

# WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY

Vol. 4 No. 12.

MID-APRIL 1943.

TWOPENCE

## Workers in Uniform and Overalls must unite in the class struggle

LAST WEEK IN the House of Commons Captain Cunningham-Reid moved a new clause in the Army and Air Force Bill to provide that 'taking part in political controversy whilst off duty shall not be deemed conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline'. The demand was a small one; as one M.P. put it, it was asking 'that a soldier on seven days' leave whose wife was living in a slum should be able to go to a political meeting to say that there should be an end to slumdom'.

But Parliament would take no risk. The idea that soldiers should be able for four weeks in a year to express an opinion on political matters filled them with anxiety. So the amendment was defeated by 195 votes to 33. Parliament has frankly and definitely stated that soldiers have the right to do the killing and dying, but that in no circumstances should they be allowed to find out what they are killing and dying for. M.P.'s even expressed the opinion that soldiers and airmen have never at any time the slightest wish to express any opinion on political matters and that therefore no opportunities of doing so should be given to them.

But the makers of the King's Regulations have obviously not chosen to rely merely on the lack of political consciousness of the Army to prevent it from taking part in the political life of the country. They are much more precise than that. Major Henderson for the War Office pointed out that, according to King's Regulations, 'no officer or soldier was permitted to take any active part in the affairs of any political organisation or party . . . If a soldier went to a political party meeting at other times than elections and asked controversial questions he might be regarded as taking an active part in the meeting and that would be forbidden'.

Gallacher pointed out during the debate that

workers in factories are too tired to think about political matters (thanks in part to the Stakhanovite methods introduced by Mr. Gallacher's associates). Millions of workers in factories are too doped with work to think, millions of people in the army are prevented from taking any interest apart from Army matters. What could suit our ruling class better? They can sleep on both ears, our M.P.'s can intrigue, renounce their pledges, betray without fear.

The King's Regulations are framed so that the life of the soldier in the army cuts him off from the rest of the population. When he dons a uniform the worker enters an artificial world which has no connection with his ordinary life and the life of his former comrades at work. The problems of wages, food and clothing which affect his fellow workers do not affect him, or at least not in the same way.

He cannot keep in touch with his former comrades as he is generally posted away from home and ceases to belong to his Trades Union. The Government not only does its best to discourage any connections being kept between soldiers and workers, but its propaganda has actually done its best to create hostility between them. The workers in the factories are always reminded of the low pay soldiers get, while soldiers are led to believe that factory workers enjoy a good life, earning big wages. When soldiers are used as cheap labour for fire-watching or on the land, or when they are used as strike breakers, as in the Glasgow 'bus strike, the conflict becomes more evident.

The constitution of the army is not an accidental development; on the contrary, it is designed to meet certain definite purposes. For the army is and always has been an instrument for maintaining class rule. Even in the midst of National wars, the ruling class constantly envisages the possibility of



having to use the Army against the enemy at home—the rebellious working class. For example, even in the midst of the German break-through and advance on Paris, General Weygand kept some divisions behind the front ‘to maintain order’.

Thus the Army is designed to be an instrument of class rule. But it is composed of workers. The problem of the ruling class is therefore how to ensure that workers in uniform will carry out their orders, how to prevent them acting in accordance with working class interests. Is it then surprising that they should segregate them from political life and isolate them from their fellow workers in overalls?

From the point of view of the ruling class, soldiers must be puppets, so they are rigidly disciplined to the point of apparent absurdity. ‘Their’s not to reason why, their’s but to do or die’, so they must not take part in current questions, not even in political tom-foolery. For our rulers bear always in mind the remark of Frederick the Great, the father of modern militarism: ‘The day the bayonets begin to think, we are lost’.

And the workers, what must their attitude to-

wards the Army be? As an instrument of class-rule Anarchists have always stressed the need of workers to refuse to enter ‘the armed forces of the crown’. Anti-militarism is fundamental to Anarchism.

But there are to-day an enormous number of workers actually in uniform—cut off, as we have seen, from their fellows in overalls. Their class duty, clearly, is to see that they are not used to subserve the class interests of their masters against their comrades. They must refuse to act as scabs. The State seeks to divide the workers: men in the army should resist this attempt, should bear constantly in mind the demands of their class loyalties.

The gaining of political rights or any other reform in the Army will not change its fundamental function as an instrument of ruling class policy. The frustration of the ruling class is clearly to come from a clear realisation on the part of all soldiers and civilian workers of the unity of class interests that binds them together. This realisation of solidarity can prevent an armed section of the workers from fighting for the ruling class against their unarmed class-comrades.

## ***Glasgow Comrades Gaoled and Fined***

On March 22nd, before Sheriff McDiarmid at Glasgow, Comrade Lewis Gordon was sentenced to twelve months’ imprisonment for refusing to obey a court order to attend the Ministry of Labour for Medical Examination. He made the following speech from the dock:—

“Justice is portrayed by a figure holding the scales but the figure is blindfolded. It was never more apt than in the present case. Justice as administered by this court with the assistance of the Ministry of Labour is concerned only with the simple fact that I have refused to comply with an order requiring me to submit myself for medical examination.

“It does not concern itself with my reasons which are ethical, not legal. In this instance the reasons for my action are more important than the action itself.

“As a conscientious objector I cannot take part in this Imperialist War. I refuse to murder my fellow-worker in Germany or, for that matter, in any part of the world.

“Likewise as an Anarchist I do not recognise the authority of this court, and I repudiate the right of the Ministry of Labour to decide whether I am to be medically examined or not.

“In court last week I asked the Ministry’s representatives if they could find moral justification for their actions towards me. None. . . .”

At this point the Sheriff intervened, refusing to listen to any more, and pronounced the sentence.

Here is the remainder of the speech Lewis intended to make: “None of them would accept responsibility, preferring to pass it on to some unknown person from whom they took orders. I think this showed that they could not justify this action and were ashamed of them.

“This applies not only to them but to all servants of the state who help to subject their fellow man to such persecution and indignities.

“If they were men and not mere cogs in a machine they would not continue to co-operate with the state, but would refuse to help enforce these regulations.

“That is all I have to say.”

Our Glasgow Comrade, Eddie Fenwick, who conducted his own defence, was fined £5, or 30 days, on March 26th, for refusing to “Firewatch” at the workshop. In his defence he stated that “As owners of private property had denied him the elementary rights of man, he was entitled to refuse to protect private property.” He also urged that there should be a “Conscientious Objection” clause in the Firewatching Order. He further claimed that, although his objections were moral and political, he nevertheless intended to assert his legal rights by seeking exemption within the terms of the order.

His fellow workers in the same workshop demonstrated an excellent example of class-solidarity by paying his fine.

**MAY DAY RALLIES**  
**SATURDAY, MAY 1st.**

Meeting in Hyde Park.  
Speakers on the Anarchist Platform  
from 3 p.m. until dusk.

**CHURCH STREET, KINGSTON,**  
Meeting at 6 p.m.



# ANARCHIST COMMENTARY

**INDIANS HANGED** IN March, 1941, in Madras Province, a peasant demonstration came into conflict with a policeman, and he was beaten to death by the demonstrators. Sixty men were arrested, and four of them, who belonged to the Kisan (peasant) movement, were charged with the murder of the policeman. Although the Judge of the High Court at Allahabad admitted that the man who gave the final blow may not have been among the accused men, the four peasant leaders were condemned to death. They lay for twelve whole months under sentence of death, while all legal attempts to secure their reprieve failed. The four men were hanged on March 29th of this year.

This judicial murder of four Indian peasants has met with some criticism in left wing papers. Amery's action is considered "regrettable." *Reynolds News* describes it as a "blunder." These lukewarm terms may be taken as a measure of their indignation. It is not that our left wing journalists are particularly concerned if a few Indian militants more or less are killed by Imperialist law; they are just afraid that their blood will return on to their own heads. "In the long years of struggle that lie ahead before Japan is defeated, many British soldiers may well pay with their lives because Mr. Amery allowed those peasants to die," says *Reynolds* on 11/4/43.

The *Daily Worker* claims that the four Kisan members belonged to the Indian Communist Party. If this is so, the C.P. does not seem to have expended over much energy in securing their reprieve. What is one to think of a party that so slavishly collaborates with a Government which murders its comrades? They have attached far greater importance to the desecration of Lenin's bust and a few anti-semitic slogans in the East End than to the judicial murder of the Indian anti-imperialist militants. The blame is put on Amery; but who believes that he alone is responsible? Has not Pollitt's comrade Churchill declared that he entirely supports the policy carried out in India? And not only Churchill, but Attlee and the Labour leaders are satisfied that all is for the best there. The C.P. supports Churchill's candidates, the C.P. wants to affiliate with the Labour Party, and "loyally carry out their obligations to it"—the Labour Party whose leaders associate themselves with the murderers of those men whom the C.P. claims as its comrades in India!

