

# WAR

# *For Anarchism*

# COMMENTARY

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TWOPENCE.

## Russian Resistance *1918 and Now*

AMONGST people who understand something of the Stalinist regime, the apparent staying-power of Russia has come as something of a surprise. Perhaps these critics have been mistaken regarding the land of Socialism, perhaps a new evaluation is required. Such periodical checking of theoretical expectations against practical experience is both necessary and salutary, since it forms the only means of assessing the correctness of the theoretical premises on which political opinions are formed.

Critics of *War Commentary* have pointed to the strength and determination of the Russian resistance—"the only real check the Nazi war machine has yet received"—as proving that the analyses we made a year ago were incorrect, and that our conclusions were unjustified. Much of this criticism is rooted in a fundamental misconception as to the method of historical analysis which is pursued in the columns of the *War Commentary*. Events are due to a number of interlocking causes, are the resultant of many antagonistic forces. One may attempt to evaluate the relative importance of these forces, and thereby explain concrete events. It is not however, legitimate to build definite prophecies on these trends, and this we never attempted to do. Our critics sometimes imply that we prophesied the imminent collapse of Russia, whereas we have always been careful to limit ourselves to indicating tendencies, never giving "dates" for future events.

With this historical method in mind, it will be useful to review the 15 months of the Russian-German war, and see if history has in fact invalidated our general analysis of the Russian regime, as outlined for instance in the Freedom Press pamphlet *The Russian Myth* and in various articles in *War Commentary*. It will be well to begin by examining

certain assumptions which generally seem to pass unquestioned.

The Russian resistance has been so written up in the press that it may seem churlish to ask what in fact has this resistance amounted to? The Red Army's material resources, formerly declared to be supreme, are now recognised to be inferior to those of the Germans, making Russia dependent on American and British industry. But in point of man-power the U.S.S.R., with its population of 193,000,000 (brought up to over 220,000,000 if one counts the Baltic and Polish annexations of 1939 & 40) has almost doubled the 80,000,000 of Greater Germany. Nevertheless, the early German advances quickly overran Russian Poland, White Russia, Esthonia, Lithuania and Latvia, and most importance of all, the huge Ukraine. In their recent advances they have secured a further immense territory in the Don basin and the Caucasus. All told they have secured an enormously large area, with a population of about 100,000,000 people (it should be remembered that the Russian propaganda omits the populations of its 1939 annexations, and calculates its losses only from the pre-war frontier.) The new frontier is some 600-800 miles inside the 1939 frontiers and the Soviet counter-attacks have only succeeded in driving the advance back up to 40 miles in some areas. The areas lost are amongst the richest in the whole Union, and provide grain, minerals, industrial plant, power and oil.

Now it is apparent that the German Army has its own difficulties—most of the deficiencies in the Red Army which can be attributed to bureaucratic totalitarian control apply with equal force to the Reichswehr. Its communications cannot be lengthened indefinitely. The Russians have wholly failed

at any time to recapture any significant territories (with the exception of Rostoff— since lost again). Hence the Nazis have been able to apply in Russia the same technique of destroying their opponents one by one that they have used elsewhere; only on the vast Russian front this has meant holding the northern front, while concentrating attack in the Caucasus. They have retained the initiative throughout and the Russians have been powerless to deprive them of it.

When the difficulties of operating 800 or more miles inside enemy territory are considered, one begins to get a different conception as to what "Russian resistance" consists of. It has not only meant retreats and the loss of the richest areas of the Union, but Timoshenko has been wholly unable to take practical advantage of the formidable difficulties which beset Napoleon and Hitler alike. "Russian resistance" is provided not so much by the supposed brilliance of Bolshevik organisation and Red Army competence, but by the natural difficulties of the terrain. It is the size of the country and the climate which offer the real resistance. These facts are unpalatable to most people. Yet a glance at the map shows that it is impossible to deny their general truth. The legend of "Russian resistance" is maintained principally by the newspapers. These after all, have to adopt sales-talk technique, and their headlines have to zig-zag between German attack and Russian counter-attack alternately to keep up public interest and sales. But when the situation is looked at as a whole, it is apparent that the Red Army has simply retreated and been unable to prevent the Reichswehr from consolidating its gains. Fleet Street is a doubtful historian to follow, as the Finnish war showed; both on the pro-Russian and pro-Finnish sides insignificant advances were hailed as overwhelming victories.

Having cleared one's mind on these questions of fact and perspective, it is possible to indicate certain comparisons which are illuminating. The Russian retreats in the last war were never so extensive as in this—a fact which invites comparison between the Tsarist Army and the Red Army. But more important still is the comparison between the modern Red Army's performance and that of the revolutionary guerillas and peasant armies of the Interventionist wars. Even when exhausted by a long imperialist struggle, the Russians of the revolutionary period were able successfully to throw back the combined German and Allied forces. Isolated as they then were, and lacking most essential supplies, their revolutionary ideals were able to overcome those almost insuperable difficulties. Clearly the Stalinist bureaucracy of to-day falls very far short of the revolutionary appeal of 20 odd years ago.

The Nazi regime is in general beset by the same internal difficulties as the Soviet Union. Totalitar-

ianism, like democracy, has its own contradictions and inner weaknesses. It is important to remember this when evaluating the German Army's achievements in the present war. The 800 mile advance was gained, not in the face of determined resistance, but on account of the weaknesses of the Stalinist regime. But the lesson of the Russian revolutionaries' resistance to proportionately far greater interventionist attacks show that it will not be impossible to demolish the Nazi invasion. Meanwhile, the last fifteen months have indicated that Stalin's bureaucracy inspires no revolutionary fervour! By making the revolution against their own ruling class, however, the Russian people can disintegrate the Reichswehr, as they did the capitalist armies of twenty years ago. They can still light the spark of international working class unity that will destroy war and oppression for ever. In no other way can an anti-fascist struggle be carried on.

## C.P. INDICTS HARRY POLLITT AS A "PRO-FASCIST"

ON SUNDAY, AUG. 30th, the local branch of the C.P. at Kingston held a public meeting in the Market Square to call for "National Unity". The speaker was very eloquent in his address and stressed the need for complete unity of the people with their Government, and he warned his audience of the existence in this country of the disruptive elements who attempted to sabotage this unity by their talk. He described these elements variously as 'Fifth Column', 'Trotskyite', 'Pro-Nazi', 'Pro-Fascist' etc. When question time came, the author of this article explained how he had read the C.P. pamphlet on 'Hitler's Agents in Britain', and then proceeded to quote the following extracts from a political paper.

*"It is not too late. Take up the struggle now. Repudiate the surrender to Churchill Government of every victory won by the Labour movement in the course of its long and glorious history.*

*End the coalition of Labour with those who have brought the people of Britain to the verge of disaster.*

*The workers of Britain cannot afford to trust their destinies to such leaders in peace or war"*

Did the speaker think that these statements were written by a pro-fascist agent of Hitler in Britain? was the question the author asked.

The C.P. speaker, with a light in his eyes, and an enthusiasm that was remarkable, expounded for five minutes on the subject; he definitely agreed that the writer of such statements must be a pro-fascist, and he showed what an excellent example it was of what a pro-nazi agent could say. When he had finished, the questioner pointed out that the extract he had read out came from Harry Pollitt's pamphlet "The War and the Labour Movement" Published in June, 1940 ! ! !

At that, the speaker nearly had a fit!! Even the peculiar brand of Marxist dialectics used by the Comical Party were of no avail to extricate the speaker from his dilemma. Out of his own mouth, this C.P.er had condemned his own Gauleiter as a "pro-fascist", and the crowd were quick to see the point.

T.W.B.

# What is happening in India

## Importance of the Peasant Movement

by DINAH STOCK

**J**UST now, when all our views and feelings about India are confused for want of facts, it cannot be too often repeated that three quarters of the Indian people are peasants. Mass movements in western Europe are usually carried through by the organised workers of the towns; in India they begin in villages, and no movement can rise to any significance unless the strength of the peasants lies behind it.

On the whole the Indian peasant is miserably poor, rack-rented, overtaxed, and heavily and increasingly in debt. This has been shown again and again even in official documents, such as the Provincial Banking Enquiries of 1930, which estimated that the average agrarian income, including rich landowners with landless workers, was 2½d. a day.

