open society*, he argues, that are the two key elements which are conducive to placing one's trust in the processes of reason. Religious faith and received moral principles, as well as modern ideologies, are anathema to the self-dependent freethinker living in a democratic society.

Growing darkness

Yet it is both the ideal of the open mind and the open society that have been dramatically challenged in the past few years. We seem to have been plunged into a world of growing darkness; with political nihilism and terrorism as a world-wide phenomenon coinciding with diminishing democratic rights in many countries and a perceptible decrease in the number of free newspapers. Even those countries that remain strong in the openness of their political institutions, such as Britain, are experiencing growing economic and social upheavals coupled with bouts of malevolent irrationalism.

Indeed, it must have been a disheartening experience for any freethinker to have observed the recent pitched battles of manifest intolerance that raged between Left and Right outside Conway Hall, possibly the most enlightened and prestigious Humanist meeting centre in the country.

Yet this particular confrontation may have been the result of a subconscious effort to close or narrow the mind, and thus reverse several centuries of increasing openness in our own universities.

The National Union of Students, significantly representing most of our future cultural and political élite, passed a motion at their April 1974 conference that was ostensibly concerned with combating racialism in this country but in effect limited freedom of speech on many university campuses that have given individual support to the motion. Part of this motion astonishingly reads like the manifesto of the Workers' Revolutionary Party:

Fascist and racist organizations should be fought against on all possible occasions, both inside and outside the student movement, and C.O.s should not provide any form of financial or material assistance to fascist, neo-fascist or fascist organizations.

Conference recognizes that racists have found a new weapon in the theories of inequality between races propagated by Eysenck, Shockley, etc. It rejects this spurious and unscientific "research" and reaffirms its belief in the equality of all people.

Apart from the general ban on Tory and Monday Club speakers that the terms "fascist" and neo-fascist" imply, what is an affront to most thinking people is the ban on eminent professors imposed because of views they do not hold. Dr. Eysenck's book, *Race, Intelligence and Education* discusses, dispassionately and humanely, the evidence for and against the belief that I.Q. is partly genetically determined. Neither he nor Professor Arthur

Jensen in the U.S.A. concluded that black people are inferior, or that racial segregation is any way justified, or that less educational resources should be devoted to Negro education. Any psychology student arguing as such in an examination would show a complete misunderstanding of Eysenck's works, and would rightly be failed by the examiner.

Indeed, the student's motion shows that there is a considerable ignorance of the nature of academic methodology by referring to the "views" of Professors Eysenck, Shockley and Jensen. Academic meetings are surely not for people to use as oratorical soapboxes for the expression of personal values and opinions, but are detached forums where hypotheses and theories are systematically related with due regard to the empirical evidence, and which are usually offered for debate. Dissent in this context is related to the method of approach, the validity of the research or the interpretation of the conclusions, and should not be levelled at the distastefulness of the original hypothesis. Have we not progressed at all in the 360 years since Galileo? Should we still threaten with the rack and thumbscrew those heretics who dare to challenge our cosy conception of the universe?

Contentious sentiments

Furthermore, there can be no valid reason why non-academic speakers like Jonathan Guinness or Enoch Powell, who may have contentious sentiments they want to put over, from speaking at a university; and for the following three reasons. Firstly, the university in a democratic society is the last bastion of free speech and free thought. If tolerance, wisdom and impartiality cannot be preserved in such cloistered and learned institutions, what hope is there for maintaining such freedoms outside of them? Secondly, for a select band of student union leaders (a tiny minority unrepresentative of the values of the majority) to ban speakers is arrogantly to assume that the students are so unintelligent or gullible that they can easily be manipulated by the most unlearned or soapbox rabble-rousers. Thirdly, absurd, irrational or intolerant views would be exposed for what they are as soon as they are articulated. Repression of such views can only enhance the status of an irrational speaker, and give credence to him, by implying that an element of truth in the message may be implanted in the minds of the audience.

Some of the best traditions of rationalism and empiricism in the freethought movement have been inherited from John Stuart Mill. Indeed, there can be no finer mentor for any institution concerned with intellectual liberty and tolerance. In his classic *On Liberty* he wrote, "The peculiar evil of silencing expression of opinion is that it is robbing the human race; posterity as well as the existing generation; those who dissent from the opinion, still more than those who hold it".

Nevertheless, contemporary academics have not entirely agreed with Mill who wrote in bold, idealistic terms and was unaware of the subtle, psychological difficulties involved in the expression of free opinion. Professor Ralph Milliband, writing in *Ideology, Social Science and Freedom of Speech*, due to be published in October, says that the notion of the counter argument misses the point, because such an encounter usually gives a "considerable initial and procedural advantage to the invited speaker". Not only, he says, are the matters in dispute not susceptible to reasoned argument because there is no common

ground from which to proceed. "Much more important is the fact that any such encounter, even when it is possible, finds very little, if any, echo outside . . . the lecture hall. . . . Prevention and disruption will cause a scandal, which is precisely why it may be desirable". In this way, he surmises, members of the public will at least become aware of some important social issues, such as white colonial oppression in black Africa.

One must, of course, admire Millibrand's sincere and laudable moral motivations. Admittedly, it is not easy to separate advocacy from unpalatable opinions (for example, the assertion that all Jews are evil might infer that something ought to be done about it—the logic of nihilistic political action). It is difficult, too, to separate advocacy from direct action (for example, if something *ought* to be done, then it is *right* that it be done without delay). Yet on the whole Milliband's approach ultimately defeats itself. Provocative sentiments that could easily inflame an emotive public presumably can be assimilated without difficulty in the detached ethos of a lecture hall or seminar room. But to proselytize the subject into the wider community for the sake of committed action would be the beginning of the end of academic positivism and objectivity.

Many students themselves, still riding the crest of the campus radicalism of the late sixties, will have no truck with "bourgeois" values like academic objectivity; and are forcing the hands of academics like Millibrand who are in any event committed socialists. Socrates said there was nothing unusual in the refusal of people to listen to unpopular views; but there is something peculiarly repellent in the fact that much of the refusal to listen to unpopular views has taken place in the higher educational institutions of democratic countries.

Mediocrity and custom

Mill was in many respects ahead of his time. Writing in *Liberty* he complained that standards in every branch of human endeavour were being more and more firmly set by "collective mediocrity" and the "despotism of custom". With the rise of popular government, society was no longer so much threatened by sinister vested interests but more by the tyranny of the majority operating through "opinion, feeling and social sanctions".

Humanists for many years past have bemoaned the loss of a real rôle in an increasingly secular and fairly permissive society, possibly because they have viewed their task along narrowly defined atheistic lines. But sadly dogma and irrationality are by no means the prerogative of the Church. Indeed, in the wider society, the fight against intolerance and ideology has hardly begun.