The Labour and Communist Press can refrain from shedding tears and uttering cries of indignation at the executions of the four murdered Indian peasants; it will not clear them of complicity in the crime.

**CAPITALIST PLANS** for the post-war world are going ahead. Among other **FANTASIES** panaceas, the creation of an international currency is supposed to solve some of the economic problems facing the capitalists' powers after the war. How to retain economic predominance over other nations while at the same time giving the impression that they are collaborating with them for their own good—that is the task which the Keynes and the White Plans have set themselves.

There has been some talk from Financial Editors recently about America redistributing her gold reserves after the war in order to stimulate world trade. It sounded a bit unreal, and very altruistic. But what this "redistribution" would amount to is set out by Mr. Harry D. White of the U.S. Treasury in his World Currency Plan.

The international currency which he proposes would be called "unitas," and would be equivalent to ten American dollars. A very simple trick to make the dollar the international currency. The *Unitas* can be converted into gold and are therefore based on the gold standard. In order to become members of the "United and Associated Nations Stabilization Fund," countries will have to buy shares and pay for them partly in gold, partly in national currency, and partly in Government securities. The countries which have no gold, or have insufficient of it, will presumably have to ask Uncle Sam for some and pawn most of their resources in the process. The system of votes envisaged by Mr. White is so devised as to give the U.S. the sole power of veto over any decision supported by the other nations.

Britain's gold stocks are a bit low, so the Keynes' Plan naturally tends to give less prominence to the gold standard. But as the Financial Editor of the *Manchester Guardian* points out: "The fact that the United States will have, at least for a time, predominant economic strength, is bound to be reflected in any machinery." Why bother with fancy terms like *unitas* or *bancors*?

**FRENCH WORKERS BOMBED** AMERICAN Fortresses have been bombing factories in German-occupied territory in France. Newsreels show beautiful big bombs being dropped in full daylight on the Paris working-class district of Billancourt. As yet there are no reports of Parisian workers leaving the bench to wave their handkerchiefs to the American bomber pilots. As yet—but no doubt the reports will come in due course. And maybe a few French communists will send messages to the *Daily Worker* (by underground channels) saying how much



they welcome the raids as a foretaste of the Second Front.

We are not amongst those people who would like only the German workers to be bombed, while their hearts, they say, bleed when Dutch or French people are massacred. These tender-hearted people exult when the workers of Hamburg or Essen are bombed to death. The bombing of Dutch or French people can add nothing to our condemnation of bombing in general, and, indeed, all aspects of warfare. But these bombings expose the futility of those who wish to try and carry on a "political" war, a war in which the spontaneous support of the masses abroad will be the deciding factor. It exposes the absolute disregard of the Governments for the lives of Allied people. In the raid on the Renault works 300 were killed, 1,000 wounded. The raid on Rotterdam demolished more than 1,000 houses in the centre of the town, while in Antwerp, the Germans say that over 2,000 people were killed. Rotterdam was bombed to bits by the Germans, now it is pounded by the Allies. More workers are added to the piles of victims, but at least Queen Wilhelmina is safe behind the bombing lines.

Workers in occupied countries are asked to risk their lives in underground work and sabotage; but the British Government shows its lack of confidence in such methods by bombing them instead. Between the Nazi enemy who starves them, and the British and American friends who bomb them from the air, the French workers will learn that only international working class solidarity will bring about their liberation from friend and foe alike.

## COMMUNISTS AND THE CLYDE

IN the last issue of *War Commentary* we published an article by a Clydeside Worker in reply to an attack on the Scottish Anarchists by Jack Owen, in the *Daily Worker*. On April 5th, Bishop Owen terminated the account of his pastoral journey by a final article in which he returned to the attack on the heretical Clydesiders.

Owen declares that "opposite the central fact of a strong body of politically alert working-class fighters, there is posed the blunt circumstance that they are held back from playing their proper part by deep-seated suspicions of the boss and of the Government." It would have been obvious to anyone less thick-skulled that the suspicions were consequent on and not opposed to the alertness of the workers. Comrade Owen, however, goes on to advocate a policy of co-operation with these same bosses, in spite of the fact that he admits "Through nearly 40 years of industrial life, I have seen them lie, cheat and victimise my mates." He puts the rosy prospect that if the workers crawl to the bosses just for the duration, then, after bogey Hitler has been defeated, the way will be open for the workers to walk into Paradise. The Clydeside workers are naturally not easily led away by this kind of sophistry, particularly when it is put forward by

people who, as shop stewards and members of production committees, are assisting to rivet into the workers an industrial tyranny as heavy as any that exists in Germany.

Owen attempts to discredit the socially conscious workers by talking of "The anarchists and the peacemongers who have not the guts to even fight for their own skins." We seem to have heard this sort of thing from blimps of another colour—but it is worth noting that while the anarchist workers of Glasgow have at least had the guts to endure long prison sentences for their resistance to the bosses and the Government, Communist Party men have been very careful to get reserved jobs from which they can lead the Second Front from behind.

"Come, cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we steer,

As the soldier remarked whose post lay in the rear."

Owen says again that the anarchists "are not concerned with realities, but prefer the foetid atmosphere of their own warped imaginations." But surely it is more real to fight the boss class where it can be touched than to help the Anglo-American boss to beat the German boss in the hope that somehow in the process the social revolution will slip in at the back door. The Clydeside workers know this (and we suspect that Bishop Owen knows it as well).

The article concludes with the consoling remark that "the brightest spot in the Scottish situation is that they (the C.P.) are in the lead and a growing following is behind them." More reliable reports, however, tell us that the Glasgow workers are in no mood to emulate the Gadarene swine, and that in fact the Communist activities on production committees have made them so well disliked that their influence on the Clyde is dwindling steadily from day to day.

## COMRADES IN ARMS

M. GUTT, the Belgian Finance Minister, revealed in a broadcast from London to his compatriots in Belgium that he had placed 3,000,000 ounces of gold, the equivalent of £25,000,000, at the disposal of the British Government at a critical moment of the war. The reason he gave was that America might have stopped deliveries of war materials to Britain if the gold was not forthcoming to pay for it.

"Belgian Gold Saved Us" announce the headlines in *Reynolds News*—rather a tactless way of putting it, as far as our American allies are concerned. That America would have witnessed unmoved the defeat of Britain—simply for lack of 3,000,000 million ounces of gold, is a reflection which had best be forgotten now that the greatest democracy in the world is whole-heartedly fighting on our side. The news also inopportunistically coincides with newspaper reports that America is trying to find ways and means of raising her gold reserves.



# BARKERS SACKED!

## Scottish Workers Run their Own Canteen

IT HAS ALWAYS been a self-evident truth to Anarchists that only by the determined method of direct action are the demands of the workers acceded to. Too often have these Arbitration Councils and Committees been proved to be the means of deliberate procrastination until the enthusiasm of the workers had dissipated itself.

An excellent example of direct action was enacted in a West of Scotland factory recently. The source of complaint was the factory canteen run by the notorious London firm of canteen caterers, Barkers Ltd. For more than a year discontent was rife with a service which betrayed the fact that the profit motive was regarded as paramount, and the feeding of the workers of negligible importance. It puzzled the workers where the sugar allowance was disappearing to, for it was too obvious that it did not go into the tea! The small portion of meat, potatoes and vegetables for which they demanded ninepence was a cynical disregard for the needs and means of the workers. A notice was placed in a prominent position in the canteen advising all and sundry that it was the wish of the Ministry of Food that they eat more potatoes, and Barkers were willing to supply them with an extra spoonful if they were willing to pay for it!

Complaints had been lodged with the factory Welfare and the Shop Stewards, and a committee was set up to examine complaints and offer advice. The committee was, however, helpless to effect any reforms because the root cause of the trouble was the question of profit. Complaints continued to pour into the Shop Stewards and the day came when they decided that discussion was a waste of time, and that the cure was to kick Barkers out.

A boycott was begun, and maintained at a hundred per cent. On the fifth day of the boycott with no sign of the caterers clearing out, an overwhelming majority voted for a four hours strike to take place the following afternoon. The pet C.P.'er of the factory moved at this meeting that the key men remain at their posts as a sign of good faith to the management. This was eagerly seized upon by what are known in the West of Scotland as "pee-hee" men. Nevertheless, the afternoon strike was a great success and made evident the determination of the workers to fight to a finish. The management of the factory who are responsible for the contract were reluctant to let Barkers go, but the Shop Stewards pointed out that there would be no compromise, and they emphasized their demands by tendering a 21-days' strike notice.

