

WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY

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Twopence

THE WHOLE world is at war. Even the few countries not directly engaged in the struggle are suffering an economic crisis and political repression which makes their fate just as bad as those of the belligerent countries.

In Eastern Europe, the Pacific and North Africa, total war is carried on with all it implies in the sacrifice of human lives and natural riches. The myth which was born in 1939 of an easy war where Maginot lines and blockades would replace tank battles and bayonet fights seems far away. With it has died the confidence in a short war in which fascism would be completely crushed and democracy triumph not only in Europe but in the whole world.

The progressive "democratization" of Britain and of the Empire has not taken place. At home, as in the Dominions and Colo-

FOR WHAT?



nies the ruling class remains all powerful and the greatest sacrifices have been borne by the workers.

The aim of the war which seemed to many people extraordinarily obvious becomes more and more difficult to define. Democracy becomes an empty word when countries with a long record of feudal oppression like Poland take part in it. Democracy becomes an obviously hypocritical excuse when countries like India are forced to fight for it. How can we fight for democracy when we have on our side a Roman Catholic, anti-semitic country like Canada, when we seek the alliance of South American governments with more resemblance to Franco's than to democratic ones, when Burma is refused independence?

The excuse may be put forward that the means justify the end, that socialist measures must wait

and alliance with reactionary governments sought so that the war can be won more quickly. This excuse can convince only those who do not grasp the nature of the forces in conflict. But even if we stop considering for a moment the means to be used we find that the end for which concessions and compromises are advocated has not yet been defined. Are we fighting for the Europe of the Polish Foreign minister Count Edward Raczynski who, in the Sunday Times, talks of restoring the balance of power in Europe by giving to Poland the place previously occupied by France and by carving up Germany?

Are we fighting for the preservation of an Empire which will not even be given the privileges of the Atlantic Charter?

Are we fighting for the Britain of the probable future Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of York who stands for "a heavily armed Britain and conscription for the next two generations?"

Are we fighting for Stalin's order in Europe which will strengthen Poland, allow a certain amount of independence to Europe and leave Britain's ambitions in the Mediterranean and North Africa a completely free field?

This is the end which the head of the Russian State, the Church of England and mighty politicians want us to achieve, while they talk of fighting for democracy!

The war becomes more and more clearly an imperialist war. While people may believe that in Britain and France they were defending democracy they have no excuse for thinking that they will die in the Far East for the same cause. What has taken the place of the "fight for democracy" humbug? For many a faith in Russia, in Stalin's order in Europe! But is it because Russia represents democracy? or socialism? No, Finland is not forgotten yet and Stalin had been a "red Tsar" too long to become a second President Roosevelt. Russia arouses a certain amount of confidence and admiration because she is the first country to resist Hitler with any success. People are not interested to know how the Russians are defending their country. If they use means similar or worse than those used by the Nazis; if in order to wage the war successfully Stalin has to decree that black marketeers should be shot and people imprisoned if they absent themselves from

work. The people are not in the least perturbed in their admiration for Stalin when he uses exactly the same methods which they condemn in Hitler. They are supposed to fight totalitarianism and they put their trust in exactly the same kind of totalitarian regime!

The people of Britain and of the Allied countries have been so doped by high sounding pretexts given to their struggles and sacrifices that they do not realise that they are only unthinking pawns in the hands of their exploiters and that they are fighting for interests which are not theirs.

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DIRECT ACTION BY KENT MINERS

LEADERS GAOLED

(FULL REPORT FROM OUR REPRESENTATIVE)

IT is customary nowadays to deplore strikes and automatically dismiss strikers as "slackers" or even "quislings." The reactionary press has fostered this attitude, but so also have the so-called "Left" papers. Thus the Co-op paper "Reynolds News" in its leader on 25th January states that "There is little to be said in defence of the Betteshanger strikers, except that miners do not deny the community coal nor their families bread merely for the fun of the thing. . . ." Even in the daily press, however, the manifest justice of the striking miners' case has had to be grudgingly admitted, especially after the high-handed gaoling of their leaders and the imposition of fines on the remainder of the men.

In view of the unsatisfactory nature of the press reports of the strike, it was decided to obtain first-hand information. At first the miners, on account of the unfair treatment of their case by other papers, were reluctant to talk, but they were soon convinced by our comrade that **WAR COMMENTARY** was concerned only with the truth of the whole matter, and volunteered the following information. The facts given below are vouched for by the miners, who are prepared to challenge contradiction.

IN November a number of men were transferred from the East Side, where the face was comparatively easy to work, and where earnings were about 10/- a day, to No. 2 face which is a very hard one to work, so that earnings dropped very considerably. A Government arbitrator (Sir Charles Doughty) came down when a dispute arose over this sudden drop in wages, and decided that certain allowances should be made as from 10th December. It should be pointed out that Sir Charles required to be advised "upon all mining technicalities and customs." He collapsed in the pit whilst on inspection, and that in his condition it is very doubtful whether he could have made an accurate examination of the face concerned. In any case, Sir Charles' conclusions are challenged by miners who consider several of them to be inaccurate and misleading. To take one example, he states that one shift produced an average of 6 tubs per man per hour, and another only 1 tub per man—entirely failing to mention that in the first case the men were 'heading' the coal (which can be done at a vastly greater speed) and in the second case working on a face in an abnormal seam. Incidentally, Sir Charles Doughty swallowed whole the excuse given by the management for the transfer to the more difficult seam, which was that there were insufficient boys to do the haulage work on the East Side. This, however, fails to hold water since there was a shortage also on No. 2, to which colliers had to be transferred to do the haulage work.

The miners, however, made an effort to carry on in accordance with the arbitration decision, but when only 7/- per shift was paid for week-ending 2nd Jan. negotiations were opened with the Colliery management, in view of the fact that under the Minimum Wage Regulation and the Kent County Agreement **THE MINIMUM RATE PER SHIFT IS 10/4½d.** The attitude of the Management was seen at the end of the following week—9th January—when the miners on No. 2 found they had been paid at the rate of 6/9 per shift (A war bonus of 4/6 per shift over and above all the rates quoted above is paid by the Government and is not the concern of the owners). *This state of affairs aroused the men to action, and by a unanimous decision of the whole 1,600 men working at the colliery they came out in defence of their minimum wage.*

At the end of the following week the Management issued summonses against the miners for breach of contract damages, but these were later withdrawn. The men then received summonses from the Ministry of Labour, charges being made under the Defence Regulations, and at Canterbury on 23rd January three of the strike leaders were gaoled. William Powell, Branch Secretary of the Kent Miners' Association got two months; Tudor Davies, J.P. (President Betteshanger Branch K.M.A.) and Isaac Methuen (member of the Branch Committee), both of them Deal Town Councillors, one month each, all

(Continued on page 16)

*Behind the***"FOOD FOR STARVING"**

You cannot help the people by playing the government's game, for the interests of rulers are fundamentally opposed to those of the people. Socialists and Pacifists only perpetuate starvation by advocating reformist half measures.

A GREAT deal of propaganda is being put out at the moment in favour of petitions and what-not to "compel" the government to send food to starving Europe, especially France and Greece. While we respect the humanitarian motives of those who devote energy to this "campaign," we consider it dangerous in that it provides another red herring drawn across the track of those who are trying to see through the tissue of propaganda falsehoods which conceal the real nature of war and government.

HELP FOR HITLER

In many cases Hitler is just as anxious to avoid starvation among subject peoples—and the Germans themselves for that matter—as the humanitarians. For Britain and America to feed these peoples would be indeed humane. But since it would manifestly interfere with the prosecution of the war—and Churchill and Roosevelt are hardly going to assist Hitler in his difficulties!—it is necessary for these propagandists to face the fact that they are playing Hitler's game. Or rather, that they would be, if it were possible for petitions and "demands" to influence the policy of the ruling class in this

matter. And all history shows that it is impossible by constitutional means to make them do something against their interests.