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KARL MARX: HIS LIFE AND THOUGHT—PART TWO

JUDEX

In June 1847 the German secret society, the League of the Just, changed its name to the Communist League and the motto "All Men are Brothers" was replaced by a new slogan, "Proletarians of all Countries Unite", Marx (it is said) having declared that there were many men whose brother he wished on no account to be.¹ A "Draft of the Communist Confession of Faith" composed by Engels (found only in 1968²) was circulated to branches for discussion. And in December 1847, Marx was commissioned to draw up the official programme of the League,³ and thus came to write the Communist Manifesto which was published in February 1848. In his discussion on pages 180-188, Dr. McLellan points out that for all the clarity and force that made it a classic, its publication went practically unnoticed and virtually all the ideas contained in it had been enunciated before. As the historian A. J. P. Taylor says, "Nearly every sentence is a sacred text, quoted or acted on by devotees, who often no doubt do not know the source of their belief."⁴ On page 183 McLellan cites a passage from Section II of the Manifesto and comments on Marx's minimization "to the point of caricature" of "the rôle of ideas in society". He also refers to Marx's claim that modern industry was abolishing national differences, but not in Marx's own words which were that "National differences and antagonisms between peoples are daily more and more vanishing" and that "United action, of the leading countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat." In fact, nationalism has been a far greater force in world affairs than Marx foresaw. The Second International collapsed during the First World War and the Third was dissolved during what the Russian communists called the Great Patriotic War. National antagonisms have evoked the possibility of nuclear war between two nominally "Communist" states.

Final crisis

When the final crisis of capitalism failed to occur in 1848, Marx as editor of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* began to call for war,⁵ and on 1st January 1849 he wrote "world war—that is the programme for the year 1849".⁶ One day after hostilities opened in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 Marx wrote to Engels that "The French need a thrashing" and spoke of a Prussian victory and "German preponderance" which would mean "the predominance of our theory."⁷

On page 187 McLellan repeats part of a sentence in Section IV of the Communist Manifesto in which Germany was said to be on the eve of a bourgeois revolution but he does not mention the second part of the sentence which says that this bourgeois revolution in Germany "will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution". Marx's prophecy, however, proved incorrect. One pages 281-2 McLellan shows that Marx was continually prophesying economic crises, catastrophe, and revolution and, said Liebknecht, "in consequence was subject to our hearty derision which made him grimly mad". McLellan refers to the Hyde Park demonstration of 1855 but does not report Marx's opinion that we "do not think we are exaggerating in saying that the *English Revolution began yesterday in Hyde Park.*"⁸

Karl Marx: His Life and Thought by David McLellan. Macmillan, £6.95 (paperback £2.95).

Among other claims made in a letter written in 1852,⁹ Marx said: "What I did that was new was to prove . . . that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat . . . and to a classless society." But as Taylor observes, Marx had not proved this at all but was relying solely on the Hegelian dialectic. In the Manifesto Marx said that "The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority." But he also asserted that the Communists are "the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties" and "have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, . . .". The Communist Party intellectual, Maurice Cornforth, admits that whereas "Marx and Engels envisaged the revolution beginning in a group of the most advanced countries of industrial capitalism", what has actually happened is "what may be called the law of revolution on the periphery".¹⁰ Or, as Taylor ("to imitate Marx is a sweeping generalization") puts it, "Peasants, it seems, make revolutions" which "occur in backward countries, not in advanced ones". Marx, in the Manifesto, said that the peasants were "not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, . . .".

Unresolved ambiguity

Taylor concludes that "As with every religious book, men can find in *The Communist Manifesto* whatever they want to find". And the German historian, Professor Schieder,¹¹ says "It is obvious that from *The Communist Manifesto* onwards 'Marx's revolutionary theory' bore a character whose ambiguity has never been fully resolved". Wolfe concurs. "It is noteworthy", he says, "that both Lenin and his democratic socialist opponents have found comfort and sustenance in *The Communist Manifesto*. It is a mixed bag from which all would-be heirs can grab what they seek. In it are voluntarism and fatalism, a theory of a vanguard professional revolutionary élite, and the specific formula for the rule of a class; conspiracy and propaganda slogans; observations on the 'art of insurrection' and the first elements of the 'science' that guarantees the insurrection's victory; . . . It is the very embodiment of the ambiguities in Marxism."¹²

Dr. McLellan gives a short account on pages 233-4 of Marx and Engel's March 1850 *Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League*—which Robert Payne¹³ says was also called *A Plan of Action Against Democracy*. Although little known and rarely studied, it is, says Payne, one of the most important and seminal documents of the nineteenth century. It is remarkable for its highly centralist and statist formulations and its streak of terrorism and was used in the next century as a Marxian manual of Leninist strategy and tactics. This is shown in detail in the second chapter of *Marxism in the Modern World*, edited by M. M. Drachkovitch, 1965 (not in McLellan's Bibliography). Riazanov testifies that Lenin knew the Circulars—or Addresses—released by the Communist League "by heart" and "used to delight in quoting them".

The Address was based on the belief that the revolution "is near at hand whether it will be called forth by an independent uprising of the French proletariat or by an invasion of the Holy Alliance". It demanded that "The

arming of the whole proletariat with rifles, muskets, cannon and munitions must be put through at once" and that the workers "must compel the democrats to carry out their present terrorist phrases. . . . Far from opposing so-called excesses, instances of popular revenge against hated individuals or public buildings . . . such instances must not only be tolerated but the leadership of them taken in hand." The workers must "drive the proposals of the democrats . . . to the extreme" and outbid them in every demand for social reform by putting forward a more extreme demand, and "dictate such conditions to them" as will ensure that their rule "will from the outset bear within it the seeds of their downfall." Alongside of the new official governments" the workers "must establish simultaneously their own revolutionary workers' governments" and must "strive for a single and indivisible German republic" and "for the most determined centralization of power in the hands of the state . . . Their battle cry must be: The Revolution in Permanence."

