

WAR

For Anarchism

COMMENTARY

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Twopence

Down with Imperialist intrigues!

FOR WORKERS' REVOLUTION!

THE stubborn resistance which the Nazis are meeting in the occupied territories and in the countries influenced by the proximity of Hitler's armies gives hope to the revolutionary movements now reduced to a few illegal and persecuted groups dispersed over the four corners of Europe.

But, in view of the dual character of this resistance, it is necessary for us to unravel very carefully the complicated knot of anti-Hitler feeling which has manifested itself in tendencies and action. And this necessary analysis must be carried out not only in the occupied countries themselves but also in the emigré revolutionary movements abroad. The Anglo-Saxon imperialists have portrayed the resistance as being patriotic and democratic; our role consists in separating ourselves from the influences of the rival imperialist groups in order to take the road of social revolution with our revolutionary aims kept clearly in sight.

There has been a revival of activity among the French, Italian, and Spanish refugees, brought about by press campaigns, by the co-ordination of the efforts of the leaders representing different racial groups, and their official recognition—or the promise of official recognition—by Whitehall and Washington. De Gaulle's movement already enjoys the support of Churchill and seeks that of Roosevelt by promising bases in Africa. On the Italian side the Mazzinian movement is little by little taking on the position of official representative of Free Italy. They attempt to replace the Fascist consulates by

establishing relief centres, sending representatives among the Italian prisoners, exercising pressure on Lord Halifax regarding the pretensions of Yugo-Slav refugees—and those of Churchill also—on Trieste and the Dalmatian coastline. Then the Spanish refugees are extremely active—both on behalf of Negrin as well as Prieto—in order to form a provisional government which would be accorded official recognition in the event of Franco entering the war on Hitler's side.

We have outlined above the outward and public side of the propaganda and agitation of the anti-fascist movements abroad; what they do not avow, but which exists nevertheless is the long series of bargainings and discussions, the pressure brought to bear regarding the repartitions of territories and spheres of influence, the economic and commercial agreements.

The danger lies in the fact that a large number of militant workers and even of revolutionaries lend themselves to this unsavoury game—whether consciously, or because they are taken in by the orgy of grand declarations about liberty carefully worked by the news agencies.

One of the chief factors in maintaining this pro-government and pro-imperialist anti-fascist attitude is the lack of faith in an independent revolutionary movement. This lack of faith is natural in groups of emigré intellectuals and social democratic movements, but it has also overtaken those sections of the revolutionary movements which originated and grew up in an atmosphere

of meetings and orders of the day, and which nurse the hope of a return to what they regard as better times.

Reality, however, differs materially from the dreams of old-fashioned democrats. The views of the workers of Trieste have more value regarding Trieste than the declarations of the Mazzini group; the hopes of the Barcelona workers are probably not the same as those of Dr. Negrin; and the engineers of Paris no doubt think differently from General de Gaulle.

While the refugee movements are preparing new government set-ups, and hope to return to their countries in the wake of an expeditionary force, with economic contracts and military treaties in their pockets, the refugee revolutionaries must follow another road, less spectacular perhaps, but more dangerous, more serious and more solid.

General De Gaulle is a member of that French Democracy which he wants to revive, a representative of the same regime which crumbled before the first blows of German Imperialism. He is not merely a strategist, he is also a French bourgeois, a partisan of a bankrupt regime. Count Sforza is one of those weaklings who allowed Fascism to rise in Italy, and who hopes to place his own incapacity at the head of an incapable government. Negrin is the artisan of the defeat and annihilation of a magnificent movement. How can the struggles of the European workers against their yoke bring about the restoration of the incapacity, the defeat and bankruptcy of the capitalists and the bourgeoisie?

Moreover, the war measures adopted by the Democracies direct the new social structure in anti-democratic channels. They partly maintain the interests of the old financiers and industrialists, and at the same time strangle the meagre rights of the workers, secured at the price of bloody and tenacious struggle; but they also open the door to new classes of State functionaries and anti-social technicians.

There exists a type of prisoner who defends with his life the governor and warders of the prison when a mutiny takes place. This is the role which the directors of the conscience of the exiled workers' movements want us to play when they defend their alliance with the De Gaulles, the Sforzas, the Negrins and Prietos.

The revolutionary movement has no place in the antechambers of the Foreign Offices; Socialists should have no access to the coffers of the Ministries of Propaganda; the Libertarian movement cannot join in the queue for places in puppet governments. The true militants are those who made the revolutions, who fought against the generals, the aristocrats and the bourgeois politicians. They have suffered imprisonment and exile, have worked illegally and seen their comrades in the struggle executed under all the democratic regimes, just as they have been under Fascism. The cadres in the struggle change, but its character remains the same.

In France the succession is an open one. In Italy both experiments—democratic and fascist—have been tried. In Spain the underground movement bursts out in spite of the overcrowded prisons and the overworked executioners. Our army consists of the Aragon peasants, the Asturian miners and the textile workers of Catalonia; our partisans are the dockers of Marseilles, the builders of Paris and the spinners of Northern France; our strength is in the Italian deserters; our men the hundreds of thousands of rebels in the Russian concentration camps. We have in the world enough militants—illegal, restless, roving and eager, to form the cadres of those forces.

We have in view no redistribution of territories, no government to form. We have an old system to liquidate and a New Order to crush. Liberal capitalism as it has existed in the past cannot survive; the fascist regime that it develops into, based on imperialist struggles and inhuman exploitation, cannot last. We hold the right of succession, and we can vindicate that right if we are ready to conquer it. If, in this epoch of instability, of transformations, of liquidation, we do not aim at a complete victory, we shall be able to achieve nothing. We exiles must denounce all imperialist intrigues, must try to define clearly our position and our line of action; must give our help and support to the revolutionary movements in the countries in which we find ourselves; and must recreate an international of action and thought. These are our immediate tasks.

This article was sent to us by a French comrade now in exile in America and we have published it in the columns usually occupied by the Editorial article, because we feel it ought to be a stirring call to the revolutionary workers of all lands.—Editors.

TRADE UNIONISM IN RUSSIA

MOST working-class supporters of the Russian regime are a little puzzled to explain the existence of trade-unions in the Soviet state; for, in Britain the trade unions arose out of the struggle of the workers against the employing class, a struggle for a higher wage or to protect existing wage rates. If, as the Stalinists often state, the workers own and control the means of production in Russia, why have trade unions? To protect the workers against the workers, to win a higher wage as a worker in a struggle against the worker as the state employer? Obviously, this cannot be.

One other purpose might exist. The unions could, as the revolutionary syndicates of Spain did, control the means of production; the factories, mills and mines; they might have been the vehicle of workers control of industry. But such is not the case with the Russian trade unions. To find a parallel to them we must not look to the British unions in their youthful days of struggle or to the revolutionary syndicates, but to the Nazi Labour Front or the Italian Fascist Industrial Corporations. In each of the three great dictatorship countries, state unions exist as a means of disciplining and organising the industrial workers in the service of the state bureaucracy.

Before the Revolution of 1917 the trade unions in Russia hardly existed. Over six hundred unions had a total membership of only a quarter of a million in 1907. Even this number were of doubtful membership and the unions were mostly small, local organisations. In the years of heavy repression which followed, even these disappeared, being stamped out by the Czarist government.