That food ships may be sent from the "democracies" to the unfortunate peoples whom they forced into the war and then deserted, is not entirely ruled out, however. Such acts would be a powerful propaganda weapon, not so much among the peoples to whom the food is delivered by the Red Cross or the Quakers, but among the workers in the democracies themselves. Clearly the task of adequately feeding a starving population would be a gigantic one. And since the food would have to be provided free, it is difficult to see how this could be achieved under an economic regime such as the present one, which is based on production for sale rather than for use. (Permission for the free distribution of an apple surplus which could not be exported from Canada, was refused recently; instead the apples were rolled down a hillside. When the local population began to pick them up, they were warned off, and the apples were then sprayed with kerosene to make them unfit for eating.)

STARVATION NOT NEW, BUT CHRONIC

Starvation is a chronic condition for the workers in almost all countries. It is only when the government-controlled press, for its own propaganda needs, draws attention to the sufferings of peoples under Nazi domination, that the liberal humanitarian sections of the bourgeoisie begin to take these wholly inadequate steps to try and mitigate the conditions. In effect, they are unpaid propagandists for the government. The socialist press (at least the left elements of it) have for years been drawing attention to the gross malnutrition in India, which lowers the average expectation of life for the Indian to 26 years. But the humanitarians have never suggested sending food ships—and there would have to be a hell of a lot of them—to the starving three hundred and seventy millions of India, to mention only one of the British colonies who have for years been in the same plight as the Greeks are to-day.

Pacifists and others are never tired of reminding us that the British government kept up the blockade

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by

ANTON CILIGA

(Author of "The Russian Enigma*")

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Slogans

EUROPE"

of Germany for two whole years after the armistice of 1918. What they do not realise is that the Hoover commission and the Quakers who sent food parcels to Germany with government permission throughout this period wholly failed to make any significant difference to the conditions inside Germany. What they did do was to give humane people the illusion that "something was being done," and so enabled the government to carry out its inhuman and beastly policy of starving the Germans to keep them slaves. As now, they were, in fact, playing the government's game, by drawing attention away from the fact that governments are never in the slightest degree concerned with the sufferings of men, women, and children of the workers anywhere, but only in retaining their power and in advancing the interests of the class they represent.

This is not to say that we are indifferent to the sufferings of the starving workers on the continent, *or anywhere else*. As Anarchists we fight against all injustice and cruelty. What we also have to fight against are methods of struggle against these things that are wholly ineffective and totally misleading. Such methods only delay the application of radical cures, and so, in effect, assist reaction to maintain the hideous status quo.

REAL CAUSE OF STARVATION

Starvation is omnipresent in a world of potential plenty in peace as well as in war. With modern methods every country could feed its own population from its own soil. They fed their smaller populations in the past with undeveloped methods of cultivation, and with the application of modern methods—prevented everywhere by various forms of vested interests—they could also feed their much larger populations to-day. The idea that British soil *cannot* supply its population is merely capitalist propaganda though it is often echoed by the Marxists. When most of the capital and labour power in all countries is mainly devoted to production of non-consumable war products, instead of to essential needs, it is not surprising that people starve. Hitler tells the German people that they starve because of the blockade; Churchill declares that we go short because of the U-boats. The real cause of starvation everywhere, however, is the misapplication of labour and capital and technical resources in order to suit the capitalist method of production for sale, instead of for need. By spouting about the blockade, these well-intentioned people are only helping the governments to delude their slaves, and divert their attention from the real means of throwing off the yoke which condemns them to misery and relative or absolute starvation.

When they say that "that is all very well but that we can do something, even a very little, to relieve suffering," we reply: for every ton of food that Britain and American propaganda departments send to Greece or France, Hitler will take a compensating ton out of those countries. Humane but reformist attempts may help Hitler, but they won't help the Greeks. Indeed they will only make them imagine that the British government are somehow different

from all other governments, and cherish humane feelings towards them, thereby enabling the British financiers once more to enslave Greece for the benefit of British imperialism.

LAY THE AXE TO THE ROOT

You cannot help the people by playing the government's game, for the interests of governments are fundamentally opposed to those of the people. The desire to relieve suffering and distress is universal—it is a manifestation of the principle of Mutual Aid—yet poverty and misery have always been the lot of the masses of mankind who are shuffled about by their governments. We appeal to all those who are moved by considerations of humanity and justice, not to spend their energies on efforts which can only be ineffective within the status quo. Let them rather devote their strength towards the overthrow of the authoritarian system whereby the few rule the many; whereby the minority enjoy luxury and security while the masses live precariously or starve outright. Where men are free, their impulses of mutual aid can build a life of plenty for all. Where governments monopolize the organization of the people's lives misery will always be universal.

As with all other social questions, the lesson of wartime starvation is that reformist methods are quite useless, however well-intentioned. And they assist reaction by once more deferring the application of radical revolutionary methods. They help to perpetuate suffering, and divert human energies that the revolutionary movement can ill-spare. Capitalist reality must be faced; our solutions may seem harsh to the sentimental; but until they are applied the workers and peasants of the world will continue to suffer miserable and slavish lives so that the few can carry out a pointless and vulgar existence of luxury and power.

J. H.

BETRAYER'S FATE

THE fate of socialist and trade-union leaders in nazified Europe is more enviable than that of socialist, communist and anarchist rank and file. While those are shot, the leaders are merely kept in prison like Leon Blum, and when they are servile enough they are allowed to retain their freedom and even some of their past influence by publishing pro-nazi newspapers like *De Man* in Belgium and *Déat* in Paris. Jouhaux had also for a time enjoyed the fruits of his treachery to the workers' cause. But Hitler's gratitude does not last long. The general secretary of the French T.U.C. is now reported to have been arrested.

Jouhaux had betrayed the working class in 1914 when he renounced his anti-militarist and revolutionary ideas and gave full support to the government in the war against Germany. After the war he proved to be more interested in serving the interests of the capitalists and various political parties than those of the workers and in 1939 he took part in the drastic suppression of all workers' liberties, thus becoming hated and despised by all class-conscious French workers.

Jouhaux should have been judged by the justice of the people and not by Hitler to whom he has handed over the French working class tied hand and foot by reactionary decrees and deprived of its best militants.

CHEAP LABOUR

As we have predicted skilled workers conscripted in the army are used as cheap labour. The Government knew what it was doing after all when it conscripted skilled men: now it gets its work done for 2/6 a day.

"Army buses with army drivers are to run in Glasgow in the New Year to supplement the ordinary services. The plan is to operate the buses for war workers only between their factories and their homes." *The Weekly News* (3.1.42.)

WAR FOR CULTURE?

Penny newspapers have plenty of paper to waste in advertising non-existent goods but valuable books can't be published for lack of paper. *The Manchester Guardian* (14.1.42.) gave the following figures:

"As compared with 1939, book production in 1941 was nearly halved—7,581 books as against 14,904. Nearly every type of book is down. Only books on aeronautics and naval and military topics show an increase, and it must be admitted that most of those are little more than moderately good journalism between stiffer covers than a daily newspaper can provide. It may be argued that many of all those volumes are of ephemeral value, but that is to overlook the fact that reprints have also been halved since 1939 (from 4,493 to 2,326), that a reprint indicates a work of some standing value, and that it has been recently reckoned that about two-thirds of the total amount of paper now available for book production is devoted to reprints. Yet what is happening in that important section of the publishing trade is shown by the fact that more than 500 of the 970 volumes which should be available in the Everyman Library cannot be supplied by the publishers."

HIGH WAGES!

Highest farm workers' wages in the country is to be paid to the Cumberland and Westmorland workers. Their minimum weekly rate for 1942 has been fixed at £3 12s. But they will work 60 hours a week for it. *The Weekly News* (3.1.42.)

GLASS HOUSE SCANDAL

At last some news has filtered into the press on the conditions of soldiers imprisoned in the glass houses. Captain Bellenger wrote an article to the *Sunday Pictorial* (28.1.42) exposing the conditions in Army Prisons.

"Everything has to be done at the 'double' and although double marching has its purpose, it can be used by those versed in the bullying ways known to some 'instructors' until a man can fall flat with sheer exhaustion.

"As if this is not enough, a thorough-going N.C.O. who knows his job can order a man to double with a full kit-bag under each arm.

"A slight refinement of this exercise is to order a man to double round the square holding a 3ft. drainpipe above his head."