Offers and suggestions were forthcoming from both management and Barkers, but the workers rejected their proposals and demanded that the contract be cancelled or they go on strike. In little more than a week the management cancelled the contract and offered to run the canteen in co-operation with the workers, the profit accruing to be used to improve the food and conditions of the canteen workers, and to reduce the price of the meals. And to crown the victory, a loan of £500 to give the new canteen arrangements a flying start!

This victory is significant in that it teaches the value of direct action. The Shop Stewards' Convener is to be congratulated for his courageous stand and his encouraging talks to the workers, in which he continuously stressed one point to them: "If you want anything, you must be prepared to fight for it."  
JAMES SMYTH.

3,000,000 ounces of gold, is a reflection which had best be forgotten now that the greatest It is to be feared that M. Gutt's compatriots will draw unflattering conclusions about the nature of democracy from his revelations!

### POLISH

### ANTISEMITISM

ACCORDING to a report in the *Aufban* of New York, Polish Jews are the victims not only of Nazi brutality. In Tel Aviv, Polish soldiers have attacked Jewish people in the streets; they killed the editor of a Hebrew newspaper, and were only stopped by police intervention from burning down the *Volkshaus*.

The spokesman of Polish reactionaries in London writes in the Polish paper *Mysl Polska*, "It is about time to destroy the legend of the unhappy life the Jews used to have in pre-war Poland." He goes on to say that the Jews have no real pro-Polish feelings, speak Polish only for business reasons, and are concerned only to cheat and

profiteer. He maintains that there is no such thing as a friendly relationship between Jews and Poles.

Why does not some M.P. ask in the House if His Majesty's Government knows that Polish Jews are still beaten and killed by their own reactionaries? Why does not the *Daily Worker*, which has so many supporters in Whitechapel, organise a protest meeting to tell the Jewish boys in uniform that they are fighting for the restoration of Nationalist Poland, that the British Government does nothing to protect the Jewish people from the attacks of an anti-semitic paper published in London?

According to a report of the Swiss Office of War Information in Washington, in French territory occupied by the Italians there is no anti-semitic law. Jews do not have to wear the Star of David, nor are their identity cards stamped with the word *Juif*. It seems that even the "Wops" are better than the Poles for the restoration of whose reactionary state some 8,000 refugees, mostly of Jewish race, are fighting in the British Army.



# On the Dole

SINCE THE BEGINNING of this war there has been such a grand ballyhoo raised over what we are and what we are not fighting for that the onlooker has sometimes had occasion to question whether anyone really knows at all. But out of the welter of conflicting opinions there seems to be emerging the idea that this war is, decidedly, the war to end war and the war whose aftermath is going to allow us to build a glorious new world and permit of wonderful new possibilities—always providing the Chancellor of the Exchequer has sufficient funds to warrant them! One of the recommendations for this future paradise is that there should be freedom from want. To help towards this, unemployment "benefit" *may*, if the economic position after the war makes it possible, be raised to 24/- per week—though one might be pardoned for thinking that in a glorious new world the "dole" would be an anachronism. However, be that as it may, the world of to-morrow will have to be built on more substantial grounds than promises dependent on "ifs" and "whens" and the Government's desire to create a state of freedom from want would be more easily credited if certain alterations governing the present conditions of receipt of unemployment pay were put in hand right away.

During the past year I have had ample time to study and—unfortunately—experience the technique meted out by the labour exchange. I have come to the conclusion that it is a debatable point whether the routine followed is calculatingly heartless or merely asinine. One of the first things I found out was the fact that ceasing to have work and "lodging" your unemployment book at the exchange entitles you to exactly nothing! You may have paid in contributions over a period of many years but you are not *entitled* to draw the money out unless and until you have "made a claim" involving the being told to "sign here" several times and answering a number of questions concerning dates and times and names of previous employments whose details you have been unprepared for and consequently don't remember off-hand. This first stage takes you slightly aback as it is natural to assume that one would automatically come into "benefit" through having ceased to be employed. The atmosphere of the labour exchange has a suggestive touch of "poor relief" in it. There is certainly nothing indicative of a person receiving money that has been paid in and is now due back. When the first stage of the formalities have been observed you are then told to report regularly on two mornings every week "at nine-fifteen" to "sign on" but that right away you must see the vacancy clerk. You see her, but find there is nothing in your "line" but that makes no difference at all. You are now a

claimant and as such come under the rules and regulations that govern the payment of the "dole" and you must be submitted to a job, however impossible or unsuitable, to fulfil officialdom's requirements. If you refuse, "benefit" will be cancelled. It is impressed on you that if you claim the "dole" you must adhere to the rules under which you are permitted to have it. Apparently the 3/- a day—

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By

Eve Righton

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Sundays excepted—is not to be handed out lightly and without due thought and consideration on both sides. You're claiming the money so you put up with the restrictions, hoping that despite the impossible jobs you are expected to apply for, something might turn up. At the end of the first week you feel you've earned the 18/- so carefully guarded against being paid out unnecessarily, and it is something of a shock to find you are not eligible for *any payment* the first week. On being told this one girl asked the clerk, "But what am I to do? I've no money and no job." She was told to "come down in a week's time".

On one occasion I was unable to attend the exchange when I should have done so. On being asked if I had been ill, I replied "Yes" and was then informed that three days dole would be forfeit as for the three days I was ill I was not available for employment. You have to be available to have a job offered you, otherwise, the 3/- per day simply cannot be paid out.

Another time I had a conversation with an ex-A.T.S. girl who made bitter comments about the way "these places treat you after doing your bit and being invalided out of the service". Will the glorious new world continue to inflict this sort of treatment on those unfortunate enough to have to "make a claim"? Has any thought been given to it or is it too small a thing to be bothered about in view of the wonderful new world the Government has, or is, planning out? It is noted that though it is the people who are fighting this war it is the Government who are saying what the shape of things to come shall be. The much-blared-about freedom from want, originated by a Government that is—apparently—eager to see it become an established fact could be credited a little more easily if those governing knew what it was like to want. It is obviously beyond their ken or why set up machinery to create the utmost restrictions on what should be a help to the unemployed. The class that decrees you pay unemployment subscriptions every week, then puts every obstacle and humiliating circumstance it can in the way to obtaining it clearly knows nothing and cares less for the difficulties that arise from it.



# What can we do?

*By Eddie Shaw*

MUCH INK HAS been spilt, many words have been spoken and written, millions have died in the struggle of class against class which finds its continuation in the mass murder engulfing the world to-day, and the ever recurring question, *What can we do?* goes up from tormented human beings in every part of the world. To this question the great leaders, surrounded by their advisers and puppets, can only reply, *Go on to victory!* But before there can be victory, there must be defeat, and from this it is obvious that the vanquished will have found no solution to their problems, nor will the victors be any better off, except for the small minority who own and control the means of production and who are the only ones likely to benefit from the conquest of trade routes and foreign markets, which the sacrifice of millions of innocent people has made possible.

Even they cannot feel secure in their strongholds, for the survivors of the holocaust will look to them to redeem their promises, which would mean abandoning some of their plunder. History does not show us where the plunderbund have ever enjoyed disgorging what they have sucked from the toilers. Recognising the struggle which will face them on the cessation of hostilities, they have systematically entrenched themselves in the state by conscripting labour power, regardless of sex, either for military purposes or for industry. In so doing they have had to resort to the last measure with which a ruling class can keep labour in subjection, the old road of the absolute state.

Up to the present little resistance has been offered to the decrees which have been passed by the modern Simon Legrees to bind the slaves to the chariot of state. Only in isolated cases, by individuals or groups of workers, have we seen any attempt to break the yoke, but these have been dealt with easily, as the state has brought to bear all its technique and power to subdue recalcitrance before it permeates the whole of the enslaved class.

But this state of affairs cannot last for ever, and each day finds the warring powers getting deeper into the morass in their internal and external relations, and aggravating an already intolerable position in their struggles to stabilise a broken down economic system. Conditions must get progressively worse for the workers in all countries, and it is just a matter of time before a break-up will take place in one of the great powers and open a new road towards solving the seemingly insoluble problems which beset humanity.

To support this contention, there is an article in the *Glasgow Bulletin*, Feb. 11th, quoting an article by Maurice English, a former war correspondent in the American magazine *Free World*.

