

WAR COMMENTARY

For Anarchism

Vol. 4 No. 13.

MAY 1943.

TWOPENCE

War Mocks May Day

MAY DAY IS LABOUR'S DAY. It celebrates the essential unity of interest between workers all over the world. And ever since the State of Illinois murdered the Chicago anarchists in 1887, working-class organizations have demonstrated their belief in the international solidarity of Labour.

Except during wars. . .

May Day is the festival of class struggle, of Labour against Capital, of the workers of all lands against international Capitalism.

Except during wars. . . But the whole idea of May Day lies in the belief in the necessity for International Solidarity of all workers, of whatever race or colour. Wars make a mockery of such workers' internationalism. In wars between nations workers kill and maim workers, while bosses sit behind and count their profits and arrange secret treaties. How they must chuckle to see May 1st come round, and demonstrate the bankruptcy of workers' internationalism, of their belief in "solidarity across all frontiers"!

Yes, May Day is a grim enough joke in war-time.

In July, 1914, the Socialist International met in an atmosphere of war clouds and reaffirmed its opposition to all national wars. A few weeks later the Social Democrats were voting war credits in Germany, and the English Labour Leaders were preparing to join the Coalition Government.

After the war, when millions of workers had sacrificed their lives, and many more their health, in order to make Germany safe for Hitler, and to enthrone the Means Test in England, these same Socialist leaders (who had held office in Lloyd George's Cabinet!) brazenly declared that they had always opposed wars, had always believed in internationalism.

Treachorous reformist lip-service to internationalism in time of peace; jingo-nationalism in time of war. . .

The twenty years of armed peace which followed were to show once more just how deep was the international working class solidarity of the Socialist political leaders and Trade Union bosses. When the Spanish workers, inspired by the anarchist syndicalist CNT, raised the banner of revolutionary anti-fascism, the T.U.C. refused to sanction direct action on the part of the British workers to secure them the arms so desperately needed against Franco, and his Hitler—and Mussolini—backed army. Their reason? "For fear of starting a world war."

Two years later, in 1938, the T.U.C. again categorically refused all direct action (even a general strike was excluded) in favour of the Spanish workers' now—thanks to lack of international workers' solidarity—almost at their last gasp. *But at the same Congress they gave their complete support to armed intervention in Czecho-Slovakia.*

Of the Munich Crisis of 1938, the Tory Duff Cooper was to declare that "it was not for Czecho-Slovakia that we should have been fighting if we had gone to war. . . It was not for Serbia or Belgium that we fought in 1914, though it suited some people to say so. . ."

So these Socialist leaders, whose predecessors had sold out their internationalism in 1914, were ready five years ago to line up the workers in defence of the bosses' interests, behind slogans which even those bosses didn't believe. While in the same breath they were refusing all help to the heroic Spanish workers who had struck the first great blow at Fascism!

Is it surprising that these shifty, treacherous "leaders" have again repudiated the international solidarity of countless May Days and have led the workers once again against their fellow workers of other lands—for the cynical interests of their masters?

ANARCHISM HAS ALWAYS proclaimed the international solidarity of the workers. But unlike the Socialists, the Anarchists have always fought against militarism and war.

In 1914, in all belligerent countries, the Anarchist movements, with a few individual exceptions, remained true to their beliefs and declarations. They opposed the war.

In 1936 our Spanish comrades took the lead in the revolutionary struggle against Fascism and Reaction, only to be betrayed by the workers of other countries under the treacherous Socialist leaders.

1937—only six years ago—brought the saddest and bitterest May Day of all. Anarchists all over Catalonia, among them our comrades Berneri and Barbieri, were murdered by agents of the Stalinist-Socialist coalition. On that first May Day of the Spanish Revolution, when international working-class action could have brought down capitalism and ended wars for ever, the Communists and Socialists consolidated the triumph of the Counter Revolution by murdering the Anarchists who formed the spearhead of the workers' anti-Fascist struggle. Let the workers never forget the part played by these assassins in the Barcelona May Days.

In the anti-war supplement to *Spain and the World* for May Day, 1938, and again during the September Sudeten Crisis of the same year, we called for direct action on the part of the international working class to stop the impending war by destroying the war-breeding capitalist system.

When, a year later, war came, the Labour Party supported the capitalists, and were not long in joining the Churchill Government. *War Commentary*, from its very first number, proclaimed the need for international working-class solidarity, and denounced the capitalist-imperialist war. "The workers in every country, belonging to the oppressed class, have nothing in common with the interests and political aspirations of the ruling class. Their immediate struggle is their emancipation. Their front line is the workshop and factory, not the Maginot Line, where they will just rot and die, whilst their masters at home pile up their ill-gotten gains."

The entry of Russia into the war made many Socialists who had been hostile to the war change

their attitude. Where they had refused to support Churchill, they enthusiastically fell in behind Stalin. The enforced entry of "the workers state" into the ranks of democracy thus demoralized most of the few remaining Socialists who had remained faithful to internationalism.

But neither the fall of France, nor Dunkirk, nor the Stalinist switchover has altered our Anarchist opposition to the war. Unwaveringly, through our paper *War Commentary* and our pamphlets, we have upheld the principles of class solidarity.

* * * * *

In our May Day manifesto for 1941 we declared: "We reaffirm the revolutionary principles we held in peace and hold in war, that we held in revolution and reaction, that we will hold in whatever changed circumstances may come about as the result of the war: that we advocate by open methods in democracy and by underground methods in a dictatorship—the principles of Anarchism."

* * * * *

ON THIS MAY 1st, 1943, we Anarchists in Britain can point without shame to our record in peace and in war. The ideas of International Working Class Solidarity proclaimed fifty-six years ago by our murdered Chicago comrades, are for us a living ideal to-day.

The interests of the workers in all lands and of whatever colour are everywhere the same. They are all the world over exploited and starved by employers and governments.

Instead of fighting against their fellow workers in wars which subserve the interests of their masters, let the working class join hands across the seas and frontiers to overthrow the tyranny of the State and private property. Let us join with our class brothers to bring the Social Revolution.

The Russian Enigma

By Anton Ciliga

WAR COMMENTARY readers who have read Ciliga's pamphlet "The Kronstadt Revolt" should not miss the opportunity of reading a major work by the same author.

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LECTURES

EVERY FRIDAY EVENING

7.0 p.m.

MAY 7th JOHN HEWETSON
Some Aspects of Syndicalism

MAY 14th CHRIS JONES
Life in H.M. Colonies

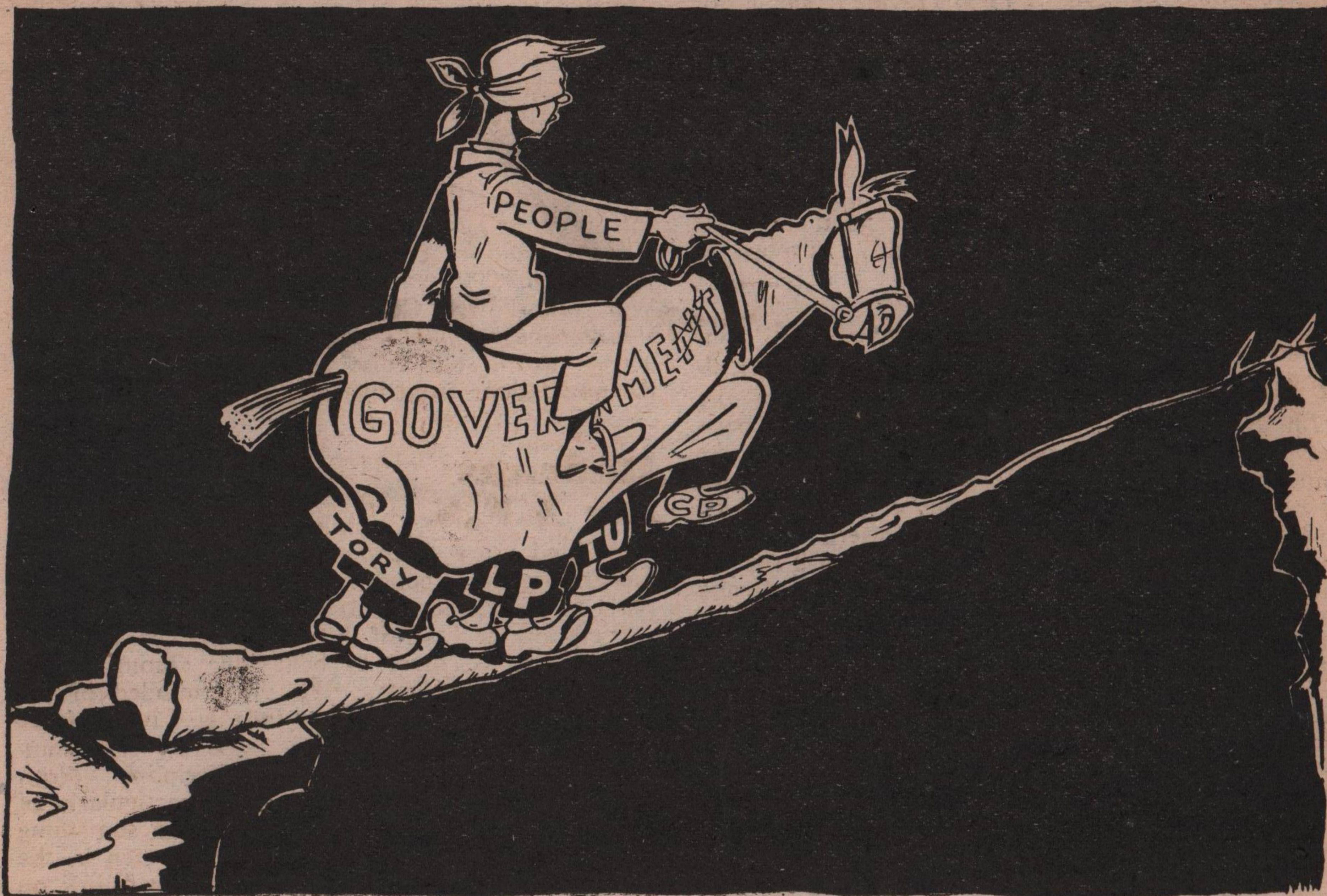
MAY 21st JUAN LOPEZ
Lecture in Spanish
Hechos de la Revolucion
Espanola