An article in the "Railway Review" (12.9.41) quoted by "Forward" paints a similar picture:

"All moves are at the double, even visits to the latrines, where 70 men must queue up, double-marking time, to use accommodation sufficient for ten, being timed, those in one department being granted one minute, those in the adjacent compartments one minute and a half! At the double all the time."

MALAYAN C.P. DEFENDS IMPERIALISM

In the latest C.P. edition "The New Year Clarion," there appears on page three an item of news which has significance for the exploited colonial workers.

Above this item of news appears a photograph of a Chinese tin-worker in Malaya, and the caption boldly announces that "his wages are 2/- per day."

Instead of denouncing this disgusting exploitation, the Malayan branch of the Chinese C.P. has issued a manifesto calling upon all its members to "turn each street, lane, mine, village and rubber estate into a bulwark for the defence of our land." The manifesto adds "We will fight to the last drop of blood in the defence of Malaya."

Thus does the C.P. defend the Imperialist exploitation of the pukha sahib.

Through

BLACK MARKET ETHICS

Housewives who try to get an extra egg for their husband's dinner will be surprised to know that according to the *Manchester Guardian* "The 'black market' is not made by the wickedness of profiteers so much as by the folly and cupidity of consumers." And that the remedy advocated is more heavy punishments "The punishment should be deterrent not only to the offender but to all of his kidney."

Heavy punishments are not a solution. The proof of that is that there is a black-market in Germany and in Russia where the offenders are punished with the death penalty. The consumers will not try to get more than their share if they have the feeling that sacrifice is shared equally. But housewives nowadays are not blind nor deaf. They see and read in newspapers about restaurants offering good meals for those who can pay for them. How can they therefore feel the slightest pang of conscience when they try to get an extra few pence worth of meat. The only solution to black market is the abolition of the profit system and rationing according to people's needs. There was no black-market in Barcelona in the first few months of the revolution when the syndicates and co-operatives organised their distribution of food giving to the people according to their needs and not in exchange of money.

IMPORTANT REASONS

The *Manchester Guardian* commenting on the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury points rather unexpectedly to the importance of finance in the tasks of an archbishop and spiritual leader:

"But there is a weightier reason for his retirement. Much of the organisation of the Church, much of her policy is clearly in the melting pot. Financial reasons, and reasons more important even than those of finance will make widespread reorganisation necessary."

22.1.42

PIECE-WORK RATES

There are all sorts of Trade Union "guarantees" against employers cutting piece work rates. Workers at the bench (rather than in the Union offices) have plenty of experience of employers' methods in this matter. But Lord Buckmaster, in a recent letter to the *Times*, gave a kind of textbook account of them. "It may not always be possible to reduce the rates paid," he admitted, "but other solutions can be found; for example, suspending work on a particular article and arranging for its manufacture with a sub-contractor who is free to fix piece-rates on a fresh basis." It is quite easy, you see!

OTHER EMPLOYERS' TRICKS

How to reduce Wages

The *Manchester Guardian* (23.1.42) gives the following account of charges made against employers

the Press

by delegates from Coventry's chief engineering works:

"In order to force down wages, the delegates say, the employers are dismissing skilled men and taking on women in their place. The dismissals are being justified to the National Service officers on the ground that the skilled men are redundant. As a result, it is said, between 2,000 and 3,000 men in Coventry are unemployed, but not registered as such because they are being sent away as trainees, are refusing to register, or are declaring themselves "unsuitable" for the poorly paid semi-skilled work they are being offered."

"Window-dressing" Night Shifts

The report continues:

"The shop stewards say that "window-dressing" night shifts are staged for visitors at works where the machines stand idle during the day. They say that machine tools stand idle at one factory when they are needed at another, and that many expensive American machine tools have never been assembled."

How to get round

the Appeal Board's decisions

"TOOLS TAKEN AWAY"

"Workers at a factory 16 miles from Coventry took time off for Christmas shopping which had been refused them. One hundred and seventy-two skilled workers were dismissed, but the local Appeal Board would not confirm the dismissals and the men returned to work. On doing so they found, it is said, that the employers had taken away all jigs, tools, and unfinished work to an unknown place. No work was available, therefore, and 108 of the 172 men were again dismissed."

ROOSEVELT VERSUS HITLER AND...

JOHN LEWIS

"The Rooseveltian technique is an extremely effective one up to a point. It is simply to increase the pressure little by little, slowly but relentlessly, until the opponent cracks, or blows up from an interior explosion. The technique cracked Jimmy Walker. *Perhaps it has cracked John L. Lewis. Conceivably, it might crack Hitler...*"

Gerald White Johnson, Editor of the *Baltimore Sun* in *Life* 24.1.42.

AMERICAN LEBENSRAUM

Going to Guiana.

On Nov. 24 the President announced that, by agreement with the Netherlands Government in London, American troops were proceeding to move into Surinam, or Dutch Guiana, a moist malarial quadrangle set in the north coast of South America between British Guiana and French Guiana (famed chiefly for its notorious prison, Devil's Island). Thus America extended its protective arm still closer to the strategic "Bulge of Brazil" and assured itself of Guiana's rich bauxite mines—source of 615,500 tons of aluminium in 1940.

Ideally, to vitiate the menace of Dakar, 1,620 miles from Natal, the U.S. should plant its troops in Brazil. But Latin America is not yet ready to accept such a forthright good neighbourly action (sic). In Brazil, however, Pan American Airway engineers are currently constructing a series of nine air bases, strung along and around Brazil's big bulge.

The U.S. also now finds itself master of 54,000 square miles, much of it jungle—2,000 white Europeans, 3,000 aboriginal redskin tribesmen, 42,000 British Indians, 34,000 East Indians imported by the Dutch as labourers, and 19,000 Bush Negroes ruled by "King" Ah Tuden Du.

WE, CIVILISED PEOPLE

Molotov's note about German atrocities has received great publicity in the press. The lynching of an American negro takes up just ten lines in the newspapers.

"A mob of over 300 to-day seized and critically injured a 30-year-old negro held in the city gaol at Sikeston, Missouri, on a charge of having criminally attacked a white woman, reports *Reuter*."

The crowd then dragged the victim, Cleo Wright through the negro quarter of the town, soaked his body in petrol and burned it."

Evening Standard 26.1.42.

ADMISSION

"General Franco, on his way to pay his first visit in three years to Barcelona, to-day told the monks of Montserrat monastery (says *Associated Press*) that Spain now had a chief (himself) and an army, and 'now we need a people.'"

Franco will find his people (those he has not already slaughtered) in Spanish prisons and concentration camps. This does not prevent the British Government from keeping an ambassador in Madrid who professes to be on the best of terms with the head of the Spanish Government.

Coming Meetings— and Lectures

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Lectures start at 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6th

FREDRICK LOHR

Peter Kropotkin and Mutual Aid

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13th

GEORGE WOODCOCK

Farming in Wartime

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20th

Dr. JOHN HEWETSON

Public Ill-Health

Questions and Discussion Admission Free

PECKHAM

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9th at 7 p.m.

TOM BROWN

Introduction to Anarchism

Dick Sheppard Centre
158, Queen's Road, S.E.15.
Non-Anarchists especially welcomed

Kingston

The Dart Room, The Fighting Cocks,
London Road

Wednesday 4th, February, 7 p.m.

Harry Jones

Peter Kropotkin

The Great Russian Revolutionary

Wednesday, 11th February, 7 p.m.

M. L. Berneri

The Spanish Workers and their Fight against
Fascism

Oxford

FRIDAY 13th FEBRUARY

First Principles of Anarchism

St. Mary's Hall 5 p.m.

Speaker: **JOHN HEWETSON**

Glasgow

Wednesday 4th February 7 p.m.

**Inaugural Meeting of the
Friends of Freedom Press**

Anarchist Federation Rooms
127 George Street Glasgow C.1.