"Unless Britain and the United States can send a large enough force to equal that of Russia in defeating Hitler at home, revolutions and civil wars throughout Europe, probably the bloodiest in history, are inevitable. In Yugoslavia, France, Czecho-Slovakia, revolutions are already under way, and in Spain the Civil War has never really ended. Republican guerillas still at large in the mountains fight pitched battles with Nationalist troops, and the Government still has to resort to secret wholesale executions. Even Norway and Holland will be wrecked by civil war."

Allowing for the journalistic imagination, this prediction is no pipe dream, and it paints a vivid picture of Europe in the near future. It is at this point in historic development that the tortured peoples must seek a new answer to the question, *What can we do?*

*Go on to Victory?* The slogan of the heroes who never fight will no longer sustain or satisfy a disillusioned world, and the only answer which will meet the needs of the hour is to go on to the classless society. How best to achieve this goal has been debated for many years. Not only has it been debated, but it has also taken the form of direct action, in the Paris Commune, the Russian Revolution and the greatest attempt of all time in Spain. If trial and error count for anything, there are enough lessons in recent years to show a clear road to emancipation.

Messiahs have had their day, and only by avoiding political medicine men can the world be reorganised in a fashion to suit all. The domination of man by man must give way to the free association of men with men, and to achieve this the means of production must be taken out of the hands of the minority and placed at the disposal of all men. The Anarchists have always stressed this point, and to-day we find that the workers, now that they have been deserted by their leaders, are learning in the hard school of experience that only by their own direct action, by coming together at the point of production, can they accomplish anything. Out of their struggles will come the realisation that they are all powerful. Thence it is but a short step to get rid of the parasitical element which has kept the toilers in bondage for so many years.

(continued on p. 14)



## ITALY'S FUTURE

"Mayor La Guardia of New York will be made a Brigadier-General to act as military governor of Italy when the Allies invade and occupy the country.

Stephen Early, White House Secretary, said that Mr. La Guardia would probably enter the Army."

*Daily Mirror, 29/3/43.*

*Will be a Brigadier General.*

*Would probably enter the Army.*

Qualifications for governing Italy—making good in American public administration plus Italian antecedents. At this rate, why not solve the fifth term problem of making Roosevelt High Commissioner for Holland; eliminate the Republicans by making Wendell Willkie the President of Germany—and maybe reconstruct Austria and Roumania under Paul Muni and Edward G. Robinson respectively—by kind permission of Warner Bros.

## "DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE"

"On the front page of the *Sunday Pictorial* for March 28 appeared a picture of a girl waving goodbye. It carried the heading 'Slavery for Men—Tears for Her.' The caption ran 'In this picture is portrayed the soul of ravaged France to-day. A young Parisienne wife, still as neat and smart as ever, but not nearly so gaily dressed, is at the Gare de l'Est . . . her man has been brutally torn from her side by Hitler's order to make munitions for war against their friends.' Several readers of *Picture Post* at once pointed out to us that this picture is identical with one printed in this paper on May 23, 1942, and said to have been taken at Paddington. They are right. The picture was taken at Paddington. A *Picture Post* cameraman—now in the armed forces—took it. The black arrow over that small boy's head in the *Sunday Pictorial* covers the word THIRD on the carriage door, which could be clearly seen in the picture as we printed it. This alteration was presumably made before the picture came into the hands of the *Sunday Pictorial*."

*Picture Post, 10/4/43.*

### LECTURES

EVERY FRIDAY EVENING

7.0 p.m.

APRIL 23rd TOM BROWN

"There Ain't No Justice"

APRIL 30th MAT KAVANAGH  
and other Speakers.

May Day Solidarity Evening

MAY 6th JOHN HEWETSON  
Some Aspects of Syndicalism

QUESTIONS DISCUSSION

FREEDOM PRESS ROOMS

27, BELSIZE ROAD, LONDON, N.W.6.

A few minutes from Swiss Cottage tube — 31 'bus route

## I.C.I. PROFITS UP £500,000

"After making provision for tax, depreciation, and all other charges, net profits of the Imperial Chemical Industries for 1942 increased by £517,753 from £5,982,106 to £6,499,859.

The directors recommend a final dividend on the Ordinary stock of 5 per cent., again making 8 per cent. for the year.

Vicker's pay 10 per cent. profits.

"Profits have been eliminated", said David Kirkwood, M.P. for Clydebank.

# Through

## AMERICAN POST-WAR PROSPECTS

"With the chances that a heavy roll of something like 15,000,000 men and women likely to be unemployed in the United States after the war, it is being urged that effective steps be taken now to prevent it. It is said that a Federal budget board should be established now to forestall a depression. It is just such a slump that may come after the war that it worrying many business men at the present time."

*The Chamber of Commerce Journal, April 1943.*

## SQUANDER IF ALL!

"Pocket money of old people in institutions has been increased from 1s. to 2s. a week by Herts Public Assistance Committee."

*Star, 6/4/43.*

Gad Sir! This country's worth fighting for.

## BISHOP ON RUBBER ECONOMY

"The Bishop of St. Albans asked the Government in the House of Lords yesterday to take drastic steps to end what he described as 'a scandal.'

At a time when every man and woman was needed for vital work for winning the war, he said, thousands were employed in the manufacture and distribution of contraceptives, with the consequent use of raw materials, especially rubber.

"I understand that this work in this particular firm is said to be a sideline. Even so, apart from the mail-order department, the number of these articles is simply amazing. Seventy-five gross or more a day of boxes each containing twelve of these articles at five days a week means an output of over 33,500,000 a year."

*Manchester Guardian, 8/4/43.*

It is a pity that the Bishop of St. Albans has not taken the trouble to work out how many rubber tyres could be manufactured if the production of "those articles" was stopped altogether; he might have received greater support in the House of Lords and been able to organise a nation-wide salvage movement.



## THE MINE OR PRISON

"Roland Earp (18), pit worker, of Coalville, Leicestershire), was at Coalville yesterday sentenced to three months' hard labour for refusing to obey a direction of a National Service officer to work underground.

Earp appealed against the direction and told the tribunal that he preferred the Army to work in the pits, and that all his brothers had told him that work in the mine was not healthy. He still refused to alter his decision after a talk with the probation officer."

*Manchester Guardian, 3/4/43.*

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# the Press

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## DIRECT ACTION IN DENMARK

"Copenhagen dock labourers are on strike again, even though the Germans have declared strikes illegal."

*Daily Express, 1/4/43.*

## HOW INDIA IS GOVERNED

"Question-time was lively and well-attended with the Prime Minister giving the news of the capture of Gabes and El Hamma, and then a harmless little joke of a division about Daventry: ayes 239, noes 12. Three minutes later, when the Secretary of State began to speak, the House had shrunk to less than fifty: half an hour more and it was down to eighteen—a fidgety eighteen who wanted to speak themselves and not to listen to each other. Small wonder, because, as my journalist neighbour put it, 'any borough council would put in a better debate.' My other neighbour (in that gallery which was so much more crowded and less comfortable than the floor) was a young Canadian naval officer, visiting the House for the first time. 'Do they,' he whispered, 'always sound so bored?' I reassured him. 'Not,' I said, 'when they're discussing income-tax or the Catering Bill: this is only India.'

Thus and thus, with a steady attendance of eighteen, went the consideration of the future of four hundred million people."

*New Statesman & Nation, 3/4/43.*

## COLLIERY OWNER

"Earl Fitzwilliam, who died at his home, Wentworth-Woodhouse, near Rotherham (Yorks), yesterday, at the age of 70, lived in the biggest private residence in Britain.

So large is Wentworth-Woodhouse that at one time it was the custom to give a guest a packet of wafers on arrival so that when going to his room he could drop them as he went along, and so find his way back again.

In 1933 Lord Fitzwilliam capitalised himself at a total nominal capital of £3,750,000 in four unlimited companies."

*Daily Express, 16/2/43.*

The only house miners finish up in is the workhouse, but no wafers are provided. We look forward to hearing the next Lord Fitzwilliam speak in the House of Lords about "inflated miners' wages", like so many fellow colliery-owners.

## JUSTICE ?

"A spinster who drew £218 in widow's pension money was at Lymington (Hampshire) yesterday said to have written to the Ministry of Pensions:—

'I went through the deception not from material motives but so that my son, who is abroad with the R.A.F., would never know that the man he loved and revered as his father was not my husband.'

The woman was ordered to pay £25, including £3 3s. costs, for making a false representation to obtain a pension.

Defending counsel said that the woman was going to sell her home to make full restitution."

*Glasgow Bulletin, 9/4/43.*

Here is a woman who has fulfilled all the obligations of marriage and motherhood, and has reared a son, and yet defends the courts who condemn and punish her.

## COMMUNIST PERSUASION

"Mr. Harry Pollitt, I hear, has invited London Socialist M.P's to a reception he is giving to discuss the Communists' wooing of Transport House.