After the March, 1917, Revolution, the trade union movement sprang up in new life. By the time of the November, 1917, Revolution, their numbers had grown to more than two millions. But even more important was the rapid growth of the factory committees. In almost every factory, workshop, mine or other place of work, the workers gathered and elected their committees. Many of these committees took over the enterprises from the owners and the movement for the socialisation of industry rapidly spread.

Such a movement was inconsistent with the Bolshevik dictatorship, indeed if the movement had been left free to develop it would have been impossible to extend or maintain that dictatorship. Therefore the Bolsheviks set out to control the unions. The campaign of repression which was carried into every other expression of Russian life was extended to the trade union movement. During the Civil War, while Left Social-Revolutionaries and Anarchists were spending themselves in defence of the Revolution, the Bolsheviks were consolidating their power behind the Front. After the Civil War the repression was intensified and all known Social-Revolutionaries, Anarchists and Socialists were hunted, sent to gaol or concentration camp or executed.

The Bolsheviks Subjugate the Trade Unions

The bloody success of the Bolshevik terror ensured their control of the young trade unions, but the victors could not agree among themselves, still less with the Syndicalist opposition, as to the form or

function of the unions. In a recent pamphlet, "How Soviet Trade Unions Work," the Communist, Maurice Dobb, states:

"The issue came to a head in the discussions at the end of the Civil War period, which led to the so-called New Economic Policy. On the one hand, Trotsky wished for the virtual militarisation of the unions, substituting appointment from above for election from below, and their conversion into units of a labour army, or labour corps. On the other hand, there was a syndicalist tendency which advocated the placing of the management of industry entirely in the hands of the unions. The policy known as 'The Platform of the Ten' (the report of a trade union commission of the

By

Tom Brown

Communist Party which included Lenin and Stalin, and on which Trotsky had refused to serve), which was officially adopted, advocated an independent role for the trade unions as voluntary and democratic bodies, subject to election and the right of recall of officials. Their main function was to be, to represent the interests of their members in all matters of wages and working conditions."

Alas for the hollowness of resolutions and constitutions! How could the unions remain democratic within a totalitarian dictatorship? With the crushing of the Syndicalists and Socialists in the factories and unions, the union official posts were, of course, all held by Communists. The independence of the unions disappeared. Said the Communist, Maurice Dobb: "Of course, in so far as the majority of the heads of the unions were Communist, they were bound by Party discipline to carry out the Communist policy. . . . The leaders of the trade unions, acting in close touch with the State organs, felt it of their duty to co-operate in carrying out the State policy. In practice they became almost subsidiary State departments, making State economic policy palatable to their members, rather than seeking to express and make vocal the interests of the rank and file or to exercise an independent influence on industrial administration and policy in this direction. So much did the trade union apparatus become associated with the State as one of its organs, that by the end of the Civil War a serious gulf had begun to yawn between officials and rank and file, and the latter to regard the trade unions not as their own, but as alien bodies, imposing orders from above." *Russian Economic Development since the Revolution*, page 168 (Labour Research Department, 1928).

The Fall of the Factory Committee's

The next step of the dictatorship was the subordination and emasculation of the factory committees. Dobb declared: "At the same time the anarch-

ism of the factory committees themselves was curbed by merging them with the trade unions. . . . Trade union influence could now be exercised to secure a uniform policy and observance of Government orders and decrees on the part of the factory committees." (ibid p. 47). The factory committees were then robbed of their control or share of the management of the factory. Individual managers were appointed from above in the regular capitalist manner. Even Dobb admits, "By the end of 1920 this process had gone so far that some 85 per. cent. of enterprises were controlled by individual managers. Moreover, the functions of the factory committees, which in the early days had interfered fairly extensively in industrial control, were now severely curtailed." (ibid p. 106).

The Bolsheviks who had never believed in workers' control, had, during 1917, when the workers held most of the factories, changed their slogans and cried for workers' control. This was done, not because of any belief in socialist or democratic principles, but was just a political manoeuvre by Lenin, who never intended to carry out his own slogan. Here is Mr. Dobb again, "The Bolsheviks, who had issued a slogan of 'workers' control' had urged on the factory committee movement to more militant claims and had organised the committees into a federation. This the Bolsheviks had done, not on fixed principles of political and social theory, but as part of the strategy of the class struggle. The matter was not viewed by them statically, in the light of certain democratic 'rights' but dynamically as part of a manoeuvre, meaningless unless viewed in relation to the objective of the manoeuvre as a whole." (ibid p. 37).

Let the Webbs Witness

Of course, as soon as Lenin gained power he set about breaking up the already existing workers' control which he hated, even while he was praising it. The Webbs in "Soviet Communism" after describing the control of industry exercised by Russian factory workers, railwaymen and sailors, said: "Within six months however, Lenin decided that such a form of workers' control led only to chaos, and that there must be, in every case, a manager appointed by, and responsible to, the appropriate organ of the government," (p. 167).

But workers' control did not lead to chaos in the early days of the Civil War in Spain. Why so in Russia? "Lenin decided," not the workers; "Lenin decided," the Czar has spoken!

Robbed of their control, the factory committees now carry out humble and unpleasant tasks, "the detailed administration of the various branches of social insurance; the arrangements for sending workers to convalescent or holiday homes; * the management of the factory club, the factory canteen. . . . and even the allocating among the workers of theatre and concert tickets." Soviet Communism, p. 183. (The good boys will be given a free ticket to the pictures). "The officers and presidium of the committee are in constant relations with the management of the factory, office or institute, over which they have no actual control." The Webbs (ibid).

*In England these tasks are carried out by insurance and friendly society agents.

The worst is yet to be. The Webbs on the same page state: "It is the factory committee which organises shock brigades, and, on behalf of the workers, enters into 'socialist competition' with other factories, offices or institution, as to which can achieve the most during a given period."

In other words the committees are given the most unpopular of tasks, that of extracting the last ounce of energy from the workers. The factory committees have the honour of being the Simon Legrees of the Bolshevik State.

The Dictatorship of the Middle Class

Many lessons may be read in the decay of the Russian trade union movement, but these three stand out in red letters of warning. Firstly; the movement of the industrial workers must never allow itself to be subjected to a middle-class party such as the Communist Parties which are led by petit-bourgeois job hunters (even when a Communist Party has leaders of working-class origin they are exproletarian, have lost the taste for work and have cultivated petit-bourgeois aspirations) the Bolsheviks themselves admitted it was found "on January 1st, 1930, only 9 per. cent. of the personnel of the AUCCTU (All Union Central Committee of Trade Unions) were of working-class origin." Report of Ninth Congress of Trade Unions, 1931, pp. 25-26).

Secondly; the unions and factory committees can only be free in a condition of general freedom. In a dictatorship the trade unions must succumb with all else. Thirdly; Labour can only be freed by its own efforts. No leader, no magical dictators can emancipate. The Lenins, the Trotskys and other petit-bourgeois "saviours" dream only of their own personal dictatorship. The slave's own hand his chains must sever!

What a Racket!

