

Freedom

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NOTES.

Labour's First Budget.

The Budget introduced in the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer is considered by the *Daily Herald* to be a great triumph for Mr. Snowden, who was cheered enthusiastically by the Labour Members when he sat down. His exposition of national finance may have been a great success from a Parliamentary point of view; but if its practical results for the workers will bring more votes for the Labour Party at the next election, the workers are easily satisfied. The "great reductions" in the taxes on sugar, tea, and other foods are estimated to mean a saving of 1s. a week to the average household! Great Labour triumphs can be bought very cheaply. Mr. Snowden said of his Budget that it was "the greatest step ever made towards the cherished Radical ideal of a free breakfast table"; Mr. Hogge (Liberal M.P.) said it "carries forward to fruition Liberal ideals for which both Labour and Liberals have struggled for years"; while Sir T. Inskip (Conservative M.P.) said "it is the sort of Budget I should like to see the Conservative Party introduce." So there is nothing distinctively "Labour" about it after all. There is one direct consequence of this reduction in the cost of living which was not mentioned by any of the jubilant Labour M.P.s, but which certainly detracts from the value of the concessions. At present a great number of wage agreements, including those of railwaymen, are governed by the cost of living, as gauged monthly by the Board of Trade. When there is a fall of a few points in the index figure, wages come down automatically. So in a few weeks time we shall see the employers taking out of their workers' pay envelopes the very shillings which Mr. Snowden has just given to them with a flourish of trumpets! No wonder employers of labour cheered the "Labour" Budget.

Communists and Police Spies.

The Communist Party are working up their indignation against Mr. Arthur Henderson, the Labour Home Secretary. Whilst they were holding a conference in London on Sunday, April 13, they discovered two detectives hidden under the platform, where they had been taking notes of the proceedings. The Communists seized them and confiscated their notebooks, and have since published in their organ, the *Workers' Weekly*, photographic reproductions of part of the detectives' notes. Mr. George Lansbury questioned the Home Secretary in Parliament about the affair and asked him whether he would take steps to prevent any such occurrence in the future. "Uncle Arthur," as his friends call him, said the declared policy of Communists demanded a certain amount of vigilance on the part of the police. We should think that in a capitalist country that is an obvious truth, but the Communists are kicking up a fearful row about it in their paper, demanding a Labour Committee of Inquiry into the Secret Service, and saying that Mr. Henderson is maintaining the system of counter-revolutionary espionage. We are not lovers of the police ourselves, but we think the Communists should be the last people in the world to complain of spies. Their friends in Russia maintain an enormous secret service, probably larger than that of any other Government. When we have called attention to the barbarous treatment of our comrades in Russia by the Tcheka, Communists have told us it served them right; and several times we have been informed by these lovers of freedom for themselves that if ever they get into power they will shoot all the Anarchists. So we regard their present display of indignation as sheer hypocrisy. The Bolsheviks recruited the Tcheka from the Tsar's Okhrana, and the Communists here would probably recruit theirs from Scotland Yard.

The Anglo-Russian Conference.

This Conference has now settled down to business and the various committees which have been formed to thresh out special subjects are hard at work finding a basis of agreement. In spite of the bankers' manifesto and the manifesto of the Russian Trade Unions, we think an agreement will be reached after much bargaining. Mr. MacDonald, in welcoming the Russian delegates, said that this country is "specially able to assist in her economic reconstruction" as far as Russia desires; and Mr. Rakovsky, in replying, said: "We consider the most important problem, and the one to which all the other problems should be subordinated, to be that of a close collaboration between our two countries in the field of commerce, industry, and finance." We may be sure that before the Conference was arranged unofficial "conversations" took place between the two Governments to probe the possibilities of agreement, and as both sides stand to gain enormously by a mutual understanding, they will find means of reconciling the apparently irreconcilable. The Die-Hards in each country may shout at each other, as when the Irish Treaty was being negotiated; but the great majority of business folk in this country, at any rate, want to get their mills and factories going again, and are quite prepared to sacrifice the comparatively small number of British investors who lost their money in the Russian Revolution. On the Russian side, an agreement with Great Britain would sooner or later compel France and the United States to grant recognition or get left behind in the race for concessions. British Governments, on foreign questions, act very much alike, and it may be that it is hoped by means of an agreement with Russia to counterbalance the predominant position of France in Europe, for if Russia's economic future is to be bound up with British industry and finance she would be almost compelled to throw her weight into the scale on Britain's side if trouble arose with France. So for these reasons we think the Soviet Government and the Labour Government will come to terms—and incidentally strengthen Capitalism in both countries!

The Toll of the Mines.

The Court of Inquiry into the question of wages in the coal-mining industry, which opened on April 24, has resolved itself into a battle of statistics put forward by representatives of the miners and mineowners. But the human side of the problem was introduced at the first sitting by Mr. Herbert Smith, President of the Miners' Federation. In an impressive passage he emphasised the terrible dangers of the miner's occupation. In 1923, he said, 212,256 men received injuries disabling them for more than seven days, and in addition 1,297 were fatally injured. Every working day five men were killed and 850 injured. "If the victims of accidents in the mines in 1923 were marshalled four men in a rank, each rank one and a half yards apart, they would have a procession of injured men stretching forty-five miles." These tragedies are happening day after day, in spite of all the Government regulations and officials to enforce them. Piecework and profit-making are the chief causes of accidents. The employers will not spend any more than they can help in keeping to the regulations, and the miners themselves are frequently compelled to take risks in the struggle to earn a living. Thousands of strikes in all industries have taken place on questions of wages, but very few have ever been fought on the question of safety precautions. Miners get callous where dangers are run every day, and those in charge of the mine know that their jobs will be in danger if they insist on enforcing regulations which would reduce the profit-earning capacity of the mine. Even a tremendous organisation like the Miners' Federation is powerless in face of this unceasing pressure of economic forces, so it concentrates on questions of wages. As long as profit-making is the leading element in coal production the mines will take their toll of killed and maimed.

Push the sale of "Freedom."

The Communists as Jailers.

It is the contention of Anarchists that every Government, regardless of the name it bears—even the best-intentioned—is by nature an enemy of its people. The Bolshevik Government of Russia has proven this contention to be true.