In same month (March 1850), in one of the articles later republished as *The Class Struggles in France*, Marx wrote that "The proletariat groups itself more and more around revolutionary socialism, around communism, for which the bourgeoisie itself has invented the name Blanqui. This socialism is the declaration of the revolution in permanence, the class dictatorship of the proletariat as a necessary transition point to the abolition of class differences altogether. . . ." ¹⁵ This, says B. D. Wolfe, ¹⁶ was Marx's first use of the term "dictatorship of the proletariat". The March Address certainly contains views that seem quite close to those of Blanqui and in April 1850 Marx formed a "united front" (the "Universal Society of Communist Revolutionaries") with the Blanquists. ¹⁷

Endless research

By the summer of 1850, however, Marx realized that the economic crisis and revolution which he had expected would not materialize and at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist League on 15 September—as the result of what Blumenberg ¹⁸ calls a "sudden volte-face"—he postponed the revolution for up to fifty years and for "naked will as the driving force of the revolution" substituted "the real facts of the situation". Thereafter, Marx's revolutionary voluntarism gave way to endless research in the British Museum searching for the hidden "laws of motion" of capitalist society which their "immanent" workings would make the revolution and communism inevitable. In an article published in November 1850 Marx declared that "a revolution is possible only in a period in which these two factors, the modern productive forces and the bourgeois forms of production, have come into conflict with each other. . . . A new revolution is only possible as a result of a new crisis. But the former is also just as certain as the latter". ¹⁹ Dr. McLellan does not deal with these events in sequence but presents Marx's November 1850 article, with its further clarification of his new view, on pages 242-3 before mentioning his speech of 15 September 1850 on pages 248-9.

As H. B. Mayo and others have pointed out, the tactics recommended by Marx in the March 1850 Address have been used to justify the seizure of power in comparatively less industrialized countries with a large peasantry such as Russia and China, and are inconsistent with other writings of Marx—for instance, the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, and to the *First German Edition of the First Volume of Capital*, and his essay "Moralising

Criticism and Critical Morality". On pages 174-5 McLellan gives two quotations from this essay but omits the intervening portion in which the following relevant passage appears:

If, therefore, the proletariat should overthrow the political rule of the bourgeoisie its victory would only be temporary, only an episode in the service of the bourgeois revolution, so long as the material conditions which would render necessary the abolition of the bourgeois mode of production, . . . had not yet been created in the course of historical development. ²⁰

In the commentary on pages 243-6 on Marx's "The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte", "his most brilliant political pamphlet", it is pointed out that a passage emphasizing centralization as an important feature of future society, was omitted from the second edition of 1869. But Dr. McLellan does not mention Engel's claim in his 1885 Preface that this work was an application of Marx's "great law of motion of history", that all historical, political, religious and philosophical struggles are "only the more or less clear expression of struggles of social classes . . . conditioned by the degree of development of their economic position, by the mode of their production and exchange . . ." There is compelling evidence, however, that when Marx and Engels applied their theory of history to actual historical situations, their early assessments were substantially modified. The "simplified" class structure proclaimed in *The Communist Manifesto*—the struggle between "two great hostile camps", the bourgeoisie and the proletariat—becomes enormously complex. A multiplicity of different social groups and sub-groups are identified, there is "an infinite fragmentation of interest and rank," ²¹ and the relationship between class consciousness, "objective" interests, and political behaviour becomes complicated. In "Marx and Engels as Historians" (not referred to by McLellan) Leonad Kreiger has drawn attention to "Marx's historical ambivalence" and his attempt to synthesize the day-to-day history of the period and the workings of political institutions, which could be grasped by means of empirical research, with fundamental, long range history, manifested in the basic economic development of society and its presumptive political demands, which could be ascertained by the philosophical means of the historical dialectic taken over from Hegel. Clearly enough, says Kreiger, there was implicit opposition between what Marx and Engels were doing and what they thought they were doing, between their actual theory of history and their desired mastery of the facts.

Theory of class struggles

In Marx's *The Class Struggles in France*, the main sections of which were written in early 1850 and predicated on the expectation of revolution, the emphasis was on the specific development of events, analysed in terms of a theory of class struggle, but traced as an open process. In *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, on the other hand, which was written between December 1851 and March 1852, when Marx realized that the Revolution of 1848 was over, events were treated rather as a closed, determined, historical process and there was an accent on the farcical and illusory quality of the Revolution. In the course of Marx's intellectual career—as he turned from philosophy to history, and from revolutionary history to economic analysis—and the elaboration of a system in which, as Engels confessed in a letter written in 1893, the main emphasis was laid on basic economic facts, and short shrift was given to the component of consciousness,

(Continued on page 111)

ADULT EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: AN EXAMINATION OF THE RUSSELL REPORT

JOHN T. WILSON

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In the British Humanist Association document *Education for the Open Society* the view is put forward that the proper task of a modern democracy is to create a society in which there is respect and toleration for differing viewpoints and lifestyles and in which there is a greater degree of individual participation in decision-making at all levels.

An open society encourages variety, creativity and personal fulfilment with the overall aim of producing an educated community. Education, it is argued, should move in emphasis from the élitist-academic ideal to the ideal of the development of every citizen in self-confidence, competence, personal fulfilment and a sense of responsibility within the context of a social milieu in which the individual participates and which he or she helps to shape. Education and society should be brought into a dynamic interaction with each other so that the quality of personal and social life may be constantly enhanced.¹

An important and growing feature of our present society is identified in the B.H.A. document in its assertion that "The majority of the population are now trained to do jobs in which they have little personal interest. The result is often dissatisfaction, apathy and a vague feeling that life is meaningless".² Following from this view the document goes on to put forward the view that "Adult education should be regarded seriously as an important element in the educational system and adequate provision should be made for it."³

Slow progress

The English adult education system owes its origin largely to vigorous nineteenth century developments such as the mechanics' institutes, mutual improvements societies and other innovations which were gradually replaced by the work of the local authorities, the Workers' Educational Association and the universities' extra-mural work. In the wake of the First World War came the Ministry of Reconstruction's 1919 Report with a *Final Report on Adult Education*, an admirable and far-seeing document, and until the Russell Report, published in March 1973, the only official report on adult education in the last fifty-four years. Growth in adult education as recommended by the 1919 Report was painfully slow. Indeed it has been only since the Second World War and the vaguely-worded 1944 Education Act that the local authorities have made significant progress, being now directly responsible for around 88 per cent of adult education provision in addition to their support of the work of the voluntary bodies (the W.E.A. and the universities) by direct financial contribution and by provision of premises and often supporting advertising. Nevertheless, the work of the responsible bodies in the voluntary sector has been of tremendous significance. Any review of adult education provision such as the Russell Report must recognize the weaknesses and strengths of the various bodies engaged in the field and seek some way of unifying the existing agencies into a

single adult educational framework which would provide a comprehensive service retaining the variety of provision and at the same time retaining the most valuable features of each agency, particularly seeking ways to enhance and enlarge the aspect of voluntarism.

The Russell Committee has come down in favour of the present system of co-operation, but argues for a firmer lead from the local authority in co-ordinating provision. The report also recognizes that adult education suffers from the lack of a national executive body to develop a national policy and to develop and promote adult education at national level. It has recommended the creation of such a body in which existing national agencies, particularly the National Institute of Adult Education, would participate. In addition to the proposed National Development Council, the report advocates a Local Development Council in each area, "an *ad hoc* council widely representative of those who have an interest in adult education as providers or users and students" as well as representatives of "voluntary, social and community organisations, associations for the disadvantaged, local radio . . . and similar bodies."⁴ This is an echo, as most of the report is, of the best practice in contemporary adult education institutions.

