

SIR, — Fred Harrison in your May/June issue says that since the moral dimension is absent from the market mechanism, freely negotiated wage bargains cannot rightly be described as "fair" — they are "something else" i.e. what is acceptable to the wage earner. But bargains, if freely negotiated, are two-sided not one-sided, they must be acceptable by both sides.

Mr. Harrison positions "fairness" on one side and unfairness on the other. But this is incomplete until one has answered the question "unfair to whom?" Oddly enough, it is fairness that is neutral. Interference or coercion in the market place, to make any sense at all, must favour one side or the other and it is the presence of coercion that creates unfairness (interfering with a mutually agreeable bargain). Therefore, if coercion creates unfairness then its absence leaves fairness or neutrality.

Mr. Harrison mentions nurses, but what of some plumbers and plasterers who are said to be over-paid? It is utterly impossible to evaluate a wage for a job other than in the market place. Indeed the very market is a computer into which is fed the judgements and evaluations of *all* the community. Where Mr. Harrison is led off the track is by his perhaps unconscious assumption that a free market in wages and salaries exists, whereas a lot of the bargaining today is not free but coercive and monopolistic.

If a man is robbed on his way to market and robbed again on his way home, has to pay "protection money" or a fee or tax before he can commence bargaining, then clearly, the market *as a market* is not to blame and it does not make bargains unfair to him or to others. The element of unfairness in reward for his labour depends upon the extent to which he can succeed in retaining the full fruits of his labour in free and open competi-

tion with others, and monkeying around with the market won't help us solve this one.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL KNIGHT
London S.W.1.

ANSWER TO
UNEMPLOYMENT

SIR, — In his article "Free Enterprise: A Lost World?" in your May-June issue, B.W.B. reviews Anthony Fisher's book *Must History Repeat Itself?* and says that while Mr. Fisher's case for free enterprise and free trade is a compelling one, the reason why this country has reverted to control, restriction and inflation, which can only lead to more control, restriction and inflation, is the fear of unemployment, a word which Mr. Fisher hardly mentions and offers nothing except an exhortation to return to the past.

B.W.B. concludes that without more fundamental thought about poverty and unemployment and the causes of industrial depression for which a real cure can be offered, Mr. Fisher cannot have any real hope that his goal of complete economic freedom with the minimum of government interference in trade and industry will be achieved.

But the real and only cure for massive unemployment and industrial depression is a free economy, free trade (with the right to buy from the cheapest world market the 50 per cent of the food which we have to import) and a sound currency. Such a policy is fundamental to the life of the British people. The Anti Dear Food Campaign is making a most important effort to counter the government's dear food policy.

There is no justification for the assumption that never again will there be abundance in some or other part of the world.

I would recommend to B.W.B. and all who share his misgivings about our reverting to this policy to read a booklet, *Save the Pound — Save the People* by S. W. Alexander, which forms the first chapter of a book. In page sixteen of this booklet Mr. Alexander says:-

"For many years the policies of successive governments have been to eliminate or reduce unemployment. That policy has been adopted in preference to one which would maintain the value of the people's earnings and savings. It is completely unsound and dishonest. It leads on to a situation where there may be massive unemployment not because of a shortage of paper money but because a fall in the value of the pound will make it impossible to buy at reasonable prices in comparison with what our competitors have to pay, the raw materials for our factories. There could arrive circumstances in which some might have to limit operations or even to close down. A policy must be pursued which will permit not the dissipation of capital that is now going on through protectionism and the Welfare State, but a new accumulation of capital.

With free enterprise capitalism and a sound currency there need never be long term massive unemployment. Indeed, it can be confidently stated that under a truly free economy there cannot be mass unemployment."

Yours faithfully,
C. C. LOMAX
Hitchin, Herts.
B.W.B. writes

Major Lomax is right to place importance on the policy of free trade. Without it we can never know the full benefits of the division of labour applied on a worldwide scale with all production concentrated where it can be most efficient.