Having come to power with the aid of the most ideal and revolutionary Anarchist and Socialist slogans, and with the co-operation of all revolutionaries, these Communists have now turned into the most reactionary, most brutal and autocratic rulers, who care for nothing but the maintenance of their power. The slogans which won for them the support of the masses have proved to be so many "scraps of paper," and their co-workers in the Revolution who found it impossible to support their tendencies and their Jesuitical methods they branded as "counter-revolutionaries," "bandits," etc. So to-day the world is told that Anarchists and other revolutionaries of "ideas" are not imprisoned; that only "bandits" are imprisoned. Behind such miserable lies and dirty methods the Bolsheviks hide their crimes against the Revolution and against revolutionists. They imprison idealists "in the name of the Revolution," they kill them in their prisons "in the name of the Revolution," just as Danton and other idealists of the French Revolution were indicted by fraud, tried with swindlers in order to cloud the issue, and finally murdered "in the name of the Republic."

Russia to-day is a great prison where every individual who is known not to be in full agreement with the Communists is spied upon and booked by the G.P.U. (the Tcheka) as an enemy of the Government. No one can receive books, newspapers, or even a plain letter from his relatives without the control of the censor. This institution, which keeps the people in absolute ignorance of all news detrimental to the interests of the Bolsheviks, is now better organised and more strict than was the notorious "Black Cabinet" under Tsar Nicholas II.

The prisons and concentration camps of Moscow, Petrograd, Karkov, Odessa, Tashkent, Vologda, Archangelsk, and Siberia are packed with revolutionaries who do not agree with the tyrannical régime of the Bolsheviks. The inhuman treatment that these people receive at the hands of their jailers can have only one purpose: that is, to wear them out physically and mentally so that their lives may become a mere burden to them.

To take an example.

Maria Korshunova, Anarchist, while under arrest in Petrograd, was continually dragged from one jail to another. At the end of 1922 she received a sentence of ten years' solitary confinement, and was taken from Petrograd to the Moscow jail where she was to have served this sentence. But she had not been there a month when she was suddenly carried off to Tcheliabensk, Siberia. Here our young comrade thought she would be let alone for a time. However, her jailers decided to give her no rest, and no sooner had she received the first letter from her mother when again she was shipped off to another place, this time to Viatka, which is one of the worst prisons in Russia, notorious for its filth, its cold, starving conditions, and, what is worst of all, for the outrageous conduct of the male keepers—"comrades" they are called—towards their helpless victims, the women prisoners. Since Maria Korshunova was transferred to this place of torture no letter has been received from her and no news about her has reached the outside world.

This comrade is well known among the Petrograd workers as a revolutionary of great idealism and sincerity, possessing a rebellious and independent spirit. She has often been compared to Sofia Perovskaya.

But, while the Bolshevik hypocrites are erecting statues to dead martyrs in an attempt to gain the support of the masses who revere these martyrs, the living revolutionaries of Russia are being killed by slow degrees.

To take another example.

Two years ago Maria Veger, an Anarchist of many years standing, and a teacher by profession, was arrested as a result of a search in her home, where literature published in America and Europe was found. This literature consisted of FREEDOM, some old copies of the *Arbeiter Freund*, the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, and some books on Anarchism. After being held for several months in the Moscow prison, where she became sick with the *tzinga* (scurvy), she finally received a sentence of two years' exile in Archangelsk, the cold region of northern Russia. The official document which was handed

to her read: "Two years' exile in the city of Archangelsk for counter-revolution."

In Archangelsk Maria Veger underwent extreme suffering. Malaria, a common disease in this swampy region, was added to the *tzinga*. When an opportunity afforded itself, she escaped and returned to Petrograd. But, alas! she could not enjoy the free air for very long. In July, 1923, when forty-one Petrograd Anarchists were arrested, Maria Veger was among them. The agents of the Communist Okhrana treated her with special brutality. Whereas we (I, the writer of these lines, was among those arrested) were all kept at the headquarters of the G.P.U. (Tcheka) for four days before being transferred to another prison, she was held there for nearly two weeks.

The prison of the G.P.U. is not the heavenly home of leisure the Bolsheviks or the agents of the Bolsheviks would have the world believe! Perhaps you, reader of these lines, can imagine yourself locked in a closed box which has only a small hole the size of a drinking-cup through which air is supposed to enter; but no air enters because the corridor into which this hole leads also has no ventilation facilities. A faintly burning lamp burns day and night in this closed box, causing a severe pain in the eyes. There is nothing but a wooden bench to lie upon, and when you lie down to rest thousands of lice, bed bugs, and other insects eat your flesh and make life a burden to you. If you, reader, can imagine this dim, evil-smelling, heavily laden atmosphere of a prison cell, the quiet of which is broken only by the ridicule and brutality of a "comrade" jailkeeper, then you can have an idea of what the cells of the G.P.U. prison are like.

The G.P.U. knew what these conditions meant to Maria Veger when they placed her there, and they purposely tortured her. Each day she was called to the office and asked to give "information," for which they promised to do her the kindness of removing her to another jail where life was not so miserable. When finally convinced that she would rather die than give lying "information" about her comrades, they ordered her to be transferred to the "Home of Preliminary Confinement," where she was strictly isolated and kept under criminal conditions.

The treatment in my own case was far from being endurable. In common with other politicals, I was denied the most elementary prison rights, scoffed at, and ridiculed by the prison administration as well as by the higher authorities. For speaking to Maria when noticing her through a window, I was threatened with the *carzer* (dark hole)! Being unable to endure such life any longer, refused the right of trial, and held under criminal conditions, we declared a hunger strike, demanding better conditions and the right of visits. On the seventh day of our hunger strike, after the prison doctor had said that we could not hold out any longer and that we must be forcibly fed, one of the G.P.U. chiefs came and granted our demands. But before they were granted another comrade prisoner of mine was called by the prosecuting attorney and asked if he could not use his influence with me to induce me to eat. He said he could not. The prosecuting attorney then said to him angrily: "Then she will be forcibly fed. Does she think she is dealing with the American police?" He spoke as if the brutal American police were gentle creatures compared with what he and his "comrades" intended to do!

The physical state of Maria Veger became worse with each passing day in prison, but the doctor said he could do nothing for her under prison conditions. And yet, in spite of the fact that she was seriously ill, she was condemned to three years' exile in Solovietzky Monastir, the dread prison situated on an island in the White Sea, to which boats can go but twice a year. This sentence amounted in fact to a death penalty, considering the health of our comrade.