QUESTIONS DISCUSSION

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ANARCHIST COMMENTARY

Sneaks in Factories

THE professional informer and amateur sneak have long been regarded with contempt by the working class of every country in the world. The man who shops his mate to the boss or to the police earns a despicable repute, and in the history of the British working class movement men like Oliver live as examples of unenviable notoriety. The early days of the English trade union movement are full of incidents when the workers took action on their own account against such gentry.

Similarly, when the Nazis introduced their system of mutual spying it gained little success among the majority of the German workers, and in nominally liberal countries was regarded as distasteful. Even the capitalist press of England recorded it with horror. However, just as the British ruling class have always imitated if they have not anticipated the actions of their Fascist colleagues, informing and sneakery are now put forward as virtues. People are encouraged to inform on their neighbours whom they suspect of not having registered for some form of conscription, and campaigns have been

launched in factories, vociferously supported by the Communist Party, who themselves act as the principal ferrets. In an article in the *Daily Mirror* on the 9th of April, which purports to contain information given by a "shop steward official," it is said that the workers are "angry because the Government do not take action under 18B to wipe out the tiny band of politically inspired people who foment every strike and ca'canny demonstration. . . . The loyal workers are taking the law into their own hands. They have organised their own secret service. They report in detail the activities and history of every suspected worker. They sit in secret judgment and fairly try him. And then they present their case to the managements." The article goes on to assert that in the South, particularly the London area, "they have cleaned out the saboteurs," and that the Tyne and Clyde workers "are starting the comb-out."

This would all make an amazing story, if it were true. But the facts are that the strikes which have taken place recently have arisen spontaneously out of the indignation of the workers, most of whom have no particular sympathy with any minority group, but who

have, on the other hand, a wholesome dislike of the blacklegs who act against them. In the campaign of spying and tale-bearing most of the workers take no part, and one can recognise in the description of the "secret committees" a reasonable portrait of the factory cells of the C.P., whose members are the leading instigators of this reactionary campaign. In every factory where circumstances have taught the necessity of militancy, the "patriotic" informers and scabs are rapidly losing their influence, and co-operation with the management for any purpose is becoming unpopular.

Post War Farming

THE British Association conference on European agriculture, which opened on the 17th April, showed that the agricultural experts have, on the whole, more sense of reality than the politicians. One of the most important features of the conference was the great body of opinion which favoured a post-war agricultural pattern of small farm units, joined in a co-operative network for the purposes of sharing equipment, acquiring seeds and fertilisers, and distributing produce. A number of the speakers had a healthy dislike of the idea of state control of land or agriculture, and Sir John Russell, Director of Rothamsted Agricultural Research Station, pointed out the danger of middlemen and moneylenders, realising that such a development would mean their end, taking advantage of any possibility to kill a co-operative movement.

As one so often finds, however, with experts, the realism with which they viewed their own province did not extend to the world surrounding it. If government is allowed to continue in Europe after the war, the state will certainly interfere more and more in agriculture, and middlemen, either capitalist or bureaucratic, will continue to take their toll. It must not be forgotten that Government Marketing Boards have been among the most rapacious of middlemen. In such circumstances the benefits of co-operation can only be limited, and continually at the mercy of the caprices of ruling classes and the economic instability of property societies. A true and beneficial co-operative system of agriculture can only arise after the state and property interests have been abolished, and when all agricultural workers, farmers and labourers alike, unite on equal terms in syndicates to operate and develop farming on an intensive scale for the benefit, not of profit-seekers, but of humanity.

Freezing Wages

IN England we have seen the war against fascism drive the ruling class step by step down the paths of fascist state control. Now it is interesting to watch the same progression towards complete central control in the United States. Recently the Roosevelt Government has fortified the position of the capitalists by freezing wages. As in England, this has been done by making it illegal for workers in "essential" industries to take work elsewhere for higher pay. This order affects 18,000,000 industrial workers—both men and women—and 9,000,000 farm workers.

In times when labour is scarce a worker can threaten to sell his labour power elsewhere if his employer doesn't give him higher wages—in theory. But in such times the government always steps in with a law to protect employers by preventing workers from changing their jobs. It has happened many times in the past, and in the last twenty odd years we have seen it in Russia and Germany; then in England at the beginning of the war, and now the process is repeated in the U.S.A. As the *News Chronicle* (19/4/43) wrote: "By freezing these 27,000,000 workers in their present jobs the War Man-Power Commissioner, Mr. McNutt, is simultaneously helping the Administration to keep wages down and discouraging employers from pirating labour from one another."

Redcaps for A.F.S.

THE way in which life in some of the so-called civilian services is approximating more and more to army life is illustrated by the recent complaints concerning the institution in some parts of the country of patrols for the Civil Defence services, on the lines of the military police, to report irregularities of dress or behaviour among A.F.S. men while in uniform. We are reminded of the early days, when men flocked into the Civil Defence services to get out of the army and enjoy a life comparatively free from danger or discipline. Now, however, they seem, and this is so particularly of the A.F.S., to have found themselves in something not very far from the predicament of men in the army. The present disciplinary measures follow on the introduction of saluting and other military orders, and are related to the other measures, such as shortening of leisure time and warnings of continued mobilisation after the war, which must be unpleasant and disquieting events for those who went into the A.F.S. with the idea that it was an easy way out of the war. As if the ruling class intended to put a premium on dodging without getting some return for it! Like all gifts from governments, it is too good to be true.

Amazons At Last

ANOTHER significant move in the campaign to get all the nation involved in some way or another in the war effort is the recent announcement that women can now join the Home Guard as cooks and clerks. Of course, like every other service started by the government, it is voluntary—at first. But when all the fools have joined up, and only the reluctant are left, we have no doubt that compulsion will be imposed. So far the Home Guard Amazons are not asked to fight, but if Dr. Edith Summerskill has her way they will soon be handling bayonets and hand grenades. This, of course, is the only logical course for a feminist who supports the war. Women should have equal rights—including the right to be forced to kill their fellow housewives and die for a government that will not even give them equal compensation for it.

Communist Party's Record . . .



SEPTEMBER 1939

SEPTEMBER, 1939

"The Communist Party supports the war, believing it to be a just war, which should be supported by the whole working class and all friends of democracy in Britain."—*How to Win the War* by Harry Pollitt.