Inequality

Adult education can be criticized, with some justification, for being nothing more than another contribution to the edifice of inequality of opportunity and resources, a provision of fringe educational activities for the middle-classes who have already had most out of the system. It has been the growth of professionalism in the adult education sector which has led to the present situation in which adult education is increasingly being recognized as having a vital rôle in community development and social education along lines familiar to humanist activists.

If, however, adult education is to develop to the full its contribution to the life of the community, finance and resources will have to be allocated to adult education directly. This is broadly the view of the Russell Committee, which draws attention to the fact that nowhere does adult education take up more than 1 per cent of the educational budget, directly or indirectly. The report argues therefore for an increase in his figure to around 2 per cent and, conscious of the importance of such current catch-phrases as "cost-effectiveness" suggests that by judicious use of existing buildings and equipment student numbers could be doubled and costs be held down to the present *per capita* cost of £10 per student even into the 1980s. Given, however, that there are gross inequalities of provision from one area to another, there would seem to be a case for some mandatory regulations governing minimal levels of spending by L.E.A.s on adult education provision. There are, after all, more students in non-vocational adult education than in all forms of higher and further education put together.

On staffing for adult education the report sensibly argues for an increase in full-time staff with a national salary and career structure and increased training. Specific adult

education centres are recommended in every town or area where the population makes it a viable proposition, to serve as foci for adult activities in the areas, with common-rooms and refreshment and social facilities. The L.E.A. as the major provider, is seen as best fitted to the task of co-ordination of adult education within its area, and this is, to some extent, the pattern which already exists in some areas.

The humanist, with his concern for participatory democracy and planning for people, should be particularly pleased with two aspects of the report. First, its endorsement of the concept of the community school and its recommendations that existing buildings and equipment be utilized and proper and suitable provision made within schools for adult and community use, and secondly, the recommendation that students in adult education should be encouraged to participate in the running and governing of centres, which should constitute provisions which include provision for such involvement.

As a whole, the Russell Report parallels many of the attitudes and concerns of humanists but it lays itself open to the same charge that is often levelled at humanism and humanist organizations—that it is too ready to accept the *status quo*, being mildly liberal and reformist where (some would argue) there is a need for radical re-appraisal of the whole rationale of adult education. Sir Lionel Russell's defence of his Committee's report as "modest" and "realistic"⁵ is an understatement: the report is a tame, unexciting and unadventurous account of the present state of adult education with some suggestions for improvement and minor developments along avenues which are already being explored.

Inadequate provisions

What was needed was a far more vigorous re-thinking of the *raison d'être* of the adult education movement and its place in the developing network of community agencies. As it is, with what the report asks for—more money, staff and resources, the setting up of development councils nationally and locally and more community involvement and work for the disadvantaged in adult education—what we will see, even if all the report asks for is implemented, is a slightly better version of the present middle-class and largely irrelevant provision. And precisely because the Russell Report has been delivered (after four years deliberation) and some peripheral improvement undertaken, it will be complacently assumed that no more need be done (is this not the real purpose of such reports?) and adult education will fail to become what it might, with vision be—a force of renewal and radical change in a perplexingly fast-moving world—an important contribution to the establishing and maintenance of the open society.

If extension into and participation by the community is to be a realizable goal for adult education then the adult educator must be conceived of in fundamentally different terms to those in operation at present. The profile of the adult educator at the present time is one of class or group teacher, organizer, publicist, administrator and clerk. If there is energy to spare, some community development or work with particular groups of the disadvantaged may be undertaken. If, however, adult education is to change direction, the key functionary must be that of *animateur*, spending time in the community, seeking out its concerns, getting to know its heart, its moods, its fears and its real, rather than its assumed needs. Such grass-

roots research must clearly be backed by the right kind of resources for doing the right kind of job in a particular situation. These resources are unlikely to be buildings, important as they are for other, legitimate, adult education purposes, but movable resources—visual aids, teaching materials, video outfits, people, print facilities and so on. Most important—and the weakest point in Russell—is the whole question of what the report euphemistically calls "student contributions"—fees. Bear in mind what the popular assessment of a ten- or eleven-year free education is and ask what chance adult education for the disadvantaged has got when the first thing that has to be settled is the length of the course, how many "students" are needed to start and how much they will have to pay.

Pious beliefs about people valuing what they pay for and vague pleas for fees to be set at a level all can afford ignore the essential problem of education for the disadvantaged—that in a great many instances they do not appreciate its value, perhaps because in their experience education has not hitherto had much to offer.

If adult education is seriously to adopt the rôle of reaching out to meet the community's educational needs (recognized or unfelt) three prerequisites seem necessary: a greater effort to take provision into the streets/homes/factories/pubs or wherever; a large amount of money for publicity and development of priority schemes and a relinquishing of the idea that provision must be related to the criteria of fees and numbers; the allocation of considerable broadcasting time and resources to non-vocational adult education.

The fundamental importance of broadcasting for adult education was recognized by the Russell Report, and its subsequent dismissal by the Committee was nothing short of scandalous. The report had this to say: "... it has been suggested to us that the principal adult education force in Britain today may well be the general television output of the B.B.C. and Independent Television (as distinct from their expressly educational work); yet we are able to do no more than to note this in passing."⁶

Glib comment

Adult educators may be forgiven if they conclude that they are wasting their time and had better go home and watch television. Clearly there is much that ought to be said about the rôle and function of broadcasting in general, but this is a subject worthy of an article in its own right.

What does need to be said, however, is that the Russell Report's glib comment on the rôle of broadcasting underlines the little-appreciated fact that communication media have radically altered within the life-time of the present adult education system and the impact and importance of television raises the question of the validity of many of the current assumptions implicit in the continued effort to draw people from their firesides into scrappy classes in drab Victorian schools and elsewhere: there is something nobly puritan about it but is it effective adult education, and would it be possible to communicate more effectively through the TV screen in the corner of every home?

Looking at the prospects for the future of adult education in the light of the Russell Report produces pessimism, and in honest cynicism it has to be said that the Russell Report ought to be supported because it is all that there is. Perhaps the mistake of adult educators was in having

faith in "Russell" as if, like other sacred volumes, it held all the answers. The answers are seldom found in conservative scriptures, but in human beings involved in action in the middle of real human problems to which working solutions must be found.