On September 16 Maria was sent away to serve the term imposed upon her; but a week afterwards word came that she was being sent back to Petrograd. After a two days' struggle with the G.P.U. officials, I finally obtained permission to see her. Burning with a high fever, and hardly able to stand on her feet, she related to me the story of her journey, which I shall tell here in brief.

When brought to the Vologda prison, which is halfway to Archangelsk, the local G.P.U. declared that she was not going to be sent any further, because all prisons and concentration camps of Archangelsk and vicinity (including Solovietzky Monastir) were so overcrowded that the local authorities had resolved to accept no more prisoners. Hence she was kept in Vologda for several days, and then sent back, together with many other politicals. Like many other prisoners at this time, she was shuffled back and forth, various

prisons refusing to accept her because of lack of space. No prisoner knows where he will really serve his term of exile, and none of his friends knows.

Comrade Veger made no complaint about her own miserable condition, but she spoke of what should be done for those prisoners who were just returned to Petrograd. She was particularly anxious about the fate of one woman who was refused a visit from her seven-year-old boy, and asked that everything possible should be done for her, as this woman was physically too weak to endure the suffering to which she was subjected. We got no further in our conversation because a guard announced "End visit."

Comrade Veger parted from me with the following words: "Tell the comrades abroad to organise and unite all their forces. Let them not be discouraged by the developments and events in Russia. On the contrary, they must make use of our experience and be well prepared for the coming world revolution."

I left her with a heavy weight upon my heart. While the Communists are issuing long gullible protests against the persecution of political prisoners (they mean only Communists) in "capitalist" countries, they themselves are imposing savage sentences upon their opponents and are forcing many of our best comrades to die slowly in the jails and concentration camps, and hundreds of others to suffer the bitter pangs of hunger and the terrible cold of northern Russia and Siberia. The real revolutionaries of Russia to-day are exiled and cut off from the entire world, forbidden the right of communication with any living person except the damnable spies who are for ever shadowing their footsteps.

MOLLIE STEIMER.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

Out of the chaos caused by the war there is emerging new and clearer thought. How could it be otherwise? Men learn by experience, and in the last ten years the proletariat, and especially the city proletariat, has been beaten badly. Power has trampled it under foot remorselessly, and shown it that its half-way remedies, fine as they looked on paper and sounded in the mouths of leaders, amount to nothing. As a result, there is, we are convinced, that increasing discontent which deepens thought and quickens action. The propaganda, as it seems to us, has been taken up again at the point it had reached when the War broke out, and is now being carried to logical conclusions which the preceding generation had not grasped. Under the whip of repeated failure we are advancing.

England is profoundly conservative, but here also thought is stirring. The movement has developed as, given the existing mentality of the masses, it was bound to develop—along political lines. Two results are obvious. In the first place, the labour problem has been brought into general discussion. In the second place, the politician's incapacity to solve it is giving birth to great dissatisfaction. As so often happens, our bitterest enemies are helping us most. The propertied class, and especially the landed aristocracy, has caught the alarm; and such men as the Duke of Northumberland, and such papers as the *Morning Post*, by the very violence of their antagonism are doing excellent revolutionary work. On the other hand, the Labour Party, by its persistent evasion of essentials, is creating amid large sections of its own following deep disgust. Before the housing and unemployment questions it stands clearly helpless, and it has no remedy for agricultural distress. Ramsay MacDonald would have the masses believe that, with peace restored in Europe, trade will pick up again and all will be well. It is needless for us to point out that this is a distinct denial of the revolutionary truth that the exploitation of the worker has its root in his economic dependence on the exploiter. All clear-thinking Socialists and Anarchists agree on that, and the masses are beginning to understand it—despite the Trade Union leaders and the Labour Party.

We express the opinion that in Great Britain there has developed steadily a universal conviction that the Russian Revolution has been a failure, that it has resulted only in putting a new official element in power, and that by no possibility can this be regarded as a solution of the social problem. It is admitted that the Russian peasants have profited greatly by expropriating the landed aristocracy, but it is recognised that this was their own

work, and not that of the Dictatorship. The bargainings of the Russian delegation now in London, who are reported as offering enormous landed concessions as security for a loan, tend to accentuate that judgment. For a long time past the international Anarchist movement has voiced that opinion in all its leading organs. There are elements, however, more Communist than Anarchist, which appear still to have faith in the Dictatorship, but we consider that their influence is dying.

In the United States unemployment is increasing, and another period of depression is well in sight. That country is always in extremes, and it will be remembered that during the hard times, three years ago, fully five millions were out of work. There was great suffering, for the Government gives no relief by way of doles; and the bitterness engendered, though often terrorised into temporary silence, has not died away. American papers are becoming more outspoken than ever, and outrageous political scandals have heaped new fuel on the smouldering fire.

The revolutionary movement in Mexico which resulted in the overthrow of Porfirio Diaz had as its main object the restoration of the land to the people. The politicians succeeded largely in obscuring that issue, but it has a firm grip on the thought and imagination of the masses, and the Mexican propaganda unquestionably has had much influence throughout Central and South America. These peoples are all in revolt against modern civilisation, the drudgery and discipline of factory life being intolerable to them. Their life is still chiefly agricultural, and they detest the foreign syndicates that have absorbed their lands. In Argentina the agrarian movement appears to be specially strong.

The general tendency of the Anarchist and Socialist movements everywhere seems well expressed by Berton in the following, which we translate from *Le Réveil*. "Every revolution being at its outset a refusal to recognise the power of the State, is essentially Anarchistic. But, while we wish that character to be preserved, those parties which believe in the State aim at establishing and consolidating as quickly as possible their newly acquired authority. Accordingly their one demand is a discipline of iron, and absolute submission to the régime they themselves personify. We, on the contrary, wish that the masses may continue to act on their own initiative. . . . While every Government is always seeking to arm itself against the people, we ought to be working for the maintenance of a people armed apart from the Government. It is our sole guarantee against a return to an old tyranny under a new name. Thus the revolutionary problem has for us an importance, an amplitude, and a depth which far surpass the conceptions held by those who dream of conquering power by seizure of the State."