1940

OCTOBER, 1939

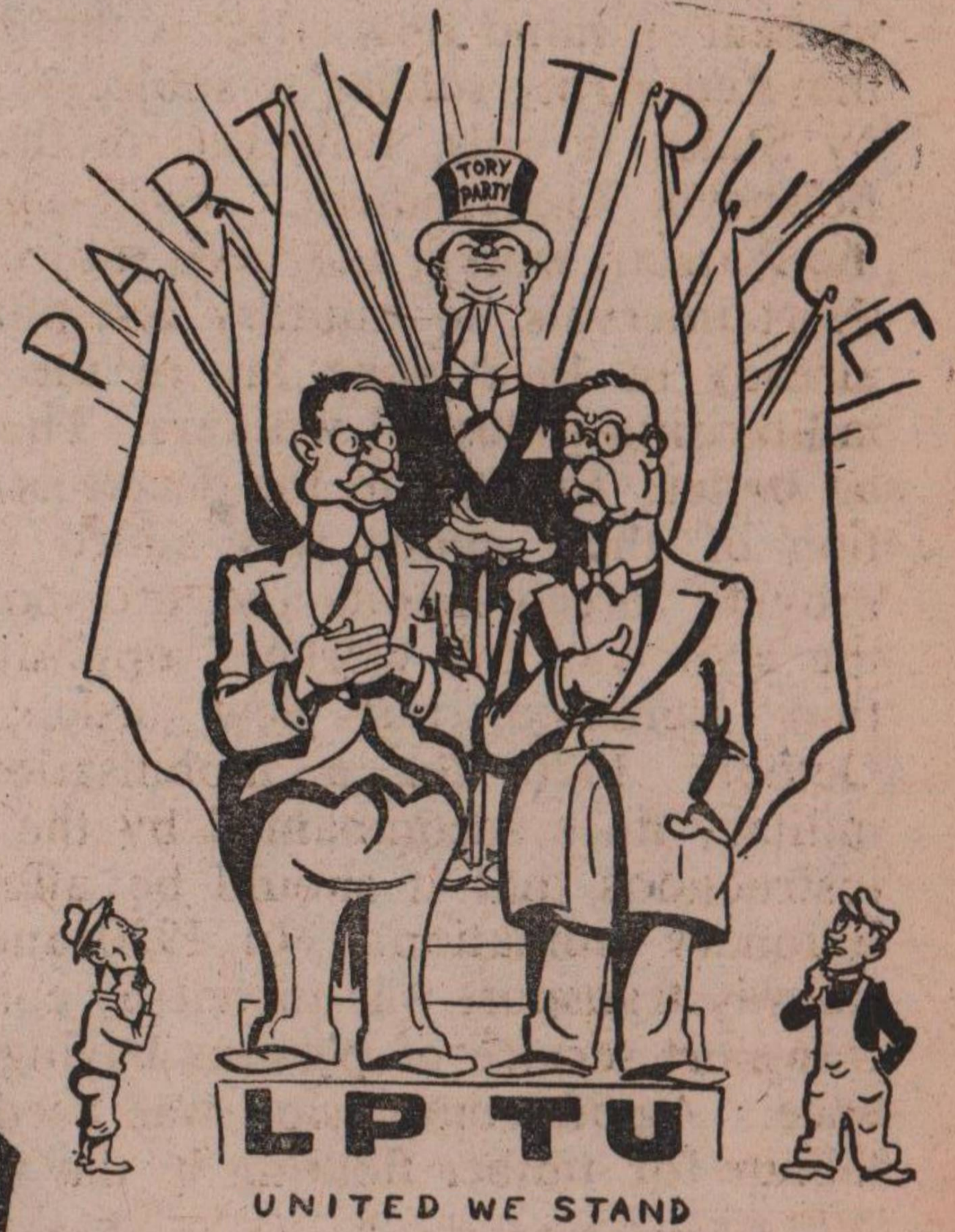
"We are against the continuance of the war. We demand that negotiations be immediately opened for the establishment of peace in Europe."—*Daily Worker*, October 4th, 1939.



JUNE 1941

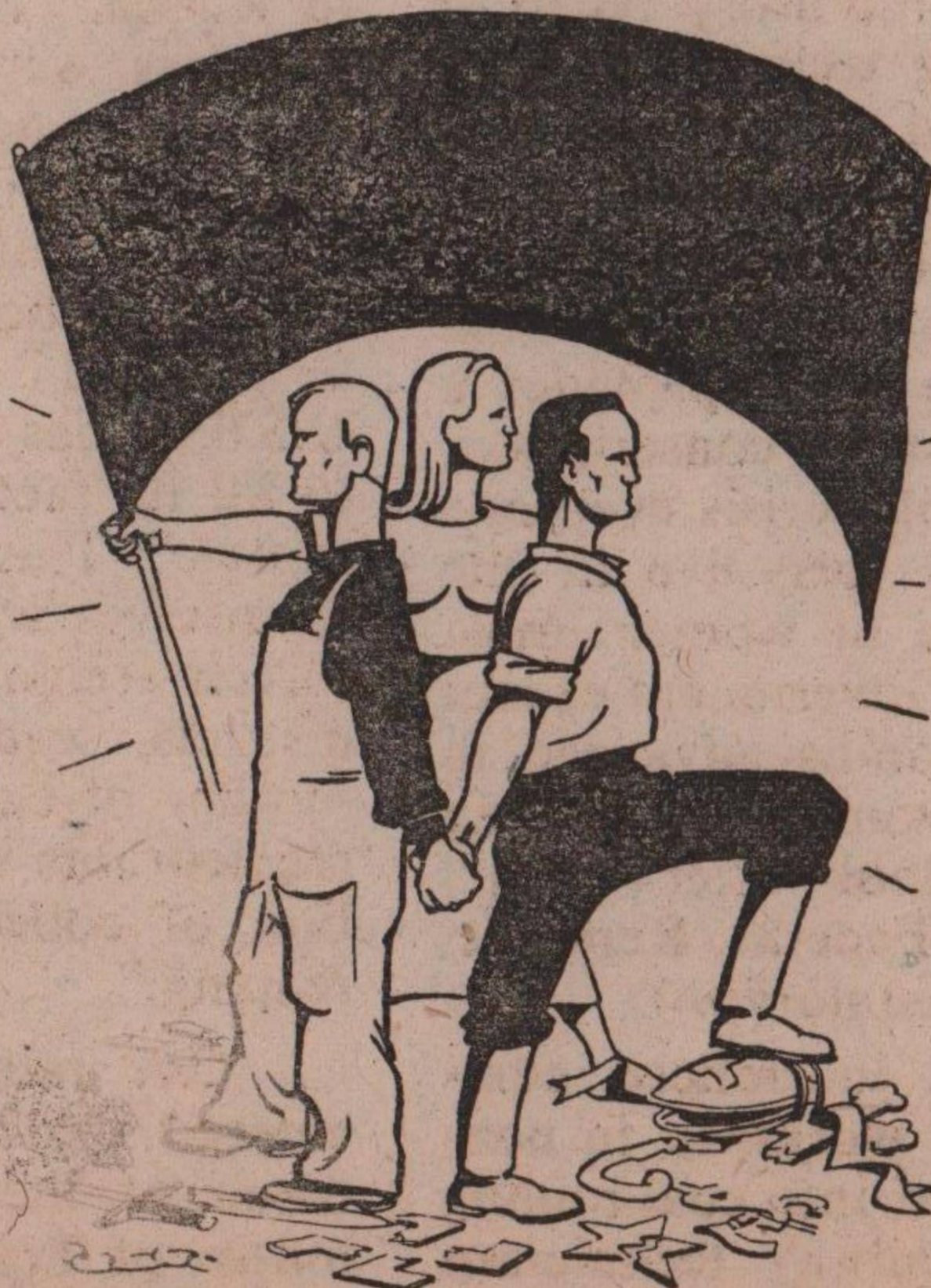
JUNE, 1941

"Mr. Pollitt made it clear that he at least is out to fight the war to the finish. He said: We must go on increasing our production and we must throw in all our weight to the fight so that we shall batter hell out of Hitler and Fascism."—*News Chronicle*, 27th June, 1941.



AND 1939

Down with the War



OURS 1943

For the Social Revolution

STALIN beats BEVIN

Labour Conscription in U.S.S.R.

THE NEWSPAPERS reported on the 16th of April that Russia's railways had been placed under martial law. The reason given being the usual one of preventing sabotage "by an unimportant minority of irresponsible workers." The six points of the new decree by Stalin are:—

1—All railways are under martial law; 2—All railway workers are fully mobilised and are unable to leave their jobs; 3—Railway workers are to be held responsible for offences or failures in their work in the same way as soldiers.

4—Offences are to be tried by war tribunals; 5—Offenders will be dismissed and sent to serve on the front unless tribunals pass more severe sentences; 6—The Peoples' Commissar for Transport Kaganovich and managers of the railways have power to place offenders under administrative arrest for periods up to 21 days.

To appreciate the severity of the decree one has to bear in mind how strict is the discipline to which the Red Army soldier is subjected. This new *ukase* by Stalin is only, however, in the tradition of the Bolshevik Government. Ever since the revolution the Russian worker has been subjected, except during short intervals, to military discipline. Trotsky had already in 1918 gone far in the direction towards militarising industrial workers. The peasants' lot was no better. In 1919, to the decree ordering the requisition of their goods was added the obligation to provide forced labour and transport. At the end of the civil war the workers' opposition to militarisation increased, but new orders were issued in October 1920 for a mobilisation of labour on military lines accompanied by the typical bolshevik instructions that it should be affected "with revolutionary animation." In 1930 and 1931 a crisis in railway transport was solved by compulsory recall to transport service of persons having technical experience. Again compulsion was used to secure skilled labour for timber floating in the spring thaw.

Legislation similar to the Essential Works Order in this country existed in Russia long before the present war started. The Russian law "provides a reserve power of complete industrial conscription, which requires that in case of public crisis everyone between the ages of eighteen and forty-five in the case of men (and forty in the case of women) must take part in work required by the Government except only women more than seven months advanced in pregnancy, nursing mothers and women with young children who have no one to look after them" (Labour Code of the Russian Federal Republic, quoted by the Webbs in *Soviet Communism*).

A decree of October, 1930, introduced compulsory transfer of labour: skilled workmen in non-essential industries could be directed into coal mining or into the building industry. Railway technicians

had to go wherever they were directed. Maynard, in the "Russian Peasant: and other Studies," quotes several examples from the Soviet Statute book where compulsory labour was used:—

"In the spring of 1930, there is to be 'rigorous discipline in connection with timber-floating, after the thaw, and labour is to be despatched from collective farms to 'seasonal branches of the national economy—construction, floating, agriculture, loading and unloading.' Demands of labour for loading and unloading of grain, and of export and import goods, are to have priority: and all unemployed persons (this refers to 1930) are to obey the call, for work on these tasks, on pain of deprivation of unemployment benefit. Intellectual workers are included in this order. Labour organisations are to create voluntary brigades of shock-workers to work off accumulations of unloading and loading . . . the system of agreements with collective farms for use of their surplus labour involves a measure of compulsion upon individuals."