REFERENCES

- ¹ *Education for the Open Society* (B.H.A.), paras. 1 & 2.
- ² *Ibid.*, para. 106.
- ³ *Ibid.*, para. 90.
- ⁴ *Adult Education: A Plan for Development* (H.M.S.O., 1973), para. 173.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, paras. 4 & 5.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 5.

REVIEWS

BOOK

THE BILLY GRAHAM RELIGION by Joe E. Barnhart. Mowbrays, £2.75.

When Billy Graham and a supporting cast of pop singers and musicians arrived in London last year the National Secular Society issued a Press statement which referred to the evangelist as a friend of Richard M. Nixon. At that time the Watergate crown of thorns was not so firmly affixed to the presidential brow, but he was becoming increasingly distrusted and Graham's admirers in Britain indignantly denied that the evangelist had been closely associated with Nixon. Any doubt which may have existed on this question has been dispelled effectively by Professor Barnhart who chronicles, chapter and verse—if the pious will forgive my use of the phrase—the long friendship between the President of the United State and the former brush salesman from Charlotte, North Carolina, who became America's supersalesman of hill-Billy Christianity.

Six years ago George W. Ball, a former American ambassador, described Nixon as "a man without principle" and Billy Graham rigorously retaliated with a statement which included this assertion: "*I've known Richard Nixon intimately for twenty years. I can testify that he is a man of high moral principles. I have not seen one thing in my personal relationship with him that would give any indication that he is tricky*". Perhaps it was such admiration for "a man of high moral principles" which had the previous year induced Graham, although ill, to travel to Florida to advise and encourage Nixon who was being racked with doubts about his chances of success in a presidential election. It is known that the two men read the Bible and prayed together. Graham urged Nixon to seek the presidency and Nixon has openly acknowledged that this advice was a determining factor in his decision to do so.

The admiration was mutual and in 1970 President Nixon was one of the speakers at a Billy Graham Crusade in Knoxville, Tennessee. The following year the city fathers of Charlotte, N.C., designated a special day for parades and celebrations in honour of Billy Graham, and President Nixon was on the platform: "Billy Graham is one of the giants of our time. Truly a man of God . . . I salute him with deep and profound respect". Graham spoke of how President Nixon had been a source of moral inspiration to him.

Billy Graham, with a little help from his Right-wing friends and the experience he acquired as a brush salesman,

had got his foot inside the White House door some years before Richard Nixon took up residence there. But it was Graham's and Nixon's friendship and the similarity of their views on religious, social and political questions that helped to turn the White House into a national prayer factory. Billy Graham offered prayers at Nixon's inauguration ceremony; shortly afterwards the President initiated the East Room Sunday services. The President found time to write articles with such titles as "A Nation's Faith in God". He was an enthusiastic patron of Prayer Breakfasts, pious functions which contributed nothing to national well-being but may have been beneficial to sceptics with waistline or constipation problems.

Richard Nixon, more than any modern President of the United States, gave the Administration a stratum of holiness. There are still three separate Bible study and prayer groups in the White House despite embarrassing departures, occasioned by the Watergate affair, of staff members. Billy Graham was Nixon's unofficial chaplain and the President surrounded himself with unctuous, self-righteous Jesuites, all of them suitably deodorized by Max Factor and the blood of the Lamb.

There are many who argue that Billy Graham has been guilty of nothing more serious than naïveté and misplaced trust in his dealings with Nixon, but that case is somewhat weakened by his consistent support for Right-wing politicians. In the early 1950s Graham was beating the anti-communist drum with the best of them and was extravagant in his praise for the odious, witch-hunting character-assassin, Senator McCarthy.

Graham grew up in an area of the United States where conservative evangelicalism, racism and anti-intellectualism are prevalent. (Dayton, Tennessee, scene of the 1925 "Monkey Trial", is in the same region.) He attended the Bob Jones University, an institution with an international reputation for prudery and narrowness compared to which the Vatican is a hotbed of outrageous libertinism. He has fiercely opposed social reforms—particularly those concerning marriage—and pines for the time when a divorced person had little chance of attaining prominence in public life; he supports capital punishment in this world and believes in eternal punishment in the next. Billy Graham is the prophet of Christian Americanism and makes much of the perfunctory references to God in the American Constitution. But he ignores the fact that many of the founding fathers were deists, Unitarians and others with beliefs in a supreme being which were of a very different order to those of Billy Graham, whose God is a divine vending machine dispensing infinite refreshment to Conservative Evangelicals.

The southern United States is a forcing ground for hot-gospellers who can elicit a response in the ignorant and the gullible. We encounter some of these colourful characters in Professor Barnhart's books and it is evident that, although as gifted and often more experienced than Graham, their preaching activities are usually confined to their own region. Billy Graham became an international celebrity and says that his success is the Lord's work; but the evangelist helped the work along by acquiring the "class" that made him acceptable to the media, the established churches and Big Business. He also made an excellent marriage and his wife, is, one suspects, the more intelligent and sophisticated partner of the union. Most preachers' wives accept the inferior and submissive rôle to which it has pleased God to relegate them and are content to remain in the wings and be an echo of the great man. But Ruth Graham does not even belong to the same

church as her husband and is not afraid to point at the warts when necessary.

Billy Graham's brand of supersalesmanship is, according to Professor Barnhart, "one among many manifestations of the contemporary cults of escapism". The high-flown promises, the urgent appeals to "get right with God" and the skilful use of music all help to create an atmosphere that is conducive to emotional, instant "decisions for Christ". Intellectual activity is the last thing that Billy Graham or any evangelist encourages; don't ask questions, don't consider the issues, just jump in at the deep end of the Holy Ghost and its Ghosts stagnant baptismal pool.

Although Billy Graham's public relations team promote him as "God's man with God's message" he is well aware that there are other contenders for the title. One of the curious phenomena of recent years has been an upsurge of interest by young people in religion, particularly in Eastern cults. Any guru can hire a hall in London or New York and soon attract a procession of young devotees anxious to pay homage (and often hard cash for the privilege of doing so). Graham cannot ignore such a development, although it must be mortifying for a fundamentalist Christian from North Carolina to acknowledge this challenge. Evangelical preachers are being forced increasingly to pose as champions of social justice and reform in order to hold the attention of the hippies and the trendy Jesus people. Some of them, including Billy Graham, are adapting to the new situation and presenting an acceptable image. But just below the new coat of thin red paint is the true face of Christianity with its arrogance, intolerance, glorification of suffering and contempt for knowledge.

The Billy Graham Religion is a useful, perceptive and humorous book. Professor Barnhart has probed deeply and the result is a considerable amount of information about Billy Graham and also about lesser luminaries in the evangelical firmament.

WILLIAM McILROY

THEATRE

TRAVESTIES by Tom Stoppard.
Royal Shakespeare Company. The Aldwych Theatre.