—IMPERIAL The Social

THE rapid retreat of the British forces in Malay and around Singapore has brought out the usual excuses, chief of which is "lack of preparation." Even the most newspaper-sterile mind finds that story difficult to swallow, for we have had Singapore preparedness hammered into us for more than twenty years. Military works on the island, carried on for several generations, were intensified in the early twenties and in 1938 there was completed "the largest, the most powerful and most modern naval and military base in the world." It would be as well for a fire brigade to declare it was not prepared for fires. Few will remember how the financing of further Singapore defences entered into the election disputes of 1923, becoming, in some constituencies, almost a major issue.

Although those electoral disputes often caused a great deal of heat, the present danger of Singapore arouses among the general public, less emotion than a football match or an outbreak of hiccups in the royal family. We do not seem to be an imperial people by inclination so much as by accident. I have always suspected the imperial fervour of the British people since I discovered schoolchildren waving Japanese made Union Jacks on Empire Day (the Japanese made flags were bigger and cheaper than the British articles).

Situation Well in Hand

Fresh news of retreat and loss in Malay arouses only cynical smiles. Official assurances of imminent victory and good news tomorrow turns the smiles into hard laughter. The public is not helped by the apologists of the Government. Defending Air Marshall Sir R. Brooke-Popham against the attacks of Lord Addison, Lord Trenchard (himself an ex-brass hat), said in the House of lords, "What does Lord Addison expect of a commanding officer in his speeches? Is a commanding officer to say, 'Hong Kong will fall and must be evacuated'? Is he to say that Malaya cannot defend itself?"

Well, if he cannot say that he could keep silent, but that would not occur to a brass-hat. You cannot stop a general making speeches. But next time you read official statements of "Air supremacy in three days, Hong Kong is impregnable or the situation is well in hand," remember Trenchard, "What does one expect of a commanding officer in his speeches." We expect a horizontal champion to state, on the eve of his big fight "I'll murder him in one round," but we do not pay any attention to him.

TWILIGHT in the FAR EAST

Significance of Singapore

Dilemma Down Under

Singapore is of the greatest possible significance to the British Empire. With this great base in the hands of the Japanese, where else can the British and U.S. navies be based, refitted and refueled? Singapore is the key to Burma, India, the East Indies, New Zealand and Australia. It is little wonder that Australia is alarmed, her best troops scattered in military gambles, or in the care of titled nincompoops," the enemy likely to approach her northern shores, with a vast continent to defend and a population of 7,000,000 against that of Japan's 100,000,000. It is not surprising she should look around for assistance. In these circumstances we are not

By
Tom Brown

surprised by the statement of the Leader of the Australian Labour Party that Australia will look to America rather than to Britain for military aid.

Nor are we surprised by Menzies' attack on this statement. The economic conflict between Britain and the U.S.A., has been, since the last war, carried into all the British dominions. In Australia this has led to an ever-increasing American share of capital investment. War accentuates the economic conflicts of other times, and the economic war of the two "Anglo-Saxon" powers will from time to time, be reflected in the line up of Australian political parties. So far the Labour Party looks like becoming the champion of yankee capital.

It must be of little comfort to the Australians to learn that Malay is short of tanks and aircraft because Britain has sent so many to Russia. It is hardly complimentary to Australia to say that Germany and not Japan is the enemy, for the German military might is embedded in Russia, while Japan is approaching the gates of the southern continent. As little comfort as that of the relatives of the crews of the Prince of Wales and the Repulse on learning that they lacked air support because the planes had been sent to Russia. "Save Bolshevism and lose the Empire" seems a queer slogan for the Conservative Party.

Misalliance

One might here turn aside to comment on the ramshackle character of the Anglo-Russian alliance. While Russia and Britain are allies against Germany, Russia remains on terms of treated friendship with Japan while, according to pro-Russian reports large Soviet forces are idle in the far east. Says Ivor Montague in "The Red Army," "In the East, near Vladivostock, there must be a fleet strong enough to keep off the Japanese or anyone else on the Pacific." (It is possible that a large part of the Russian navy is there, that part which is in the Baltic is of little use). And further, "Not long ago Kuznetsov declared that U.S.S.R. had more submarines than Germany, Italy and Japan put together." Of the army Montague says, "The Far Eastern Army, which

would have to face the Japanese, is entirely separate from the rest of the forces, with separate tanks and air force, separate war industry, separate food reserves and supply."

Above all it is Russia alone which holds the territory from which Japan might be attacked. In the present case, while any combination might turn up, it seems that Stalin is very reluctant to become the ally of Britain in the East. Perhaps the communists may persuade him to open a second front in the East.

White Niggers

The general effect of the retreat in Malay must be to weaken the imperial bonds and system of alliances. Chief of the problems will be that of continuing to hold down the "coloured races" of the Empire. How often have we heard that British forces must be in India, or Burma, or Africa because the "coloured races" cannot protect themselves. The carefully built up legend of "white superiority" is receiving a severe hammering. As it declines, the confidence of the colonial subjects will increase. It may be that we are at the beginning of a severe contraction of the Empire.

As the Eastern empire shrinks there will arrive in Britain increasing numbers of colonial administrators, planters and slave drivers; those whom even the capitalist press speaks of as ignorant, selfish whisky swillers. Their arrival here can only mean the further depression of the metropolitan working class. The white sahibs have been used to a very high living standard, a standard wrenched from a starving native population. With the loss of imperial possessions that high standard can only be maintained by lowering that of the British workers.

Further, the sahibs have been used to power. Who has not heard them boasting while on a year's leave, of "jumping on a nigger's feet," or "kicking a Chinese in the ribs." Often it is just the whisky talking but it reveals the mind of this type.

They will not quickly lose this habit of power, they will ask to exercise it on the British workers. We only become the home coolies, the white niggers. A poetic fate for an imperial people. With the increasing surliness and rebellion which the workers will develop on the prolongation of the war, some sort of "black and tan" force is likely to arise. What better candidate for the job than an out-of-work sahib? When these gentlemen arrive home in increasing numbers we shall learn the meaning of fascism.

Such a social phenomenon is not new; it happened in Spain after the decline of the Spanish Empire. At the height of that empire a vast parasitic class had developed in Spain. The loss of the fruits of overseas possessions led to an intensification of exploitation at home. Even to-day the ruling class of Spain is faced by an insoluble problem, how to maintain an imperialistic parasitic growth without an empire.

It seems we are beginning that historical process in Britain. It may take a long time or it may come swifter than any of us dream, but come it will. In these stormy days to come, talk of the restoration of British parliamentary democracy will be sadly out of place. Britain will become the most fascist or the most revolutionary country. It is up to us.

A Red and Black Notebook

THE RUSSIAN T.U. DELEGATION

THE Russian Trade Union delegation visiting this country seems to prefer the company and guidance of the state and employing class officials rather than the company of workers.

At the Handley Page aircraft works the delegation was shown around by Mr. Handley Page and Moore-Brabazon. The shop stewards were carefully ostracised.

Much peeved, the Stalinists among the stewards issued a handbill protesting against the conduct of the visit. In the handbill they stated, *"the Shop Stewards bitterly resent what appears a deliberate affront to themselves and the men they represent, in depriving them of the opportunity of giving expression to appreciation and gratitude for all that the Soviet people have suffered and accomplished."*

It is difficult to know who is blamed for this, the management, the T.U.C., or the Russian delegates themselves. After telling of the wonderful reception they would have given the delegates, if they had been invited to join the party, the stewards further say, *"But someone decreed otherwise, and in view of the facts obtainable it is difficult to pin the blame on to any particular person or persons."*

Well, if the Russians wanted to see the shop stewards or the British bolsheviks they could. We have not heard them complain of being the prisoners of Moore-Brabazon and Citrine. If they do not desire the company of unimportant people, why peeve?

MEN OR MICE?

THE same handbill complains of the Handley Page management playing a cat and mouse game with the "Production Committee" set up by the Stalinists to speed up work. Mistrusted by the men and despised by the employers, this committee now likens itself to mice. But why be mice? Be men!

A few weeks previously, in reply to a Syndicalist attack, the same people wrote, *"We try to set up production committees, and seek the co-operation of managements to hasten this" . . . "This is not 'Trusting them too much.' This is not class-collaboration."*

Two weeks later came the "cat and mouse game" manifesto. Co-operation! Does the mouse co-operate with the cat?