Mr. Beaverbrook has started another of his sensational campaigns this time to collect waste paper. Housewives had been previously asked to deprive themselves of their saucepans while the manufacture of aluminium articles continued and prices soared. Workers have been asked to work all out to produce tanks while gamblers on the Stock Exchange were rubbing their hands, as the following extract from the Daily Herald (3-10-41) testifies:

"More tanks mean greater oil consumption."

"This fact is being exploited to the full by gamblers in oil shares in the Stock Exchange."

Now books, letters, etc., will go to provide paper so that Beaverbrook's papers may devote a third of their space to advertisements of non-existent goods.

Frank Leech

The Glasgow Bus Workers and the State

Our comrades of the Glasgow Anarchist Federation gave their full support to the bus workers in their recent strike, a message of fraternal greetings and solidarity was sent to them, and our comrades offered their services and the use of their resources. This is the first of two articles on the strike by Frank Leech, the secretary of the Glasgow Anarchist Federation.

DURING "Armistice" week Imperialist War was almost superseded by Class War. The Glasgow Corporation Bus Drivers and Conductors at the Knightswood Depot came out on strike without consulting the "Trade Union" officials. The issue being precipitated by the tyrannical action of the Transport management, with the acquiescence of a "Democratic" Labour Council.

The cause of the strike was the introduction of new schedules of running time and the suspension of four delegates who were negotiating with the management on the schedule.

The workers came out without meeting. Someone chalked on the notice board "Stick to your guns", "Run in the buses" the spontaneous response was solid. Out of 600 workers only 40, mostly office staff and crawlers looking for promotion, remained.

During the negotiations which followed the manager promised to amend the schedules. The Bus workers then agreed to call off the strike. But they found that the manager had gone back on his word—the new schedules were to remain. The workers remained on strike.

The following days witnessed a barrage of propaganda against the Busmen and Conductresses. The Capitalist Press journalists excelled themselves in the presentation of lies regarding the worker's case. What else could you expect from them. They have to do their master's bidding. The press of today is not being used to serve workers' interests. The tragedy is that workers read it. The usual claptrap was trotted out, "the strikers are sabotaging the 'National Effort'," "their wages are higher than engine drivers," "soldiers boo the strikers," "their claims are unreasonable," etc., etc. The strikers were threatened with dismissal. This did not deter them. Other depots Larkfield and Parkhead came out. Those

in authority called upon the Army and Air Force to supply buses. The role of the State was becoming clearer. Signs of solidarity began to roll in from the rank and file in the shipyards and factories on the Clyde. Some requested speakers to explain the Busmen's case at the mealhour meetings. The main topic everywhere was "The Busmen's Strike." Never since this war began was there so much discussion on class issues. Feeling was running high. The arguments pro and con support for the war came to the top. "Did our boys join up to be used against their fellow workers" was one of the questions. "The press compares our wages with those who have a lower wage. Why not compare them with the managers and Officials who have ten, twenty, and forty pounds per week!" "We are not out for wages," etc., were some of the replies of the Busmen.

The manager apologised for not posting up the changed Duty Sheets earlier. His excuse was "depletion of staff." It didn't occur to him that he should delay the introduction of the new schedules.

Eighty Army and Air Force buses were drafted into Knightswood Garage. The Transport Committee with its majority of Labour representatives had thrown down the gauntlet. Would the workers accept the challenge? We waited. No, the workers did not accept. At a heated aggregate meeting, in view of the forces arrayed against them, the Bus workers decided to call off the strike. How far the struggle would have gone, if the decision had been in the other direction, can only be left to conjecture. Discontent bordering on despair is rife on the Clyde, and only held in check by the bogey of Nationalism, both the British and Russian variety. What will happen when these illusions go?

Many Busmen are determined to withdraw from the Union—the Transport and General

A Comment on Mr. Amery's Recent Speech in Manchester.

MR. AMERY, Secretary of State for India, speaking at the Manchester Luncheon Club recently, dealt with the "problem of India," but, efficient politician that he is, he succeeded in saying much and offering the Indian people very little. As the Manchester Guardian put it:

"Mr. Amery's words . . . were lucid but threw no fresh light on what is happening or is likely to happen in India. . . . One would not say that anything in his speech shows understanding of the fundamental quality of the Indian demand: the deep feeling that India is in a prison-house and that she is able, and ought to be allowed, to govern (or misgovern) herself. . . ."

But though Mr. Amery's speech offered nothing, it nevertheless contained remarks which betray the Government's Colonial policy, and are therefore of value especially to those so called Left wingers and revolutionaries who, since September 1939, have pinned all faith in British democracy.

Mr. Amery opened his speech with these modest words "we could well be proud of Britain's contribution to India. Altogether our achievements have been something of a miracle." When Hitler or Mussolini talk like that we all sneer and rightly point to the concentration camps and penal islands. But that Mr. Amery should have patted himself in the

(continued from page 5)

Workers Union. They have had little faith in it for some time and now the issue has reached a climax. To be successful in the future, they must prepare for action along Anarcho-Syndicalist lines; organisation by themselves on the job,—no full-time officials—all decisions by the rank and file—solidarity with other depots and industries on a federal basis—preparation for the taking over of the transport industry by the transport workers in a general movement for the common ownership and control of the means of life.

I have just heard that twenty four of the strikers are being hauled before the Sheriff's Court charged under E.P.A. regulations. I suppose just to remind them that they are today living in chattel-slavery.

The ex-Lord Provost P. J. Dollan, has chastised the Bus workers in "Forward" for 22nd October, 1941. I propose to deal with this article and the attitudes of the Labour and Communist Parties in next issue of "War Commentary."

WHITHER

same way, with as little justification, he is greeted with applause and no condemning finger is pointed to the Indian concentration camps. That is yet another example of our smugness; that attitude which says "these things don't happen here."

However, in view of the fact that he had not the praise of any representative Indian body to offer his audience by way of introduction, it is natural that Mr. Amery should have patted himself on the back instead, and so attack the problem of India with more confidence. "The problem of India"—continued Mr. Amery—"is not to be solved by catchwords. 'We are fighting for democracy; why not therefore give India what she wants?'" And to this Mr. Amery answers:

"That sounds so plausible and generous. But who and where is the machine, where is the body, in existence or yet to be constituted which can in that sense speak for India or express an agreed demand? What form of democracy can be found under which the peoples of India are prepared to live together? Such catch phrases bring us not a step nearer to the solution of our problem."

That is an old argument we have all heard a hundred times. But before discussing Mr. Amery's answer, we should express our agreement with him that the question is a catchword. It is a catchword, because the first portion, "We are fighting for democracy" is also a catchword and has been used in this war by the ruling class to split the workers' movement and to play on the people's natural sense of freedom and justice in order to get them to fight to protect one set of scoundrels from another. If "We are fighting for democracy" were true, then it would follow automatically that the Indian people would be free today to work out their own destinies as would the Africans, the Arabs, the West Indians and all the subject colonial peoples. Mr. Amery pleads that India has not been granted self-government because no machinery exists in India to take over. This is an admission that no attempt has been made by the Government of India to create that machinery though all sorts of promises of self-government were made during the last war. But it is surely impertinence to suggest that the Indians if left to themselves could not rule themselves more satisfactorily than is being done at present by the British. It is impertinence because any civilised visitor to Europe (whose population is no greater than that of India) will blushing avow that it would appear that in spite of their advanced "civilisation" and wisdom, the Europeans have much to learn from the African tribesmen and such backward peoples in the ways of peaceful communal living.