Recently, according to the press despatches, the Russian Government issued stringent orders for the disarming of Moscow's civil population. Despite all their struggles, therefore, the people are reduced once more to helplessness. That they will recover their self-ownership eventually we do not doubt, but the struggle to reconquer it will cost them dear.

Publications on the Russian Revolution.

Workers and Peasants in Russia: How they Live. By AUGUSTINE SOUCHY. 2s., post-free.

Anarchism and the World Revolution. By FRED S. GRAHAM. 1s., post-free.

The Crushing of the Russian Revolution. By EMMA GOLDMAN. 4d.; postage, 1d.

The Russian Revolution and the Communist Party. By FOUR WELL-KNOWN MOSCOW ANARCHISTS. 6d., post-free.

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The Socialist Bargain Counter.

"We are Constitutionalists at the beginning, at the middle, and throughout," said Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in addressing the Independent Labour Party Conference at York, April 19th, and he added: "The Labour Government must remain in office, and conduct its work in accordance with the principles, not of Liberalism, nor of Toryism, but in accordance with the principles of the Labour Party itself." What are the principles of the Labour Party?

In all sincerity I reply that, as far as we Anarchists can ascertain, the Labour Party's one principle is to remain in office, and not "to be bothered with a General Election for two or three years," as Mr. MacDonald put it in the speech already quoted. As it appears to us, the Party is ready to purchase popularity at any cost; just as the Communists in Russia are eager to ally themselves with any of the world's great Powers, however reactionary, imperialistic, or monopolistic those Powers may be. In each case the real motive is the same: "Here we are, and here we intend to stay."

From our standpoint no greater treachery can be conceived; and to us it is rendered all the worse by the soft-spoken Jesuitism behind which the true motive is concealed. Nor is the position made one whit the better by the fact that some have hypnotised themselves into the belief that their Jesuitism is justifiable; that it is, indeed, the highest wisdom; that ultimately, by pandering to every interest and prejudice that has sufficient strength to menace their security, they will reach the Socialist goal on which their hearts are set. "The road to Hell is paved with good intentions," and however ornate the pavement, the final destination remains unchanged.

Consider what Socialism has been, and what to-day it is; what it set out to do, and what it now is doing. It flamed into the world as the boldest of all movements; as one that struck straight at the roots; as the great Redeemer whose special mission it was to rescue the disinherited from economic bondage. "All slavery has its roots," wrote Bebel more than forty years ago, "in the economic dependence of the oppressed on the oppressor," and every Socialist accepted that as fundamental. Socialists were all agreed that, under the present system, the worker was divorced from the means of production, and that their business as a movement was to put an end to that divorce. No tinkering with a condition so grossly unnatural was to be thought of. No compromise with an iniquity so palpable could be tolerated by any Socialist who understood his creed. Beyond all question the masses were enslaved. Beyond all question, therefore, Socialism's task was to awaken them to the necessity of throwing off their chains.

That programme was so simple that a child could understand it; and it won the immediate devotion of those who detested shams and had become nauseated with the lip-promises of alleged reformers. For this new movement they spent themselves unstintingly. They toiled at propaganda without thought of honour or reward. They accepted ostracism, and the poverty ostracism involves, as their inevitable burden, and in thousands of cases they faced imprisonment and death itself without a murmur. The history of those who laid the foundations of the Socialist movement is most noble. They had clear-cut convictions, and they had the character to stand by them. They were not hirelings.

To those simple-minded pioneers such a speech as that with which our Socialist Prime Minister welcomed the Russian delegates to the Anglo-Soviet Conference would have appeared impossible, and it should have been impossible; for, on the occasion named, Mr. MacDonald's declared views on economics were bankers' views, and his attitude toward foreign propaganda was that of the Duke of Northumberland and of the *Morning Post*. On the matter of Russia's debts he stated that there must be "consideration of inter-Governmental obligations, the claims of British holders of Russian bonds and of British subjects who have had their properties taken away from them or who have otherwise suffered losses owing to events and policy in Russia; the claims of British subjects who have suffered personal injury in Russia, and so on." This is, of course, the orthodox commercial attitude, and Trotsky has retorted promptly that "in 1917 we solemnly declared that we would not recognise the obligations or repay the debts of the Tsarist Government, and we will stubbornly and honestly keep our word."

Mr. MacDonald's statement respecting propaganda seems to us even more open to criticism, for, by virtue of his official position, he is now the chief mouthpiece of a movement which is supposed to regard international revolutionary propaganda as its first and most sacred duty. It is not supposed to be interested in keeping trade on its legs or administering a tonic to the existing system. On the contrary, it is supposed to be working for their overthrow, in order that from their ashes there may spring into life conditions under which useful work shall be the sole title to reward, and the parasite shall be abolished. However, on the subject of propaganda Mr. MacDonald said: "We do not question the right of the Union to set up any form of internal government which may seem good to it; but we do maintain that the first essential to friendly and profitable relations between the Union and ourselves is that the Union should reciprocate our attitude in this matter and should desist from contravening directly or indirectly anything that smacks of an attempt to carry on among the people of this country, either at home or abroad, a propaganda which when internally inspired may be legitimate, but when controlled and even financed from abroad, is not legitimate." For our part, we can only wonder what European Socialists will think of this declaration that beyond the limits of their own countries their propaganda must not reach.

Of course it will be replied that Mr. MacDonald is no longer a private individual, but the Premier of the British Empire, and that on behalf of its interests he is compelled to speak. We admit that the argument has force, and we remark that it defeats itself; because it amounts to an admission that a Socialist who has the misfortune to become a Prime Minister must thenceforth talk with another tongue, and give the lie to all his propaganda past. And what applies more especially to the Prime Minister applies also to all the members of his Cabinet and to every Socialist representative now sitting in the House of Commons. Each one of them is pledged to support the Constitution. Every one of them must shape his speeches to the policies His Majesty's Government is pursuing. Not one of them dares rise from his seat and say: "As a Socialist I denounce this entire system as no longer possible, since it is founded on the monopoly by the few of that without which the masses, my constituents, cannot live. I will not help to prolong the agony by doctoring into some semblance of healthfulness its decaying life, for I am out to destroy it." Yet that is precisely what must be stated, and is the one thing their Socialist philosophy requires them to proclaim.