For people in this condition to love their government would be a form of unnatural vice. The Indian peasants do not; Hindus, Moslems and Sikhs alike are overwhelmingly behind the Congress in its struggle for national independence. They form the main strength of the Congress membership, and are organised besides in Kisan Sabhas, or Peasant Unions, which unite to form the largest movement in the country apart from the Congress itself. The All-India Kisan Sabha works with the Congress politically, though being a class organisation, unlike the Congress, its outlook is more explicitly revolutionary. It stands not only for national independence but for the freedom of the peasants and workers and the achievement of a classless society.

The Communist Party has made more headway in the towns than in the villages. This is natural; Communist arguments are more easily understood by the town worker, and Communists themselves are usually too doctrinaire to make good rural organisers. Still, the C.P. has worked hard to organise the villagers, and in its anxiety to preserve working-class unity the Kisan Sabha has kept on good terms with it. Few of its rank-and-file members, but a considerable number of its leaders, both local and national, are members of the Communist Party.

The present struggle in India has divided the Communist Party from the National Congress. The immediate issue between Britain and the Congress is simple and clear; Are the Indian people to be allowed to defend themselves against Japan? Are they to have guns, tanks and aeroplanes, and learn

to use them, and organise their own defence force? If they do this the Japanese aggressor will make no headway, but the British aggressor will find himself equally powerless. Or are they merely to acquiesce while British armies, defending British vested interests, make use of India as an operational base? Sir Stafford Cripps was sent with a promise of self-government to come. Congress said no, and there is no question that the mass of the people agreed with them.

Considering the object-lessons of Singapore and Burma, sheer prudence would make them hesitate to trust to British arms. It would be a mistake, however, to credit them with nothing more. In the national struggle of the last ten years, the Indian people have learnt a genuine love of freedom and a hatred of Fascism, whether practiced by British, Germans, or Japanese. They recognise that their cause is that of the Chinese people and of all oppressed colonial people the world over. Nothing in their experience of British rule convinces them that the British have this cause at heart, or would weigh it against the least of their own vested interests. They believe that the only defence against Fascism lies in the people's will to freedom, and they mean to make themselves ungovernable by any power, British or Japanese, which tries to exploit them. That is the meaning of Gandhi's Civil Disobedience Campaign, of Nehru's and Azad's demand for a defence force. As Gandhi himself has pointed out, if the British were really fighting on the side of freedom against tyranny, they would welcome such a spirit and rejoice to make an ally of India. But if they are merely trying to defend their own system of vested interests against the encroachment of the Axis powers, they cannot afford to win the war by methods which would leave them without any colonies to exploit.

For the Communist Party it is logical to accept the British terms, since their main object is to defend the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.S.R. has pinned its faith to British help. The British C.P. has therefore no choice but to throw what weight it has into the campaign for a second front, and to boost Winston Churchill in the name of national unity; and in the same way, Indian Communists have now to pour cold water on the struggle for Indian freedom, for fear Britain may have its hands too full to give

effective help to the Soviet Union.

In March of this year the All-India Kisan Sabha, debated its policy at its sixth annual conference at Bihta, in Bihar. The Communists were there in strength, and tried to bring in a resolution calling on the peasants to boycott Gandhi's campaign for national freedom. But the opposition was so intense and so clearly represented the feeling of the masses, that they had to withdraw it.

On the other side the non-Communist wing of the Kisan Sabha has taken the lead in a movement called the Colonial People's Freedom Front. They declare that the real struggle against Fascism is the struggle of the oppressed peasants and workers of the world—Chinese, Indian, African, West Indian, even British and German insofar as they can truly understand the international fellowship of workers—and that it is impossible to carry it on by dropping their own immediate fight for freedom. They will support the Congress in its determination to fight against Japan, and they will try to link up their own struggle with that of all other colonial peoples who

have the courage and vision to strike for freedom. It is a struggle which will not cease until the last Empire has fallen, and a free classless society is achieved throughout the world.

At the present moment the left wing of Indian nationalism is split from end to end by this clash of policies. Students, industrial workers, peasants, all have two rival movements, each claiming nation-wide authority. One says: "The U.S.S.R. is itself the workers revolution. Forget your own struggle and serve its need for the sake of the future!" The other: "The revolution lies in your hands and in those of your oppressed comrades. Fight now, and fight to win!"

This is the position: anarchists may judge the rights and wrongs for themselves. But if the Colonial Peoples' Freedom Front is to become a victorious force it must be realised outside as well as inside India; it must find an echo and a response in every part of the world where exploited peasants and workers can strike a blow in their own defence.

## A New Pamphlet

WHICH WAY, BRITAIN? Wilfred Wellock.  
Published by Wilfred Wellock, 12, Victoria Avenue,  
Quinton. ... .. 1/-

*In this 60-page pamphlet Wilfred Wellock sets out to diagnose the nature of the crisis in modern society, and to prescribe a cure for the disaster. The diagnosis is conducted with that analytical capability which I have always admired in Wellock. The cure prescribed, however, inspires little confidence.*

*Wellock demonstrates the counter-revolutionary nature of Fascism, and the fact, overlooked by most Left theoreticians, that Fascism, while it implies a narrowing of capitalism into the funnel of state monopoly, is inimical to the interests of the individual capitalist. Fascism sounds the knell of laissez faire capitalism at the same time as it destroys its political manifestation of liberal democracy. Under Fascism is fulfilled Marx's prophesy of the expropriation of the expropriators, but not in the way Marx foresaw. Thus we see Thyssen and his fellows hoist by the petard they assisted to erect for the destruction of the working class movement. Wellock also points out that Fascism can, and indeed does, distribute certain small material benefits to the people, just as the preceding revolution of imperial capitalism was able to ameliorate the lot of the workers out of the proceeds of its colonial exploitation. This, however, is done at a terrible cost in the loss of any form of freedom, social and economic, of speech and act. Wellock, moreover, realises the supreme danger of Fascism and Communism alike, that both of them have economic policies which are capable of carrying on without crises for some considerable period.*

*Yet the ultimate flaw of totalitarianism is the same as that of the capitalist order of yesterday. The power to produce plenty is not used for its true end—the hap-*

*piness of the people. Where, under laissez faire capitalism the lion's share of wealth went into the hands of a minority of the community, under Fascism it vanishes into the Moloch mouth of the state. So, where the surplus of production over distribution was previously allowed to accumulate until the avenues of exchange were clogged, under Fascism it is indeed used up—by being cast into the holocaust of war—just as coffee was thrown into the furnaces of Brazilian railway engines. It is when war has become too much for the people of the world, when the governments are forced to cease fire by fear of mutiny, that Fascism will be found wanting as an economic panacea. The crisis that ends Fascism will dwarf in magnitude the already terrible crises that preceded it.*

*Wellock lists three possible ways out of the impasse into which society in Britain has been driven. One is the counter-revolution of Fascism, ending in tyranny and the deification of the State. Another is the political revolution of Communism, ending in a tyranny virtually identical with that of Fascism. The third, which Wellock favours as the only way to the new democracy he envisages, is what he calls "revolution by consent". This is an idea that the capitalists of the remaining democracies can somehow be persuaded to give up their power and wealth and accept some form of planned international order based on economic justice. In view of the nature of the British capitalist, it requires much credulity to regard this possibility as other than extremely remote, and if we had only Wellock's three ways, the future would indeed appear black with tragedy.*

*But there is a fourth way, the way of social revolution, not by a political party, not by a group of power-hungry fanatics, but by the people themselves, taking into their own hands the economic power controls of society, destroying the state and capitalism, and establishing the free society of anarchism. This way only, lies our salvation from the social evils that beset our age.*

GEORGE WOODCOCK.

# Communist Shop Stewards Line Up with Bevin

## AIRCRAFT WORKERS VICTIMISED

THE FOLLOWING account of Stalinist let-down is valuable, not only for itself, but because it is typical of what is happening everywhere; multiplied a hundred-fold daily, it is the "Party Line" throughout the country.

The story begins early this year when a well-known firm in Scotland desired the transfer of skilled engineering labour from London. At the Handley Page works, two Communist shop stewards, Black and Carey, appealed to the workers to volunteer for work in Scotland. A similar appeal was made at the Fairey works and two dozen men, the majority from Page's volunteered. Certain promises of wages were made, and the men were informed by the Scottish firm's representative that their highly skilled labour was needed to get the factory under way and that they could give the job three months' trial.