Children do not escape labour conscription. The Press announced on the 6th of May, 1941, that a decree ordering the mobilisation of 700,000 boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 17 as labour reservists had been issued in Moscow. They were to be in addition to the five millions already mobilised for training in trade schools as skilled industrial workers. A decree of October, 1940, had already restricted the choice of employment by young people. Those in collective farms were chosen by the Committee and obliged to undergo industrial training and remain for a certain period in the trade to which they had been directed.

In view of the number of decrees ordering compulsory labour it is surprising to see that Beatrice and Sidney Webb deny the existence of compulsion in Russia. In "Soviet Communism" they declare: "Unless we are to consider as slavery all work done for wages or salary, in pursuance of contracts voluntarily entered into, and upon conditions settled by trade unions in collective bargaining, there does not seem to be any implication of slavery involved in a planned economy. The Government of the U.S.S.R. has, indeed, no need to employ compulsion to fill its factories or state farms, or even its lumber camps." This statement is contradicted by the Webbs themselves who, a few lines earlier, referred to "the forced removal from their homesteads to other districts, leading normally to less pleasant opportunities of earning their living, of kulaks and other recalcitrants who in 1931-1932 obstructed the formation of collective farms or the timely sowing and reaping."

One might question the validity of contracts entered into by the Russian Trade Unions in the name of the workers. Even if the Central Committee of Trade Unions had given its consent to the

labour decrees ordering compulsion, these are nevertheless forced upon the workers. The Russian Trade Unions are merely the instruments of the State and their decisions are not reached by the rank and file members. It would be just as absurd to say that in this country the Essential Works Order is a voluntary contract between the Government and the workers when the workers were never consulted and when the entire Emergency Regulations controlling the country at the present time were passed by the House of Commons in less than two hours, receiving the support of M.P.s who confessed afterwards that they had had no time to read them.

Not only compulsory labour exists in Russia, but slave labour, too. With the excuse of punishing them for their opposition to the Government, millions of people have been, during the last fifteen years, condemned to penal labour. An immense army of men and women has been formed whom the Government can direct to do the hardest work without payment of wages and kept at starvation level. It was after the decree ordering the collectivisation of the land in 1929 that the Government first experimented in the use of penal labour on a big scale. Peasants who opposed the decree were arrested by the G.P.U. (the Red Army is said to have refused to do the job for fear of revolt in its ranks) and transported to build roads and canals. Since the decree met with great opposition in the countryside, the Government was able to draw from an almost inexhaustible supply of labour:—

“Before long, Dnieperstroi, Magnitostroi, every important construction job, had its crowded barracks for the deported kulaks, virtual prisoners of the state, as well as for the actual convicted prisoners who were locked in at the end of the working day.”—(Eugene Lyons “Assignment in Utopia.”)

For a time the Press, both in Russia and abroad, denied the use of forced labour by the Russian Government. But when the U.S.S.R. started exporting Soviet goods in 1930 at ridiculously low prices, foreign capitalists became alarmed and something became known about conditions in the Soviet penal labour camps. Eugene Lyons, who was in Russia at the time, exposes in his book the lies used at the time both by the Soviet Government and the foreign journalists:—

“The Soviet government’s denials of forced labour put the finishing touches on the diverting Olympiad of hypocrisy involved in the ‘anti-dumping’ campaign. ‘Prisoners everywhere work, why should not ours?’ the Kremlin asked indignantly, thus evading the issue, which was why the U.S.S.R. possessed so many hundreds of thousands of prisoners. It did not explain whether a million or so men and women transported forcibly to places where there was only one job and one employer and then given a free choice of employment were ‘forced labour’ or not.

“For the special purpose of appeasing American public opinion, an American ‘commission’ was dispatched to the lumber area and in due time it attested truthfully that it had not *seen* forced labour. . . . I knew all three men intimately, and it is betraying no secret to record that each of them was . . . thoroughly convinced of the widespread employment of forced labour in the lumber industry . . . they placated their conscience by merely asserting ambiguously that they personally had seen no signs of

forced labour; they did not indicate that they made no genuine effort to find it and that their official guide steered the ‘investigation.’”

Forced labour, with its indescribable sufferings and hardships, has found its apologists. Louis Fisher has described the army of slaves of the G.P.U. as a “vast industrial organization and a big educational institution.” The G.P.U., in fact, found itself able to employ millions of people with a minimum of expense. No wonder the G.P.U. soon prospered and became one of the biggest contracting firms in the country, being able to undertake the manufacture of anything from a camera to the building of roads and canals. Maurice Edelman, in “How Russia Prepared,” explains how the prisoners of the G.P.U. were not allowed to decay in idleness:—

“Road building is controlled by the Central Highway Administration of the People’s Commissariat for Home Affairs—translated into Russian, the G.P.U. . . . At a time of great social change, when resistance to such change was an offence, the dissidents whom the G.P.U. interned numbered many hundred of thousands. They were not allowed to decay in idleness. The internees were put to the task of improving Soviet communications, particularly by road and canal.”

The G.P.U. saw to it that there was plenty of labour available for its various enterprises: “. . . from the isolated official admissions by the government (at least 200,000 prisoners engaged on the Baltic-White Sea Canal, several hundred thousand in double-tracking the Trans-Siberian Railroad, etc.), a conservative estimate of the total at the time when Fisher’s ‘vast industrial organization’ was at its vastest would be two millions. If we add the exiled peasants transported to areas under G.P.U. supervision . . . the total would at least be tripled” (Eugene Lyons).

The immense armies of slave labour of the G.P.U. have no parallel in any other country in the world. What exists in a sporadic way and in a small scale in countries like India or China has been organized along the most ruthless and efficient lines by the Soviet State. And yet forced labour in the camps of the G.P.U., where people die of hunger and cold, submitted to the discipline of convicts, treated like animals whom it is unnecessary to spare as ten can take the place of the one who falls, is the logical consequence of laws enforcing military discipline on the workers at the time of the revolution. The artisans of the February and October Revolution gave up their right to organise their work and to run the factories themselves. They allowed the State to impose its discipline upon them. At the time the State was still weak and it had to treat them with a certain amount of respect and consideration. But when it succeeded in crushing its bourgeois enemies from outside and the revolutionary movements in Russia itself, the Bolshevik Government was able to build powerful weapons in order to regiment and suppress the Russian working class. Ten years after the end of the revolution, Stalin’s Government was able to use compulsion in industry on a great scale and to reduce millions of peasants to the status of slaves, the greatest achievement in the oppression of peoples known in the history of mankind.

M. L. B.

POLICE TERROR IN IRELAND

"In the King's Speech to the Belfast 'Parliament' came the surprising announcement that the authorities are to extend the extraordinary powers over the life of the subject given them by the Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Act. Already 500 young men are interned without hope of redress; raiding of homes of political opponents of the Junta goes on incessantly; the Executive possesses what would appear to be almost absolute power over the inhabitants of the area, a power which is used exclusively against those who oppose the Orange power. *Now new powers are to be sought.*

"It was not stated what they were to be, but it is understood that they will include the imposition of more severe sentences for offences such as the possession of pamphlets criticising the Orange Partition policy. Sentences of twelve months have already been imposed for this 'offence.'"

Northern Ireland Publicity Service, 8/3/43

FASCIST BOGEY GAINS THE HOUSE

"Sir Kingsley Wood had finished his lengthy speech which had no surprises for anyone and most of the members had left the Chamber. Then occurred within five minutes these gems of Parliamentary wit and unconscious humour.

"Mr. Gallacher (speaking in a very Scottish accent): 'I hope that the Chancellor will think over the matter. He is rapacious in one direction—'

"The Deputy Chairman: 'I do not think the hon. gentleman ought to go into the possibilities about all the various political parties to which the Chancellor might belong.'

"An Hon. Member: 'He said rapacious, not fascist.'

"The Deputy Chairman: 'I beg your pardon, I thought he said 'fascist.'"

Evening Standard, 13/4/42

WHEN MUTINY IS NOT A CRIME

"About 300 French recruits for the African Phalanx have mutinied in Paris and have barricaded themselves in their barracks. These recruits, who are not enthusiastic supporters of Vichy, had joined only to avoid being deported to Germany."

La Marseillaise, 18/4/43

LOGIC

"If an officer playing football is knocked down by a Tommy, they are playing a game, and they are playing in mufti. If an officer was knocked down by a Tommy in uniform, that would be a very grave breach of discipline. If an officer or a man speaks at a political meeting when in mufti, it is very different from speaking in uniform. In uniform, it might lead to a grave breach of discipline, especially if the arguments get heated."

Major Sir Jocelyn Lucas (Portsmouth South).