Thus real propaganda is assassinated, and amid the clamour of contending factions revolutionary truth finds it impossible to get a hearing. What use have those who have adopted Socialism and Labour politics as a profession for any commodity so dangerous as truth? They are playing for safety, and not in that direction does safety lie. MacDonald and his camp-followers are talking like bagmen working on commission, and when listening to their haggings I could almost fancy myself in Petticoat Lane. All which, as is natural, the capitalistic press judiciously applauds.

W. C. O.

Oil Kings Buy U.S. Politicians.

"The spoils to the victors" is an old tradition in American politics, and the leasing of the naval oil reserves differs only from previous scandals by virtue of the number of Cabinet and ex-Cabinet Ministers involved.

Four years ago, when the late Mr. Harding was nominated as Republican candidate for the Presidency, some influential representatives of great oil interests told the Republican National Committee they were willing to contribute one million dollars for the political campaign provided Mr. Harding would agree to appoint a Secretary of the Interior who would be "sympathetic" to the exploitation of the nation's oil wealth. The bargain was struck. Mr. Harding was elected, and he selected as his Minister of the Interior Mr. Albert Fall, a Senator and a friend of the oil magnates. At this time the naval oil reserve lands were under the control of the Navy Department. Mr. Fall persuaded Mr. Denby, the Secretary of the Navy, to pass them over to the Department of the Interior, and President Harding signed the order less than two months after he took office. Within a month Mr. Fall showed his expected "sympathy" with private enterprise by secretly granting a lease of the Teapot Dome Reserve in Wyoming to Mr. Harry Sinclair, and shortly afterwards granted a lease of the Elk Hills Reserve in California to Mr. Doheny. Having done the work for which he was appointed, he retired from office and became an agent for the Sinclair interests.

However, some people were rather curious to know more about these leases, and they found out that, though Mr. Fall was very hard up when he was appointed to office, he had subsequently become so wealthy as to be able to buy a ranch and some other land at a cost of \$120,000, besides livestock and motor cars. When the Senate Committee on Lands was inquiring into the question of these leases it asked Mr. Fall to explain his sudden wealth. He wrote that he had received as a loan \$100,000 in cash from Mr. Edward B. McLean, a newspaper proprietor. Thereupon Senator Walsh, a member of the Committee, paid a visit to Mr. McLean, who said he did lend that sum in the form of cheques, but that Mr. Fall subsequently returned them to him uncashed. Curiosity was now aroused. The mystery was soon solved, however, as Mr. Doheny, the oil millionaire and a prominent member of the Democratic Party, said he had lent Mr. Fall, "as an old friend," \$100,000 without interest; and the lawyer of Mr. Sinclair said that Mr. Fall had received from him \$25,000 in Liberty Bonds.

Further revelations before the Senate Committee show that Mr. Daugherty, the Attorney-General, who arranged the transfer of the leases, as well as Mr. Slemp, at present secretary to President Coolidge, were among the officials who had transactions in the Sinclair or Doheny oil stocks about the time that the naval reserves were leased. A lady also testified before the Committee that Mr. Daugherty and her husband shared close upon £40,000 for permitting inter-State transport of Dempsey-Carpentier fight films, in contravention of the law prohibiting the inter-State transport of such films. Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, son of the old "Trust buster," who was Assistant Secretary of the Navy, had advised the Secretary of the Navy to transfer Teapot Dome reserve to the Ministry of the Interior, thus paving the way for its transfer to the Sinclair company, in which he was a stockholder.

The Republicans were mostly involved in the scandal up to this point, but they soon dragged the Democrats into the mess. Mr. William McAdoo, son-in-law of President Wilson, under whom he was Secretary of the Treasury, was brought into the limelight as attorney for Mr. Doheny at \$50,000 a year since he resigned from office five years ago. As Mr. McAdoo was the nominee of the Democratic Party for the Presidency, and was looked upon as certain of election next November, this revelation was a bombshell in their camp. Mr. Gregory, Wilson's Attorney-General; Mr. Lane, his Secretary of the Interior; and Mr. Garrison, his first Secretary of War—all Democrats—are shown as having been in the employ of Mr. Doheny. We also learn that, besides all these business transactions with Cabinet Ministers in both parties, Mr. Doheny, a Democrat, in 1920

contributed \$25,000 to the campaign fund of the Republican Party; while Mr. Sinclair also gives money to both parties.

The sensation caused by these revelations day after day before the Senate Committee has scared the capitalists and politicians, who fear that this exposure of corruption in Government and official institutions may shake them to the ground, and during the past few weeks the Press has almost ceased to discuss the matter. As we said last month, the American Ambassador here says we must not jump to the conclusion that all public officials in America are corrupt. Senator La Follette, however, speaking in the U.S. Senate on February 11, said:—

"This is but the latest of a series of organised raids upon the public treasury and the public domain carried out with the connivance of public officers. . . . Let me remind you of the war frauds amounting to billions of dollars committed under the last administration and, in great part, condoned under this one. Have you forgotten the sugar scandal involving high public officials—the enormous plot to force the reduction of the acreage of the Cuban sugar crop by use of the tariff club, and thus raise the price of every pound used in the United States? Are you without knowledge of the blatant graft and corruption of the Veteran's Bureau, and in the sale of surplus war supplies, with which the newspapers were filled for months? The shameful scandals of Prohibition enforcement and the administration of our revenue office and the Treasury Department are daily before your eyes, and a fraction of the truth has not as yet been told about them. The wholesale fraud and petty larceny of the Shipping Board are matters of common knowledge. The sinister activities and inactivities of the Department of Justice are matters of common tongue, and are likely to be more specifically brought here shortly. . . . We all know, and the public knows, that this Denby-Fall case is only one of a large number of public betrayals—that it is merely a putrid eruption on the body politic, and important largely because it indicates a generally diseased condition."

We hope the *Wall Street Journal* is correct in saying that these exposures are sure to break down the feeling of trust and confidence which the American people ought to feel in their Government. We know that not only the Government but also the Supreme Court, the judges, the police, and all the forces of the law are but instruments under the control of Big Business, who regard the United States as their private property and the common people as mere producers of wealth for their enjoyment.