UNDER MILK WOOD by Dylan Thomas.
The Dolphin Company. The Shaw Theatre.

It all hangs by a pair of trousers. Improbable, but Mr. Stoppard specializes in spinning a logical web out of improbabilities. Or put it another way: Lenin, Tristan Tzara (the Dadaist) and James Joyce were all in Zurich in 1917, so how could you bring them all together in a play? The answer is that pair of trousers and the importance of being Henry Carr, British Vice Consul in Zurich. Providently the pair of trousers was worn by Henry Carr in an amateur production of *The Importance of Being Earnest* managed by James Joyce, which history's footnotes assures became the subject of a law suit between Mr. Carr and Mr. Joyce. History assures us of very little else in this play but just as one of the characters speaks of a "travesty of justice" so the play is a travesty of history, an entertainment wrought from the random "perhaps" and accidental "maybe", which never strictly goes beyond the bounds of possibilities, while pushing as near the boundary as possible.

The events are seen from the perspective of Henry Carr's memory, which plays tricks on him and us, allowing for permutations of possibilities. The character is given a virtuoso performance by John Woods, ambling and drooping around his memories with a fag end always poised to emphasize an orotund cliché carefully chosen for one or another version of his past. It is one of the ironies of the play, emphasized by such a remarkable performance, that Henry Carr, obscure and uncertain, becomes the most interesting character in this historical gallery.

Stoppard's wit and humour bubble throughout the play: who else would have had the audacity to repeat so many puns on "dada"? or play around with the confusion of Joyce-Phylis Deidre so often? The elision between the lines of *The Importance of Being Earnest* and those of Stoppard is so smooth that old epigrams are given a new twist. At times the concoction burst into music hall with delightfully sung doggerell between Gwendolen and Cecily and a delectable dancing butler towards the end.

As far as the play has seriousness beneath the surface wit, it concerns three views of art. The nihilism of Dadaism, in which the inconsequent is given significance, is contrasted with Joyce's views of art as the product of the unique insight of a seer, and Lenin's opinion that art is a social product for the people is thrown in for good measure. (I felt that the lengthy section in the second Act relating Lenin's call to revolution was not entirely satisfactorily integrated into the plot.) The paradox that revolutionaries love bourgeois art is not bypassed. The view of art as pure entertainment is not stated but rather exhibited by the play itself, with its generosity of ingenuity, theatrically and verbal pyrotechnics.

Under Milk Wood, revived at the Shaw Theatre, offers verbal brilliance of a different kind. Dylan Thomas's famous radio play gives us a mellifluous and poetic picture of a small Welsh village. "Isn't life terrible, thank God!" says one of the many characters and the pleasure all the villagers take in their own and each other's idiosyncracies supports this line. But I was tempted to wonder whether Thomas was not merely using the characters as a vehicle for his verbal sensitivity, whether tolerance could not merge into indifference (as a reversal of the letters of the name of the village, Llaregyb, suggests). Perhaps I was not entirely captured by James Roose Evan's production. A radio play presents serious staging problems and this production, avoiding a realistic interpretation, never completely achieved a convincing style. Using only chairs and sheets as props, the style was so fluid that it occasionally became a little confusing. However, attractive cameos from, for instance, Frances Tomelty, as the nubile young Gossamer Beynyon and Ian Price as Mog Edwards, loving to be in love, together with accomplished ensemble work added up to a pleasant evening.

JIM HERRICK

CINEMA

BLOW OUT (La Grande Bouffe) directed by Marco Ferreri. The Berkeley Cinema, Tottenham Court Road. G.L.C. X Certificate. English subtitles.

Four middle aged, middle class men hole themselves up in a rambling suburban villa for a "gastronomic seminar". They are Marcello (Mastroianna), an unsmiling, libidinous airline pilot, Philippe (Noiret), a blubber-faced,

coddled judge with a mild bosom fetish, Michel (Piccoli), a campish television producer with a wife and family, and Ugo (Tognazzi), a dingy little restaurateur. With a singularly joyless dedication, the four men set about to eat to death, laying in gargantuan quantities of food. Local prostitutes (and lesbians) are also brought in to aid digestion; and Andrea, a cosy but broadminded schoolmistress, comes to dinner and stays. One by one, the men succumb to the result of their excesses, and only Andrea survives.

As the seminar gets under way, the men drop all pretensions to graciousness. They grow quarrelsome, and their conversation dwindles to grunts and monosyllables; Michel takes to farting, loud long and fruity. The quivering doughy flesh of Andrea's bare backside is feverishly pressed into the pastry for what looks like an outsize pizza. Snow begins to fall, and the orgy becomes more and more unpleasant. The plumbing gives out; and the men find themselves wading through a swirling river of ordure. The tarts walk out in disgust; and eating becomes more of a chore, a highly unpleasant duty. The food, at first so lovingly prepared, is perfunctorily forced down unwilling throats. Indigestion begins to take its toll: Michel's exercises at the barre, none too graceful at the best of times, become heavily laborious as his belly swells under his leotard. The sullen Marcello drives his beloved Bugatti backwards and forwards in the garden through clouds of exhaust fumes, like a caged animal. The statulent and bloated Michel collapses on to a couch, overcome by memories of his unhappy childhood, and the prospect of the mammoth task ahead. The others jolly him along by making him imagine he is a starving child in Bombay—with the desired results: soon Michel is eating and breaking wind again.

At the end of the film, after Marcello, Michel and Ugo have died heroic deaths, Philippe is left alone with his fiancée Andrea in the misty, neglected garden. Andrea feeds her loved one on two large pink blancmanages, duly topped with coffee-coloured nipples. A meat lorry arrives, and, at Andrea's bidding, the delivery men drape joints of meat over the branches of the trees, till the garden begins to resemble a Dalí painting. With his head resting on Andrea's breast, Philippe dies.

The concept behind the film is brilliant and its execution is masterly. The film is about excess, not necessarily in eating, but in sex or drinking, and about the way we seem to feel in duty to bound to sate ourselves with "pleasure". I have always suspected that the men who try to down a yard of ale have lost sight of the fact that alcohol is to be enjoyed, and not used as a very disagreeable means of proving one's virility, and that if anything the ability to perform circus tricks of that nature proves nothing. We take our pleasures with so little joy; we take ourselves so seriously; our morals are so warped, our values so twisted; we are so petty and so unspontaneous, that *Blow Out* a ruthlessly honest parable of our times, is a film that had to be made.