Inscribed on the invitation is the information that there will be 'a licensed bar'."

*Evening Standard, 2/4/43.*

## EMPIRE DESCRIBED

"If you study the history of the British Colonies you will find records of the great love they have for their King and this country, records of human progress of which you can be proud and the like of which will never be seen."

*Duke of Devonshire, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Colonies, reported in the "Evening Times", 19/3/43.*

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::: GLASGOW :::

## ANARCHIST FEDERATION SOCIAL & DANCE

In aid of Anarchist Prisoners' Fund

CENTRAL HALLS,

25 Bath Street. Friday, 30th April at 7.30 p.m.

Tickets 2/6 from:

ANARCHIST BOOKSHOP, 127 George Street.

—oOo—

## MEETINGS

Brunswick Street, every Sunday 3.30 and 7 p.m.

Discussion Circle every Monday at 8 p.m. at

127 George Street.

Organisations desiring to hear the case for Anarchism should apply for Speakers to the Secy.,

ANARCHIST BOOKSHOP

127 George Street, Glasgow, C.I.

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## Pages of Anarchist Theory

# GODWIN on PROPERTY

ONE HUNDRED AND fifty years ago, in 1793, William Godwin published his "Enquiry Concerning Political Justice." This, the first work setting out a reasoned and comprehensive system of anarchism, created a great sensation at the time of its publication, not only among the literateurs, but also among the conscious workers, many of whom formed clubs to buy the book and discuss Godwin's theories. As his friend Hazlitt said, a quarter of a century afterwards, "no one was more talked of, more looked up to, more sought after, and wherever liberty, truth, justice was the theme, his name was not far off. . . . No work in our time gave such a blow to the philosophical mind of the country as the celebrated 'Enquiry Concerning Political Justice.'"

In the great reaction that followed the declaration of war between England and France, Godwin's teachings were deserted by most of his followers, and in the reformism of later English labour movements

his work has had little influence. It was with the rise of the anarchist movement on the Continent many years later that the most important of Godwin's ideas were born again.

Regarded over the interval of a century and a half, Godwin's theories are seen to be more revolutionary than those of any of his contemporaries. Modern revolutionaries may not agree with all Godwin's teachings, particularly those on the technique of revolution, but his basic doctrines are no different from those anarchists hold today.

To celebrate this anniversary, we are reprinting a number of extracts illustrating Godwin's teachings on various subjects. The first will illustrate his ideas on property. The extracts are taken from the first edition of "Political Justice," as in later issues Godwin made certain modifications which detracted from the directness and clarity of his first declarations.



THE SUBJECT OF PROPERTY is the keystone that completes the fabric of political justice. According as our ideas respecting it are crude or correct, they will enlighten us as to the consequences of a simple form of society without government, and remove the prejudices that attach us to complexity. There is nothing that more powerfully tends to distort our judgment and opinions than erroneous notions concerning the goods of fortune. Finally, the period that shall put an end to the system of coercion and punishment is intimately connected with the circumstance of property's being placed upon an equitable basis.

Various abuses of the most incontrovertible nature have insinuated themselves into the administration of property. Each of these abuses might usefully be made the subject of a separate investigation. . . . But, excluding them all from the present enquiry, it shall be the business of what remains of this work to consider, not any particular abuses which have incidentally risen out of the administration of property, but those general principles by which it has in almost all cases been directed, and which, if erroneous, must not only be regarded as the source of the abuses above enumerated, but of others of innumerable kinds, too multifarious and subtle to enter into so brief a catalogue.

What is the criterion that must determine whether this or that substance capable of contributing to the benefit of a human being ought to be considered as your property or mine? To this question there can be but one answer—Justice. Let us then recur to the principles of justice.

To whom does any article of property, suppose a loaf of bread, justly belong? To him who most wants it, or to whom the possession of it will be most beneficial. Here are six men famished with hunger, and the loaf is, absolutely considered, capable of satisfying the cravings of them all. Who is it that has a reasonable claim to benefit by the qualities with which this loaf is endowed? They are all brothers, perhaps, and the law of primogeniture bestows it exclusively on the eldest. But does justice confirm this award? The laws of different countries dispose of property in a thousand different ways; but there can be but one way which is most conformable to reason.

It would have been easy to put a case much stronger than that which has just been stated. I have a hundred loaves in my possession, and in the next street there is a poor man expiring with hunger to whom one of these loaves would be the means of preserving his life. If I withhold this loaf from him, am I not unjust? If I impart it, am I not complying with what justice demands? To whom does the loaf justly belong?

I suppose myself in other respects to be in easy circumstance, and that I do not want this bread as an object of barter or sale, to procure me any of the other necessaries of a human being. Our animal wants have long since been defined, and are stated to consist of food, clothing and shelter. If justice have any meaning, nothing can be more iniquitous than for one man to possess superfluities, while there is a human being in existence that is not adequately supplied with these.



Justice does not stop here. Every man is entitled, so far as the general stock will suffice, not only to the means of being, but of well-being. It is unjust if one man labour to the destruction of his health that another man may abound in luxuries. It is unjust if one man be deprived of leisure to cultivate his rational powers while another man contributes not a single effort to add to the common stock. The faculties of one man are like the faculties of another man. Justice directs that each man, unless, perhaps, he be employed more beneficially to the public, should contribute to the cultivation of the common harvest, of which each man consumes a share. This reciprocity, indeed, as was observed when that subject was the matter of separate consideration, is of the very essence of justice.

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But it has been alleged that we find among different men very different degrees of labour and industry, and that it is not just that they should receive an equal reward. It cannot, indeed, be denied that the attainments of men in virtue and usefulness ought by no means to be confounded. How far the present system of property contributes to their being equitably treated, it is very easy to determine. The present system of property confers on one man immense wealth in consideration of the accident of his birth. He that from beggary ascends to opulence is usually known not to have effected this transition by methods very creditable to his honesty or usefulness. The most industrious and active member of society is frequently with great difficulty able to keep his family from starving.

But, to pass over these iniquitous effects of the unequal distribution of property, let us consider the nature of the reward which is thus proposed to industry. If you be industrious, you shall have an hundred times more food than you can eat and an hundred times more clothes than you can wear. Where is the justice of this? If I be the greatest benefactor the human species ever knew, is that a reason for bestowing on me what I do not want, especially when there are thousands to whom my superfluity would be of the greatest advantage? With this superfluity I can purchase nothing but gaudy ostentation and envy, nothing but the pitiful pleasure of returning to the poor under the name of generosity that to which reason gives them an irresistible claim, nothing but prejudice, error and vice.

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In beginning to point out the evils of accumulated property we compared the extent of those evils with the corresponding evils of monarchies and courts. No circumstances under the latter have excited a more pointed disapprobation than pensions and pecuniary corruption, by means of which hundreds of individuals are rewarded, not for serving, but betraying, the public, and the hard earnings of industry are employed to fatten the servile adherents

of despotism. But the rent roll of the lands of England is a much more formidable pension list than that which is supposed to be employed in the purchase of ministerial majorities. All riches, and especially all hereditary riches, are to be considered as the salary of a sinecure office, where the labourer and the manufacturer perform the duties, and the principal spends the income in luxury and idleness. Hereditary wealth is in reality a premium paid to idleness, an immense annuity expended to retain mankind in brutality and ignorance. The poor are kept in ignorance by the want of leisure. The rich are furnished, indeed, with the means of cultivation and literature, but they are paid for being dissipated and indolent. The most powerful means that malignity could have invented are employed to prevent them from improving their talents and becoming useful to the public.

This leads us to observe that the established system of property is the true levelling system with respect to the human species, by as much as the cultivation of intellect and truth is more valuable and more characteristic of man than the gratifications of vanity or appetite. Accumulated property treads the powers of thought in the dust, extinguishes the sparks of genius, and reduces the great mass of mankind to be immersed in sordid cares; beside depriving the rich, as we have already said, of the most salubrious and effective motives to activity. If superfluity were banished, the necessity for the greater part of the human industry of mankind would be superseded; and the rest, being amicably shared among all the active and vigorous members of the community, would be burthensome to none. Every man would have a frugal yet wholesome diet; every man would go forth to that moderate exercise of his corporal functions that would give hilarity to the spirits; none would be made torpid with fatigue, but all would have leisure to cultivate the kindly and philanthropical affections of the soul and to let loose his faculties in the search of intellectual improvement. What a contrast does this scene present us with the present state of human society, where the peasant and the labourer work till their understandings are benumbed with toil, their sinews contracted and made callous by being for ever on the stretch, and their bodies invaded with infirmities and surrendered to an untimely grave?