Do not let us make the mistake of thinking that these conditions are peculiar to the United States. We remember the Marconi scandal here, and we also remember the deputation composed of members of all parties, including Mr. Asquith and Mr. Clynes, which interviewed a Minister with the object of getting Government assistance for a Soudan company in which Mr. Asquith's relatives were financially interested. The relations between Big Business and Government Departments here may not be so open as they are in the United States, but they are of the same character if more subtle, and are the inevitable results of the Capitalist system.

LOSOVSKY LETS THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG.

During the first Congress of the Red Trade Union International, A. Lozovsky, chief of that organisation, and his assistants, used every device to impress the foreign delegates, especially the French delegation, that the Third International had no intention whatsoever to control the Red Trade Union International. Far from making it an adjunct, the Comintern welcomes the Profintern* as an autonomous sister organisation and will work with it harmoniously side by side.

We who lived at the time in Russia and were in close touch with the preparatory work for the forthcoming Trade Union Congress knew better. We knew that the new-born babe was to serve for blood transfusion into the anæmic body of the Comintern composed of a handful of intellectuals. In Russian Communist circles no secret was made of the intent and purpose

* "Comintern" is an abbreviation of Communist International, and "Profintern" of Professional or Trade Union International.

to which the Comintern destined the Red Labour International. But it was necessary to make the foreign delegates, especially the French Anarchist-Syndicalists, always opposed to any political sponsorship of their organisation, believe that the Comintern was free from such doings, at least until they will have been lured into the R.T.U.I.

I well remember my talk with the Russian-American De Leonite, Reinstein, *apropos* of the relation between the Comintern and Profintern. For many years he had lived and had been active in the States as a rabid opponent of the Industrial Workers of the World and the Anarchist-Syndicalists. In 1917 Reinstein went to Russia and there was constantly paraded as the "Delegate of the American Proletariat." That was during the blockade, when it was very hard to enter Russia, and other self-appointed American delegates had not yet found out how profitable it is to serve Moscow. Poor old Reinstein, what must he be doing now with so much American competition!

In 1921 Reinstein was head of the Anglo-American department of the preparatory work for the Labour Congress. In speaking of it, Reinstein said that it was really his suggestion which induced the Comintern in 1920 to take up the initiative of calling into life a new Trade Union International. It was indispensable to the Comintern if it is not to remain a mere political debating club, composed largely of Russians or such foreign Communists who had lived in Russia since 1917 and had been cut off from the rest of the world. "An organised working men's body of international scope," Reinstein said, "would give new, vigorous blood to the Third International, thus making it a world power." The fate and function of the R.T.U.I. had been decided upon and carefully mapped out long before its birth.

It must be said that the Profintern does justice to its creators. It is not only in their image, it is the reflex of all the dreams and schemes of the Comintern. And those dreams are the dominion over the workers and their subjugation to the political State now known as "Leninism." And the Profintern is the medium which is to help secure that world dominion.

The delegates at the first Red Labour Congress easily fell into the trap laid for them by Moscow. Some owing to their naive faith that the Third International actually symbolised the Russian Revolution. Others, and they were in the majority, were shrewd enough to see the trick, but decided it was wiser to serve their Moscow masters than their organisations, whom they had come to represent against an attempt to hitch the Red Labour International to the political cart. Besides all these, there were earnest men in the delegations who refused to be cajoled, mesmerised, or bribed. But they had very little chance to make themselves felt in the convention packed by fake delegates from such ultra-industrial centres as Palestine, for instance, Bokhara, and Adjerbaijan.

Since then three years have passed. Again and again the Red Labour International has demonstrated who is master in its house and whose directions it must follow, directions which have spread chaos, confusion, and distrust in the ranks of the international proletariat. Still, there are credulous people who hold tenaciously to the superstition that the Comintern is only the kind brother of the R.T.U.I., guiding and protecting his fair yet frail sister against her enemies. It may, therefore, be of interest to them to learn from the most authoritative Communist source and the head of the Profintern, A. Lozovsky, just what part the Comintern has already played, and will play, in the life of its "sister" organisation.

The *Pravda* dedicated to the fifth anniversary of the Third International contains an article by Lozovsky, an exultant tribute to the birthday child for its share and work in the Profintern. He writes, among other things:—

"In throwing out the slogan that the existing Labour Unions must be bored from within instead of forming new small revolutionary organisations, the Comintern has saved the entire Trade Union movement from complete ruin and extinction. . . .

"The Third International deserves great credit not only for being the initiator of the Profintern, but also for being the director of its course and its activities. . . .

"It is only necessary to examine carefully the work done

by the Profintern since its inception, the resolutions and decisions of its Central Soviet and its Political Bureau, to realise at once how interwoven the two Internationals are. In fact, *all the resolutions were conceived by the Comintern* in line with its aims and methods. . . . Just as the Profintern could not have been born without its parent who gave it life, so too it could not continue to exist and function without the directing force behind it, namely, the International and Communist Party in every country. . . . It is precisely this close inter-relation of political concepts and ideas between the two organisations which calls forth the attacks of the Anarchists upon the Comintern. . . . But we have no time to listen to reformist and Anarchist babblers. The Comintern is too busy creating a united(?) revolutionary fist against the reformist block of Amsterdam and the Second International.

"The Comintern has never considered the Labour movement a prohibited field which Communists may enter only by giving up their programme and methods. . . . The reformists and Anarchists constantly demand that of us. But the Comintern can and will never comply with such a proposition. The aim of our party is to capture the majority of the working class and to organise the revolution for which the Trade Unions are indispensable. But the latter are not considered by the Comintern as an end, they are merely the means to an end, the end being the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. . . . It is for this very reason that the Comintern must wage war on the slogan of the French Anarchist-Syndicalists: 'All power to the Syndicates.'"

Since 1921 Lozovsky has learned to tell the truth sometimes. He has let the cat out of the Communist bag. In other words, he openly declares that the Comintern never entertained the slightest idea of recognising the aims and activities of the Profintern as anything separate and distinct from its own aims, to which everything else must be subordinated. And that aim is, as Lozovsky himself emphasises, the capture of political power and the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

Some day the workers are sure to wake up to the full meaning of this dictatorship. They will then see that they have been serving as marionettes on the Communist stage, which is rehearsing the repetition of the Russian drama, the drama that has crushed the revolution, has stifled the thought and actions of the masses, and created a system of political persecution hardly known in the world before—the tragedy of Capitalism reinstated and triumphant in Russia once more.