TWO LAWS—1, THE WORKER

THE compulsory regulation of labour, it is claimed, is a law to be applied equally to capital and labour. In practice, like most other laws, it is just plain class legislation. Workers are heavily fined and imprisoned for changing their jobs or not working sufficient overtime, but we look in vain for such heavy penalties imposed on employers.

2, THE BOSS

Occasionally an action is taken against an employer, as on the 19th of January when the Fairey Aviation Company was fined £20 and 10 guineas costs for refusing to reinstate two employees, as directed by the National Service Officer.

£20 is little from a capital of several hundred thousand pounds, but much from a wage of a few pounds a week. Had the case been reversed by the two workers refusing to work for the Fairey Company, they would now be in prison, but the court did not sentence Mr. Fairey or his representatives to gaol.

GONE WITH THE WIND

WITHOUT regret we noted the official death of the self-styled "Peoples' Convention," exactly a year after its birth. Actually the thing died eleven months ago. As we said at our meetings and in War Commentary at the time, the outfit was as good as done for once the delegates left the first meeting. The idea is to make the aims of the conference so general they will attract everyone, but they are so vague and general that nothing can be done about them.

Such "popular fronts" of socialists and conservatives, workers and employers, pacifists and militarists, atheists and churchmen, shopkeepers and co-operators waste the hopes and energies of the workers.

Such nebulous, cloudlike formations of middle-class "leftism" are quickly dispersed by the bitter winds of reality, only to reform.

We would not have referred to this one except the Stalinists are scheming new outfits. Enough of these entertainments. We shall wait until the war is ended and see a good circus.

ANARCHIST AIMS:

1. The destruction of any political power is the first duty of the proletariat.
2. Any organization which claims to hold power in a revolutionary and provisional way, in order to be able to abolish it, can only be a betrayal, and would be as dangerous to the proletariat as all the governments in existence to-day.
3. The proletarians of all countries, rejecting all compromise in order to achieve the Social Revolution, must establish, above bourgeois politics, the solidarity of revolutionary activity.

MICHAEL BAKUNIN

POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION PLANS

(1) ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

"A heavily armed Britain and conscription for the next two generations after the war if the victorious Allies are going to build a post-war peace and freedom upon a sound basis were envisaged by the Archbishop of York at Bristol.

'Let us not make any mistake about it. If you are not going to be pacifists, if you are going to have any force at all, you must be sure you have enough,' said Dr. Temple. 'It is more disastrous to have insufficient force than to have none at all.'

This valuable piece of real-politik will not be lost on the ruling class to whom the Church has always been the lackey, and to whom presumably the genial Doctor was addressing himself.

"We must make it quite clear," he added "that conscription is going now to last for the next two generations; otherwise we shall be betraying the cause we are serving. We cannot get out of the responsibilities that victory will lay upon us. Last time we shirked it and America shirked it worse. We must not shirk it again."

Manchester Guardian (8.1.42.)

That conscription is an exceedingly efficient method of enslaving the workers and defeating them on the economic field, we have repeatedly pointed out in War Commentary. Ruling class mouthpieces like the Archbishop, however, do not usually admit compulsion to serve in industry and the forces as one of their direct war aims, much less as a post-war aim! Forgotten Chamberlain even declared that he would never introduce conscription in peace time—but that was only a month or so before he brought it in. Since then it has been usual to protest that it is a regrettable wartime necessity, which is not really the same as Fascism, because it is only temporary.

In this war, the most vehement advocates of conscription are those who are now no longer of military age, but who in the last war were C.O.'s. The Archbishop is even better qualified: not only is he well over military age, but he belongs to a profession which is permanently reserved.

But in general the Doctor is right. As the Fascists, Stalinists, and Nazis have already discovered, you need conscription to keep the

How C.O.s Fare in New Zealand

Repression under the Labour Government

IN spite of the measures put into force, by working class "leaders" like Morrison and Bevin, there are still people in this country who continue obstinately to believe that Labour men in governments are less repressive and reactionary than their conservative friends. They think that if "we" throw Morrison and Bevin out, and put in more "moderate" members of the Labour Party, everything will be all right. We are afraid that governments, even when it is the Labour leaders who get the ministerial salaries, are, however, the same the world over. And the sooner this sad but undeniable fact sinks into the minds of the workers for good, the better will the future become.

The Labour Government of New Zealand, the "most advanced and enlightened Social Democratic Government in the world," is no exception. A comrade in New Zealand, who is a member of the Fellowship of Conscientious Objectors writes to us as follows:

Dear Comrades,

I write to you almost on the eve of being imprisoned for the duration. Briefly the position is this. About 25 per cent. of C.O.s obtain conditional exemption (against 50 per cent. in England). There is no unconditional exemption and no Appeal Tribunal. Those whose cases are turned down are being placed in detention camps for the duration of the war. There is no reconsideration at any time. The Tribunals have varied greatly in their decisions, one granting about 10 per cent. and another nearly 40 per cent. The whole thing has been an absolute farce and our

Government has not the courage to face up to the ridiculous position that has arisen.

After making a statement to the tribunal of my own position, I refused to bring any corroborative evidence or allow myself to be cross-examined, stating that I did not wish to obtain exemption from a tribunal whose proceedings were so obviously farcical. Naturally enough, my case was dismissed.

Now I am intensifying my anti-war pamphleteering campaign, as I intend to be jailed for having made my protest against the slaughter of others, rather than be interned for just refusing to allow them to use my body for their bloody purposes. It will be much more uncomfortable in jail. A few others are following my lead and a group of Christian pacifists are speaking openly in the streets and being jailed every time . . . M.Y.

We express our solidarity with our New Zealand comrade and wish him success in his stand. We would have been glad to have had more details of the Free Speech fight of the Christian Pacifists. Similar methods of compelling the authorities to make mass arrests have been used by the I.W.W. in America, and by various libertarian groups in this country. Several of our comrades in London and elsewhere have been arrested on the platform and sent for varying terms since the war began. In general the Christian Pacifists in this country have shown much less militancy, and we should like to know more about the New Zealand movement, against the Labour tyrants.

workers down. . . Our rulers will doubtless not "shirk" at least the attempt to carry out this "responsibility of Victory." Then it is quite true, as Anarchists have always taught, that those who intend to rule, "must be sure of having enough force." It is certainly "disastrous" for them "to have insufficient."

(2) JOE STALIN'S NINE POINTS

The Evening Standard (22.1.42) printed nine points which embody Holy Joe's ideas for the post-war world. These related to Russia's

interests in Turkey, Finland, Baltic States, Africa and Iran with reference to Britain, defined Roumanian borders, and demanded "the recreation of a strong and independent Poland." The workers were not mentioned—nor Capitalism for that matter.

Again there is much to agree with in this declaration. The workers of the "Workers' State" certainly have no interests in Turkey; nor we might add, in Russia. (As Clemenceau once remarked,

(continued on page 14)

HELL SHIPS *for* REFUGEES

Governments offer hospitality to exiled Kings and Princes.
Workers must show their solidarity towards refugees who
have been able to escape from Europe only to find
themselves denied shelter in so-called democratic countries.

THE newspapers are filled with Nazi atrocities in occupied Europe, journalists and editors shed tears over the martyrs of Hitler's regime, and politicians swear that help and revenge will come. One would therefore think that when Vichy France allows Polish, Austrian, Italian, Russian and French refugees to leave the European inferno they would be received in the democratic countries with open arms and given all possible facilities to live and work. Nothing of the kind, however, happens; European refugees are not allowed even to land in the "democratic" states of South America. The following report taken from *L'Adunata**, quotes *Time* (1.12.41) as showing how the inhuman methods of the Vichy Government have been more than equalled by those of the "friends of democracy" in South America.

"A year ago, a group of Jewish refugees, coming from Poland, Austria, Czech-Slovakia, France, Italy, Switzerland, and even Russia, had secured from the Vichy Government the permit to embark on the ship *Alsina* bound for Brazil. Each refugee had been accorded a special visa for that country. The *Alsina* was about to sail from Dakar, when an order came from Vichy preventing it from leaving the port. For four and a half months the *Alsina* remained anchored at Dakar with her human cargo.