\* \* \* \* \*

The fruitful source of crimes consists in this circumstance, one man's possessing in abundance that of which another man is destitute. We must change the nature of mind before we can prevent it from being powerfully influenced by this circumstance, when brought strongly home to its perceptions by the nature of its situation. Man must cease to have senses, the pleasures of appetite and vanity must cease to gratify, before he can look on tamely at the monopoly of these pleasures. He must cease to have a sense of justice before he can clearly and



fully approve this mixed scene of superfluity and distress.

\* \* \* \* \*

Force grew out of monopoly. It might accidentally have occurred among savages whose appetites exceeded their supply, or whose passions were inflamed by the presence of the object of their desires; but it would gradually have died away as reason and civilisation advanced. Accumulated property has fixed its empire, and henceforth all is an open contention of the strength and cunning of one party against the strength and cunning of the other.

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Ambition is of all the passions of the human mind the most extensive in its ravages. It adds district to district, and kingdom to kingdom. It spreads bloodshed and calamity and conquest over the face of the earth. But the passion itself, as well as the means of gratifying it, is the produce of the prevailing system of property. It is only by means of accumulation that one man obtains an unresisted sway over multitudes of others. It is by means of a certain distribution of income that the present governments

of the world are retained in existence. Nothing more easy than to plunge nations so organised into war. But if Europe were at present covered with inhabitants all of them possessing competence and none of them superfluity, what could induce its different countries to engage in hostility? If you would lead men to war, you must exhibit certain allurements. If you are not enabled by a system, already prevailing, and which derives force from prescription, to hire them to your purposes, you must bring over each individual by dint of persuasion. How hopeless a task by such means to excite mankind to murder each other! It is clear, then, that war in every horrid form is the growth of unequal property. As long as this source of jealousy and corruption shall remain, it is visionary to talk of universal peace. As soon as the source shall be dried up, it will be impossible to exclude the consequence. It is property that forms men into one common mass and makes them fit to be played upon like a brute machine. Were this stumbling block removed, each man would be united to his neighbour in love and mutual kindness a thousand times more than now; but each man would think and judge for himself.

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## American Herrenvolk

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There has always of course been a section of American feeling which, albeit confined to a minority, has nursed the conception of an American Empire. In any great and wealthy community, conscious of power, that must inevitably be so.

When an Imperial consciousness was being reawakened in this country in the last quarter of the 19th century, it was fed from two main currents—the essentially patriotic Imperialism of the military type, and the idea of trusteeship and duty to backward peoples of the missionary. In the United States to-day the same currents can be discerned. They were well expressed to the public in a famous manifesto entitled 'The American Century' which appeared in one of his own magazines from the pen of Henry R. Luce, the powerful publisher of *Time*, *Life* and *Fortune*. Luce is qualified to embody the two ideals, for he was the son of a leading American missionary in China, and has become the principal journalist spokesman of the big business community and one of the best known of the little group of whom Mr. Willkie is the outstanding political representative.

The theory of 'The American Century' is that, just as Britain assumed the leadership of the world

in the last century, so its growing power and central position challenge and compel America to do so in the present one. This outlook is readily acceptable to powerful statesmen. Thus of Sumner Welles, the chief of America's foreign service, it is reported—and I believe not merely metaphorically—that he once said that his tragedy was that he had not been born an Englishman, for he would then have become a great pro-consul. Now in the leadership of impressive conferences attended by all the countries of the Western Hemisphere he finds himself in a role that fills the same human need. And if the fortunes of war lead the political and economic influence of America to follow its military and naval forces across the Pacific, the practical idealism of the Luce and the administrative statesmanship of the Welleses will not be behind in framing an appropriate philosophy and a suitable form of government.

What can we expect that philosophy and form of government to be? The spirit of the times and the tradition of the United States

will alike prevent them from being lustily Imperialistic in the Kipling sense. But the conscious sense of American strength and power will not permit of a rival leadership. In destroying the Japanese co-prosperity sphere, and in excluding the herrenvolk, the Americans will doubtless expect to share the condominium with others, but if they abandon the right to pro-consulships, they are not likely to renounce the privilege of leadership, or to admit others quite on an equality to their 'American century'.

Where backward peoples are inhibited by habit and climate—as, for example, on the rich regions of the South-west Pacific—from conducting their own self-government and defence, we are likely to see a condominium in which the former British, Dutch and French empires may share with the newly-arrived American authorities, but we are hardly likely to see the Americans expect to take a seat other than the Chairman's.

William Dwight Whitney,  
*Who are the Americans?*

1941.

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### NOTE.

*Will any reader who has for disposal books concerning Godwin, Bakunin and Anarchist topics in general please write to Freedom Press, enclosing a list giving particulars, price, etc.*



# THE CITY IN SOCIETY

THE STUDY OF society, both in the past and in our own time, has been dominated by political concepts, by the abstractions through which the rule of authority is maintained and the super-abstraction of the state is erected as a nightmare prison around the lives of men.

Politicians, political economists, and all the various classes of journalist who batten on the existing system of society have thus managed to lead even intelligent men away from the realities of social life, from the basic economic facts and the human and functional relationships of men which make the real fabric of society and without which no society, even a state society, could survive. For authority is external. Unless the organism over which it is wielded lives from within, that external authority is meaningless. It cannot infuse life into a dead society any more than a physician can make a dead man live.

Fortunately, there have arisen in the last half-century certain sociologists who have seen the falseness of prevalent social ideas. Some of them, like Kropotkin and Reclus, were convinced anarchists. Others, like Geddes, were not avowed anarchists, but were forced by their study of society to realise the true nature of political abstractions and to preach doctrines of the organic nature of society whose only logical outcome could lie in the direction of the denial of the state and the elevation of the principle of voluntary co-operation as the necessary factor in the development of society.

That the work of these men was incomplete and often piecemeal in its nature does not rob it of its value in the development of an integrated social theory. On the contrary, the evidence such men have assembled and the ideas they have enunciated concerning often limited sectors of human life are of the greatest importance to those who would develop their conception of a voluntary society.

One of the most important of such sociologists in our own day is Lewis Mumford, who has written a number of considerable and valuable sociological books and whose development has been consistently in the direction of a social conception based on co-operation and integrated growth as against the modern society based on authority and the chaos of conflicting interests.

Mumford's most interesting book is "The Culture of Cities", a study of the development of the city as a social form from the Middle Ages down to the present day, and of the manner in which its future development might contribute to the formation of an organically sound society.

He shows clearly the way in which cities concentrate and epitomise the nature of the society from which they spring.

"The city, as one finds it in history, is the point of maximum concentration for the power and culture of a community. It is the place where the diffused rays of many separate beams of life fall into focus with gains in both social effectiveness and significance. The city is the form and symbol of an integrated social relationship . . . Here is where the issues of civilisation are focussed . . ."

He demonstrates the way in which the city represents the most complex communal and co-operative form of life.

"What transforms the passive agricultural regime of the village into the active institutions of the city? The difference is not merely one of magnitude, density of

population, or economic resources. For the active agent is any factor that extends the area of local intercourse, that engenders the need for combination and co-operation, communication and communion; and that so creates a common underlying pattern of conduct, and a common set of physical structures, for the different family and occupational groups that constitute a city. These opportunities and activities superimpose upon primary groups, based upon traditional

By

George Woodcock

acceptances and daily face-to-face contact, the more active associations, the more specialised functions, and the more purposive interests of secondary groups; in the latter the purpose is not given, but chosen: the membership and activities are selective: the group itself becomes specialised and differentiated."

In our own day, under the power of centralised states, the communal nature of city life is hidden under the excrescences bred of money and power.

"During the last few centuries, the strenuous mechanical organisation of industry, and the setting up of tyrannous political states, have blinded most men to the importance of facts that do not easily fit into the general pattern of mechanical conquest, capitalistic forms of exploitation, and power politics. Habitually, people treat the reality of personality and association and city as abstractions, while they treat confused pragmatic abstractions such as money, credit, political sovereignty, as if they were concrete realities that had an existence independent of human conventions."

The result of this lack of understanding of civic community was, as Mumford expressed it admirably, "a crystallisation of chaos, disorder hardened uncouthly in metropolitan slum and industrial factory districts."

Mumford's book represents a more or less successful attempt to apply real social criteria to the study of the development of the city, and to develop a conception of the city in which its true communal possibilities will be seen in a natural and balanced way, tending towards a true organic growth.

He deals with the successive phases of the city from its rise in the Middle Ages after its disintegration in the later years of the Roman Empire and the early years of the barbarian Dark Ages.