Parliamentary Hansard

HONOURS FOR TRAITOR

"In the House of Lords, yesterday, Lord Strabolgi said that Darlan had betrayed the secrets of radiolocation to the Nazis. In his recent book, as I noted here at the time, Lord Strabolgi wrote that Darlan connived at giving the Nazis the secret of the asdic.

"The price of treachery goes up and up."

Evening Standard, 25/3/43

Darlan became a favourite of the Allies, but a tired factory worker, who produces some faulty parts for an engine, can be accused of sabotage and get five years.

SOMEBODY'S GRATEFUL

"Jacques Mornard, who assassinated Trotsky, has been sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment by the Mexican Supreme Court.

"During his detention, Mornard, a French Jew, has been receiving 300 dollars monthly, paid into his bank by 'mysterious hands.'"

Glasgow Record, 17/4/43

The Communists won't be able to talk about Hitler's money this time, since they always claimed that Trotsky was a Nazi agent!

Through

COMMON WEALTH SUPPORTER

"I mentioned recently the activities—industrial and, more recently, political—of Mr. Alan P. Good, who at 36 is one of the chief apostles and financial supporters of Sir Richard Acland's party, Common Wealth. Mr. Good began as a solicitor, then took an interest in small property enterprises.

"Now Mr. Good is on the boards of 25 companies; he is chairman of 17 of them and deputy-chairman and managing director of one."

Evening Standard, 15/4/43

BOOM IN GOLD SHARES

"Holders of gold-mining shares are in the money: and many of them believe that their prosperity is assured and is not just a passing boom-phase. A City expert who is a director of several mining companies tells me that this confidence is based on the Keynes and the White (American) currency reports.

"For some time there has been some doubt about the future function of gold. 'Now,' the expert tells me, 'although we cannot tell exactly what the White plan is, gold, obviously, is going to be used for backing currency. And that's what matters.'

"Already there is something of a boom in South African gold shares; but the Keynes and White plans will affect gold all over the world."

Evening Standard, 19/4/43

REUTER LINES UP

"Reporting the sentence on Trotsky's assassin on Friday evening, Reuter added a bit of background as follows:—

"Trotsky, former Bolshevik leader and creator of the Red Army, played a leading part with Lenin in the building of the Soviet Republic in 1917. After Lenin's death he lost all power and was exiled from Russia in 1929."

"Seven minutes later the agency made an effort to correct this little classic of garbled history by tapping to sub-editors the request to delete the words 'and creator of the Red Army.'"

Daily Worker, 19/4/43

Thanks to the *Daily Worker* for showing us how journalists work and congratulations to Reuter for not upsetting Uncle Joe.

ILL HEALTH & MALNUTRITION

"The death rate from tuberculosis had, unfortunately, increased this year, said Prof. T. Gillman Moorhead at the annual general meeting of the Women's National Health Association of Ireland. . . . In the year 1891 the death rate in Ireland from tuberculosis was 19.6 per 10,000 population. Last year it was down to 11. Unfortunately, this year it had shown a tendency to go up, and the last figure he saw it had gone up to 12."

Irish Independent, Dublin, 14/4/43

Newspapers also report an increase in unemployment and malnutrition.

the Press

DOING WELL

"Mr. John Marchbanks the trade union leader, is to be paid a fee of £750 as a director of British Overseas Airways Corporation. No other fees are being paid. The new directors will give part-time attention to the work, the Air Minister explained yesterday."

Bulletin, 9/4/43

... AND RESERVED OCCUPATION?

"The same enemies of our cause are at work in Britain. Victory, which all Allied leaders have agreed is vitally connected with the Second Front, is not in the bag. That is why the fight for the Second Front comes top priority in the list of essential work."

Daily Worker, 16/4/43

WAR-TIME CHILDREN

"About a week or so ago I was telling my small daughter about the sunrise and sunset. She had asked me how it happened, and why. And she said: 'You mean the sun's been going up and coming down every day for ever—like the barrage balloons?' I remember another time, too, when I was with her and two other children in the main street of the neighbouring small town, and one of these children said: 'Why do they have these high posts along the road here?' 'What, these?' I asked. 'They're lamp-posts.' Then my infant said: 'Yes, I know they're lamp-posts. But what are they for?' So I told her, 'To light the streets.' This explanation produced a good deal of laughter, and finally one of the children said, 'But you don't have lights in the streets—that's silly. You don't have lights in the day because you can see, and at night it's black-out.'"

The Listener, 15/4/43

COMMUNIST M.P. BETRAYS

"Shots were fired, on the 11th April, at Capron, the Mayor of Alfortville. None of the bullets touched him, says Radio Paris.

"This Capron, a former Communist deputy, has been a collaborationist from the first hours of the enemy occupation. He is today one of the most active bawlers of the Hitlerite press of Paris. He carried his villainy so far as to go to Gabriel Peri, imprisoned and condemned to death by the Germans, to offer him the ignoble bargain of collaboration or death!

"Peri preferred a glorious end. And Capron will find an infamous death."

La Marseillaise, 18/4/43

ON THE AMERICAN LABOUR FRONT

"A new and commendable precedent in Chicago labour union management was set last week when more than 200 white bricklayers, assembled in regular meeting, elected a Negro fellow-craftsman, J. Edgar (Duke) Hodges, as their steward.

"The masons are at present engaged in building the huge aluminium plant on the western outskirts of Chicago and their democratic gesture in selecting a coloured man to represent them is indicative of the harmony prevailing there among the construction workers."

Chicago Defender, 9/1/43

PENNSYLVANIA MINERS' STRIKE

"And the armies line up. On one side, the miners, without a penny in their local treasuries. On the other, Lewis and his mobsters. Roosevelt and his 'labour boards.' The snarling, gutter press of all the reactionary capitalists of the country. The sewer press which, to-day, poses as a 'labour press.' All the radio commentators—with very few exceptions. Every nit-witted 'paypatriot' and every racketeering 'paypatrioteer.' The \$6,000,000 which the miners had gathered for their own defence. The tax money robbed from other workers which is being used to hire 'word-jockeys' as 'information services' of the various government departments.

"Despite it all—even their own failings as union men—the miners held form for three glorious weeks. As we go to press there still exist nearly a thousand 'die-hards' fighting a rearguard guerilla campaign. To Roosevelt's threat to send in the army, they reminded this—their friend—that coal isn't dug with bayonets. To the threat to take over the mines—they told this—their friend—that they didn't own the coalmines and they didn't care a damn which set of thieves did.

"To Lewis's vomit of 'union discipline' and 'sanctity of contracts' they gave a loud and glorious bronx cheer.

"They want a wage boost of \$2.00 a day at least. They'll get it even though they have been forced back on the job. They've thrown a scare into every phase of the 'labour front' of this country. The labour fronters will find some phony reason why these miners should have more money—not because of the miners—but because militancy of union men is a contagious disease—of which the employing class has an abiding horror."

Industrial Worker, 30/1/43

PRESIDENT BORED

"During his trip Mr. Roosevelt visited numerous army camps and emphasised the fact that the troops are rapidly being prepared to fight throughout the world. It is believed here that these observations were without any important military significance regarding an early invasion of Europe. Obviously, the President could have learned the facts about the condition of the soldiers without leaving the White House. On the whole, Mr. Roosevelt's trip is believed to have been taken mainly because he is bored and restless in Washington and believed he was entitled to a little holiday."

Manchester Guardian, 22/4/43

GOD IS ON OUR SIDE!

"I sometimes have a feeling—in fact, I have it very strongly—a feeling of interference. I want to stress that. I have a feeling sometimes that some guiding hand has interfered. I have the feeling that we have a guardian because we serve a great cause, and that we shall have that guardian so long as we serve that cause faithfully. And what a cause it is!"

Churchill in "The Secret Speech to Miners."

Manchester Guardian, 22/4/43

TO MANY ENGLISH people anarchism remains what it has been represented by the ruling classes of the world since, seventy years ago, Michael Bakunin first lit the fire of social revolution across the skies of Europe—a creed of terror and destruction, of chaos and fratricidal social strife.

To the ruling classes it is indeed a creed of terror and destruction, for its success means the end of their world, the end of ease for the few at the cost of misery for the many, the end of privilege and exploitation, of the empire of money and greed.

But, as Michael Bakunin said, "the urge to destroy is also a creative urge." And in the destruction of the present form of society, the anarchists envisage not the empire of chaos, but the growth of an integrated society of free co-operation, where equality will become real, where oppression and exploitation will be abolished, where men will live in peace and trust in a society based on justice and mutual aid between individuals, and where human life, freed from the fetters of poverty and oppression, of government and property, will develop with a freedom and richness such as has only been approached spasmodically at the most vital periods of the world's history.

We will take it that no sincere man has any fundamental objection to our aim as stated in such general terms. Almost every person concerned with political thought will agree that such a form of society is desirable, and the attraction which the concept of freedom has for the majority of the people of every nation in the world is shown by the way in which our rulers use it continually in order to induce their subjects to fight in the interests of their respective imperialisms. Even the political parties, communists and socialists, which base their methods on principles of authority diametrically opposite to those of anarchism, at the same time claim as their ultimate objective the anarchist society where the state will mysteriously have withered away of its own accord.