Again, in answer to Mr. Amery's last question "what form of democracy can be found, etc." we would suggest that in the democratic concentration camps of India will be found men who enjoy more prestige amongst the Indian people than has ever been enjoyed by the British rulers, and that democracy (that is, not the British variety) can be achieved in India, if at all, by the Indian people themselves only when they are freed from the fetters of British Imperialism, which has held them in physical and moral bondage for nearly two centuries.

INDIA?

BUT let Mr. Amery proceed: In his opinion the application of the Atlantic Charter to India is another "typical instance of loose thinking." In the first place "article 3 of the Charter primarily referred to the restoration of national life in Europe, and in any case did not qualify in any way our own declarations as to India's future."

Further:

"it gives no indication as to whether India is to be regarded as one people or several. It does not say by what method the form of government is to be decided. It lays down no procedure, *no time-table*. On all these points it naturally does not attempt either to give guidance or to impose any precise obligation."

We have emphasised the "no time-table" because it is so typical of many British promises to the colonial peoples. As we said earlier, similar promises were made to the Indian people in the last war when the fate of British Imperialism was in the balance. But the Great War was followed, not by greater freedom or by self-government, but by the passing of the Rowlatt Acts in 1919, which in the present day terminology would be called a Fascist measure, in that they provided for arrests without warrants and indefinite detention without trial. Where trials took place they could be held in secret, and their proceedings were not to be made public. What a hope for the Indians, when 20 years later not only do similar laws apply to their children but also to us, the civilised-white-men-in-the-metropolis!

Mr. Amery went on to remind his audience that the promises of Dominion status given to India last August were just as far reaching as the Atlantic Charter. In fact, once realised, India would exist as an equal partner with this country. *But* here follow the conditions:

"But I shall be told that all this is limited and circumscribed by our saying that it is 'subject to the due fulfilment of the obligations which Great Britain's long connection with India has imposed upon her.' But would anyone suggest that the framing of any new form of government in pursuance of the Atlantic Charter could take place anywhere without some provision for the fulfilment of pre-existing obligations?"

Speaking as he was to the Manchester Luncheon Club (not to be confused with the Communal Feeding Centres), at which were gathered many whose fortunes were made by the "blood, tears and sweat" of the Indian workers, it is understandable that Mr. Amery should not wish to affect their digestion by suggesting that Freedom for India really meant Freedom in the fullest sense. After all many of those gentlemen present were suckled on Lord Brentford's famous words: "I am interested in missionary work in India and have done much of that kind, but I am not such a hypocrite as to say that we hold India for the Indians. We hold it as the finest outlet for British goods in general, and for Lancashire goods in particular."

And Mr. Amery explains that one of this country's obligations is:

"The defence of India until India could take over that burden."

This naturally did not mean a

"derogation of status, but was a concession to the facts of a particular situation which would no doubt be modified by the growth of India's military resources and perhaps by changes in the nature of the possible dangers which might confront India after the war."

Readers who are not doped with war propaganda, will recognise in these apparently innocent and altruistic remarks, a similar proposal to that made by Hitler to the occupied countries in Europe. In case we have not made ourselves clear we will show by quotation how even before the Atlantic Charter, and the wild-war-time promises of Freedom made by our ruling class, British Imperialist policy was on the same lines as today. In 1928 Sir Austen Chamberlain, the then Foreign Secretary wrote a note to the Government of the United States which contained the reservations stipulated by Great Britain in signing the Kellogg Pact.

Much was made of that pact at the time by peace-loving people in all parts of the world. What the pact actually meant to the British Government may be surmised from the following sentences contained in the Chamberlain note: (*)

"There are certain regions in the world the welfare and integrity of which constitute a special and vital interest for our peace and safety. . . . Their protection against attack is to the British a measure of self-defence. It must be clearly understood that His Majesty's Government in Great Britain accept the treaty upon the distinct understanding that it does not prejudice their freedom of action in this respect."

The development is clear. The modern conception of Empire is the control of the peoples in the Empire through the control of markets and superficial political freedom is provided by "Constitutions" and the like. But always in the background lurk the armed forces, the Navy, and now the Fleet Air Arm. It is interesting to note that Indians are used by the British in the defence of Egypt and Iran to good effect, so we are told, yet the Indians are apparently unable to defend their own soil without the British Army to see that they defend the right people and the right interests!

AGAIN let us quote Mr. Amery now dealing with the moral aspect of rule in India. He said:

"Congress had yet to learn that the conditions under which it could exercise its influence and fulfil its ideals in a self-governing India had still to be agreed upon with other elements which were not prepared to consider Congress majorities as having any moral authority over them merely because they were majorities."

This kind of argument will seem fantastic to demo-

*This and the Chamberlain note are taken from Reg. Reynold's book "The White Sahibs in India," 1938.

cratic Englishmen who believe in "Government of the people by the people for the people," and who have been taught that that democratic institution Parliament, is run on these lines, and that the party with a majority rules. In fact have we not been told that Fascism is the rule of the majority by a minority; of rule forced upon the majority against their will. Have we not been told that the German and Italian people have been dragged into the war against their will by a clique of individuals lusting after power? And yet Mr. Amery considers India not ripe for self-government because there is a minority in India which were not prepared to recognise the moral authority of the majority. *That is loosely called Fascism today, but British Imperialism is much older than Fascism and that kind of argument has been called "DIVIDE & RULE" which is the age old technique of British Imperialism.

THE more one studies the political manoeuvres of the ruling class the more one is convinced that the emancipation of the workers will be brought about only by the workers themselves. For the past two years we in England have been cut off from Indian affairs, because of the strict censorship of information coming out of India. Consequently we cannot form an opinion as to the intensity with which the movements of Indian liberation are working. Thousands of Indians are in concentration camps without trial. But from amongst those millions of Indians who are the victims of Imperialism and yearn for freedom there will arise those who will seize the present opportunity (in spite of the pleadings of Indian leaders who—like all leaders—have become politicians and declare that nothing must be done by Indians to impair the war effort) to free India from her chains, and build up that unity which the policy of Divide and Rule has prevented through the centuries.

LIBERTARIAN.

*For fear that any reader should associate the idea of the moral authority of the majority over the minority, as an Anarchist concept, we should point out that Anarchists do not believe in the Government of one group of individuals by another, and do not therefore recognise "authority" in any of its senses. But they recognise the freedom of majorities and minorities for in the words of Bakunin, "I can really be free when those around me, both men and women, are also free. The liberty of others, far from limiting or negating my own is, on the contrary, its necessary condition and guarantee." Oeuvres, vol. i, p. 277.

FREDRICK LOHR speaks on

Anarchism and Social Reconstruction

F.C.O. Devenport Hall,
Devenport St., Lewisham

Friday, 5th December, at 7.30 p.m.

Infantile Disease Completely Cured

Iwelcome Communist backing" is the heading of an interview with the Conservative candidate, Charles Challen, in the Hampstead by-election, reported in the "Hamstead Special" issued by the Hampstead Branch of the Communist Party. The party members are instructed to pass over not only Pemberton-Billing and Hipwell, the Independent candidates, but also Dolond, the All-Out Aid-for-Russia candidate, and vote for "Charles Challen, Churchill's Choice." They thus are following up their support for the conservative candidate in the Lancaster by-election.