One would have to despair utterly in the possibilities of the masses if one did not believe fervently that that awakening will come.

EMMA GOLDMAN.

Anarchist Speaker Charged with Obstruction.

The Hammersmith police have made another attempt to stop the Anarchist open-air meetings at The Grove. On April 16, whilst a meeting was in progress, a policeman, evidently acting under orders, told the speaker, P. F. Meachem, he was creating an obstruction and must stop the meeting. As our comrade refused to do so, he was taken into custody. The next day he appeared at the West London Court to answer the charge of obstruction. After the policeman had given evidence, Meachem asked for a remand, which was granted. On the following Thursday our comrade said meetings had been held there for many years. Since he was charged another organisation had held a meeting at the same spot without police interference, and it was evident he had been prosecuted because of his opinions. After the prosecuting counsel had announced that Meachem was sent to prison for a similar offence last year, the magistrate said: "You are warned now that you must not hold meetings at this spot. The police will take whatever steps they think proper." He then discharged our comrade under the Probation of Offenders Act.

The West London Group are going to uphold the right of free speech at this thirty-year-old meeting place. Labour organisations have promised assistance, and we hope all comrades in that part of London will also rally to their support.

TO-MORROW AND TO-DAY.

The Anarchist Individualists certainly do not place their hope in the society of the future. They are practical people. They realise that their life is only a single moment's duration compared with that of the universe, and they aim to get the maximum of results out of that moment. They do not ignore the fact that the present is heir of the past and pregnant with the future. They know them to be commonplaces. It is not to-morrow that they want society to cease encroaching, invading, restraining the individual; it is to-day they want to be delivered from dependence upon it and its varying circumstances and conditions.

That does not prevent them confessing their inability to design in detail the map of a future society such as would exist if all their claims and aspirations were realised; nevertheless they are in a position to submit some directive principles which would preside over the constitution of a "future humanity" responding to their hopes. They are able to conceive a general view of it. They know that it will in no way resemble the world as it is, not because certain details will undergo more or less modification or transformation, but because the general mentality, the fashion of viewing life, the current manner of conceiving relations and agreements between one man and another, the particular and universal state of mind, will make the existence of certain methods and the functioning of certain institutions impossible.

Thus the Individualists can affirm with certitude that in the "future humanity" there will not be, there could not be, any recourse to the method of authority. We have there an indisputable, established point to which there will be no returning. To imagine a "future world" wherein the Individualist could move about at his ease and wherein one could still find traces of domination, obligation, and coercion, would be nonsensical. Individualists know that there will be no place whatever in "future humanity" for the intervention of the State, an institution or a governmental or social administration—legislative, governmental, disciplinary; nor shall there be any intervention in the modality of the thought, the conduct, or the activity of human units, whether isolated or in association. We have there another point gained.

Individualists know that the relations between humans and the agreements they may conclude will be voluntarily established; that the understandings and the contracts they may enter upon will be for a determined object and time, and not indefinitely; that they may be cancelled by mutual consent; that there will be no clause nor article of an agreement or contract that has not been weighed and discussed before being subscribed to by the contractors; no "unilateral" contract will be possible, that is to say, a contract obliging anyone to fulfil an engagement that he has not accepted personally and knowingly. Individualists know that no economic, political, religious, or other majority, that no social mass, whatever it be, will be able to compel a minority or a single human unit to conform involuntarily to its decisions or decrees. Here we have another series of certitudes over which there can be no quibbling.

Between this aspiration, this desire, this aim, this ideal—the term matters little—and events as we see them to-day it cannot be denied that the difference is cruel. The method of authority triumphs everywhere. Never have the chiefs of Governments concerned themselves less than at present to ascertain the opinions of individuals or communities. During the period which elapsed from the falling of the régime of the Moral Order to the first years of the twentieth century the wealthy bourgeois gave proof everywhere in Europe of a certain respect for legality; they scarcely dared to give any evident twist to the laws or the Constitution; to create new legislative or constitutional dispositions reference was made to Parliaments. State action appeared henceforward to be reserved to the Balkan States or Spanish-American Republics. It cannot be denied that there was regression on this state of mind and action. There is no great thing left, however, on the Continent of this deference, true or feigned, for Law. All has become a question of pure brute force, of the will and the means of the group who capture power. And not only do the business men and those of the possessing and privileged class proclaim the necessity of trampling on the goddess of Liberty, but men in the confidence of the "organised proletariat" say and do the same thing. One can imagine the sinister row of signposts as they stretch toward the horizon on the imperial road leading to the temple of the idol Authority: Kronstadt, the occupation of the Ruhr, the Fascist

coup de force, the pledge of Corfu, the *pronunciamento* of Primo de Rivera and his associates.

I quite agree that, up to a certain point, these facts are only incidents consequent to the march of human progress. Periods in which governmental pressure is exerted by a hand of velvet alternate with those in which interference is imposed with shameless and wilful severity. Distinguished philosophers and sociologists pretend that the present crisis is the inevitable consequence of the great butchery of 1914–1919. The state of flabbiness, resignation, censure, and constant requisition lasted too long to allow the general mentality easily to resume its normal balance. So long was the public deprived of what political civilisation denominates "constitutional liberties" that it accepts their suspension or even their annulment without a kick. There is some truth in this point of view. Yet it is essential not to forget that Parliament and governmental procedure had ceased to interest thinkers long before 1914.

I estimate that all these reasons are only accessory. The strenthening and incontestable victory of the method of authority have far deeper roots. The world's stage is dominated by economic phenomena, specially by the modes of its accomplishment, by their performances in so far as they are moral values. On one hand economic phenomena consist in intensive production and in series; in the organised flow of indispensable or superfluous utilities; this production or flow implies immense factories, workshops, sheds, mines, warehouses, depots—duplicates of barracks—where masses of disciplined, regimented workers or employees fashioned to obedience to a central directorate carry on their operations to the orders of a hierarchy of overseers and sub-chiefs.

The machine of production as it is actually conceived tends to reduce the worker to the role of operator, tending it so that it may work smoothly; or it may make of him an automaton unceasingly producing the same piece, the same fragment of an object. I hold the present system of production responsible for the universally prevailing tendency to produce individuals of a uniform type—the average type of his group or class. And it is this tendency that created the flesh that contemporary dictatorships feed upon.