It is now revealed that the shop stewards in question did not make any adequate investigation of the job. Within a few weeks the men were in difficulties. There was no special need of their skilled labour, the agreed wages were never fully paid (the men earned much less than at their previous employment) and the workers were subjected to a petty reign of terror and "National Service" intimidation.

So disgusted with the mismanagement were they, that they informed the Ministry who investigated the qualifications of the management. After that conditions became intolerable and they demanded their release. The reply of the management and the National Service Officer, according to the men, was a threat to keep them from their homes for the duration of the war. (most are married and have children).

Later they were ordered to report for employment on the other side of Scotland on September 9th, at much lower wage rates. During all these months the men had been corresponding with the Handley Page shop stewards, who persuaded D. N. Pritt, M.P., to write to Bevin about it. Needless to say, Bevin replied saying that the men must go, and Pritt said that this was the law. Following this long and perfectly useless correspondence, the dominant faction of the shop stewards told the men to follow the direction of the N.S.O., and promised them—more correspondence!

The workers declined this advice to accept victimisation tamely and several returned to London and sought the assistance of the Handley Page shop stewards. A special meeting of stewards being called for Monday, September 7th, the transferred men put their case.

Their chief claim that the other side had not fulfilled the bargain and that therefore they ought to be allowed to return to London, was difficult to contest. They did not ask the stewards to take risks, but declared their own willingness to go to gaol if necessary, rather than submit to such injustice. All they asked was the moral backing of the workers of Pages and Fairey's and sufficient money to keep their families during the struggle. There was no doubt of the sincerity and determination of these men.

A Syndicalist steward then moved a resolution to give these workers "full financial, moral and any other support which they considered necessary in their fight" Something like panic appeared in the leadership of the C.P., faction, Black, the party leader, moving an amendment which was so involved that he had to withdraw it later. Undaunted, he moved a second amendment even more entangled. Like a birds nest it was too twisted to find a beginning or end, and on being pressed, he withdrew again. He was forced to reveal his hand and on the resolution being put, he led the voting against. The resolution was carried by ten votes to three, a few communists deserting the party line and voting in favour. The Scottish delegation telegraphed their comrades up north who then set out for London.

Undaunted by their defeat, the Stalinists got to work the following day and whipped up the Party. That night a meeting of stewards was to be held and the means of carrying out the resolution discussed. A first glance at the meeting foretold its end.— the "Party" was there in force. Their first spokesman jumped up and moved the rescinding of the resolution, declaring that the men ought to obey Bevin's direction. Black and Carey, the stewards who had appealed for volunteers, worked up blood-curdling threats of imprisonment. Carey led the Communist chorus "the men of Handley Pages did not wish to support their fellow workers from Scotland." This was obviously slander for the workers in the factory had not been consulted, did not even know of the events.

All arguments were futile, the party caucus was there, eyes and ears shut, heads down, hands ready to vote. The resolution was rescinded by 23 votes to 7, all Communists but one returning to the Party fold. In honour of this one, Jim Power the convenor, it must be said that throughout he has acted honestly and put class loyalty before party loyalty, giving the men splendid support.

By this time the remainder of the exiles were on their way to London. Arriving there they heard the story of their betrayal. Altogether sixteen men were now stranded in London, posted as absentees and 450 miles from their destined employment. Over £6 each in train fares alone had been wasted by the useless journey south. The minority shop stewards with the convenor began the organisational work for a defence fund collection on September 10th. After a good deal of hard work it became obvious that the collection would be successful. The Stalinists then had no course open but to join in and support the collection willy-nilly. In spite of "official" prophecies that "we'll be lucky to get £20," about three times that amount was given at the first call.

Enough for one issue has been said of the long-continued story of Communist betrayal. It should be obvious to all that those who preach "national unity", where only class-war is the relationship of the classes, must suppress all public knowledge of the manifestation of that class-war. If these men are exiled in Scotland, they cannot talk in London. Dead men tell no tales, even when they are buried alive.

## Indian Commentary

# Churchill on Indian situation

MR CHURCHILL'S statement to the House on the Indian situation was a strange mixture of figures and rhetoric. The figures were based on 1921 statistics (according to the admission of Mr. Amery) and bore no relation to present day conditions in India.

The Premier's chief objective was to represent Congress as an insignificant body, hardly representative of Indian opinion. "The Indian Congress does not represent all India" he said. "It does not even represent the majority of the people of India. It does not even represent the Hindu masses". In fact Congress was only sustained by the efforts of "certain manufacturing and financial interests", a fact which Mr. Churchill appears to deprecate in Indian politics, but upon which he and his Party have been for long nurtured! He went on to point out that 90 million Moslems were "fundamentally opposed" to Congress, which statement, anyone with an elementary knowledge of the facts, knows to be false. One member who shouted "Nonsense", undoubtedly knew that there are more Moslem supporters of Congress than members of the Moslem League. In any case the Moslem League though opposed to Congress, also turned down the Cripps proposals, and in a statement recently made by Mr. Jinnah its president, Mr. Churchill was firmly informed that "the British Government cannot expect us to support the war effort, for we have no say in how the war effort is to be used" and that "You cannot expect the Moslem League to be a recruiting sergeant or to raise money".

Mr. Churchill then dealt with the other "opponents" of Congress, numbering in all according to his figures, 235, out of India's 390, million. These include the 95 million "subjects of the Princes".

Sufficient facts are known regarding the conditions of this unfortunate section of the Indian people, to know that they have little opportunity to express ideas of their own. Serfs are not allowed opinions. The Princes think and speak for them, and Mr. Churchill the arch politician does not hesitate to use any weapon when it suits his own convenience. And this was more clearly shown when he referred to the martial races, whom he declared would "never consent to be ruled" by Congress, and added "*Nor shall they ever be against their will so subjected*". Mr. Churchill, defender of the martial races' rights of self-determination, which he denies to millions of Hindus and Moslems opposed to British rule!

The Premier also referred to the Indian police who are doing so much to stifle the risings in India. But he does not refer to these Indians as traitors and Quislings as he does when he talks of those Frenchmen who assist the Germans in occupied France. And after all no one can deny that India did belong to the Indians before the British invaders landed on her shores (though it is true that in a recent editorial the Daily Mail suggested that all Congress leaders should be "arrested and turned out of the country"!)

In conclusion Mr. Churchill assured the House once more that Congress was weak (though Cripps when challenged admitted that "Congress is one of the big parties in India") and "powerless to throw into confusion the

normal peaceful life of India". This statement is far from confirming the news of the disturbances which is slowly finding its way through the double censorship on news from India. Mr. Amery admitted that "300 stations were attacked and 24 cases of derailment of trains were reported" and one M.P. referred to a statement by an American commentator to the effect that "a strike had broken out in the Tata munition works of 50,000 men". And did not the Legislative Assembly declare that "*Thousands of rioters gave themselves up to an orgy of destruction of communications and other Government property? According to this report*" A large part of the railway in this area (Bihar) was put out of action, and for a considerable period Bengal was almost completely cut off from Northern India".

Mr. Churchill may have scored yet another oratorical victory, but to the thinking people of this country, it will be yet further proof of the hollowness of the Government's promises of "freedom" "self-determination" and other fine sounding slogans and war aims. In his speech Churchill emulated the best efforts of Dr. Goebbels Propaganda Ministry, and we suggest that those demonstrators who showed their contempt for the British Government by burning four effigies of Mr. Churchill in the streets of Bombay, expressed the feelings of millions of workers throughout the world, who are slowly but surely, seeing through the political racket.

V.R.

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## OUR DEMOCRATIC ORDER

THE disappearance of the French Chamber of Deputies was considered as a great loss for the French people and great commiseration was shown by the 'democratic press' for the French nation. Every day brings however, proofs that both in Britain and in America Parliaments play a very minor role in the running of the affairs of the country. In America, if Congress does not choose to follow the President's advice, it can be overruled by the President. In the case of anti-inflation legislation Roosevelt has plainly warned Congress that he will apply it whatever it decides. The Press in this country approves the President's action wholeheartedly as they say the nation as a whole is behind his policy and 'his leadership will be generally acclaimed' If Roosevelt represents the people's will and Congress doesn't, it is a sad reflection on parliamentary regime.