These political gentry, however, pay only a token adherence to the concept of a free society. Their whole technique is, in fact, based on a seizure of the machinery of authority and the replacement of the present exploiting class by a bureaucracy which will inherit its power and therefore its opportunities of privilege. This process is entirely opposed to the concept of anarchism, and it is mere childishness to suppose that any class which has acquired power is likely to let it go again with any degree of ease. The state will never wither away. It must be destroyed at the roots.

PRACTICABILITY OF ANARCHISM

The general objection to anarchism is, then, not on grounds of its undesirability, but on the grounds of its impracticability. A long period of education will be needed, it is asserted, before men will be fit to assume control of their own affairs, before they can be trusted not to turn freedom into licence, and, therefore, human nature being what it is, justice and equality can only be given to men through the kindly supervision over their affairs by govern-

WHAT IS

mental means. The anarchists, on the other hand, claim that theirs is the only means of achieving a just and equal society, that government is an institution that will of necessity breed privilege and inequality, and that insofar as it is true to say that men are at present unsocial beings, they are made so not by their innate characteristics, but by the fact that their natural aptitude towards mutual aid and co-operation for the fulfilment of common ends has been warped by the imposition of a system based on coercion and deceit—which are and must always be the two corner stones of authority.

Let us examine the causes which are responsible for the injustice and misery of contemporary society. They are, briefly, the institutions of property and government—the economic exploitation and political domination of the many by the few.

THE CLASS SOCIETY

Human society to-day—and this is true no less of countries that have remained semi-feudal or have become pseudo-socialist than of the plutocratic empires of the West—is divided into two classes, those who control the means of production and reap the profits from their exploitation, and the workers who operate the means of production for the smallest wage their exploiters dare pay them. Between these two classes there is no interest in common, and the rivalry between them is inevitable so long as the exploitation of man by man is allowed to continue. The anarchist therefore recognises the class struggle as an inevitable feature of present-day society, and also as a necessary factor in the supersession of the governmental society by the free society.

The system by which the control of the ownership of the means of production and distribution is vested in the hands of a few is anti-social, not only from the fact that it causes some men to enjoy plenty while the majority live at or a little way above starvation level, but also because it results in a retardment of the exploitation of the resources of nature and an artificial depression of the level of social life. The difference in the standard of human life which would result from a free and equal distribution of the present products of the land and of industry is small in comparison with the vast increase in production which would become available, concurrently with a great increase in leisure, if the means afforded by modern science to improve production, both on the land and in the workshops, were used to their full extent. The interests of private ownership, however, forbid the full use of scientific knowledge in this respect, and thus the miserably paid efforts of the worker are largely wasted on unproductive toil.

THE STATE

But the system of property cannot be dissociated from the State, which began and has always existed as an instrument for the protection of the ruling class control over property. The state is the

ANARCHISM

**George
Woodcock**

coercive superstructure on a property society which maintains, through its weapons of force, such as parliament, the police and the army, the domination and prosperity of the governing class as against the exploited workers. The socialists pretend that if *private* property is abolished, if capitalism and landlordism are ended, then it will be possible to create an equitable society by governmental means, through the institution of the State. The anarchist, however, sees in the State the principal enemy of the working class. Even where capitalism and landlordism are destroyed, as in Russia, the continued existence of the state preserves the institution of property.

The means of production may theoretically become vested in the hands of the workers, but while the state remains they will in practice be controlled by the ruling bureaucracy, who will become the *de facto* possessing class. The fact that the new ruling class may have come from the workers will make no difference, for their situation will force them to assume the role of an exploiting class. In order to maintain their position, they will have to use power. "Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely."* Power gives privilege, the privileges conferred by control of the goods of society, and it is proved by the verdict of history that men who have privileges do not lightly relinquish them or fail to make use of them for their own ends.

To-day the State is assuming a more dangerous and powerful form than ever before. In every country power is passing steadily into the hands of the growing bureaucrat class founded by the needs of the state. Political and economic control are coalescing into one body, so that the state and its ruling class can maintain more efficiently their control and exploitation.

It is clear, then, that if men are to become free and are to enjoy anything approaching a complete development of their faculties, the state must be abolished, together with the system of property, and other means of exploitation, such as the wages system, which are contingent to it.

MAKING THE FREE SOCIETY

In the place of the state the anarchists advocate the establishment of a society in which the principle of organisation would be not the government of men, but the administration of economic resources by means of the voluntary co-operation of the workers.

In order to overthrow the present society and to establish the new one, we advocate the method of syndicalism, by which is meant the organisation of the workers in syndicates or unions on an industrial basis, at their places of work. Syndicates differ from ordinary trade unions in that they are organised not

primarily for the securing of reformist amelioration of conditions under capitalism, but for carrying out the social revolution by means of economic action—although they support in every way the day-to-day struggle of the workers both as a means of weakening the ruling class and in order to educate the workers in the tactics of the class struggle. The syndicates, moreover, differ from the trade unions in the fact that instead of being centralised organisations with governing bureaucracies, they are federations of freely connected groups of workers organised in the various factories of each industry.

In the present form of society the role of the syndicates is to prepare the workers for the revolution. Revolutions cannot be made, as Bakunin pointed out, but preparations can be made so that when they occur the workers realise what action to take in order to secure the successful overthrow of the state and the establishment of a free society.

In the prosecution of the class struggle the anarchists reject all reformist or parliamentary methods, which merely play into the hands of the ruling class and lead to fatal class collaboration. The revolution can be maintained and won only by the direct action of the workers themselves on the economic field where they hold the decisive power. In the revolution the syndicates will be the organisations by which the workers will carry out the social general strike, seize the factories, farms and railways, and expel the property owners and the representatives of the state.

STRUCTURE OF ANARCHY

After the revolution, the syndicates will serve as the basis for the building of the new society. The industries will be run by the workers themselves, each factory by the men and women who work there, each farm by the farm workers. The factories in each industry will be organised into regional and national federations, for the purpose of co-ordinating production, and in order to co-ordinate the various industries there will be a general federation of industries. Distribution will be undertaken by syndicates of distributive workers, who will run the stores from which goods will be distributed to the people. Public services, like teaching and medicine, will be undertaken by the syndicates of teachers, doctors, nurses, etc., and such municipal services as are necessary will be undertaken by local communes, which will also be federated regionally and nationally in the same manner as the syndicates. None of the regional or national federations will be vested with any authority—they will be merely organisations for voluntary co-ordination and the transmission of information.

With the ending of a property society, the state and all its appendages will vanish. A free society where there are no vested interests will have no need of parliaments, codes of law, police, armies,

* These are not the words of an anarchist but the melancholy conclusion of a Victorian liberal after a lifetime studying the development of human institutions.

etc., all of which are intended to preserve property rights. The workers themselves can be left to deal with any people who attempt to interfere with their liberties, once they have gained them.

Another consequence of the abolition of property will be the ending of the money and wages systems, which have been among the most effective means of oppressing the people in the past. Instead of money, goods will be distributed to people who need them, and there will be no attempt at the impossible task of assessing the quantity of food given out by the amount or quality of work done by the recipient. Once the increase in production has been expedited, the principle of "From each according to his means, to each according to his needs," will be applied.

EVOLUTION OF FREEDOM

As anarchism is based on the belief in a continually evolving society, it is impossible to make any blue print for society once freedom has been achieved. The centralised, large-scale forms of indus-

trial organisation will probably be followed by a great decentralisation of function and administration, a breaking into smaller functional and communal groups, and the break-up of the factory system, as well as a closer integration between town and country are likely. But first the revolution must be made and the present means of production taken over by the syndicates and developed by the workers.

This is a period when the old social forms are passing away, when forms of power are changing, when the State itself seems to be driving humanity towards the chaos of a new dark age of brutality and want. It is for the workers to use their power now to destroy authority and the property which it protects, and to erect in their place not another edifice of authority under the guise of "revolutionary government" or "workers' state," but the free society of anarchy, in which alone justice and equity can determine the lives of men and human society develop in freedom to a stage of plenty and happiness for all men which the developments of science and the resources of nature have made possible in the modern age.

Polish Socialists Murdered

Molotov Explains

FOR a good many months past socialists had been wondering what had become of Heinrich Erlich and Victor Alter, two Jewish leaders of the Polish Socialist Party, who had been in the Soviet Union since the Russian invasion of Poland in 1939. They had been condemned to death in 1941, but were released after two years' imprisonment at the request of the Polish Government. After that they disappeared.

A petition for their release, signed by Socialist and Jewish leaders in America, was sent to Litvinoff, the Russian Ambassador at Washington. In reply to this, Molotov sent a statement revealing that Erlich and Alter had been executed last December for "hostile activities."

The Soviet Union has always been a graveyard for foreign socialists, and Erlich and Alter are merely two more additions to the long list. The Polish National Council describes them as "outstanding Labour leaders and leaders of the Jewish socialists in Poland," and declares in a resolution that "we do not believe the motives given for this act. The official announcement of the shooting of these two citizens of the Polish Republic has aroused the deepest concern in the minds of the Polish public as to the fate of those thousands of Polish citizens deported to the depths of Russia, concerning whom the Soviet authorities have not yet given sufficient explanation."