Blow Out has to be seen; but as it has only been granted a G.L.C. X Certificate, the majority of the people in this country will not be able to see it. This to me is heinous. I would concede that many of the sequences with the prostitutes are rather too graphic for young people, and it is therefore quite fair that only people aged eighteen years and over should be admitted to the film, but it seems both ludicrous and unjust that an excellent film, and, I might add, one that will not incite acts of violence, should be denied the wider audience it deserves, and who have the right to see it. Censorship of this sort is quite irrational,

and smacks of hysteria. It calls into question the critical faculties and the powers of reasoning of those who ordain what we shall see and read and what shall be proscribed. If the censors could lucidly catalogue the demerits of those works of art that they consider so pernicious, then we might well be deterred from seeing and reading those works, and there would be no need to ban them. Besides, no one is forced to read pornographic books or to see outspoken films. No one is forced to see *Blow Out* but I would strongly recommend that they do.

VERA LUSTIG

LETTERS

Marxist debate

Several readers have complained about the apparently never-ending debate on marxism between Judex and Pat Sloan. A point I would like to raise is just why this debate, like many others on Marx and Lenin, is so inconclusive and interminable: what is there about marxism which allows, indeed promotes, such violent disagreement between intelligent and well-informed antagonists? There are some fairly obvious answers: the facts of the marxist revolutions, what actually happened, have been hard to dig out, and the ambiguities and uncertainties admit of varying interpretation; psychological considerations are clearly important, as anyone who has (like I have) associated with the trotskyist sects will know (I remember how, at a meeting of the International Socialists I went to about five years ago as an interested outsider, everyone present came to life when a speaker said how important it was for revolutionaries to kill policemen); and history is sufficiently complex to endow the marxist interpretation with a good deal of plausibility, provided that one is clever at selectively choosing one's facts.

May I, however, chip in on the side of Judex and try to answer a point which Mr. Sloan has made in the past—that humanists should take marxism seriously? Indeed they should; but not for Mr. Sloan's reasons, because they seem to me quite incompatible with what a freethinking attitude to the world should be. Freethought is not consistent with promotion of dogma, however tortuously dressed up as reasoned argument. Humanists have to oppose murderous régimes, states, groups, parties and sects wherever they are found: not just the excesses of governments, but the evil groups like the I.R.A., whether they wear "left" or "right" labels, we have to oppose the arrogance of those who suppress other people's views, whether they are Stalin, the National Union of Students, or the dictatorships of Spain and South Africa; and our indignation must not on any account be partial or selective, as in left-wing circles it so often is. Where, for instance, was the great outcry among progressives about the 80,000 people slaughtered by Amin in Uganda, or the tens of thousands butchered in central Africa, or the scores of political prisoners in Tanzanian gaols? We hear a lot about Vietnam from Mr. Sloan and his kidney, and rightly so, but never does the left divert its gaze from the cruelty and violence of western societies to the ghastly horrors of the socialist and undeveloped countries. In this, *The Freethinker*, if not all its readers, is an honorable exception. Long may it continue to spread the virtues of free and honest thought.

PHILIP HINCHLIFF.

Objection expanded

The aim of my April letter was none other than a simple request for a "little less" of Judex and I. S. Low. I had thought that, with *The Freethinker* now a monthly, the amount of correspondence would be greater than available space; and that since Judex has made his point *ad nauseam*, and likewise with I. S. Low's viewpoint on world government, such a request would not be untoward.

The last thing I am advocating is any form of censorship or "attack on the freedom of speech". On the contrary, I will defend I. S. Low's right to his viewpoint about world government, regardless of my own viewpoint on the matter, but undue repetition does pall a little after a while.

Sorry to have to sling back yet another of Judex's red herrings—for I am not a member of the Communist Party and hold no brief of any kind for that organization for the simple reason that being a Scot and a Socialist (no connection with the Labour Party) I regard the English orientated Communist Party in both

its form and content as irrelevant to Scottish problems. My objection to his side of the debate with Pat Sloan is that, apart from his acrimony and repetitiveness, his tactics are questionable, because he uses quotations indiscriminately and often out of context. For example, in his April letter he would have us believe that the French Marxist Philosopher Louis Althusser said: "Historical materialism, as exposed in Marx's later works, implies a theoretical anti-humanism". On referring to the book in question we find that the quote is not from the body of the Althusser book at all, but is from a glossary of terms inserted by the translator of the book from French into English.

Such is an example of the Judex tactic in making not a positive contribution to the correspondence columns but in putting what purports to be an anti-Marxist argument; as one who looks to the continuing integrity of *The Freethinker* I trust that Judex contributions henceforward will be looked at with the caution necessary to ensure their freedom—from the Judas-kiss!

R. MULHOLLAND.

World government specified

I shall try to accede to Mr. C. Byass's request for "something a bit more specific on the shape/form of the world government I have in mind". I must point out, however, this is a tremendous subject to deal with in one letter.

Briefly—the world should become one country. But a country like the U.S.A. or Switzerland—a democratic federation. A World Parliament should be elected directly by the people of the world. This World Parliament should be in a position to give orders to its executive branches—for instance its armed forces to prevent aggression. The experience of both the League of Nations and the U.N. makes it clear that this is the minimum needed to end power politics.

The world government should deal with matters affecting the whole world and regional government should deal with matters affecting their own regions—as in any federation.

The negative aspect of world government is the need to stop war. The positive aspect is the need to give ordinary men and women control over their own destiny. Under national sovereignty only powerful nations like the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. have any control over events: and in these it is the diplomats and military chiefs who take the decisions—and even they aren't free, they have to watch their rivals. World Federation could mean that a new concept of government would come into being—Man thinking about his future.

The world government should also have power to ensure that all peoples get the raw materials and so on needed for a reasonable standard of living and adequate culture and education.

I know there are many points to be discussed. I know there are tremendous difficulties. But if as much effort were put into uniting the world as has been put into splitting it up we could be well on the way to world unity. I suggest we begin now.

I. S. Low.

Truthful reaction

To Walter Connolly (letter, June) I would suggest ("in the interest of truth"): (1) that a reactionary's honest opinion, or view, cannot 'lie', (2) that a reactionary can say something 'factual' without 'lying'.

CHARLES BYASS.

OBITUARIES

George Dowman

George Dowman, who has died at the age of 80, was a dedicated and respected member of South Place Ethical Society for over half a century. He joined as a singer in 1920 and eventually became responsible for the Society's musical programmes. He served for some years as editor of *The Monthly Record* (now *The Ethical Record*) and also worked tirelessly for the Society in other capacities.

Although Mr. Dowman underwent a major operation last year he still managed to attend occasional functions and was at the annual general meeting of the Humanist Housing Association only a week before his death. He was cared for with great devotion by his wife, Constance, who is general secretary of the Rational Press Association.

Hector Hawton conducted the funeral ceremony at Golders Green Crematorium, London, on 18 July.