M.P.'s who have passed regulations providing heavy sentences for workers' absenteeism do not mind leaving the House when it suits their convenience. When they were all coming back from a month's holiday, they did not have the strength to listen to Churchill's much advertised and much expected speech. That the speech was boring is besides the point, as at that rate most workers would not stick to their jobs more than a few minutes a day. To excuse them the *Tribune* correspondent points out that they had sat through the previous question time and the speech itself, a total period of two and half hours. After this supernatural effort they naturally needed a diversion and they went to the dining rooms. Some actually left during the speech, and when Arthur Greenwood spoke there were about twenty people to listen to him. After this, the House considering itself probably overworked, adjourned itself for another fortnight!

Parliamentary reports give the impression that when M.P.'s feel energetic enough to attend the House they often behave like schoolboys more anxious to make a good joke and pass catty remarks, than to discuss the welfare of the people or the effective prosecution of the war. Witness the following discussion which took place in the House before the new recess:

"Mr. CUNNINGHAM-REID said that in "a rather wangling White Paper" published recently it was asserted that the soldier got the equivalent of £3 a week. Subtracting the holidays members of Parliament had already had, and assuming they would get others on the same basis as last year, they would receive £30 for each six days worked. (Interruption and cries of "Order") On the same basis the House would have three months' holiday. (Cries of "No.")

He thought they should have no more holiday than the ordinary worker.

The hon. member was interrupted by cries of "Honolulu."

Mrs. TATE (C.—Frome): The hon. member must remember that there are some constituencies which want us to represent them.. (Laughter).

Mr. CUNNINGHAM-REID: What the hon. member says is not borne out by what took place in my constituency recently, when I was given a vote of confidence, and that was not what happened to her some time ago in her constituency. Continuing, he said if the House could not set an example to the country of hard work, the least they could do, considering how little work they had to do, was to agree to have their salaries cut down to £200 a year.

Mr. G. A. GRIFFITHS (Lab.—Hemsworth): He has got £20,000, and he is talking about my 600 quid. (Laughter).

British soldiers who can see every night, pubs filled with American and Canadian soldiers drinking the beer they can't afford, must have been rather puzzled by Sir Stafford Cripps when during the debate on Service pay "he expressed gratitude to American sailors, soldiers and airmen for the most helpful way in which they are doing their utmost to diminish in every way the incidence of the differences in pay as compared with our Service men". What is Cripps referring to? The American soldiers cannot help being better fed, better dressed than the British, and we have heard no case of American soldiers sharing their pay with the British. Perhaps S. Stafford Cripps is referring to a case we have heard of American soldiers sending a few grapefruits to a British Company. The British officers soon proved that solidarity does not exist even in the British army: they ate the grape fruits and gave the men a few bottles of grape fruit squash to avoid grumbling.

It's ridiculous for the government to expect any kind of solidarity from the American soldiers. The Sergeants and officers in the British army enjoy better food, can afford drinks and girls, without worrying themselves about the privates. Inequality in pay brings automatically envy and hostility between men. The ridiculous increase of sixpence a day for privates is not going to decrease the inequalities which go on at present. It is clear that the British soldier cannot rely either on the generosity of the American troops or on that of the Government, to improve his position, but that he will only get what he secures by his own efforts. M.L.B.

## WOMEN'S WORTH

"The Ministry of Pensions has now worked out, to a penny, the exact difference between the financial needs of males and females injured while fire-watching.

Observe in particular the comparative rates of compensation for total incapacitation. "Men 37s. 6d.: women, 27s. 6d."

Now cast your minds back to May, 1941, when a similar piece of legislation, the Personal Injuries Act, registered the following comparative estimate of sex-values—"Men, 35s.; women, 28s."

This is interesting. We see that in 15 months a man's value has increased by 2s. 6d., while a woman's has decreased by 6d.

This represents an increase in male values of 5.71 per cent. per annum and a corresponding decline in female values of 0.4 per cent.

Further, whereas in May, 1941, a woman was worth 80 per cent. of a man, by August, 1942 she was worth only 73.3 per cent. of a man."

*Yaffle in Reynolds News 6/9/42*

## STRIKES GO ON . . .

"The strike of felt workers employed at nine factories in the Rossendale and Bury districts continued yesterday. The stoppage, which follows an unsuccessful demand for an increase of wages, affects between 1,000 and 1,700 workers, and is not recognised by the union—the National Union of General Municipal Workers".

*Manchester Guardian 4/9/42*

"Ex-Servicemen, most of them employed at the British Legion poppy factory at Richmond, struck work yesterday over a piece rate dispute."

*News Chronicle 2/9/42*

## IN SPITE OF COMMUNISTS . . .

A small section of skilled workers at a Woolwich Arsenal factory staged a stay-in strike yesterday.

The dispute arose with the day workers over the introduction of piece-rates, and when the night-shift arrived and were told of it they also stopped work.

The strike was ended when negotiations were opened between the management and the unions.

The London District Committee of the Communist Party wired to the Secretary of the shop stewards' committee appealing them to return to work."

*Evening Standard 5/9/42*

## AND TRADE UNION LEADERS

An unusual reason is given for the strike at a north-east shipyard regarding a proposed change in total time day.

The employers, interviewed, stated that an agreement had been reached between the Tyne shipbuilders and the Confederation of Trades to alter the total time day, owing to the volume of work to be done by depleted staffs of the wages department.

The men complained that they had not been consulted or advised by their own leaders, and had no notice of the new arrangements.

The strike, therefore is not a protest against the employers, but against the leaders".

*Evening Standard 5/9/42*

## GUINNESS IS GOOD FOR GUINNESS.

"It would be interesting to know why Mr. Churchill made Lord Moyne Vice-Minister of State in Cairo. He was hardly a success at the Ministry of Agriculture. He did not exactly shine at the Colonial Office. Is it a principle that, even in politics, guinness is good for us?"

*Laski in Reynold's News 6/9/42*

## THE LEOPARD DOES NOT CHANGE HIS SPOTS.

"Those people who think that the "economic royalists" change their habits in war time ought to read about the practices of some of the American business magnates since Pearl Harbour.

Mr. Ford is devoting all his energies to hamstringing a great public housing scheme for the workers in his giant factory at Willow Run. A great corporation has just been indicted by the Assistant Attorney-General for making bulbs for electric torches which have an unnaturally short life.

Most of what could be done to jeopardise the success of the synthetic rubber programme has been done. The record of the aluminium interests is fantastic.

We hear much of the remarkable drive of men like Mr. Kaiser. But if one reads of Mr. Kaiser's reception at Washington, and the massive barrage erected by vested interests there, lest he brings his energy and ingenuity into their bailiwicks, one gets a lesson in the habits of monopoly capitalism that is really epic.

*Laski in Reynold's News 6/9/42*

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# Through

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## EQUALITY OF SACRIFICE.

"This meat-eating country learned to-day that the Government intends to ration meat before the end of this year and has decided on quotas for wholesalers which will produce a discernible meat shortage within the next fortnight.

Even so, American families under rationing as it is being conceived now, will get considerably more meat per head than the British used to eat before the war. It is proposed that each adult shall be allotted 2½lb. a week. British pre-war consumption worked out at 1¾lb. a head."

*News Chronicle 2/9/42*

Jolly decent of the Americans to eat all the meat so that our gallant navy hasn't got to risk their lives to bring it over here.

## AMERICAN AUSTERITY

"Because eggs are one of the best protective foods, everyone should eat at least one egg a day. Six popular ways of serving eggs are shown on opposite page."

*American magazine "LIFE" 27/8/42.*

We are sorry that for technical reasons we cannot reproduce the really gorgeous pictures of the six popular ways of serving eggs advocated by *Life*, so that Americans do not get bored with them.

"Chickens, the supply is plentiful and the prices are low. Now is the time for every family to have a chicken in the pot, and on the opposite page are six different ways in which Americans like to serve it."

Wonderful coloured photographs of Roast chicken Broiled chicken, Fried chicken, chicken fricasee, and chicken salad adorn the issue of *LIFE* quoted above.

Why hasn't the Editor enough tact to leave out those mouth-watering pictures from the English edition?



## CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT

"Sir Edward Benthall, the Member for Indian War Transport Board, answering a question in the Assembly, said that since the civil disobedience movement, 250 railway stations had been damaged.

"There have been many instances of tampering with the track which have resulted in at least 24 derailments," he said.

"The greater part of the sabotage has occurred in Northern Bihar and the eastern district of the United Provinces."

"The damage is likely to be less than £7,000.

"In most areas the track has been restored.

"War transport has experienced a temporary setback, but this has been rapidly overcome. Mr. Guranath V. Bewoor, Secretary of the Department of Posts and Air, said 550 post offices had been attacked—53 had been completely burned down, and serious damage done to 200.

Telegraph and telephone lines had been tampered with in a large number of places and some of the repair parties had been attacked by mobs. Some £7,500 in cash and stamps had been looted."

*Evening Standard 14/9/42*

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# The Press

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## ENCOURAGING PATRIOTISM

"Down at the Treasury in Whitehall, a good many people are scratching their heads, wondering how they can persuade men and women to buy Defence Bonds.

They had this same problem in the United States. It was a dull business, if patriotic, to buy war bonds, until the U.S.A. Treasury called in Hollywood and Broadway. Actors and actresses joined in the high-pressure campaign to sell war bonds by parades, fun fairs, gags, spectacles—any kind of stunt. This is what the Press agents call "Cheesecake".

After three weeks or a month of it, Marlene Dietrich is acclaimed supreme Empress of Cheesecake, champion bond seller of them all. She made three cross country trips, quickening pulses and opening purses all the way. At Cleveland one worker signed away 10 per cent of his pay for the duration. After Dietrich had rewarded him with a long kiss, he said it was worth the sacrifice.

Nineteen showgirls put on bathing suits, plastered themselves and suits with savings stamps. In nine minutes all the stamps were peeled off and paid for to the tune of 500 dols.

Now then Sir Kingsley, what about a Cheesecake here?"

*Evening Standard 3/9/42*

## NO AGE LIMIT FOR M.P.S

"The oldest member in the House of Commons is a Socialist, Will Thorne. He has attained the grand old age of 85. Next to him are two other Labour members, Mr. Cecil Wilson and the Rev. James Barr, both of whom are 80 years old. Liberalism is represented in the highest age groups by Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Haydn Jones. They are 79 years of age. The oldest among Conservatives is Sir Frederick Mills, the member for East Leyton, at 77. He is followed by 76-year-old Lieut-colonel Sir William J. Allen, K.B.E., D.S.O."

*Evening Standard 3/9/42*

## ROOSEVELT...THE RIGHT DICTATOR FOR A DEMOCRACY

"The United Nations cannot win the war until the English-speaking people are united under one leader, and that leader should be President Roosevelt," declared William Duncan Herridge, former Canadian Minister in Washington, in a speech here.

Speaking as "a Canadian and a British subject," Major Herridge said that Mr. Churchill representing the British Empire, should nominate Mr. Roosevelt for the Allied leadership. "The President should have dictatorial powers with a great general staff—half British and half American—to advise him.

Major Herridge said that Canadians should demand that Mr. Churchill take such a step. "We must purge democracy of its peace-time weakness. We must build the English-speaking people into a great engine of destruction. For that purpose we must have one leader for the English-speaking people and that leader must have the power of a dictator. Washington is the right place for democracy's general headquarters. They cannot be in the front line in London."

Next time you see that the C.P. is going to denounce the fascists and fifth columnists in our midst, don't think they are going to expose Mr. William Duncan Herridge, he is a democrat, a true enemy of Hitler and Mussolini.

## BLACK VANITIES COME FIRST

"The T.U.C. conference opened at Blackpool to-day in a setting as different as can be imagined from last year's gathering at Edinburgh.

To-day's meeting was in the Winter Gardens, one of the greatest palaces of pleasure in the country.

But there is competition for space even in Blackpool. At the Opera House each night Black Vanities is staged, and the conference must finish by 4.15 each day. On Wednesday when there is a matinee it will not be possible for the conference to meet in the afternoon at all."

*Evening Standard 7/9/42*

## THIS IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR

"Saying that they had proved conclusively their demand for a minimum basic pension of 30s. a week, Mr. James C. Birtles, of Manchester, presiding over the annual conference of the National Federation of Old Age Pensions Associations at Derby to-day complained of the methods of the Assistance Board.

He said that the Board was inquiring into the needs in a manner more degrading than any yet devised by that body.

"As usual," he said, "inquiries as to needs are preceded by inquiries as to means; has the old man more than one suit, one overcoat, two pairs of boots, two pairs of underpants.

"And more degrading still to hear the inquisition on his dear old wife; how many pairs of corsets, nightdresses, undervests has she?"

*Evening Standard 30/8/42.*

## NO CHECK ON HER NIGHTIES

"A woman confessed to the birthrate commission, that she had ninety night gowns, each of them scented with a different perfume to please her husband.

By that means, she said, she had managed to retain the affection of her husband for forty years."

*Daily Mirror 11/9/42*

# OUR POLICY

**T**HE WORTHLESSNESS of the many "saviours" now afflicting mankind is apparent to anyone of normal intelligence. Whether it is the schoolboy braggadocio of Mussolini or Churchill, the ruthlessness (concealing fear) of Stalin and Hitler or the empty phraseology of Petain and the Pope hiding a dearth of ideas, or whether it is the resurrected promises of all politicians about "afterwards" and how sufferings are for "the duration" only, there is nothing in any of the current slogans for to-morrow for which any serious person can derive comfort for his or her future.

But scepticism is not enough, apathy is a sterile condition—any doctrine of fatalism only keeps things as they are, and assists those who do well out of the present system, quite as much as any blind faith in the ruling-class. The world demands a concrete programme of action. Already in parts of the world, in occupied Europe and colonised Asia, revolt has broken out. The revolt is against State tyranny, and this need not be obscured by the fact that in parts it bears a nationalist character. "Nature abhors a vacuum" where there is no positive revolutionary programme any flag will do.

The European masses who have flung themselves at their Nazi overlords are not revolting for the sake of their monarchs and bosses in comfortable exile, not even where these have camouflaged themselves with the glamour of persecution, nor for the sake of a phrase called "the United Nations".

Did such manifestations of open civil warfare appear in Germany's occupied territory in the last war? No one can compare Belgium of 1914-18 with the lasting counter-terrorism of occupied Europe today. Similarly in India. The struggle in India may bear a nationalist veneer, but the masses did not revolt merely to change their masters; their struggle too is fundamentally the class struggle.

We put forward our own programme, not as a rival to any political party, but as a contribution to the spontaneous struggle of the people, the logical outcome of which is an opposition to all parties placing themselves as defenders of or successors to the State machinery. The only means of achieving freedom from the State machinery is by direct action of the workers. The daily struggle for better conditions the necessary defence of civil liberties, and a struggle for freedom, must be made one and the same fight.

Wherever there is a place of work there is a battlefield for the struggle for freedom. In canteen, pithead, garage, deck, office, factory, shop, field,

wherever there is a place of work there must be an assembly of the workers, a council of action, in the one meeting place which no dictatorship can destroy, for the purpose of carrying out a struggle for betterment (whether expressed in wages, conditions of living or working, or whatever other main issue, including the social question, as the Indians have declared a general strike on the "Quit India" issue, and the Luxembourgers a general strike on the anti-Conscription and anti-assimilation issue.)

In every locality the assemblies must act together, as a representative body of the people. Not a fake representation such as borough councillors and MP's afford, but a truly inclusive body of the organised industrial workers. In the local communes, assemblies of the industrial workers, and in federated industrial unions, this movement can become a militant expression of the will of the revolutionary workers, in spite of the trend to dictatorship, and it can continue to act (as the organised Spanish workers always did) even when dictatorships come into power.

The immediate aim must always be to force concessions from the ruling class, to secure betterment by strikes and industrial action; but the final aim must be nothing less than the taking over of the means of life by the workers themselves, the syndicalist conception of workers' control of the places of work, directly, without the intervention of the State. The final lockout of the bosses and the establishment of free socialism is the only guarantee of freedom from State tyranny.

The issues to-day are not between rival states, but between all states on the one hand, and freedom on the other. All governments are moving to State tyranny, and the only means of resistance is industrial solidarity, the building of a new society in which the state will not exist.