It is needless to say that the Soviet Government will be unmoved by the "concern" shown by the Polish National Council, especially since the latter is evidently not prepared to go so far as to denounce the Soviet leaders responsible for what is, in the

Council's view, the murder of these two men.

Equally feeble is the protest of the I.L.P. The *New Leader* (13/3/43) states: "Alter and Erlich are known intimately by many members of the I.L.P., including James Maxton, Fenner Brockway, and John McNair. They were associated with the beginnings of our International Centre, though their Party afterwards affiliated to the Second International. Alter and Erlich are equally well known to the Labour Party and Trade Union leaders of this and other countries. Erlich was a member of the Executive of the Second International, and Alter of the Polish T.U.C." It is clear, therefore, that the *New Leader* thinks the Soviet Government has murdered their Polish comrades, yet the article ends with merely pious regrets: "We regret having to give publicity to this matter at this moment, but is due to Alter and Erlich and to the thousands of Polish Socialists who honour their work for the Socialist cause. We join in voicing our tribute to them and express our deepest sympathy to all Jewish Socialists who will feel this tragedy so deeply."

The I.L.P. evidently doesn't think that it is due to its murdered comrades that their murderers should be denounced. In Spain the I.L.P. gave the utmost publicity to those comrades killed by the Fascist Franco, but were more tactful about the treacherous calumny and assassinations of the P.O.U.M. leaders by the Spanish Stalinists. Similarly, they remember comrades killed by Hitler, but quickly forget those stabbed in the back by Stalin.

We have nothing in common with the politics of Erlich and Alter, but we do not hesitate to condemn the Soviet hangmen who have done them to death.

CLASS FIGHTERS for FREEDOM

by John Hewetson

ANARCHISM is first and foremost a philosophy of struggle—struggle against injustice and cruelty and oppression. It seems more clearly than any other political creed the horrors and needless brutalities of class society. And at the same time it has a clear vision of what human society could achieve when freed from governmental authority and poverty. The Anarchists have always thrown themselves with complete solidarity and sympathy into the struggles of the workers for freedom. That is the fight that goes on, all the time, in peace or war, in booms and slumps. It is, in fact, the class struggle itself; and in the course of it a vast number of our comrades have given their lives. On May Day it is fitting that we should look back with gratitude on the work of these comrades, and let their example inspire us in the same fight to-day.

Most of them have fallen in the struggle to overturn existing society in which authority is entrenched behind organized and legalized violence. In 1887, Spiess, Parsons, Lingg, Engel and Fischer, the Chicago Anarchists, were murdered by the State of Illinois, the first of a long series of victims of American State tyranny. They were arrested after a great protest meeting called on May Day to demonstrate against the shooting down of strikers by the police on the previous day. Ever since that day, organized labour throughout the world has celebrated the ideals of International solidarity which they taught, by means of demonstrations, on May the First.

Thirty years later, in 1916, Mooney and Billings were accused by the State of California of throwing a bomb during a jingoist demonstration in San Francisco. Although evidence existed which conclusively showed that the two Anarchists had nothing to do with this incident, they were both condemned to life imprisonment. Billings died in prison, while Tom Mooney was released after twenty years, broken in health, to die a short time afterwards.

In connection with the same incident, the State of California asked the New York authorities to extradite our comrade Alexander Berkman. Berkman had already spent fourteen years in goal for his individual assault upon tyranny at Homestead, but the California police were anxious to frame him on the same charge as Mooney and Billings. Fortunately the February Revolution had just successfully overthrown Tsardom in Russia, and the workers of Petrograd recognized our comrade's work for the revolutionary movement. They therefore intimated to the New York authorities their intention of assassinating the U.S. Ambassador, Francis, if Berkman were extradited. In the face of such a threat, the California request was refused. The Petrograd workers probably saved Berkman's life. By a bitter

irony, he was to defend these same Petrograd workers in 1921 when the Bolshevik Government was ruthlessly suppressing all independent working class action in Russia. Berkman escaped from Russia in the same year.

As if to show beyond all doubt its cruelty and cynicism, the American ruling class in 1920 arrested the two Italian anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, on a frame-up charge of murder. After seven years of imprisonment and futile legal proceedings, they were sent to the electric chair, though their innocence of the charge had been conclusively proved.

And as well as these outstanding cases, many I.W.W. militants have been lynched, framed and executed all over the U.S. for their vigorous prosecution of the workers' fight for freedom.

But America is by no means alone in this record of Anarchist victims. The war waged by the French propagandists of the deed against the State cost the lives of some of the most prominent exponents of anarchism. In England the Walsall anarchists were sentenced to life imprisonment for an alleged crime, the evidence for which avowedly came from a police informer. In Japan, in 1911, the government executed twelve anarchists, after a secret trial, on a false charge of plotting against the Emperor. Their crime, in fact, consisted in agitating against the exploitation of the working class. The cruelties perpetrated in Montjuich upon the Barcelona anarchists who fought so vigorously in the struggle of the Spanish workers for emancipation at the turn of the century, brought a wave of indignation all over Europe. The instigator of the Montjuich tortures, the Prime Minister Canovas, was assassinated by the Italian anarchist Angiolillo.

Just as anarchists were in the forefront of the struggle before Fascism was heard of, so they have continued the fight against dictatorship when reformist socialists have basely handed over the working class organisations without a struggle. Twelve years ago Michele Schirru attempted to assassinate Mussolini, and paid for his attempt with his life, only to reap a harvest of calumny from those reactionaries who today talk loudest about anti-fascism.

In Germany the Weimar Republic killed Gustave Landauer after the abortive uprising of 1923. Together with thousands of nameless comrades, Erich Mühsam was killed by the Nazis in 1937, displaying a unique heroism in the face of concentration camp brutalities.

Anarchism fights not only against the secular tyranny of the State, but also against the enslaving authority of the Church. Particularly was this so in Spain, where in 1909 Francisco Ferrer was tried and condemned to death under martial law for his

struggle against the Jesuit monopoly of education. The Church was directly responsible for the horrors inflicted on thousands of Spanish workers during and after the Civil War, for their attempt to throw off the religious fetters which enslaved Spain.

Besides those who fell in the course of the day-to-day struggle against entrenched capitalist reaction, many of our comrades have given their lives fighting for the revolution or in the struggle to ward off the counter-revolution. Among the many Russian anarchists who fought against the reactionary White Armies, the name of Nestor Makhno is outstanding. Time and again he drove the armies of, first Skoropadsky and Petlura, and later Denikin and Wrangel, out of the Ukraine. And every time he secured a breathing space for Russia against the interventionists, he was attacked by the Red Army—only to be appealed to by the Bolsheviks when the threat from without again began to loom large in the West. Several times condemned to death by the Bolsheviks, he was finally compelled to flee from Russia, to die of tuberculosis in Paris a few months later.

But not before he had passed on his heritage to his Spanish friends, Durruti and Ascaso. Ascaso fell fighting for the revolution in the assault on the Atarazaras barracks on July 19th, 1936, in Barcelona, while Durruti was killed on the Madrid front five months later.

Many thousands of our comrades fell in the front lines of the Spanish revolutionary militia in the struggle against Franco. But many, too, were assassinated by the counter-revolutionary Stalinists, who claimed to be fighting alongside them for the victory over Fascism. During the May Days in Barcelona in 1937, Camillo Berneri, the Italian anarchist theoretician and militant, was killed by the Stalinist Cheka for his fearless criticism of the Soviet intervention and the attempts of the Communists to strangle the Revolution.

Another Spanish militant, Cipriano Mera, who took a prominent part in building up the revolutionary militias in Central Spain, was thrown into a North African concentration camp and may have been done to death there. In the last few weeks Marin, Val, Esgleas, and many other Spanish anarchists have been sentenced at Toulouse to imprisonment for hostility towards the State under the Vichy dictatorship.

It is a tremendous record of heroism and sacrifice in the continual struggle for justice and freedom. The bitter repression of anarchists in every country clearly shows that the class struggle cuts across all national frontiers. The two great principles put forward by the Chicago anarchists fifty-seven years ago—unremitting struggle against the ruling class and international working class solidarity have been worthily upheld. That is why May Day is pre-eminently an anarchist celebration. The need for struggle is as great today as it ever was, and we draw inspiration and strength from the heroism of our comrades who have fallen in the fight. Anarchism is a living force today and will in the end lead the workers to the triumph of the Social Revolution. Let us remember the words of August Spies as he stood on the scaffold: "There will be a time when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today." Reaction can kill anarchist militants but it can never destroy anarchism.

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Books**Tom Brown****The Wild Oats of****WULLIE****GALLACHER**

I have just re-read "Revolt on the Clyde," by Mr. William Gallacher, Britain's only Communist M.P. and a leader of the Communist Party since its formation. I have also re-read some speeches made by Gallacher during the last two years, and the contrast is so amazing, even for a politician, that I must tell you about it.

"Revolt on the Clyde" tells of the last war strikes of engineering workers on the Clyde—and about Gallacher. Indeed, the strikes are only to be taken as background to the personality of Mr. Gallacher—as the "Daily Worker" calls him.