In the section dealing with the mediæval city he dispels the too prevalent notion that the Middle Ages were "a compound of ignorance, filth, brutality and superstition", and, while he sets aside with equal caution the over-precious views of romantics like Ruskin and Morris, he proves that a mass of evidence the contentions, put forward before his day by anarchist sociologists like Kropotkin and Reclus, of the socially advanced and virile nature of the free mediæval cities. It was, as he shows, the culture of these cities that "invented the mechanical clock, made radical improvements in mining, sailing and military attack, and learned to cast iron and manufacture



glass spectacles and utilise physical energy on a scale never before achieved by any other civilisation." Furthermore, as he demonstrates, "our hard-earned discoveries in the art of laying out towns, especially in the *hygienic* laying out of towns, merely recapitulate, in terms of our own social needs, the commonplaces of sound mediæval practice."

In the mediæval city every function was organised in a corporate and communal manner. Only the outlaw remained outside the corporations, and even he usually joined a band of robbers or beggars. Each trade was organised in its guild, which carried on external trade and formed the framework for the internal order of working details, and beyond the domain of work the city itself organised, in its numerous hospitals, its homes for the aged, its bath-houses, its purchases of grain and fuel from the surrounding country, the satisfaction of the common needs of its inhabitants. To the mediæval city we owe, again, the development of scholarship and education to a hitherto unprecedented degree in the corporate institution of the university. In the mediæval city, in general, health was well maintained. The great plagues came in its decadence. The spacious method of building, with many gardens and even fields within the walls, gave its inhabitants all the benefits of sunlight and air; slums were not very widespread, nor did extreme poverty afflict nearly so high a proportion of the urban population as in the later forms of the city.

The mediæval cities declined, in the sixteenth century, with the rise of the autocratic kingdoms in Europe and the beginning of the development of the national state. The state, whether it took the form of absolute monarchy, or, as it did later in England, of the oligarchy of a land-owning aristocracy, had to destroy the autonomy of the free cities in order to preserve and increase its own power. The rise of the State brought centralisation, and the rulers of the State built great cities of their own, subject to their own power, in which administration and commerce became centralised. The metropolis grew at the expense of the independent city, and the old towns rapidly dwindled into provincial centres for disseminating the power emanating from the capital city, the London, Paris, Berlin, which grew to such an extent that by the end of the seventeenth century London had a population of 500,000 against the 30,000 of its nearest rivals, Bristol and Norwich. In the new metropolitan cities the corporate institutions declined, and the amenities of the mediæval cities disappeared. The organisation of the city was for the maintenance of power and the protection of property rather than for the good of the citizen. Inordinate luxury in the nobleman's palace and stark poverty among a large section of the workers developed side by side. Overcrowding destroyed the spaciousness of the old cities. "The systematic building of high tenements began—five or six stories high in old Geneva or in Paris, sometimes ten or twelve in Edinburgh." With the death of communal values, the evil in cities tended to come uppermost.

The next stage of the cities coincided with the rise of capitalist industry. The monstrous spread of the metropolis continued until it lost all cohesion in its sprawling extension that comprised as much as five or more million inhabitants. But now there arose, beside the metropolis, the great provincial cities based purely on industry, dominated by the physical necessities of proximity to coal beds and transport and shipping facilities, and ruled by the abstractions of money and power. In these cities there were added to the overcrowding and poverty of the metropolis the grime and noise of chaotic

mechanised industry and the mentally stultifying evils of working in regimented factories and living in regimented and insanitary slums.

In our own day this industrial capitalist form of the city still exists, albeit threatened with mechanical destruction in the wars which the property desires of its rulers have made inevitable while their system survives. It exists as a symbol of a social form based on property and class.

From his survey of the historical development of the city, Mumford proceeds to the discussion of the lines on which urban development must run in order to restore the city as a communal unit, based on the needs and functions of its inhabitants and drawing its life from their co-operation. He sees the hope in decentralisation, both political and physical. He realises that the breakdown of the power of state is a prime necessity for the birth of a rational urban society, and that this must be accompanied by a breakdown of the faith in political and monetary abstractions. He realises that the technical development of modern civilisation has placed in our hands the means for the physical decentralisation of industry. The transmission of electric power over long distances by the grid system removes the need for industry to be centred round the coalfields, the development of road and air transport ends the necessity for the valley pattern of urban development dictated by the low grades of railways. Regionalism, with its integration of urban and rural life has become possible on the plane of the highest technical development of our civilisation. It is on this regional development and the federal organisations of the regions by country and continent that Mumford places his hopes of a better world.

But, having gone this far, he shows a timidity when faced by the final stages without which his desires cannot be realised. Revealing in an inimitable manner the defects of class rule and of money relationships, he fails to demand an abolition of these causes. Denouncing the power state, he does not denounce the principle of authority in itself and still talks of a "service state" and of governmental administration, tempered by some vaguely outlined form of co-operative organisation. Thus his books ends in ambiguity, and his ideas fail to produce their proper effect because they are not worked out to the full conclusion.

In spite of this, the revolutionary student of society should not fail to read this book thoroughly, for it contains one of the best analyses of urban society both in the past and to-day.

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(continued from p. 7)

Only when this has been accomplished will society be able to rid itself for all time of the pestilences of war, famine, poverty, disease, and to develop to a degree that staggers the imagination.

Workers, with you and you alone rests the future of mankind. Not with the fellow in the next house, but with you. The class struggle is not centred in Russia, but in every part of the world, in every producer. Carry on your part, and let your workmates know that they are the men who will determine the new social order. When in discussion the question arises *What can we do?* don't forget that it depends on you.



# Is Tomorrow Hitler's?

## Book Review

IS TOMORROW HITLER'S? By H. R. Knickerbocker. Penguin. 9d.

ON THE morning of June 22nd, 1941, most of the journalists of the English-speaking countries breakfasted as anti-bolsheviks, defenders of democracy against all forms of totalitarianism; when they took afternoon tea they had become raving bolsheviks, nothing was too red for them. A notable exception is H. R. Knickerbocker, the celebrated American foreign correspondent of International News Service. Knickerbocker is all out for the Soviet against Germany and in favour of all aid being given to Russia, but he does not attempt to create any illusions about the bolshevik regime. Nevertheless, we do not share the general views of Knickerbocker, who is a spokesman of "liberal," capitalist democracy and a partisan of British and Yankee capital in the present capitalist fratricidal conflict. We quote him as an eye-witness from the other side, the side on which are lined up the Labourites and Communist friends of Russia.

The book *Is Tomorrow Hitler's?* is written in five chapters dealing with Germany, Russia, England, France and the U.S.A. The chapter on Germany is mainly concerned with an interesting, though highly speculative analysis of Hitler's character. The English chapter is all about Churchill, his enthusiasm for cigars and his love of food. "Toward midnight we climbed to the smoking room where Mr. Churchill as a nightcap consumed a large platter of thick slices of rare roast beef with the appetite of John Bull." "Once he was in ill-health and went to a noted specialist who, contrary to the fashion of the day and despite the patient's well-upholstered body, advised him to eat more food. He follows the prescription enthusiastically." The American chapter is unimportant.

The most important chapter is on Russia. Explaining the Russian resistance to the German advance, Knickerbocker says, "The first reason for Russian resistance is that this was the first time Hitler ever tackled a country with *lives to waste* and *miles to waste*. Its 200,000,000 population lived almost like animals, but most of them flourished like healthy animals on their black bread and cabbage. In fighting the Germans they could afford to lose two to one and still have superiority in numbers. Their high command knew this and wasted lives with abandon."

"The second reason for Russian resistance is that this was the first time Hitler had ever struck an army and a generation untouched by the humanizing influence of Christianity, immune to any form of pacifism, unsoftened by Western civilisation. . . . The Bolsheviks invented totalitarian fanaticism; the Nazis only copied it. It was the first time the Germans had come up against a people more savage than themselves. The Bolsheviks were ahead of the Nazis in pronouncing that the end justifies the means, and the oriental Russians surpassed the occidental Germans in cruelty."

On the revival of state religion in Russia Knickerbocker writes: "Freedom of worship was never frankly and publicly prohibited; it was merely quietly strangled. Today its public restoration is a gesture towards the outside world and an effort to canalise even the religious energies sleeping in the hearts of the older people, into national defence. All the old shibboleths of religion and patriotism and nationalism and local pride and mystic faith in Holy Russia which for two decades had been banned have now been revived."

Asked to explain the inefficiency and wastefulness of Russian industry Knickerbocker replies: "The Bolsheviks twice in twenty years exterminated their ablest people in the country, or rather I should say the Bolsheviks first killed off the ablest people of old Russia, and then Stalin killed off the ablest Bolsheviks."