In his election address, Challen declares "There is nothing wrong with wealth, save when divorced from responsibility. It is then that social evils arise." He adds, "Changes must come. They are inherent in life. Our duty is to see that throughout the processes of change we adhere to proper principles of growth and development, preserving those ways that we know to be good in the life of ourselves, our Nation and Empire. To this task I pledge myself." So the "unswerving party of the working class" supports "responsible" wealth, and the guidance of the Tories in the directing of inevitable change into such evolutionary channels as ensure the welfare of the Conservative ruling class, preserving those things which we (?) know to be good in the life of themselves, their Nation and Empire. But the rank-and-file is well trained; they will swallow it like good boys.

The elements which formed the original C.P. in this country were inclined towards anti-parliamentarism. In order to cure them of this "infantile disease," Lenin wrote his pamphlet ridiculing "Left-Wing Communism." The C.P. accordingly made strenuous efforts to secure the collaboration of the Labour Party (whom Lenin had previously denounced as Social-Chauvinists). In the popular front days they went beyond the right-wing socialists and made advances to the Liberals. Now it is alliance with the Tories which forms the object for which Pollitt and Dutt demand the energy of the C.P. rank-and-file. One may be assured that they have quite got over their infantile disorder!

Fredrick Lohr

War Against the

FOR the second time within thirty years Capitalism has plunged Europe into the hell of mechanised war. The difference between the two wars is that this one is Total war. Will future historians recognise it also as counter-revolution? I think they will if the records of these time escape the funeral pyre of 'indexed literature' which appears to be the ritual introduction to the modern renaissance.

Mars now bestrides two battlescarred continents, but Nemesis lurks unseen in his shadow. Famine, pestilence and brutality accompany his bombing planes and tanks, but disillusionment, bitterness and class-hatred foster in their tracks and will wreak a terrible vengeance should military operations plunge on beyond political foresight.

Will 'Christian' Britain and 'Pagan' Reich permit their antagonism to blind them to the consequence of the social upheaval of Total war, or will they give heed to the counsel of Ecclesiastes—"Be not over-righteous, why shouldst thou destroy thyself." I suggest that whilst public attention is focussed upon the question of military victory or defeat, the powerful interests behind the war are considering this wider perspective. A dilemma confronts the ruling classes which must soon be decided, before the boomerang of Total war wheels to recoil upon them.

The iconoclastic changes in recent years compel that a drastic adjustment of policies must be made for the capitalist system to survive the imperative demands of historical transition. In these changes perhaps we may find an answer to the question posed above.

The past century has been one of increasingly rapid technical development. This has been impeded in latter years by the inability of class-divided society to distribute its commodity surplus, which caused a periodic building up of a vast accumulation of frustrated industrial energy, which released itself in war. War obtained a relaxation of the pressure of machine production, but further technical expansion during war only served to aggravate the tension and increased the drive towards Total War. Total War, instead of providing the capitalist system with a safety valve, threatens to carry away with it the very system itself, because it tends to become an end in itself, subordinating commercial interest to political policy.

Side by side with this technical progress proceeded an awakening of the political and social consciousness of the labouring masses. Mechanised transport and improved means of communications

encouraged mobility of labour and brought about a widespread interchange of ideas. The narrow parochial outlook of past generations gave way to a wider social awareness.

The new scientific methods of wealth production raised the material living standards of millions of workers above the poverty line, and produced a feeling of self respect with its consequent inclination towards independent thought. Thousands upon thousands of people began to seek a meaning in living beyond the daily grind of earning a livelihood. (The malignant persistence of unemployment somewhat obscured this factor, but it is important to recognise that this desire for intellectual emancipation is still growing and will increase as the workers, as a class,

Common Man

become aware of the possibilities almost within their reach for more full and satisfying lives).

The growth of popular education broke down the barrier of illiteracy which had confined knowledge within the comprehension of a privileged minority. The democratisation of knowledge has tremendous social significance, and should not be discounted because press propaganda appears still to direct working-class opinion. Also educational progress should not be estimated in ratio to the facilities available to society as a whole, but by comparison with the leisure permitted by the daily economic struggle. Whereas fifty years ago few had any knowledge outside parochial affairs, today millions are acquainted with currents of thought operating throughout the world. To nothing like the same degree as their parents are workers today bound by ignorant hearsay.

Whilst modern inventions have not succeeded in inculcating much abstract meaning into personal lives, nevertheless, the printing press, the cheap post, the telephone, cinema and radio have compelled a recognition of the interdependence of all within the community. This change from simple to complex society, has so increased the tempo of life that now few habits acquire permanence. Traditional beliefs are being uprooted by the most daring changes in ideas.

Modern methods of hygiene and sanitation, new labour-saving household appliances, and improved conditions of work introduced by scientific management of office, factory and municipal undertakings, have all assisted towards an expansion of outlook and a practical attitude towards social affairs.

All these factors promote the realisation that powerful mental influences were at work for many years over a vast field of human experience which built up a solid expectation of a reasonably bright future for humanity. The last war impacted upon this anticipation and produced a condition of doubt, perplexity and a sense of inchoate frustration. Since the signing of the last armistice, society has exhibited a state of nervous flux and with the coming of this present war, all the customs, ideas and hopes of the past have been thrown into the melting pot, and we live, literally from day to day on the brink of a collapse.

During the period under review the cultural pursuits which for ages had been the preserve of a fortunate few the civilisation of the upper crust of society, penetrated the lives of the working masses

who shewed signs of whetted appetites for such fare. These wars blighted many aspirations in this direction. The present war has, however, produced a very intelligent reaction in the field of, what was in peacetime, surplus labour and unwanted women. They have been quick to appreciate the importance placed upon their labour in contrast to the casual indifference of their rulers to the perpetual anxiety from economic insecurity and social isolation in which they formerly lived. They observed the ease with which the problem of unemployment, declared before the war to be insoluble, has during the past two years been eliminated. The poverty of their previous cultural pleasures is sharply posited against the extravagant future promised them after the war by hysterical politicians. Such observations naturally invite the pushing forward of demands for small instalments now of the golden harvest to follow victory, and each successful strike, each trifling economic gain, tends to increase self-respect and to arouse desire for further betterment. The output of the productive machinery during war compels a realisation of the enormous potential of modern wealth production, and opens up a wide vista of the great possibilities social effort contains. This must harden the determination to resist any lowering of living standards after the war.

In the light of these reflections can we continue to regard this war as one merely of rival economic ambitions, or of merely conflicting national policies? Must we not widen our vision to embrace these issues within a larger concept? The economic rivalry is certainly genuine, the political hostility is obviously a fact but surrounding these questions and surely more important to governmental systems is the rising challenge from the masses against the privileges and prerogatives of an outmoded social system.