Nevertheless the background of this far from modest autobiography serves as an interesting reminder of the great struggle of the Clydeside workers during the last war. In that struggle Gallacher, and several other Communist and Labour politicians, served as shop stewards. There were several big strikes for higher wages and against victimisation of shop stewards, led by the Clyde Workers' Committee, a federation of factory committees. The Committee fanned the flames of anti-war feeling until the Clyde became world-famous as a rebel area. Said Gallacher,

"But what of the engineers when the war broke out? Wages which had been inadequate before, rapidly became worse. From the very first days the profiteers were on the job. There's profit in blood; more, a thousand times more, than in any booze racket in Chicago; and where there are profits the Al Capones of all sizes will be found." (Page 23.)

It seems the Clydesiders made use of the following epic poem:—

*"Your King and Country need you,
Ye hardy sons of toil.
But will your King and Country need you
When they're sharing out the spoil?"*
(Page 30.)

The great "February Strike" of the Clydeside engineers to enforce their demand of twopence an hour increase of wages had to be called off largely because of the opposition of the trade union officials. The strike committee of which Gallacher was the chairman, passed a resolution urging a return to work.

"The strike continues," the resolution ended, "but now inside the factories. We call on all workers to operate a stay-in strike." Ca-canny was the order of the day. (Page 48.)

Readers who have heard Gallacher making a patriotic speech may be surprised to know that he was not always in

favour of bigger and better battlefields.

"I remember speaking at a meeting on Glasgow Green and drawing attention to a speech of Churchill. He had been talking about me, I said, and I didn't like what he had to say. His words had been, 'We will sacrifice our last shilling and our last man.' One of the workers present interjected, 'You're wrong, Willie, he wasn't talking about you, he was talking about himself.'" (Page 77.)

Now Mr. Gallacher shouts for a "Second Front." There are not enough soldiers being killed. We must have more battlefields. Why the change? During the war of 1914-18 Gallacher was in his early thirties, now he is over sixty. A well-known type. "If only I were twenty years younger—heaven help the Germans. Same again miss."

Now the Communists speak in adulatory terms of Churchill and the Leader's greatly enlarged portrait accompanies Mr. Gallacher at his meetings, but Gallacher did not always admire our present Prime Minister. Speaking of Churchill's defeat in the Dundee parliamentary election, Gallacher tells of the near collapse of the great man.

"Churchill was standing with his back to the window wrapped in deepest gloom. He nervously plucked at his bottom lip . . . he was lacking in the essential stuff, lacking in intestinal co-ordination as he himself would have probably put it. His body fell back into line with his feet. His chance had gone. Mr. Churchill can 'dish it out,' of that there is not the slightest doubt, but Mr. Churchill cannot take it." (Page 204.)

We are all familiar with the stunt of giving medals and honours to workers who are supposed to have excelled their fellows in hard work. The Press and the B.B.C. have given publicity to such doubtful persons and to the Communist shop stewards who have muscled in on it. The "Daily Worker" and the Y.C.L. "Challenge" regularly boost such goings-on. It is not a new stunt, for it was tried out during the 1914-18 war. Gallacher tells us of its fate.

"When we heard of it on the Clyde, we could scarcely believe it was true. We thought it was someone's idea of a joke. But no. Medals were to be

distributed to the 'heroes' in the factories, and the workers themselves had to select the 'heroes.'" (Page 167.)

The first factory to be selected was the torpedo works near Greenock. There the workers were to select their own hero of production, "with one accord, absolutely, unquestionably unanimous their decision was recorded, the medal had to go to the lavatory attendant."

Gallacher once had little regard for those who oppose war only when they are of military age.

"Dollan (a Glasgow Labour Party leader), now City Treasurer, was at first a patriot, who did his bit in the columns of the 'Daily Citizen,' until Conscription was introduced. That was carrying the war a bit too far, so P. J. developed a conscience. He went to the Home Office Scheme at Wakefield, where he spent most of the time in hospital." (Pages 24-25.)

Now Dollan, like Gallacher, supports the war when it is perfectly safe to do so:

Of trade union support of the war, the Clyde Workers' Committee (chairman Gallacher) said:

"The support given to the Government by the Trade Union leaders is an act of grossest treachery to the working class." (Page 52.)

Of Socialist politicians, Gallacher said: *"We had a supreme contempt for the parliamentarians."* (Page 266.) But Willie became a parliamentarian himself. Who managed to change him from a militant shop steward to a politician? His answer is—Lenin. In 1920 Gallacher travelled to Moscow, where he met Lenin, who persuaded him to support the formation of a British Communist Party, which should become parliamentary and affiliate to the Labour Party. At that time most of the Clydeside shop stewards were anti-parliamentary and very anti-Labour Party. Lenin persuaded Gallacher and thus started him on his political career.

"Revolt on the Clyde" concludes with a report of Gallacher's maiden speech in the House of Commons, from which I take the following juicy extract:

"I hope I may never see the day when I win applause from the opposite side of the House." (Page 209.)

That was in 1935. In 1941 Gallacher was winning loud applause from the Conservative benches. Such is a politician's progress. "I hope I may never see the day." Oh! Mr. Gallacher!

ANARCHIST FEDERATION

Aims and Principles

AIM

The establishment of an anarchist society which will render impossible the growth of a privileged class and the exploitation and oppression of man by man. The Anarchist Federation therefore advocates free access to the land, industry and all means of production and distribution, on the basis of voluntary co-operation.

CLASS STRUGGLE

Class struggle is necessarily inherent in governmental society, and therefore the exploiting class and the working class have no interests in common. For the workers', solidarity with their own class both at home and abroad is the fundamental consideration, which must take precedence over all others.

THE STATE

We are therefore opposed to all monopolies of power whereby the division of society into a ruled and ruling class are maintained. Similarly, we oppose all the means of maintaining the class-divided society—parliament, the legal system, the police, the armed forces, the Church, etc. All such means are the expressions of the State, which always exists to protect the interests of a privileged minority, e.g., capitalists, landlords, bureaucrats, etc. We are therefore unalterably opposed to the State.

MILITARISM, NATIONALISM, IMPERIALISM AND WAR

We oppose militarism because the armed forces are used by the ruling class to maintain their class rule.

National frontiers being the lines of demarcation between ruling class spheres of interest, they can only be a check to the natural aspirations of the workers. Therefore, against nationalism and its colonial expression, imperialism, we call upon the workers to demonstrate their solidarity with each other by destroying the artificial barriers which enable the ruling classes to exploit their traditional method of divide-and-rule.

We oppose the war as the outcome of the clashing interests of rival imperialisms. Since empires exist only to serve the interests of the ruling classes, wars undertaken for their extension or defence have nothing in common with the interests of the workers. The rivalries between the national sections of the ruling class should be utilised by the workers to their own advantage, by prosecuting the class struggle more vigorously at a time when the masses of the people are being forced to shed their blood in the interests of their masters. Nationalist sentiment aroused by war is the most effective means employed by the ruling class to deceive the workers and conceal the underlying class struggle.

We expose and reject the facile slogan "Democracy versus Fascism." Under capitalist "democracy," the ruling class has everywhere shown itself ready to compromise with Fascism rather than make concessions to the workers. In Spain the forces of bourgeois "democracy," aided by Stalinists and socialists, strangled the social revolution under cover of this treacherous slogan, and thereby drained the life blood from the only effective resistance to Fascism—the spontaneous direct action of the armed workers. Rather than face revolution, "democracy" will join hands with Fascism; but at home and abroad, social revolution alone can defeat Fascism.

DIRECT ACTION

Victory in the fight against class domination can only be achieved by the direct action of the workers themselves. We reject all parliamentary and similar activity as deflecting the workers from the class struggle into paths of class collaboration.

ORGANISATION OF THE WORKERS

Since direct action on the part of individuals produces only partial and inadequate results, it is necessary for the working class to organise collectively. Anarchists advocate the organisation of the workers into syndicalist unions free from the craft divisions and bureaucracy of trade unions. While trade unions seek to be permanent wage-bargaining institutions, syndicalism fights for the abolition of the wage system, and the destruction of the property-relations of existing society. To do this the workers must organise at the places of work.

SYNDICATES AND RECONSTRUCTION

The workshop committees will be federated into industrial syndicates. These industrial syndicates will be able to control each industry when the workers have locked out the employing class and administer production and distribution on behalf of the community. All industries will then co-operate in a Federation of Labour, controlling and co-ordinating the whole economy of society. Production will be freed from wage slavery and profit-seeking, and the whole energies of labour will be directed towards the satisfaction of human needs. There will be no capitalism and no State.

SOCIAL REVOLUTION

As the imperialist war drags on it is time for the scattered forces of the world revolution to redouble their efforts for the task of preparing to meet social collapse with the revolutionary message to the workers: No compromise with forces of reformism or reaction. Organisation for the social revolution ANARCHISM.

GLASGOW ANARCHIST FEDERATION MEETINGS

Brunswick Street,
every Sunday 3.30 and 7 p.m.
Discussion Circle every Monday
at 8 p.m. at 127 George Street.
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