The ship was then transferred to Casablanca in French Morocco. The refugees were interned in a concentration camp where several died. Towards the end of the summer, 40 were allowed to embark on the *Cabo de Buena Esperanza* where the conditions were even worse than on the *Alsina*: the ship was overcrowded, filthy, infected, stinking; the food uneatable. In the sick berths old newspapers were used instead of sheets. During the journey two refugees died.

Arrived at Rio de Janeiro they were prevented from landing on the pretext that the visa obtained at Dakar was valid only for 90 days and this period had long since expired.

A few days afterwards the *Cabo de Buena Esperanza* resumed her journey towards Argentine. There the refugees obtained permission to stop for 90 days in the "Immigrants' House" during which period they were ordered to secure a refuge. Before the end of the 90 days Ramon Castillo (President of Argentine) gave the order for them to leave. All of them had secured a permit to enter Paraguay but Castillo refused to give them a permit to cross the

city in order to embark in the ship which would have brought them to Paraguay. They were instead crowded on the *Cabo de Hornos* where there were already 57 refugees from the original group of the *Alsina*.

Before the *Cabo* weighed anchor one of her passengers committed suicide. At Rio de Janeiro two refugees were able to land. Despair reigned on board. The Captain frankly told the journalists that his passengers would have committed suicide *en masse* rather than return to Europe. For the whole night the port police surrounded the boat in order to pick up those who would have committed suicide.

But the Brazilian authorities did not change their mind, and the tragic ship resumed her journey.

At the end of November the Dutch government allowed the refugees of the *Cabo de Hornos* to land temporarily at Willemstadt capital of the Island of Curacao in the East Indies.

The number of the refugees who landed was 79."

* * * *

How long will the workers allow their governments to act in such an inhuman way towards refugees? After the Spanish war hundreds of thousands of refugees were left shelterless and hungry on French shores. They were treated like beasts and many were handed over to Franco. No movements of protest, no strikes took place in order to demonstrate the solidarity of the French and British workers towards the victims of Franco. Now the American workers show the same indifference towards those who, after tremendous hardships, have succeeded in leaving Europe. We know that governments, even if they call themselves democratic are not concerned with the lives of persecuted men and women. The example quoted above is but one of many cases which have occurred in the last few years. We have seen letters from Spanish refugees in Mexico who found the conditions there so appalling that they wanted to return to Europe; we know cases of old Italian anti-fascists who preferred Mussolini's jails to Daladier's concentration camps. Democratic governments will allow hospitality and comfortable homes to the Queen Geraldines, Jugo-Slavian princelings and Dutch princesses but it is for the workers to see that their refugee brothers are not left to starve and die on murderous ships or in concentration camps.

* The Italian anarchist weekly published in the United States.

Lack of space has obliged us to leave out the correspondence regarding George Woodcock's article in our January issue. It will appear in our mid-February number.

DO NOT MISS !

The Mid-Monthly Issue of
WAR COMMENTARY
Out on the 15th FEBRUARY

From the Workers' Point of View

LENIN

(April 28, 1870 — January 21, 1924)

IN recent years more and more workers on the revolutionary left have become disillusioned about the USSR and, more particularly, about Stalin. But there are many who, without abating their opposition to Stalin's leadership, are yet prepared to agree with the Stalinists that the character of the war has fundamentally changed since Hitler invaded Russia on June 22nd, 1941. By no means all such are devotees of Trotskyism, but they most of them share the illusion that there is in the USSR some radical basis of a "Workers' State," which puts Russia in a different category from the other belligerent nations. The Freedom Press pamphlet "The Russian Myth," brought forward a body of evidence showing that from the point of view of the workers—which is the only point of view which anarchists consider of fundamental importance—the USSR does not differ essentially from the other totalitarian states, or from the Democracies.

But even among those who accept the anarchist analysis of the present position in Russia, confusion still arises as to the origin of the present counter-revolutionary regime.

Stalin's crimes against the workers are so vast that they tend to deform historical clarity—he is too often represented as the "gravedigger of the revolution" who is solely responsible. F. A. Ridley has often ridiculed this "bad man theory of history" which the Trotskyists subscribe to. Anton Ciliga, in the January issue of War Commentary, and Emma Goldman, in her pamphlet, "Trotsky Protests too much," have shown that Trotsky must take some share of the blame also. But does it end there?

Anarchists have always held that a revolution would inevitably fail if the Marxian principles of centralization and compulsion were applied. As opposed to the Anarchist principles of Mutual Aid and voluntary economic organization, these principles are of the essence of the State idea, whether bourgeois or a so-called "Workers' State." They were the principles which were so rigorously applied in Russia, under the driving influence and determination of Lenin—they were fundamental in his theory and in his practice. None of Stalin's important acts of later years are innovations; whether mass-arrests, mass-calumnies, or show-trials, they can all show a Leninist precedent. And those who hate the GPU are too apt to forget that it was Lenin who was the special advocate of the Tcheka, Lenin who called Dzerjinsky, its founder, a "saint of the Revolution."

Libertarian Socialists To-day

Many revolutionaries to-day advocate "libertarian socialism" (the I.L.P. for example) while at the same time giving homage to the ideas of Lenin. We shall show that such a conception of Lenin is quite at variance with his words and his deeds. That it

is possible to confuse Leninism and libertarianism is due to the fact that Lenin, like any other demagogue, frequently made use of lofty sentiments in his public utterances and writings, especially between February and October. And these are quoted to-day in reverence for Lenin's memory. Thus in the current issue of "Solidarity" the following is quoted, presumably in approbation of Lenin's ideas generally:

"Man's dearest possession is life, and since it is given to him to live but once, he must so live as to feel no torturing regrets for years without purpose, so live as not to be seared with the shame of a cowardly and trivial past; so live, that dying, he can say, all my life and all my strength, were given to the finest cause in the world, **THE LIBERATION OF MANKIND.**"

Kropotkin himself made a similar appeal. But Lenin's determination to establish before everything else the dictatorship of his party resulted long before he died in the total enslavement of the Russian workers.

"Libertarian Socialism" can only mean workers' control of economy and over their own lives, and Lenin seemed to agree with this when he said:

"All the power in the State, from below up, from the remotest village to every city block in Petrograd, must belong to the Soviets of the Workers, Soldiers, Agricultural Labourers, etc., Deputies" (Address to the Soldiers: Works, Russian Ed. Vol. 14, Part 1, p. 75).

and

"An officialdom that is appointed from above to 'direct' the population always was, is and will be the main instigator of attempts to restore the monarchy, it being similar in this case to the standing army and the police . . . The idea of 'an appointed officialdom' should not be tolerated. Only those organs can be recognised 'which are created by the people themselves' in a given locality." (Whither do the Counter-revolutionary Measures of the Provisional Government Lead Us? Works: Vol. 14, Part 1, p. 129).

But workers' control and appointment from below are syndicalist, anti-State ideas, fundamentally opposed to any centralized authority equipped with the means to enforce its plans and impose its power. And in spite of the above declarations which he made before the Bolsheviks were in power, "syndicalist tendencies" were for Lenin the most bitter heresy of all. This was necessarily so, because his fundamental aim, as the following quotation indicates, was not workers' control, but the dictatorship of the Bolshevik Party.

"It is necessary to combat the ideological disunity and the unhealthy elements within the opposition who go so far as to give up the idea of a

militarized economy, as to renounce not only the methods of appointing people which have been practised until now, but the 'principle of appointment as such,' that is, they renounce the leading role of the Party in regard to the mass of the non-partisan workers. It is necessary to combat the syndicalist deviation which will ruin the party if the latter does not cure itself completely in this regard." (The Party Crisis, Works, Vol. 18, part 1, p. 37).

And Michael Farbman, an early writer who was sympathetic to the Bolsheviks, states that "the struggle between the syndicalist ideas of the workers and the State idea of the Government occupied almost the entire period of militant Communism" (Farbman: Bolshevism in Retreat, 1923, p.177). It was these "syndicalist tendencies," manifested for example, by the Workers' Opposition, by the Makhnovist movement in the Ukraine, and by the Kronstadt sailors, which aroused Lenin's bitterest resentment, and brought on them the bloodiest and most vengeful persecution.