History is in the throes of transition: that is the inescapable conclusion of our brief analysis, but in what direction is this movement? Any attempt to interpret social meaning into the war must take into consideration *the problems facing the ruling classes in all countries*. Do they not confront a prospect of class-strife which transcends their national rivalries: which might easily transform their inter-family fracas into international civil war. For ours is a horribly frustrated age, and frustration is capable of generating terrific dynamic very suddenly. The great promise of the past, contained in phenomenal technical progress, has not given the workers economic security, and miserably failed to satisfy their emotional and spiritual needs. Society is as rigid as ever in its caste system, as intolerant as ever in its defence of privilege. Disparity of income still makes mockery of political enfranchisement.

But this very expansion of industrial technique has introduced factors which have undermined the authority of our plutocratic oligarchy. Consider how rotten now is the fabric of the corrupt and decaying capitalist order. What ideological strength has it left? What psychological power does it possess to restrain the aspirations of the emotionally hungry masses, should barbarous war conditions incite their challenge? In the event of military defeat the government would collapse like a house of playing cards. Imperial Britain retains but a shadow of its former prestige among its subject races and is heartily despised by large sections of the British themselves. British Imperialism hangs together today merely by virtue of the economic advantages gained by the British exploitation of their coloured

brethren. With this gone the rotten egg of imperial prestige would release its putrid smell. The leaders of both sides would face almost certain annihilation in defeat. Certainly with the totalitarian States. The greater the extravagant promises of riches and glory after the war which they have made to their unfortunate peoples, and the more fanatical the faith their propaganda machines have invoked to withstand the stresses of war, so the more absolute will be the revulsion against them on suffering defeat.

What are the prospects of religion as a rallying point? So far as ecclesiastical authority is concerned, for years science has been corroding the influence of God's Estate Agents. In the event of a British defeat these dealers in superstition would never retain their dubious hold on their flocks. I see little hope of the turbulent youth of war's aftermath being amenable to the discipline of the Church.

The present generation is no longer exposed to the authority once embodied in local administration. Today this is little else but a tax collecting agency for centralised bureaucracy. Political parties have lost their independence and with it their social influence over their members. The importance of youth organisations and craft fraternities has almost vanished in recent years. The evacuation of children and the break-up of homes forced by the mobilisation of women must inevitably produce a weakening of family ties. Filial duty and parental responsibility no longer operate in a society divorced by years of war from the integrating meaning which such concepts had for previous generations. The indiscriminate bringing together of thousands of girls and youths into quasi-military organisations will very likely arouse an indifference to codes of morality, and prelude a defiance of sexual taboos which will not tolerate the interference of Mother Grundy's, priestly or secular.

How else can we but think that if this war is fought to the bitter end, as a genuine intention to obtain military conquest, it cannot but cause this crazy edifice of capitalist society to explosively disintegrate. The unstable foundations of an age which has sought to measure its progress by a blatant attachment to materialist values, and to reconcile these with a hypocritical and canting reiteration of meaningless religious loyalties will be evident to all.

How could a sternly prosecuted war hope to circumvent the crisis contained in its aftermath? Disillusionment would react in dissatisfaction. Psychological frustration would manifest itself in a convulsive ferment of contending ideologies. Nothing could prevent the poverty of philosophic meaning which capitalist civilisation has brought about from producing an eruption of rebellious emotions seeking to break free from the bonds of long imprisonment. Again we ask the question—Can it be that our rulers are ignorant of the tremendous psychological forces with which they play? Will they go all out for military conquest? I think not. There remains the policy of counter-revolution—escape by way of embracing and directing the transition period, as F. A. Ridley has indicated in his brilliant pamphlet, "Fascism—What is it."

Why should not the character of the war change? What prevents war itself being the instrument to curb the revolutionary dynamic? Why should not the ruling classes of the world merge and concentrate for mutual protection against the common herd. Suppose Hitler is sticking to his Mein Kampf policy,

(continued on page 12)

Questions and Answers

ON ANARCHISM

Question: What happens to such state functions as insurance and how would social services operate under Anarchism?

To answer these questions we must briefly outline the Anarchist society's method of distribution, which is socialist or communist. (By communist we do not, of course, refer to the ideas or programme of the Communist Party, a party which has about as much to do with communism as the Freemasons with bricklaying). Capitalist society having private ownership of the means of production must also carry the principle of private property into the realms of distribution and consumption. An Anarchist or Libertarian society also must have means of distribution and consumption in keeping with its economic basis, the abolition of the private monopoly of the means of production and that means abolishing the wage system.

Every society has some degree of communal distribution "to each according to his needs," primitive society most of all, capitalist least of all, for even capitalism has not abolished every shred of this fine human principle, operating it in the cases of public parks, roads, bridge, museums, libraries, etc. Obviously Anarchism will rapidly extend this principle to one utility after another. Remember that modern society can quite easily produce an overwhelming supply of all the necessities and comforts of life, so that there would be no need to have hordes of inspectors and officials to ensure the people do not eat too much. At the same time the syndicates of production would not produce such commodities as 40 horse-power automobiles, diamond tiaras or 100 room mansions. Such commodities only have meaning in a class society.

As all of these utilities would be distributed according to each ones need and not according to his ability to pay money, it follows that the aged, infirm and sick would

de as well served as the strong. So most of the necessity of "social service" would disappear. After all, "social service" is usually applied to the poor and not to the wealthy who have the money to satisfy their needs.

But, and this is a very great but, most "social services" are merely palliatives for problems created by capitalism. Unemployment arises because of the capitalist monopoly of the means of production and so the dole is created, not abolish unemployment but to make it endurable. Bad housing, dirty factories and malnutrition cause tuberculosis, the victim is sent to a sanatorium and, after a rest, sent back to the slum and factory to cultivate more tuberculosis. The same might be said of all their "services," old age pensions, lunacy boards and the rest. Social service is the scavenger of capitalist misery.

Insurance would be without meaning in an Anarchist society. The insecurity of the individual in a capitalist society makes insurance necessary today, but the principle of insurance being that a loss is better shared by many than by few or one, then it follows that the best "insurance" is the sharing of all risks and losses by the community. So in an Anarchist-Communist society the creation of a vast machine for the collecting of contributions is a waste of time and effort. The people now employed in government and other insurance would find productive work.

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MEXICAN WORKERS VICTIMS of GOVERNMENT SHOOTING

THE biggest massacre of workers in time of peace since Dictator Porfirio Diaz shot down 600 textile workers 35 years ago," took place in Mexico on 26th of September reports the Industrial Worker (11-10-41).

"The ghastly massacre, with a score dead and at least three score badly hurt, including women and children, was the result of a

(continued from page 10)

and certainly he has, so far, made no move against any vital British interest. Astute politician that he is perhaps he recognises the British Empire represents a stabilising influence in a world swollen with discontent and subversive movement. A stalemate in the military field would compel a British consolidation of Imperial defence, and a German consolidation of Europe. This underway, as indeed it is now, each State could lengthen its governmental tentacles to encompass all those rebellious of discipline. Workers' organisations could be cajoled or intimidated within the State machinery. (The T.U.C. President recently pronounced that "the Trade Unions are today an integral part of the State machinery"). Suppose the war went on, albeit cautiously, to provide the disciplinary period necessary for the world-totalitarian-confederacy-of-counter-revolution. From the viewpoint of the capitalist class there is surely much to recommend a quartering of the world between the Great Powers, Germany, Britain, America and Japan (with France and Italy given a buggy-ride of course), for if they face a universal threat from the international working class, would it not be better to combine forces, eliminate wasteful competition, and exploit the workers under a common scheme? At least it would solve that very dangerous unequal development of capitalism, which provides the various labouring masses with a source of strength.