Olga Heckermann

Olga Heckermann, who died suddenly at her home in London, settled in Britain before the Second World War as a refugee from the Hitler régime. She was aged 61 and had been a freethinker for many years.

There was a secular funeral ceremony at the East London Crematorium on 17 July.

KARL MARX: HIS LIFE AND THOUGHT

(Continued from page 105)

there was, says Professor Krieger, a certain shift of emphasis in the theory. The basic change lay in the dislocation of the Marxist dualism—the mutually conditioning relationship between man and nature—to favour the "object" over the "subject", alien conditions over human activity, and necessity over freedom. But faced with the need to explain contemporary behaviour and the lack of a revolutionary consciousness, despite a developed capitalism, Marx and Engels were forced to reconsider their notion (as expressed in *The German Ideology*) of consciousness as a simple "reflex" or "echo" of man's material life-process. Stress was now placed on the complexity of the relationship and on what Engels called "false consciousness". "In historical struggles", said Marx,²² "one must distinguish still more the phrases and fancies of parties from their real organism and their real interests, their conception of themselves, from their reality." And in the third volume of *Capital* there are passages²³ in which consciousness becomes an expression not of the "real laws" and "inner essence" of the capitalist process of production, but of mere "outer appearance". In 1890 Engels admitted²⁴ that history is made by "an infinite series of parallelograms of forces", amid an "endless host of accidents", and that ideas react upon the economic basis although "ultimately" the economic element asserts itself as "necessary". "We are left", says Professor Duncan, "with evasive, almost vacuous formulations", and some notion of "determining" causes whose weight and precise effects it becomes difficult to separate out in each particular situation.²⁵

NOTES

- 1 McLELLAN, DAVID (1973). *Karl Marx: His Life and Thought*, pp. 87, 168, 172.
- 2 See STRUICK, D. J. (1971). *Birth of the Communist Manifesto*, Appendix 2.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 61. Cf McLELLAN (p. 177) who says Marx and Engels were given the task.
- 4 Introduction to the Pelican edition of the Manifesto.
- 5 For citations see *The Freethinker*, January 1974.
- 6 McLELLAN, p. 213.
- 7 McLELLAN, p. 389.
- 8 MARX and ENGELS (1972). *On Religion*, pp. 114-15.
- 9 McLELLAN, p. 187.
- 10 *Marxist Quarterly*, January 1957, p. 39.
- 11 (1962). *The State and Society in Our Times*, pp. 22-3.
- 12 *Marxism in the Modern World*, pp. 60-1.
- 13 (1968). *Marx*.
- 14 (1927). *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*, p. 100.
- 15 McLELLAN, pp. 237, 239, 240.
- 16 (1967). *Marxism*, chapter 10.
- 17 McLELLAN, pp. 235, 239.
- 18 (1972). *Karl Marx*, p. 102.
- 19 McLELLAN, pp. 240-3, 248-50.
- 20 *Selected Essays*, p. 137.
- 21 *Capital*, Vol. 3.
- 22 *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*.
- 23 See (1972 edition) pp. 48, 168, 313, 817.
- 24 See *Marx and Engels Selected Correspondence*.
- 25 (1973). *Marx and Mill*, pp. 142-3.

(To be continued)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

National Secular Society. Details of membership and inquiries regarding bequests and secular funeral services may be obtained from the General Secretary, 698 Holloway Road, London, N19 3NL (telephone: 01-272 1266). Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the N.S.S.

Freethought books and pamphlets (new). Send for list to G. W. Foote & Company, 698 Holloway Road, London, N19 3NL.

Ashurstwood Abbey Secular Humanism Centre (founded by Jean Straker), between East Grinstead and Forest Row, Sussex. Telephone: Forest Row 2589. Meeting every Sunday, 3 p.m.

Humanist Counselling Service, 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, London W8 5PG; telephone 01-937 2341 (for confidential advice on your personal problems—whatever they are).

Humanist Holidays. *Summer Centre*, 17-24 August at Hunstanton, Norfolk. Small, quiet town, variety of beaches for all ages. Golf, Country Club Hotel on cliff, licensed. Will take dogs. Full board (lunch packed is required) £26.50, includes V.A.T. and gratuity. Reduction for juniors. One double room left.

1975. Comments are invited from any interested in proposal for a two-week event in the Isle of Man next year. Hon. Secretary: Mrs. M. Mephram, 29 Fairview Road, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4PD. Telephone: 01-642 8796.

London Secular Group (outdoor meetings). *Thursdays*, 12.30—2 p.m. at Tower Hill; *Sundays*, 3—7 p.m. at Marble Arch. (*The Freethinker* and other literature on sale.)

Falmouth Humanist Group (affiliated to the National Secular Society) welcomes visitors to Cornwall. Particulars of meetings, etc., from the Secretary, 30 Melville Road, Falmouth, Cornwall. Telephone: Falmouth 313863.

EVENTS

London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, London W8. Sunday 21 July, 7.30 p.m.: DAVE HICKMAN, "The Ancient Unchanging World of Afghanistan". Sunday 4 August, 7.30 p.m.: JEREMY MUMFORD, "The Camden-Botswana Link".

National Secular Society, Annual All-day Excursion, to Kent. Sunday 8 September. Pick-up points in North and Central London. Cost of coach fare, packed lunch, admission to Sissinghurst Castle and to Smallhythe Place: £2.40 (National Trust members £2). Further details from General Secretary, 698 Holloway, London N19 3NL (Telephone: 01-272 1266).

South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Sunday 21 July, 11 a.m.: Professor ANTONY FLEW, "Tolstoy and the Meaning of Life".

Victoria and Albert Museum, London SW7. Weekdays 10-6, Thursdays 10-8, Sundays 2.30-6. "Byron". (Admission 40p, students and pensioners 20p).

Waltham Forest Humanist Group, Public Library, Wood Street, Walthamstow, London E17. Tuesday 23 July, ERIC DEAKINS, M.P. Further details from General Secretary, 46 Springfield Road, London E17 8DD.

FREETHINKER FUND

We are grateful to those readers who contributed to the Freethinker Fund during June.

Our thanks to: H. A. Alexander (42p), Anonymous (32p), W. Armstrong (£1), J. H. Budd (£3.84), G. J. Davies (£2.90), A. D. Douglas (13p), T. H. Ellison (£2.90), D. Harper (£3), N. Henson (£3), E. J. Hughes (£2), A. MacKay (£1), M. P. Morf (£2.52), P. Somers (90p), F. Westwood (88p). Total for June: £26.91.

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The Longford Threat to Freedom	A. C. Bouquet	55p	11p
Religious Education in State Schools	Brigid Brophy	10p	3½p
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