The Party or The People?

It does not greatly matter whether Lenin was sincere or not. For the workers what he did was more important than what he promised. In order to steer his party to power, Lenin made use of all the slogans which the revolutionary workers had coined—"All Power to the Soviets," "The Land to the Peasants, the Factories to the Workers"—they were anarchist slogans. But once in power, he was compelled by the necessities of retaining it to suppress and compel, starve and slaughter the revolutionary masses—always, of course, stigmatizing opponents and critics indiscriminately as "counter-revolutionaries." Let those who confuse Lenin's ideas with libertarian socialism remember his stern injunctions to the party which he controlled:

"Keep up your meetings and discussions, but when it comes to governing, don't show any wavering; govern with greater firmness than the capitalists did. Otherwise you will not win. You must remember: your administration must be more stringent and firm than the old administration." (Works: Vol. 18, part 1, p. 379).

"We know that without compulsion things will not be done, without compulsion to which the ruined peasantry will react quite strongly." (Works: Vol. 18, part 1, p. 20).

"Without an apparatus of compulsion we shall not take what we need. Never! Anyone can see that." (Speech to the Party Conference, May 27th, 1921, Vol. 18, Part 1, p. 273.)

"We need a terroristic purge: trials held on the spot and shooting as an unreserved measure." (On the Food Tax: Vol. 18, Part 1, p. 226.)

By insisting all the time that only the Bolshevik Party could rule Russia, Lenin was really declaring his disbelief in the workers' and peasants' ability to organize the country's economy and resources and order their own communal life. (Hence the legend which has grown up about the "backwardness of the Russian peasants"). He reiterated his anti-syndicalist viewpoint with almost pathological insistence. Hence his insistence that "an officialdom to direct the population" must, in fact, be appointed from above by the Bolshevik Party. He had built up the party himself, and trained it to absolute discipline and blind allegiance to its leaders, giving it a structure which Stalin has been able to use to maintain his own position against all rivals. From his "principle of appointment as such" and his insistence on "the leading role of the Party," Lenin laid the foundations for that gigantic parasitic bureaucracy which starves the Soviet worker of to-day.

"The people are starving, they have no clothes or shoes." (Works, Vol. 18, Part 1, p. 80.)

In spite of the disorganisation of the economy which his dictatorial decrees and forced requisitioning gave rise to, in spite of the appalling famine, he would not abate in the slightest his insistence on the bureaucratic supervision of all forms of production. But when the wars of intervention ceased, and the need for "national unity" against the threat from without was removed, the resulting unrest was expressed in many local revolts and especially in the Kronstadt "rebellion." Where the spectacle of mass starvation had left him unmoved, the threat to the supremacy of the Party immediately caused him to take action. But not in the direction of libertarian socialism, of workers' control, as the Petrograd strikers and Kronstadt had demanded. Instead he followed the method of all governments, "Divide and Rule," and introduced new class divisions among the workers and peasants by means of the NEP with its return to private capitalism. With it, Russia traversed a long slow road to partial economic recovery along capitalist lines. This is what Lenin was advocating when he shouted:

"It is necessary to learn about state capitalism from the Germans, to assimilate their methods, not to spare any dictatorial methods in order to accelerate the westernization of barbarous Russia, not to recoil from using barbarous means of struggle against barbarism. If there are still people among Anarchists who are prone to say that it is not fitting for us, revolutionists, to 'learn' from German imperialism, we have to tell them: The revolution would go to pieces—and rightly so—if we took seriously people of your kind." (On the Food Tax: Vol 18 part 1.)

In the light of actual developments, comment seems hardly necessary. J.H.

(continued from page 11)

"the Anarchists are right: the poor have no country"). Yet those who identify Russia in general, and Joe in particular, with the Communist *International*, will perhaps be puzzled to find that nine out of the nine points are so exclusively concerned with such national affairs as frontiers and border fixing, quite after the "infamous and never to be forgotten Versailles Treaty" style.

If I were an African, I should be relieved to hear that Stalin had no interests there, but no doubt this declaration will come as a shock to those colonial slaves who have been taught to regard the all-wise General Secretary as the unsleeping champion of their downtrodden interests.

But it will be cheering for trustees of British Imperialism like Pollitt, Dutt, Churchill, Pritt, and other Friends of Cyprus, Palestine, and Egypt, to learn that our Geor-

gian comrade "acknowledges Britain's bid for a dominant position in the Mediterranean as legitimate."

Indeed "Socialism in One Country" may now be taken to mean simply "Socialism in only one Country," (whose enlarged borders, however, are to be defined later!) and Anglo-American Imperialism in all the rest. But it begins to be difficult to decide how "Socialism in One Country" differs from imperialism anywhere else!

KINGSTON In spite of bad weather a good audience at the Kingston Hotel on Jan. 14th heard Tom Brown give an excellent address on "The Future of the Trade Unions." Several comrades from the local garage took part in the interesting discussion which followed. Jim Barker was in the chair.

HUDDERSFIELD Interesting discussion followed Tom Brown's speech to meeting organized by Larry Hopkinson at Huddersfield. A West Riding group of the F.F.P. was formed.

LIVERPOOL. Following a visit by Tom Brown, a group of the F.F.P. was formed last month in Liverpool. All comrades and sym-

pathizers in Liverpool, Wallasey, Birkenhead, etc., please get in touch with Friends of Freedom Press, 27, Belsize Road, London, N.W.6.

LONDON Fredrick Lohr gave the third and last of his lecture discussions at the Conway Hall on Jan. 25th. The series has been very well attended and has aroused considerable interest.

Hammersmith. Bad weather prevented a large attendance at a meeting organized by West London Group F.F.P. on Jan. 14th, at the

Co-op Hall, East Acton. Bill Gape, Mat Kavanagh and Frederick Lohr spoke, chairman John Hewetson. All W. London sympathizers please contact Bill Gape, 15, Poplar Grove, Shepherd's Bush.

North London Lecture series at Belsize Road. Lively discussion followed the lecture by M. L. Berneri on the Spanish Revolution, and Mat Kavanagh on the Easter Rebellion in Dublin 1916. Harry Jones gave an introductory lecture in a series of talks on Peter Kropotkin, the centenary of whose birth falls this year. Subsequent lectures include "Wartime Farming," "Peter Kropotkin," "Public Ill-Health," etc. Every Friday, at 7 p.m. at 27, Belsize Road, N.W.6.

A BIGGER EFFORT NEEDED!

WITH the December list of contributions which we are publishing below, our Reconstruction Fund reached the total of £269 11s. 7d., which is £31 short of the £300 we asked of our readers. However though we did not reach our objective, we need hardly say that the contributions received from our readers, near and far, have helped us to bridge a very difficult period in the history of Freedom Press. To date we have been unable to re-print all the publications destroyed when our premises were consumed by fire in the May 10th raids, but during the coming months a steady flow of

important books and pamphlets will come from the presses bearing the imprint of Freedom Press and we need the continued enthusiastic support of our comrades and friends in giving these as wide a circulation as possible.

At the same time we should remind our readers that a considerable proportion of the money contributed to the Press Fund has been already absorbed in meeting the deficit on WAR COMMENTARY and in paying the printing bills for publications which were destroyed, which means of course a dead loss to us. Consequently we are unable to rest on our laurels

and again appeal to all our readers to give us their moral and financial support during 1942. To meet our commitments and allow for the necessary publicity of our publications, we shall need at least £500 during the next 12 months. January has already brought in £35 and we thank all the comrades and friends who have contributed. Let us make February a much better effort, and it can be done if only our readers realise the importance of supporting a free Press. So let the aim be £500, all for propaganda (there are no salaries to pay on Freedom Press) during 1942.