Under the cloak of national patriotism what is to prevent the State propaganda machine from weaning away from the masses the entire inheritance of progressive and liberatian ideology bequeathed them from the eighteenth century. Why not a clandestine arrangement between apparent belligerents to accommodate themselves to changing conditions, until such time as the workers are once more disciplined and emotionally loyal to the doctrines of some phoney New Order.

Maybe this is an unrealistic suggestion, but there are signs that the ruling class has learned the lessons of the last war, and this is an age of irrationality. It might well be that this Fight for Freedom, this Crusade for the Liberation of Enslaved People, this Establishment of a United States of Europe, this Pax Germanica, is in truth a counter-revolution against Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, a barricade against Reason, a return to State Theocracy. It is becoming to look uncommonly like a class-war, a racket, a war against the Common Man.

clash between soldiers and peacefully demonstrating workers outside president Avila Camacho's private residence Sept. 26, a date which will be celebrated yearly by a solemn silence.

"Some 1,800 workers from the Military Arsenal Workers Union had gone to Camacho's house to present complaints against Gen. Bobadilla, head of the war equipments factory. Bobadilla it was said, was practising anti-union tactics."

The President refused to receive the petition but Col. Ochoa came out and a dispute arose between him and the union secretary. "Ochoa, or one of his aides, emptied his gun into the secretary's body. Then the shooting began. Three volleys were fired into the workers point blank before they could disperse. Many of the dead and wounded had been shot in the back. Three had been bayoneted."

The Mexican workers have paid dearly for their confidence in Camacho who was presented to them as being a friend of the workers. Even more than Cardenas, Camacho is the ally of the capitalists and the militarists leaders who take all the opportunities to crush the workers.

The expropriation by President Cardenas of the foreign owned oil and agricultural land, his attitude towards Republican Spain and towards Spanish refugees caused people to believe that he was a socialist, while under his regime the workers and peasants had to live on starvation wages as before and strikes and revolts were ruthlessly suppressed.

Camacho adopts even more openly fascist methods to crush the workers. This should be a warning to the Mexican workers who up to now have been fooled by left-wing politicians and Trade Union leaders into believing that Camacho represented the true interests of the people.

We note that the Anarcho-syndicalists union (affiliated to the I.W.M.A.) shows signs of renewed activity. Let us hope that with them workers will learn to rely not on corrupt politicians but in their own strength.

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Enemies of the People

THE words "class-struggle" must surely be the most common in the vocabulary of all revolutionists, but should we not pause to consider whether, by over-emphasising this aspect of society, we are not soft-peddling to a dangerous degree the responsibility of the individual for the continuation of a pernicious social system, in whatever stratum of that society he may find himself.

No realist can deny the existence of the inevitable and incessant tension between those who own and control the means of life and those who are graciously permitted sufficient (in most cases) to keep body and soul together, but, although there are often references to the fact that the workers have the power to change this iniquitous state of affairs, it seems that all too little emphasis is laid on the fact that, if we are all, to a greater or lesser extent, tarred with the same brush of capitalist mentality, the tar-removal process must be applied not only to the Machiavelian ruling class, but also to every other member of society retaining capitalist *values*. The Big Business and City of London fraternity can, of course, only operate so long as they retain the subservience of a very large middle or buffer class, which, in turn, derives certain privileges—and so on down the scale to such people as foremen, who can be as tyrannical as the most inflated blimp. The most ardent supporters of the capitalist system, whether consciously or unconsciously, are those who either see a chance to "get on" (no matter at whose expense) or are concerned with the preservation of an imaginary security. In short, the focussing of the attention of the working-class upon the "evil minority" tends to blind them (the majority) to the necessity for a change of values in themselves, as only by exorcising the devil of greed and acquisitiveness can the foundations be laid of a social system based upon free co-operation.

Much of the above may appear trite and commonplace, but it is important to bear in mind that to attempt to organise syndicates in factories or elsewhere without the workers understanding what is required of them as individuals, i.e., a sense of unity and brotherhood, and a willingness to forego any privilege they themselves may have obtained in the past over less skilled or less fortunate workers, will court failure.

Is it not true that almost every critic of the anarchist's case uses the argument that mankind as a whole is so bound up with self, and almost entirely unconcerned about the plight of his fellows, that it is useless ever to expect such a regeneration as that which a successful social revolution, i.e., an anar-

chist revolution, demands. We are asked what hope is there for a community which can complacently ignore the near-starvation of millions of its inhabitants and only becomes aware of their abject position when numbers of them walk from one end of the country to the other, or lie down in front of the traffic in the wealthiest and busiest centres of the country's capital? A community in which the aged and infirm drag out a miserable existence on a few shillings a week, after spending the whole of their active lives in producing wealth for this grateful country. And today can take the view of an interested spectator whilst millions of their fellow-workers are slaughtering one another not very far away, being mainly concerned with the cigarette shortage, the poorer quality of beer or the amount of their war bonus. If there is a coal shortage, this will be the main subject of conversation—not the ghastly suffering of mankind as a whole, not the low level of degradation to which human beings are sinking and the misery that lies ahead—least of all what degree of responsibility lies with themselves for past social crimes, the present lunatic chaos and future re-organisation of society.

However, the time must come when conditions will compel serious thought on social problems, and, in preparation for that occasion, the direction of our efforts must be carefully considered. By all means let us expose the repressions and tyrannies contained in a class-society, but beware of holding out false hopes to the oppressed (most of whom alas are not aware of it) in the manner of political parties who are, in effect if not by intent, working for a mere change of oppressors. In striving for the removal of all governmental and repressive institutions and the liquidation (used in its old sense) of the ruling class, let us always be vitally aware that this can only be achieved by the willing acceptance of entirely new values by the individual.

LAURIE HISLAM

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ON the one side are the disciplined, uniformed ranks of the Government obeying the word of command—they create nothing, their highest virtue is obedience, which means the sacrifice of judgment, the one quality that would make them higher than the beasts. On the other side are the irregular, motley ranks of the workers. In their hearts is rebellion, and their minds are filled with great ideals—ill-formed and imperfect, a dim consciousness of a mighty power to create something infinitely great and beautiful, for it is they who have moulded the wealth of the world into shape.

Who can doubt what is the meaning of this great struggle? Is it to end in a few extra crusts of bread for the workers' army? Is it merely to ensure that they shall be allowed to work rather than starve? Will peace be declared when a new party of politicians sit in Parliament?