On the other hand, economic phenomena are manifested morally by the preponderance they accord to the man who "makes money." The man who makes money is the master of all the coercive and repressive forces: ministers, generals, newspaper directors. He inspires them and enrolls them under his banner; they hold themselves at his disposal. Since he pays, he can acquire everything.

One meets Individualists who think, by some curious sophism, that in a régime of increased repression—statist, governmental, administrative—the one thing to do is to fly to some oceanic island, there to busy one's self with hygiene or some form of diet reform; or again, perhaps, to make money like everybody else. Their Individualism is not ours. "Our" Individualism is not satisfied so easily. Exactly because it is an actual state of being it will not yield before the tyrant. It is proud. It does not steal away. In the very midst of a period of involution—in relation to its present conception of life, to its aspirations regarding the future—it claims that there is actually a certain number of human beings who affirm, according to their temperament, some by their actions, others by writing, that the method of authority is repugnant and disgusting to them, whatever be the domain in which it prevails; that they feel no species of consideration for the man of money, he whose cash is able to buy lick-spittles and belly-crawlers with university qualifications and uniforms indicating high military rank. In the midst of a period of restrictions upon the faculty of expressing one's self "our" Individualism proclaims that the only person who represents a "moral value" in its eyes is he who, by word or deed, according to his nature and possibilities, revolts against the encroachment upon the individual by governors, rulers, social administrators, or their mandatories, no matter what class or caste profits by the exercise of that encroachment.

E. ARMAND.

(Translated from *L'en Dehors* by J. HAINING.)

ANARCHISM VERSUS SOCIALISM.

By WM. C. OWEN.

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ALBUM OF THE FUNERAL OF PETER KROPOTKIN in Moscow, February 13, 1921. With an Introduction by R. Rocker. Contains 31 photographs, including two of Kropotkin taken after death. Price 1s., postage 2d. From FREEDOM PRESS.

Historical Annals of the International Anarchist Movement.

Relying upon the intellectual support of most of the revolutionary writers, the "Argonauta" publishing house of Buenos Aires (Argentine), whose publications have gained a sound name in Labour circles of Spanish-speaking countries, and generally among those who are interested in the development and solution of social problems, has decided to commence the publication of "Historical Annals of the International Anarchist Movement," which will begin to appear in the Spanish language on January 1, 1925, in volumes of about 400 to 500 pages each.

The "Annals" will contain a series of essays and articles, the object of which will be to fill the international gap—so greatly felt at present—in the historical and theoretical studies of Anarchism. The material will be compiled under the following three heads:—

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It will be a work of propagandists and investigators for investigators and propagandists.

We request that all periodicals, manifestoes, pamphlets, and books referring to the above-mentioned programme be sent to us as exchanges. At the same time we ask the comrades of all countries to send us all data they consider useful to the international movement.

Address *administrative correspondence* to J. M. Fernandez, Casilla de Correo 1980, Buenos Aires, Argentine.

Address all *editorial correspondence*, exchanges in all languages (all of which will be acknowledged in the "Annals") to Fritz Kater ("Argonauta"), Kopernikusstr. 25 II, Berlin O 34, Germany

Anarchism via "Cosmicity."

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR SIR,—Anarchism is unrealisable with the present kind of people and to-day's development of communication, transport, and destructive appliances. As G. T. Sadler says, it is like talking of letting loose the animals at the Zoo—it will not be tried. Even talking about it is retrograde, and asking for a return to the cave and tree-top, as described in Jack London's "Strength of the Strong," "Before Adam," and "Scarlet Plague." W. C. Owen's talk of getting rid of land monopoly and freeing the land leads nowhere. Some folk might claim that State ownership freed the land; but this is not Anarchism nor freedom.

The privileges which the strong and selfish can obtain by government, and the protection from the unruly and predatory which the weak and timid get, even though it is paid for by wars, conscription, taxes, and interfering legislation, are sufficient for the great majority of the people of to-day to insist on keeping it. The statement of the New York *Freeman* that government is an anti-social institution created to exploit one class for the advantage of another, and for no other purpose whatever, is a fallacy.

And yet the ideal I aspire to would bring Anarchism and freedom as a reward and unsought, arrangement committees supplanting governing ones. What is wanted is what I call "Cosmicity," a word compounded from cosmic consciousness and cosmic service. I have thought about it for many years, and I would like to open a discussion on it in your columns. It is a few years since I had a correspondence in them, when I attacked the Lenin organisation, and

used the *nom de plume* of "Sidney Cooper." The letters extended over six months and I think those who read them will agree that they helped to progressive conclusions. So with a little encouragement I will try to describe and defend from criticism the type of man that I hold will bring Anarchism and Freedom.

Cosmicity entails rising higher than animal and self life, and it can be lived as soon as it has spread sufficiently to be able to support cosmic thinkers who "do" little and are supported by cosmic doers who trust to them. There would be mixtures of the two of every proportion, and this proportion would vary every moment. Cosmic thinkers would often be very glad to try to learn cosmic doing, when they could feel sure that plenty other cosmic thinkers would be left who could look at every question from all points of view and keep life guided to cosmic progress, with Anarchism and freedom as welcome but unsought rewards.—Yours, etc.,

Leeds.

JOSEPH CLOUGH.

[Mr. Clough says that the New York *Freeman's* view of the purpose of government is a fallacy, but gives no evidence in opposition. His own idea that the weak and timid get protection from the unruly and predatory seems to us a bad joke. The policeman may—or may not—protect us from pickpockets and footpads, but he does not protect us from the State, which Buckle called "the great black-mailer." As to elaborating his views on "Cosmicity" in our columns, we cannot say we are greatly attracted by the new cosmic "thinkers" who are to direct the "doers." Unless the doers also think, they will be "done" by the thinkers.—ED. FREEDOM.]

"Freedom" Guarantee Fund.

The steady falling-off of donations to this fund is a very serious matter. We always have to rely on the generosity of comrades and sympathisers to make good the monthly deficit, and unless we get more support than during the past few months it will be difficult to maintain the regular publication of FREEDOM. We appeal to all our readers for donations.

Received with thanks since our last issue:—C. Blandy 2s., G. P. 2s., A. D. Moore (March and April) 4s., N. Duenas 3s., L. G. Wolfe (March and April) £2, A. Sanders 2s.

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(April 1 to April 29.)

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