As Anarchists, we do not ask people to "vote for us", "put us in power" or anything of the sort. We put forward to all who believe in fighting, and not accepting, State tyranny, the logical outcome of whose beliefs is the abolition of all governments—the method of building the class front.

A.M.

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**Part I****Michael Bakunin**

THE growth of libertarian thought in the nineteenth century cannot be attributed to any one man, but although the influences of Godwin, Proudhon and many lesser figures were important, it was with the rise of Michael Bakunin that revolutionary anarchism emerged as a social doctrine and that an anarchist movement grew in Europe and became the vanguard of revolutionary endeavour.

Bakunin was a Russian nobleman by birth, and his whole life and work are characterised by great intolerance of injustice and coercion and a passionate devotion to personal freedom and integrity. Gigantic and commanding in stature, before his years of imprisonment and suffering Apollonian in physical handsomeness, by nature simple-minded, eloquent, courageous and generous to a fault, Bakunin had all the attributes that might have made him a successful man of the world, commanding statesman or the hero of a national revolution, like his friend Garibaldi. Yet he sacrificed all prospect of a prosperous or distinguished future for the suffering and poverty, the misrepresentation, obloquy and apparent failure which fall to the lot of the social revolutionâry. He had neither the scientific, methodical mind of a Kropotkin nor the talented cunning of a Marx, but for the devotion and personal heroism by which he built the libertarian movement in Europe, he remains probably the greatest and certainly the most dynamic revolutionary figure of modern times.

Bakunin's father was an ex-diplomat who held an estate of five hundred serfs in the Russian province of Tver, and who had planned for Michael, his eldest son, a respectable and patriotic career in the Tsar's army. It was in the family that Michael first attacked authority, and his early years were filled with stormy incidents in which the Bakunin children, organised and incited by Michael, rebelled against the parental will.

Michael himself was sent to the St. Petersburg Artillery School, where he showed little zeal for military studies and, although he gained a commission in the Artillery, he left the service of the Tsar at the first opportunity. He decided to devote himself to academic studies, and became a keen student of philosophy and a disciple of Hegel, then the fashionable sage of intellectual Europe. Soon he became restive in the frustrated atmosphere of Russian society, and in 1840, when he was 26, he left Russia to study the Hegelian philosophy in its own German environment.

He departed a loyal subject of the Tsar, but in Berlin he soon fell, like Marx, under the subversive influence of the young Hegelians and began to move towards a revolutionary outlook. He studied the early socialist and communist movements which flourished in France, and first manifested himself as a revolutionary in 1842, when he published in Arnold Ruge's *Deutsche Jahrbucher* an article entitled 'Reaction in Germany'. This article contained the famous phrase 'The desire to destroy is also a creative desire', which has been used by many of the more unscrupulous opponents of anarchism to misrepresent Bakunin as a monster who desired violence above all and for its own sake. In fact, Bakunin meant merely that the old form of society must be ended before the new can be built. That he should have been devoted to violence for sadistic motives is contrary to all we know of his character.

Indeed, he said on more than one occasion that violent revolution was at best an unpleasant and unsatisfactory necessity. "Bloody revolutions are often necessary, thanks to human stupidity; yet they are always an evil, a monstrous evil and a great disaster, not only with regard to the victims, but also for the sake of the purity and the perfection of the purpose in whose name they take place."

In 1843 Bakunin was in touch with Weitling, whose authoritarian communism he eventually rejected, and when Weitling was erected in Switzerland, Bakunin's name was found among his papers. The Swiss police informed the Russian authorities, and in due course Bakunin was summoned home. He refused to obey, and in his absence was condemned to deprivation of his title of nobility and

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**by George Woodcock**

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his inheritance, and also hard labour in Siberia. For his defiance the Russian government became thenceforward his most implacable enemy.

In the same year he met Proudhon and Marx in Paris. He was impressed by the two men, and in the following years his ideas, as they grew slowly through much effort and experience, were influenced by both of them. From Marx he learned that economics were more important than politics and religion, a fact which Marx revealed in his scientific analysis of society and forgot when he came to formulate revolutionary methods.

The following years saw Bakunin attempting to intervene wherever revolution appeared in Europe. At first he supported the Poles, until he was discredited in their eyes by a rumour spread by the Russian secret service that he was one of their own spies—a slander which followed him for many years and was afterwards revived by the Marxists to serve their own particular ends.

Then, in February 1848, he hastened to Paris for the revolution against the regime of the Citizen King. He assisted enthusiastically at the barricades, but when he began to preach the anarchist ideas which were already beginning to appear in his mind, the Jacobins found him an embarrassment, and one of them remarked to him, "What a man! What a man! The first day of the revolution, he is a perfect treasure, but on the next day he should be shot!" The new 'revolutionary' authorities did their best to get rid of him, and when Bakunin realised the reactionary nature of the state that arose from the Parisian revolution, he decided to return to his efforts to foment the Polish insurrection.

He went to Breslau, near the Polish border, but again he found that the Poles distrusted him, and he went on to Prague. Here he was involved in another rising and fought on the barricades with the Czech students, but the insurrection was soon defeated, and he fled back to Germany, where he found a temporary refuge in Anhalt, a tiny liberal principality islanded in Prussian territory. He still intrigued with his friends in Bohemia, and in 1849 went illegally to Dresden in order to maintain closer contact with them. Here he was again overtaken by revolution and, although he had no sympathy with the German liberals, who were rising to maintain their constitutional democracy, he offered his services with a remarkably dis-

interested willingness and, when most of the leaders fled, remained at the barricades and assumed control of the revolution. He conducted himself so well that even Marx and Engels praised his ability and coolheadedness and, according to Bernard Shaw, Wagner, who fought beside him, was so impressed by his heroism that he used him as the model for Siegfried.

The Dresden revolution was defeated and suppressed with great brutality by Prussian troops sent to assist the Saxon king, and the surviving rebels—the majority had either been shot or thrown into the Elbe—fled to Chemnitz, where most of them, including Bakunin, were arrested during the night. Wagner was one of the few who escaped.

For Bakunin capture meant the beginning of an imprisonment which was to last eight years, in the most terrible prisons of four countries, and to be followed by years of exile in the spiritual desert of Siberia. First he was kept in prison for more than a year by the Saxon authorities, then sentenced to death, taken out to execution, and reprieved at the zero minute. Then he was handed on to the Austrian government, who desired their revenge for his part in the Prague rising. Nearly another year passed in Austrian Prisons, first the citadel of Prague and then, when a rescue was feared, in the castle of Olmutz, where he was chained to a wall for three months. Again he was tried and condemned to death, and again reprieved and extradited to the next country which desired to torture this formidable rebel.

This last country was his own land, from which, as he had already been sentenced, he could not even hope for the mockery of a trial. What he expected was an execution, this time stayed by no reprieve. Instead, he was condemned to the exquisite psychological torture of writing a 'confession' to the Tsar (one can make an interesting comparison with the equally humiliating 'confessions' extorted by Tsar Stalin at the present day). After that he remained for six years in solitary confinement in the Peter and Paul fortress and the even more rigorous prison of Schüsselburg, where the enemies of the Tsar lived and died in solitary confinement for many generations of revolutionaries. He suffered terribly from his privations and became toothless and prematurely aged from the ravages of scurvy. He began to lose all hope of ever leaving his prison to rejoin the struggle for human liberty, which, even in his greatest despair, remained always in his thoughts. In 1857, however Bakunin was released from his cell and sent to Siberia for a life's exile. He stayed there for four years, and then staged a sensational escape and returned, via Japan and the United States, to London, where his friends Ogarev and Herzen, were living.

Bakunin returned to freedom with a spirit, unlike his body, preserved in all its integrity and enthusiasm throughout the years of his long suffering. Life on Paddington Green and the editing of a liberal paper with Herzen soon tired him, and he wished to resume the revolutionary struggle which had been torn from his hands in Dresden twelve years before. When the Polish insurrection started in 1863 he endeavoured to assist the insurgents, but again the Polish leaders would have nothing to do with him, this time because his dream of a great federation of liberated Slavs ran counter to their own imperialist aspirations and his idea of a peasant uprising was diametrically opposed to their plan of an aristocratic class government. Bakunin would not accept their rebuffs, and went to Stockholm to join an expedition of Poles who planned to land in Lithuania. The project never matured, and Bakunin's experiences with the Poles finally taught him that

the social revolution could not be achieved through nationalist movements. Thenceforward he moved rapidly towards the idea of an international revolutionary movement based on the working class.