But to credit free trade with the

power to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to earn a living, and to blame the abandonment of free trade for the mass unemployment we have known in the past, is to fly in the face of reason — and of history.

The British unemployment of the 1930's, for example, was not the *result* of defection from free trade after a century of enjoying its benefits. It was the tide of unemployment (never below one million from 1922, and rising to 2.6 million between 1929 and 1931) which forced the National Government of October 1931 to take action — any action — against it. Unfortunately, one of their measures was the misguided imposition of tariffs.

For all its virtues, free trade cannot neutralise the more fundamental effects of a country's system and pattern of land tenure, the factor above all others that determines — or very largely determines — who shall have the opportunity to produce and who shall not.

ADVENTURE OR DISASTER?

SIR, — Mr. Heddle (May/June issue) calls Europe a "great adventure". An avalanche is an adventure — so is falling into an abyss.

With the amount of unscrupulous, one-sided, pro-market propaganda paid for by the public treasury (nothing like doing your own brainwashing!) and the quite disgraceful roping in of the state education services, up to university level, for this purpose, (as I have first-hand experience of myself), it is no wonder if ordinary people feel their confidence in their own underlying judgement of the situation shaken at times. One is grateful to journals like *LAND & LIBERTY*, which have continued to present the true perspectives of the situation. George Gale, of London Broadcasting Company also put it well recently:-

"In terms of the economics of the argument it is extremely difficult for the man in the street to determine whether we are going

to gain from entry into the Common Market, or not.

"However, if you take the economics side of the question as unproved either way, we are then left with the political question. Now the political question is really a very simple one, and that is, whether or not you wish in the long run for the government of this country to remain in the hands of Parliament and in the hands of the British people, or whether you wish, in the long run for the government of this country to pass to some federal united states of Europe, of which we would be a province, or a part, and in which the capital would presumably be Brussels, or somewhere like that. Do you wish, that is to say, for the ultimate political authority to pass out of this country, or not?"

Mr. Heddle's words about our "leading from the driving seat" in Europe, express a deluded hope — and a dangerous one. Bureaucracy has never given the lead to anything worth while *at all*, in any case. If one doesn't know that, then one doesn't know the ABC of P.P.E.

Yours faithfully,

SHIRLEY-ANNE HARDY

London, W.11.

OVERPOPULATION?

THE entire U.S. population could live in single-family houses in an area the size of Iowa, or if we all lived in the states of Texas and Oklahoma combined, with our other forty-eight states completely devoid of population, the density of those two states would be a little less than in West Germany and the United Kingdom today.
Charles F. Seymour, President American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers.

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE?

SIR, — Mr. John Heddle (*LAND & LIBERTY* May-June) equates his statement that on 28 February

"18 million electors in this country voted for the pro-European Conservative and Liberal Parties and only 11 million voters gave their support to the anti-European Labour Party," with support for or against the E.E.C. For naive self-deception this takes some beating.

As for "going back on our word" (if we withdrew from the E.E.C.) is this not precisely what Mr. Heath did to the electorate when he led us in without a mandate?

Yours faithfully,

J. G. GERRARD

Slough, Bucks.

THE AMERICAN DREAM?

WHEN, some 200 years ago, that slightly smelly real estate speculator Daniel Boone slashed his way to the top of Cumberland Gap, he saw blanketed before him what was probably the largest territorial commons in the history of North America. He stood dumb, it is said, silently dipping into the future far enough to envision those grasslands filled with commerce. The land was called Kentucky.

Two hundred years later, Kentucky is once again on the verge of the real estate man's dream. Caught up in the nation's headlong lust for land, the state is faced with a real estate hustle nearly as great as the one Boone and his fellow settlers first unleashed.

The speculators on Kentucky's soil have found a classic rallying point — the construction of a new international jetport for Louisville, the state's largest city.

The airport's dreamers determined to locate well beyond suburban Louisville in one of three rural counties, thereby gobbling up hundreds of acres of fine farm and dairyland — cheap. From the airport comes growth: hotels, shopping malls, amusement parks, new towns, freeways.

— *New York Times*, May 29