It is far greater than all of these; it is the age-long struggle between the past and the future; it is the great war between liberty and slavery. On the one side are decaying relics of the dead past, and on the other side is the ever-growing strength of young ideals. Ignorance and submission against understanding and self-reliance. (p. 21).

from "The Anarchist Revolution" by G. Barrett



DIRECT action, having proven effective along economic lines is equally potent in the environment of the individual. There a hundred forces encroach upon his being, and only persistent resistance to them will finally set him free. Direct action against the authority in the shop, direct action against the authority of the law, direct action against the invasive, meddlesome authority of our moral code is the logical, consistent method of Anarchism."

from "Anarchism" by Emma Goldman



THE whole case for anarchism rests on a general assumption which makes detailed speculations quite unnecessary. The assumption is that the right kind of society is an organic being—not merely analogous to an organic being, but actually a living structure with appetites and digestions, instincts and passions, intelligence and reason. Just as an individual by a proper balance of these faculties can maintain himself in health, so a community can

Anarchism

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live naturally and freely, without the disease of crime. Crime is a symptom of social illness—of poverty, inequality and restriction. Rid the social body of these illnesses and you rid society of crime. Unless you can believe this, not as an ideal or fancy, but as a biological truth, you cannot be an anarchist. But if you do believe it, you must logically come to anarchism. Your only alternative is to be sceptic and authoritarian—a person who has so little faith in the natural order that he will attempt to make the world conform so some artificial system of his own devising. (pp. 30-31).

from "The Philosophy of Anarchism"

by Herbert Read



BUT if government, were it even an ideal revolutionary government, creates no new force and is of no use whatever in the work of demolition which we have to accomplish, still less can we count on it for the work of reorganisation which must follow that of demolition. The economic change which will result from the Social Revolution will be so immense and so profound, it must so change all the relations based today on property and exchange, that it is impossible for one or any individual to elaborate the different social forms which must spring up in the society of the future. This elaboration of new social forms can only be made by the collective work of the masses. To satisfy the immense variety of conditions and needs which will spring up as soon as private property shall be abolished, it is necessary to have the collective suppleness of mind of the whole people. Any authority external to it will only be an obstacle, and beside that a source of discord and hatred. (pp. 22-23).

from "Revolutionary Government" by P. Kropotkin



ANARCHISTS like Socialists, usually believe in the doctrine of the class war, and if they use bombs, it is as Governments use bombs for the purpose of war; but for every bomb manufactured by an Anarchist, many millions are manufactured by Government, and for every man killed by Anarchist violence, many millions are killed by the violence of States. We may, therefore, dismiss from our minds the whole question of violence, which plays so large a part in the popular imagination, since it neither essential nor peculiar to those who adopt the Anarchist position.

from "Roads to Freedom" by Bertrand Russell

How Free is the Left Press ?

A NEW YORK friend sending a contribution of \$25 to our funds wrote that she sent it "partly because I think it's so wonderful that England still allows you to exist, and partly because I read very interesting little items in WAR COMMENTARY that I never see anywhere else." The first part implies that our friend is agreeably surprised that WAR COMMENTARY adopting the line it does should be allowed to carry on admitting thereby that actually she didn't have much faith in "democracy", otherwise surely she would accept the fact that WAR COMMENTARY continues to appear just as a matter of course. We have received other letters from the other side of the Atlantic which criticise our attitude to the war on the grounds that in Germany we should not be allowed to publish Freedom Press publications. The argument is therefore that since Freedom of the Press is recognised in this country we have no right to use that liberty to oppose the war! Surely that is a bad as being like Mr. Morrison and his labour Party colleagues who are pacifists in peace-time only!

Regulation 18B

ACTUALLY the position in this country is not as easy and carefree as our American friends think. Already a number of our comrades have been sentenced to terms of imprisonment for refusing to bow to the dictates of the State, and the Defence Regulations such as 18B provide powers to the state which have been described as fascist even by men and women who are not socialists. And what is more important, Regulation 18B has been used by the Home Secretary Mr. Morrison with such zeal as to arouse the House and the Press. Therefore it is not to be assumed that it is impossible for the present Government to take steps to suppress all opposition if and when it is most convenient. The machinery to do so is there and the men in power have shown themselves capable of such measures in spite of their pasts (ex-C.O. and ex-socialists). *It is and will only be the vigilance of the politically conscious sections of the community that will prevent such measures.*

Paper Control

BUT there is a much subtler method of suppression of opinion which in the name of public economy can succeed in stifling any unwanted "voices." That is the Paper Control. In the first place it is illegal to publish any new periodicals during the war. That puts paid to any group which has sprung up during, and as a result of, the war and needs an organ for the expression and dissemination of its ideas. Further, supplies of paper are limited to 20 per cent of the consumption during the year ending August 1939. This hardly affects the National Press as it is it has nothing original to say (all newspapers obtain their information from the same source) and as further proof to this we should mention that about one third of their space

is given to advertisements. If they had more space we can well imagine that it would be given to advertisers who spend profits in advertising goods they cannot supply rather than patriotically handing it over to the state as Excess Profits Tax!

Again the large publishers could afford to lay in enormous stocks of paper before the paper control came into force. These publishers are also able to find printers and binders whereas the small Left Wing publishers find it difficult to get their work printed (the printers are either too busy on Government contracts or are intimidated by the Defence Regulations which threaten them if periodicals bearing their imprint are suppressed by the Government) and virtually impossible to have their publications bound when they do find a printer.

And the paper shortage does effect small publishers like Freedom Press, who when war broke out were in the process of building up an organisation and reaching out to a wider public. And to add to these difficulties all our London stock was destroyed during an air-raid.

A Further Difficulty

BUT worse still in the case of Freedom Press not only are we threatened (a) with suppression by a dictatorial Home Secretary and (b) paper starvation but also (c) by lack of funds to continue our work, a point we must admit our New York friend did foresee! And we have to bear in mind that in the New Year all printing charges are being increased by 15 per cent. which means that if WAR COMMENTARY is to remain at 2d. a copy and the Supplement at 1d. and the pamphlets at a price to make them accessible to workers we must rely on contributions to our Funds. The Reconstruction Fund closes at the end of this month, and while we cannot hope to reach our original objective we ask our readers to make sure that we reach the £300 mark by the end of December. We have already £235, so that the £65 required is not very much amongst so many readers and sympathisers.

RECONSTRUCTION FUND

NOVEMBER 1941

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------|-------------------------|
| London: Hyde Park | Anon. | £5/0/0 |
| Sympathisers | 5/0 | Maidstone: E. T. J. |
| Kingston: T. W. B. | 10/0 | London: S. S. |
| Islington: T. A. McC. | 5/0 | Bournemouth: L. A. M. |
| Cricklewood: R. M. | 10/0 | |
| London: Hyde Park | | 1/0 |
| Sympathiser | 3/6 | Manchester: N. L. |
| Bristol: C. W. L. | 5/0 | Glasgow: R. T. |
| Bristol: Miss J. G. | 2/6 | Windsor: J. A. W. |
| London: T. B. | £1/0/0 | London: J. H. |
| Huddersfield: L. H. | 2/5 | New York: M. d S. |
| Stroud: L.G.W. | £1/0/0 | Waltham Cross: C. J. W. |
| Fordingbridge: A. J. | | |
| | £5/7/0 | London: M. L. B. & |
| Bristol: J. S. R. | 5/0 | V. R. |
| Manchester: G. W. | 2/0 | Lanarkshire: H. P. |
| Essex: A. W. | 1/0 | Aldershot: A. G. |
| Brede: C. S. | £1/0/0 | Leicester: R. L. P. |
| | | Month's Total |
| | | £34/8/0 |
| | | Previously Acknowledged |
| | | £201/5/2 |

TOTAL TO DATE £235/13/2