"In Germany the Nazis succeeded in coercing the capitalists into becoming useful members of the National Socialist Collective. In Russia, the Bolsheviks set out to destroy the capitalists as a class, or rather every human being who by his birth, or position, or accomplishment, had become identified as an active member of the old system. First, they killed off the artstocracy and landed proprietors, numbering several hundred thousand. . . . Then they exterminated the industrialists. . . . With them a little later were exterminated the managers, supervisors and technicians, the scientists, the professional men, dentists, surgeons, lawyers, teachers and judges. These numbered a million or more."

"By the time I got to Russia in 1925 all these were fully exterminated. By exterminated I mean just that. They were either shot, or sent into exile in the Arctic or the deserts of Central Asia, or condemned to penal labour under such conditions that they died within a few

years. They were nearly all killed. Only the most meagre remnant remained, a few accidents of survival."

After this a pause ensued with only the routine daily executions, then, with the First Five-Year Plan came the decision to exterminate the "kulaks." The kulak was defined as a peasant who employed labour to help work his farm. "The Bolsheviks, however, chose to amplify this category to include all peasants who, even if they did not employ labour, had become in the least degree more prosperous than their neighbours. This prosperity, based for the most part upon the individual industry and sagacity of the kulak, might consist in the possession of two cows to the neighbour's one."

"They had to die. They did die." . . . "It took about two years to do away with the kulaks. Tens of thousands of G.P.U. troops and agents sought out every family of better-than-average peasants throughout the entire Soviet Union, and forced them into boxcars and herded them off to places of exile, down to Kuzastun or up to Narimsky Krai, to places where it was too hot or too cold to live. It is a conservative estimate to say that some 5,000,000 of these more enterprising farm workers and their families died at once or within a few years."

Then, when all possible opposition was exterminated, the Bolsheviks, sole masters of Russia, turned against one another in the murderous Trotsky-Stalin conflict.

Knickerbocker was a correspondent in Russia during 1925-1927, a N.E.P. period, and later revisited every part of the country from Vladivostock to Odessa and Leningrad to Tiflis. In 1930, during the First Five-Year Plan he made a trip of 17,000 miles. He was in Russia again in 1934 and 1937.

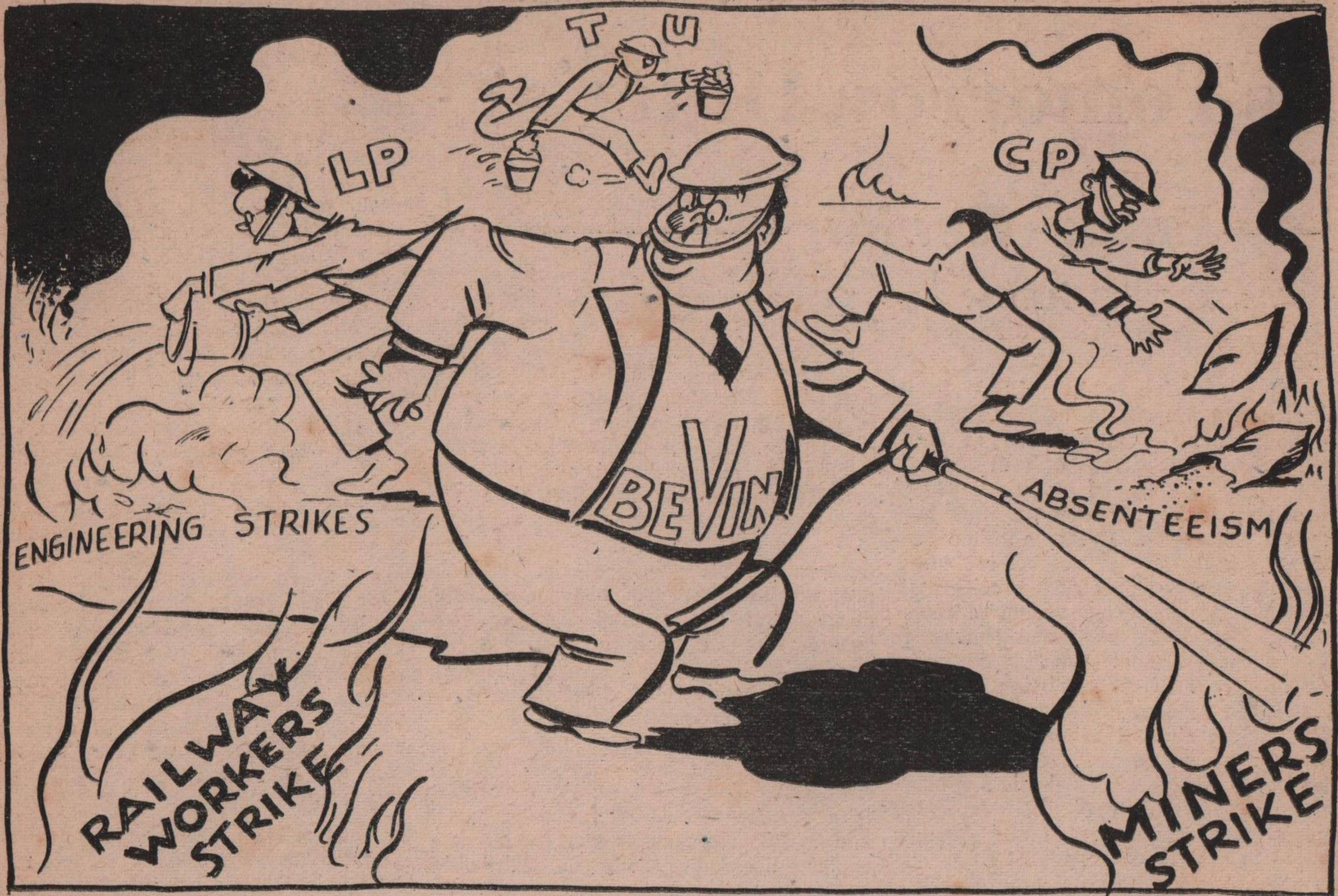
Of the French agents of Stalin, during the Hitler-Stalin pact of 1939-1941 Knickerbocker writes: "Agents of Berlin told the French Communists, for instance, that Germany was Soviet Russia's ally, and that if Hitler won the war, he would not oppose a Communist Revolution in France."

"During the war the Communists had been given reasons for believing that they were on the side of the Germans. Some of the French Bolshevik leaders who deserted during the war fled to Germany. Findings of French radiogoniometric services proved that Communist short-wave stations broadcasting in French were operating from Germany. After German troops reached Paris, several young French writers known for their Communist sympathies, who had remained behind when most other Leftists had fled, were immediately given important places, such as the editing of Paris daily papers, by the Nazi authorities."

An interesting book, but you will find it awful hard to get hold of.

T. B.





## STRIKES INCREASE

"Working days lost by stoppages of work due to industrial disputes during the first two months of this year reported to the Ministry of Labour were estimated to have been about 78,000, said Mr. Ernest Bevin in the Commons to-day.

When Sir Waldron Smithers (Con. Chislehurst) asked him what steps he took to enforce the special powers granted to him under the Strikes Act with regard to the 1,527,000 working days lost in 1942, Mr. Bevin replied: 'Prosecutions are instituted in all suitable cases.'

He pointed out that the number of working days lost in 1942, though higher than in 1941, was far below that of any of the years of the last war."

*Evening Standard, 8/4/43.*

## STAY-IN STRIKE

Nearly 1,200 miners at Penrhiwceiber Colliery, Aberdare Valley, Glamorganshire, went on strike on the 5th of April over the alleged non-payment of minimum wages to nine men.

## ENGINEER'S STRIKE

On the 5th of April engineers stopped work at a large North-East factory because of dissatisfaction with the recent wages award by a national arbitration tribunal.

At a mass meeting in a public park 3,000 workers from the engineering shop passed a resolution asking the executive of the Amalgamated Engineering Union to recall immediately the National Committee to discuss the position arising out of the award.

## ONE-DAY TRAM STRIKE

A strike of 1,500 conductors, more than half of them women, which stopped the Leeds tram service on the 11th of April, was settled after union officials had met the management and the strikers.

The conductors complained that the number of trams in the curtailed Sunday service was insufficient, and stopped work when told that it could not be increased. A skeleton service run by the corporation was unequal to public needs and ceased to operate early in the afternoon.

## BELFAST DOCKERS & CARTERS

One thousand Belfast dockers came out on strike at the end of March in sympathy with the 600 carters who stopped work on a demand for an increase of 10s. a week.

Most of the dockers were working on cross-channel steamers, and cargoes of essential war goods were yesterday unloaded and delivered by soldiers.

## War Commentary

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