During the ensuing years he lived mostly in Italy, where he gained a number of followers, and founded his first organisation dedicated to the achievement of an anarchist revolution, the secret International Brotherhood. This was followed by his joining the League for Peace and Freedom, an organisation of liberals with a vaguely pacifistic policy which held its first congress at Geneva in that year and which Bakunin hoped to influence with his revolutionary ideas.

Bakunin's attendance at the conference was the first public appearance of this now famous conspirator and revolutionary, and the aura attached to his name as the hero of so many revolutions, of so many prisons, and of the sensational escape from Siberia combined with his gigantic presence to rouse the greatest enthusiasm. One of those present wrote "As he walked up the steps to the platform . . . a great cry of "Bakunin" went up. Garibaldi, who was in the chair, rose and went forward to embrace him. Many opponents of Bakunin's were present, but it seemed as if the applause would never end."

At first Bakunin had high hopes of the League for Peace and Freedom. He was elected to the Central Committee of the League, and gained a small following therein including the brothers Elisee and Elie Reclus, who were later to become famous in the anarchist movement. But very soon he realised the essentially bourgeois nature of the League as a whole and, although he attempted some kind of fusion between it and the International, which he joined in 1868, he found that the membership of the League could not keep pace with his own development. He had now come into the open as a declared enemy of capitalism, and demanded the expropriation of the land and means of production which would be worked collectively by worker's associations. At the Second Congress of the League he put forward proposals for the expropriation of wealth and the establishment of a classless society. When, as he had expected, these proposals were rejected, he left the League with his few followers, and turned to the International as the instrument of his revolutionary activity.

*(to be concluded)*

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# WAR WITHOUT END

AT THE BEGINNING of this war, as of the last also everyone expected that it would be short—over by Christmas, 1939. Since then the military operations have been characterised by slow intervals, punctuated—at least as far as the Axis is concerned—by bursts of intense activity. But on the home fronts, the social and economic organisation of production has been altered to accord with wartime “needs”. War has become a normal routine of life.

The illusion of a short war began to die out with the invasion of Scandinavia and the Netherlands and received its death-blow with the collapse of France. So far from it being possible to limit the sphere of operations, the Balkans and Mediterranean Africa and the Near East, and still later the entry of Japan, America and Australasia has shown that as far as the war is concerned “the world is the limit”. It is evident that whatever are the underlying causes of the war, they operate alike on all countries and exempt none.

Now it is interesting to note the propaganda which has gone hand in hand with this wide extension of the war situation. The short-war phase was clearly indicated by wishful hopes. But since these have been blasted, we find that they have been replaced by the very opposite. In this country for two years now, we have been constantly adjured through Parliament, pulpit and press to accept one thing above all others—the inevitability of a long war. Indeed, it has gone further than that, for the country has repeatedly been told to expect that many wartime features—conscription for the Army and for industry for example, will be maintained for years following the peace. The Archbishop of Canterbury (then of York) insisted that the claims of “social justice” demanded such measures! So also has Ernest Bevin. Meanwhile, assurance of parity with, or superiority over, the enemy are always postponed to . . . 1943 or 1944 or 1945.

It is the same in other countries. The working population is constantly assured by their guardian governments that their trials and toils, their blood and sweat and tears, must be drawn out for longer yet. The Chinese recently entered on the sixth year of the war with Japan and are assured that their generalissimo is preparing to carry on the fighting for another ten or fifteen years! And with all these dreary prospects, more factories are planned and laid down, more and more of the population are drawn by methods of strict conscription and control, into the wartime industries. This propaganda is rendered all the more extraordinary by the manifest

apathy and lack of enthusiasm amounting almost to cynicism which has been from the start displayed by workers all over the world.

It has often been pointed out in these pages, that wars serve the interests of the ruling class by stimulating the nationalist feelings of the working class and so deflecting them from class solidarity. Nationalism claims to identify the interests of the ruling class and the workers. Hence it serves the interests of the former by concealing the fundamental class antagonisms. We have also pointed out with many concrete indications that the ruling class, whatever their nationalist-patriotic declarations, never for one moment forget their need always to seek advantage at the expense of the working class. Let us however, leave this aspect of “patriotic” propaganda and consider the question of an extended war from the standpoint of the ruling class and the state.

All propaganda of a general kind emanates from the ruling class. But it also reflects their interests: and the ruling classes everywhere are in a very tight spot. Ultimately their power depends not on the police and the army, the two classical instruments of governmental authority, but on their monopoly of the control of national economy. Unfortunately for them the operation of economic events on a world scale are not fully under their control. Thus the enormously increased productive power brought about by the last war, caused the relative shrinkage of world markets which brought on the ghastly economic havoc of 1929 to 1932. The so-called “over-production” was checked by consolidating the tendency to restrict production—with its consequent massive unemployment—restriction of production has indeed been the principal feature of capitalism in the last twenty years.

Nevertheless the maintenance of their economic power, demands that the ruling class should make profits and the way to recover from the world depression made only one source of profit generally available. That source was armament production. So the farcical disarmament conference disintegrated into an armaments boom. All the major powers began, with varying degrees of completeness to replace a peace-time social and economic organisation by a war-time economy. Such a step was not dictated by a desire for war—as Munich showed—but by the stern necessities of the search for profits in a world of shrinking markets. Of course, however, the changeover from peacetime to wartime economy led inevitably to war, just as it had done before 1914. The important point is that the ruling-classes could not have avoided war without relinquishing the quest

for profits, without, in fact, weakening the basis of their economic superiority over the workers.

But now they are in the war, the same forces which drove them on are still operating—only to an increased degree. As in the last war, the enormously increased productive power of industry can only have the effect of diminishing still further the peacetime markets, and so will produce an even more ghastly and disastrous slump than last time. Hence the rulers are driven to maintain at all costs the wartime basis of economy. The ending of the war spells ruin for them.

It has often been stated that the economic basis of Fascism depends on preparation for war. Both Hitler Germany, Italy and the Russia of the Five Year Plans, fully demonstrated this truth. Now, the “democratic” nations are in the same boat. It is clear therefore that for the Allies and the Axis alike, the paramount necessity is to maintain the war. Its ending will deal a most deadly blow to the economic structure on which the power of all ruling groups depend. We begin to see, therefore, what lies behind the propaganda for a long, almost an indefinite war. Why, also, our statesmen are at pains to point out that “even when peace comes”, certain features of wartime production, military and industrial conscription—will be maintained. Supposing “peace” to be possible—which seems doubtful—they will do their utmost to make it as much like war as possible!

Wars however, cannot indefinitely conceal the class struggle behind a word-screen of patriotic nat-

ionalist propaganda. By contrast with their protestation of “patriotism” the class motives of the national sections of the ruling class begin sooner or later to stand out in their full hypocrisy. Class clashes were very sharp in England, following the Napoleonic Wars. The Franco-Prussian war of 1870 gave place to the Paris Commune of 1871. Russia’s defeat by the Japanese was largely responsible for the revolution in 1905, while the ineptitude and naked self-seeking of the Russian ruling class in the last war provoked the workers and peasants to act in class solidarity and make the revolutions of February and October, 1917. Since the ruling groups are forced, as we have seen, to continue the war indefinitely, as peace would ruin them and cut away the basis of their economic power, it seems likely that the present war can only be brought to an end by the revolutionary action of the workers. By overthrowing the wage system and securing freedom of access to the means of life to all, the working class throughout the world will not only end the fratricidal conflict but will also overthrow at one stroke the Fascism which the war has itself enthroned. Let us never forget that the revolutionary action of the Spanish workers in July, 1936, provided the only successful (alas only temporary) opposition which Fascism has ever received. The war consolidates Fascism: the anarchist revolution of the workers themselves will overthrow both war and Fascism.”

(to be concluded)

J.H.

## A Muddled Manifesto

THE MANIFESTO ‘Against Race Hatred and for a Socialist Peace’ originated by the labour M.P., W. G. Cove and widely advertised by the I.L.P., is yet another of these fruitless initiatives born from the inactivity and frustration of Left wing movements.