THE EDITORS

RECONSTRUCTION FUND

December

London: T.G. ...	1	4	Stroud: L.G.W. ...	1	0	0
Stevenston: J.D. ...	2	8	Glasgow: F.J.D. ...	1	0	0
London: F.C.D. ...	1	0	Aldershot: A.G. ...	2	6	
London: Park Sympathiser	1	2	Matlock: N.F.E. ...	15	0	
Bellshill: P.S. ...	2	3	London: Scotch Sym-			
Milwaukee U.S.: A.H. ...	4	9	pathiser ...	1	10	0
Bristol: C.C.B. ...	2	6	Doncaster: M.T. ...	2	0	
Broken Hill, Australia: E.K.	1	0	London: Holborn Hall			
San Francisco: Social Oct. 19			Sympathiser ...	5	0	
and Comrades (per L.N.)	4	5	Epsom: P.L.S. ...	2	0	
Shrewsbury: R.S. ...	1	0	Glasgow: H.P. ...	1	6	
Pinner: C.H. ...	7	9	London H.A.M. ...	1	0	
London: Sympathiser		9	Leeds: M.F. ...	5	0	
Aldershot: A.G. ...	7	6	London E.14: J.E.P. ...	10	0	
Bebington: W.J.H. ...	2	6	New York: H.S. ...	10	0	
Vancouver: G.K. ...	1	0	H. Wycombe: J.E.R. ...	6		
London: L. ...	5	9	Caerns: D.A.P. ...	1	6	
Cambridge: C.J.H. ...	15	0	Oxford: "Morris Worker"			
Leicester: A.E.B. ...	11	0	per D.F. ...	5	0	
London N.: L.W.P. ...	2	6	Hammersmith: W.G. ...	4	3	
Teddington: T.W.B. ...	1	0	London: Park Sym-			
Liverpool: H.H.J. ...	10	0	pathiser ...	4	9	
Rochford: D. ...	5	0	London: V.R. ...	5	0	
London: T.B. ...	1	0				
Chicago: B.Y. ...	3	0	Month's total:	33	18	5
London: S.C. ...		5				
London: J.H. ...	5	0	Total to 31st Dec., 1941	£269	11	7

PRESS FUND		JANUARY
Anon: ...	...	5 0 0
Glasgow: F.M. ...	...	2 6
Newton Abbot: E.D. ...	...	5 0
Shrewsbury: R.S. ...	...	10 0
London S.W.: J.C.W.C. ...	...	4 0
Clapham S.W.: D.B. ...	...	2 6
Hampstead: V.P. ...	...	10 0
Los Angeles:		
Man! group \$5		
J.S. (per J.S.) \$5		2 9 4
Gloucester: J.W. ...	...	11 9
Paterson N.J.: I.L. Group		
per C.F.)		\$25 6 3 6
Haverfordwest: E.M. ...	...	1 0
London: V.R. ...	...	5 0 0
Enfield: F.E.S. ...	...	8 6
London W.2.: A.D.L. ...	...	2 0
Oldham: J.H.H. ...	...	3 6
London: F.C.D. ...	...	1 2
Barnet: T.B. ...	...	1 0 0
London N.: E.G. ...	...	5 0
Teddington: T.W.B. ...	...	1 0 0
Hammersmith: F.F.P. G'p.		8 6
London: J.H. ...	...	5 0 0
London: Sympathiser		5 0 0
Stroud: L.W. ...	...	1 0 0
Keighley: A.M. ...	...	5 0
Stroud: P.P. (per L.W.)		2 6
Total		£35 15 9

Betteshanger Miners' Strike (continued from page 3)

of them with hard labour. The rest of the strikers were ordered to pay fines amounting to over £1,000.

COMPANY BREAKS WAGE AGREEMENT

The Company had broken the wage agreement without a word to the miners' representatives, and the charge of ca'canny is much resented by the men—men who, after "staying put" during air-raids and invasion warnings, were congratulated by the Prime Minister and the Minister for Mines, saying "The country will never forget the debt it owes to the Kent miners." It is not surprising that they are feeling a little bitter! The miners say they are ready to return to work when the £35 due under the Minimum Wage Agreement is paid to the men on No. 2 face, and their leaders are released from gaol.

The attitude of Magee, the Agent for the Colliery Owners (Pearson and Dorman Long) has aroused considerable resentment among the miners. He has been at Betteshanger since 1938, but had acquired an unpopular reputation before that at the Nunnery Colliery, Sheffield, and at Featherstone Colliery. He is regarded as an enemy of Trades Unionism and workers' rights.

SOLIDARITY THROUGHOUT THE MINE

At a recent meeting of 800-1,000 of the miners, Mr. J. Elks, General Secretary of the K.M.A., and Mr. E. Lawther, the Financial Secretary of the K.M.A., proposed that the men should return to work (whilst their representatives were still in gaol!), *The miners spontaneously rejected this proposal and their hostility to such a compromise was not left in doubt.*

When our comrade left the miners today (Tuesday) they were adamant and determined to stand out for their rights, whatever happens. One view expressed was that rather than go down the pit before their demands are met and their comrades released from gaol, they would go back where they came from—to Wales, Scotland, Cumberland, Yorkshire etc. There was no sign of the "frayed nerves" referred to in the Daily Express of 27th January.

There can be no doubt of the justice of the demands of the miners working on No. 2 face—to be paid 6/9 a shift instead of the minimum of 10/4½ amounts to open robbery. *But it must be made clear that this gross injustice directly affects only the 40 men on the face referred to. The rest of the 1,600 miners are out in solidarity with them.*

On top of the injury of 6/9d a shift, the men have been subjected to insults in the shape of allegations that they are "slackers," unconcerned with national need. The men's attitude to this sort of calumny is clear. The 40 men demand £35 from the owners, to make up their wages to the agreed minimum. The Management has preferred to lose three weeks' work for 1,600 men (about 25,000 tons of coal at £3 per ton while £320 was expended on summonses which were later withdrawn). The men have lost so far over £7,000 in wages. Clearly the Management is more intent upon repressing these militant workers than on assisting the "national effort." They merely use this as a stick with which to beat the men.

LEGAL JUGGLING

Strikes being illegal, the strikers themselves get no

relief whatever. Those with dependents get 12/6 a week for a wife, and 4/- for a child, from the Public Assistance Committee. The question at issue is one of elementary justice, and to claim, as the press generally have done, that it is "only" a question of miners demanding "more money," is to belittle their cause, especially as the overwhelming majority are out in sympathy with an injured minority.

Regarding the legal proceedings, it is significant that the claims on the miners for "breach of contract damages" were withdrawn by the firm, thus leaving only the charge under the Defence Regulations, i.e. that the miners did not give the required 21 days' notice of the strike. This left the miners dealing with the Government, in the form of the Ministry of Labour, so that representations regarding the conduct of the Colliery Owners were ruled "out of court."

In this strike, the militancy comes from the men themselves. The K.M.A., as our report shows, has acted in a conciliatory capacity. The decision to strike was a spontaneous demonstration against the continued refusal of the owners to pay the minimum rates after representations had been made by the men the week before. The gaoling of the three men was carried out on the excuse that statutory 21 days' notice of the strike had not been given. Of course, as is realised by the miners, this clause in the Defence Regulations was inserted in order to allow employers to organise their defence and so deprive the strike of most of its effectiveness.

THE KEY TO VICTORY

If they are compelled to continue on strike much longer economic necessity will force the Betteshanger men back to work, otherwise they will starve.

The action taken against the miners clearly demonstrates that in spite of the flagrant injustice to the men, the Government, through Bevin, Minister of Labour, immediately came to the support of the owners. It must never be forgotten that it was the Minister of Labour who summonsed the miners, fined them and gaoled their leaders.

Such success as the miners have had so far comes from the spirit of solidarity which brought the other miners out in defence of their comrades on No. 2 face. But to ensure rapid victory, the solidarity should also have been extended to them from miners all over the country.

If the miners were organised throughout the whole industry on the syndicalist principle that "an injury to one is the concern of all," there would be no fear that injustices such as this would fail to be met with effective action on the part of miners throughout the country, resulting in speedy removal of the injustices. Workers as a whole should be suspicious of appeals to them to accept wage cuts "in the national interest" extended to them by employers who show no disposition to consider the national good, but only their own profits.

All who work for the freedom and emancipation of the workers will extend fraternal greetings to the Betteshanger Miners in their struggle: but they must also be prepared to back them up with action.