Every time injustices and excesses are committed by the government some well known personality takes the initiative of an open letter, a manifesto or a petition directed to some higher authority. The effect of these activities is of course nil. Governments do not yield to public opinion until it is backed by force (if sometimes they seem to give in to public opinion it is only when it suits their interests, the case of the reprieve of the five Irishmen being a typical one).

All these initiatives do is to pacify the consciences of the originators of the manifestos or appeals, and that of the signatories; it gives them the comforting impression of “having done something”. But far from achieving anything these initiatives canalize people’s energies in the wrong channels and prevent them from taking real effective action. If the workers of France and Britain had not had an opportu-

ity of shouting so often and so loud “Send Arms to Spain” to their Governments they might have taken some action to send arms themselves.

The other danger of these manifestos is that they generally add to the confusion and muddled-thinking of the Left. To get the maximum signatures the manifesto must necessarily be left as vague as possible. This is the case with Mr. Cove’s Manifesto which is very muddled indeed. On the main issue of the war, the Manifesto says that it aims at counter-acting the growing influence of Vansittartism in the Labour Movement, because “The war has no meaning and no historic purpose if it is envisaged merely as a means of killing Germans”. This implies that war can have a meaning and historic purpose so that it is therefore surprising to see pacifists and people who have denounced the war as an imperialist conflict, signing this manifesto. How can the I.L.P. which claims to be still officially against the war, collaborate with pro-war M.P.’s in getting signatures and giving publicity to the manifesto? We are also surprised to see the name of several collaborators of *War Commentary* at the bottom of the Manifesto, and we wonder if the vagueness of the Manifesto has succeeded in misleading the signatories themselves.

# THE FUTURE OF THE CINEMA

THE CINEMA forms, together with the radio and the state controlled press; one of the main sources of popular entertainment, and thus is an important factor in the moulding of public opinion. During its forty years or so of life, the picture making industry has advanced to a tremendous degree, involving millions of pounds every year and giving employment to thousands, and has gained so great a hold that it influences habits of life such as dress, food and even the language that we speak. Indeed, almost a complete dreamworld has been created as an escape-mechanism from the sordid realities and tiresome responsibilities of everyday life, a dream-world inhabited by beautiful or fantastic people living artificial lives in surroundings of plenty. When the subject-matter is other than the love-life of the bourgeoisie, it is still highly coloured or sensational, dealing mainly with the intricacies of criminal detection, the more grandiose pages of "Hollywood History", and in war-time the unmasking of fifth columnists and spies. The dead hand of commercial success has laid upon films a set of conventions which are rarely, if ever, broken; perhaps the most common is the banning of tragedy from the screen; the exceptions to this are notable by their rarity. In the English-language film tragedies, there is generally a secondary fulfilment of honour or some legal obligation, witness "Blood and Sand", "Years Without Days" or "The Case of the Frightened Lady". I do not think that the English or American studios have produced anything like "La bete Humaine" in which all the conventions were broken; in this film the legal systems played a very minor role which would never have satisfied the Anglo-American producers. This convention that the film must always end happily with the bride smiling on the arm of the groom, has led to the tacking on of endings which completely spoil many fairly good films. I remember especially a small and unsung film, "The Stranger on the Third Floor," which would have doubled its value had it ended five minutes earlier than it did. It was noteworthy also that the majority of cinemagoers were disappointed at the conclusion of the film "Citizen Kane", which certainly made an attempt to break through some of the hide-bound Hollywood traditions. Perhaps the most important point for those interested in the social aspect of films is that most of these conventions are of a purely bourgeois and philistine nature; the social agitator, the artist, the musician are nearly always objects either of ridicule or are regarded as slightly barmy, if harmless, and together with the criminal, can seldom be the hero of the film. We may in some way regard the killer in "This Gun for Hire" as a

hero, but the fact remains that he had to die and Law, Order and American Democracy, as always, were triumphant.

Films with a genuine working-class content very rarely get made; this is not surprising when we consider that the controllers of the cinema industry would certainly be amongst the losers if the workers did take any action. "Love on the Dole" was set in a working-class family and dealt in a sympathetic manner with the problems which they have to face, but the nearest approach to a solution was the Labour Party, the present champions of the Imperialist system, and the film was prefaced and followed by notes in the "Homes fit for Heroes" style. The only film in any degree revolutionary which I have seen was "Kamaradschaft", the bi-lingual advocate of internationalism, banned from the commercial cinema in this country. Besides its advocacy of internationalism this film was refreshing in its realism. I understand that all the underground scenes, except for one small incident, were completely natural, and this was supplemented by the unadorned appearance of the workers, both of which facts are a welcome change from the usual excesses to which we are accustomed.

If we limit our values to a bourgeois nature, it must be freely admitted that the French cinema far and away surpasses anything in Hollywood or England. The films are in many cases true works of art, which is, in itself, a step forward in a world where art has become divorced from the life of the common people. If on the other hand we examine the Russian cinema from a revolutionary standpoint, we find that most of the films now being shown in London, advocate nationalism and militarism—witness "Alexander Nevsky", "General Suvrov" and so on. This is the logical extension of the bourgeois function of the present regime. "Professor Mamlock" was a change, but this anti-Nazi film offered nothing constructive as an alternative, although it was a vivid portrayal of the persecution of the Jews in Nazi-Germany.

Apart from considerations of aesthetics and social implications the early Russian and French films represent a marked technical improvement on the American and English, which make them much more worth seeing.

The cinema is a potential art-form which has arisen with industrialization and the proletariat; its future, like that of all other artforms, is bound up with the society in which we live; its fulness and maturity can only be achieved by the men working in harmony with society as a whole.

JACK WADE

## 48 HOUR WEEK IN AMERICAN INDUSTRY

The heads of all Government bodies concerned with war production in the United States have urged on industry the adoption of a maximum forty-eight hour week. The recommended policy also includes a weekly rest day for the individual (approximately every seventh), a thirty minute meal period in the middle of a shift, and staggered holidays. Hours in American industry, like those of ours after Dunkirk, have been running to extravagant limits. It is pointed out to industry that this does not pay and will lead to a falling off in production, absenteeism, accidents and illness. There is a further argument—that uniformity in hours will stop the “poaching” or “pirating” of labour by the offer of heavy overtime payments. This we have got over by “freezing” labour, but the United States has not yet reached that point. What is particularly interesting is the standard of hours suggested. The statement says:

While a forty-hour week is generally accepted in peace time there is a widespread and increasing agreement as a result of actual experience, both in this country and abroad, that for war-time production the eight-hour day and forty-eight hour week approximate the best working schedule for sustained efficiency in most industrial operations.

*Manchester Guardian 1/9/42*

Workers in his country who would not work more than 48 hours a week would be sent to prison for it. Maximum hours in this country is sixty six hours. Eighteen hours a week more than in America and American workers seem to be better fed than the British and have not had to endure air-raids and the privations of three years of war. Taking that into consideration the working hours of the British worker should be less than those of the American. Either British or American experts seem to be wrong somewhere.

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## Daily Worker Strike —C.P. Scabs Brought In

The *Daily Worker* made a bad start with its reappearance by having to face a strike during the first printing on Sunday. The D.W. management refused to re-employ a N.A.T.S.O.P.A. member who had formerly worked for the paper, until the time of its banning. The N.A.T.S.O.P.A. declared that this refusal constituted victimisation since it was based on an incident which had occurred between the management and this worker two years before the suppression. They accordingly struck work.

The D.W. management acted with characteristic C.P. methods, William Rust, the Editor, appealed to the T.U.C. in Blackpool to give instructions that the strike be called off. The appeal was refused.

The management then called in C.P. members who were *non-N.A.T.S.O.P.A.* operatives to act as scabs to break the strike while negotiations were going forward. Needless to say, this did not improve relations between the employees and their “Communist” bosses.

Eventually the D.W. was compelled to give in, and the employee was re-engaged. Like their Russian masters, the C.P. behave in quite as ruthless a manner as other capitalist exploiters.

### LECTURES

EVERY FRIDAY EVENING

7.0 p.m.

SEPT. 25.

*“Direct Action in the Class Struggle”*  
FRANK SODEN.

OCT. 2.

*“English Precursors of Anarchism”*  
GEORGE WOODCOCK

OCT. 9

*“The Future of Ill-health”*  
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