

# WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY

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TWOPENCE

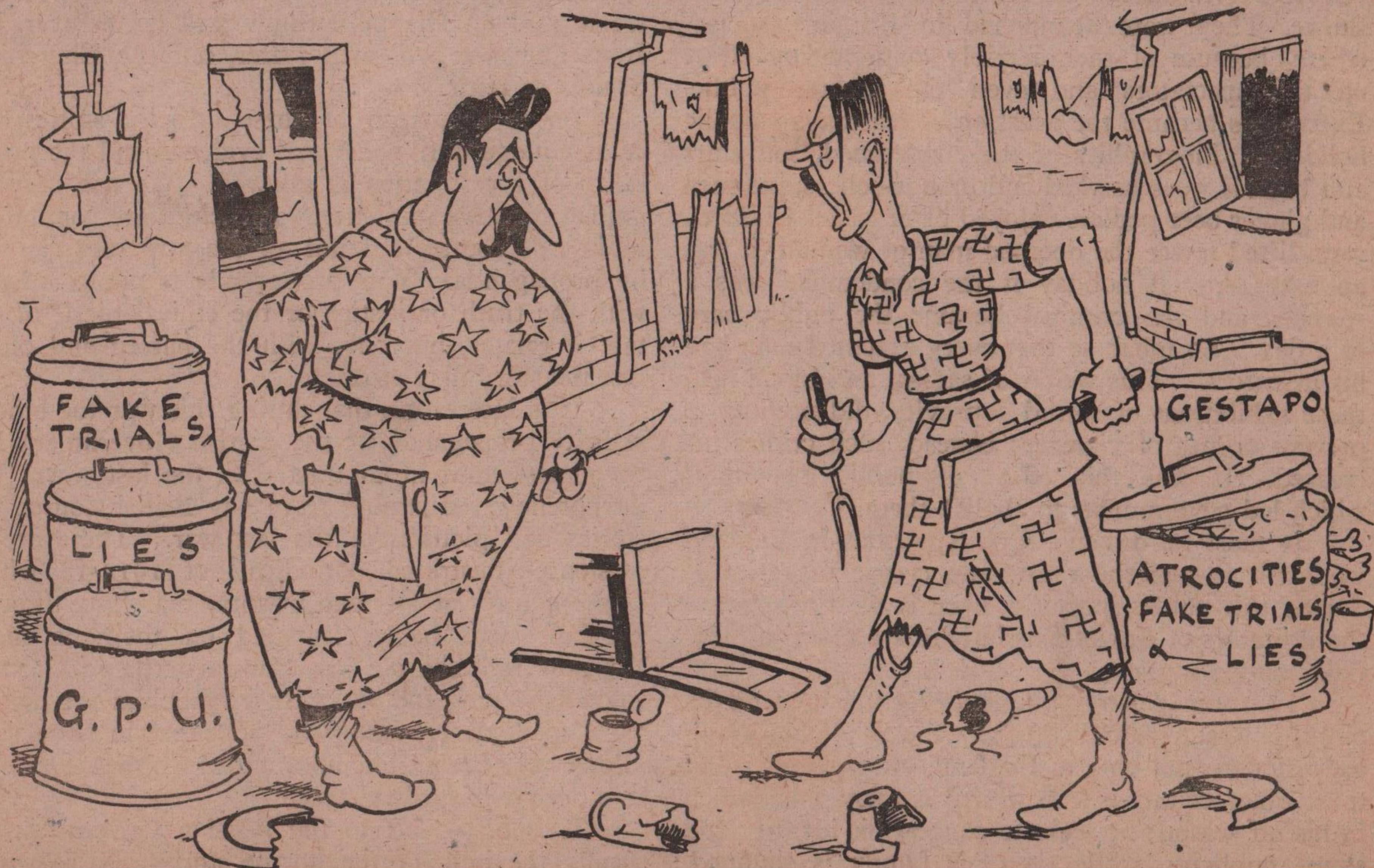
## The Kharkov Trial

THE KHARKOV CIRCUS has ended and to the theatre applause of the assembled population and the lukewarm and doubtful approval of the British Press the German soldiers Wilhelm Langheld, Reinhardt Retzlav, Hans Ritz and the Russian lorry driver Michael Bulanov are hanged. We cannot tell, from the evidence revealed, whether or not the men are guilty as accused or if the alleged atrocities have been committed, but certain features of the play merit comment.

As in the celebrated "Moscow trials", the chief evidence is furnished by the accused themselves who confessed. In English law confession is doubtful

evidence and we recall cases even of murder, where self-accused prisoners have been found not guilty. Even Russian law technically recognises the above sound principle, but in practice relies on its violation.

An equally dangerous innovation in judicial procedure is the Propaganda Trial, a trial which is staged not so much to discover guilt and award punishment or acquittal, but as an addition to the already extensive propaganda technique of governments. Looked at purely in a judicial sense a trial should be entirely free of propaganda. Judicially, the purpose of a trial is to discover the truth of the case. The purpose of propaganda is to sell an idea;



Adolf: "It isn't only my dustbin which stinks!"

whether true or not does not effect the method much.

The greatest publicity and every trick of showmanship was used during the trial, as in the "Moscow" model. The trial was staged in the Kharkov Opera House and the conduct of the trial and the behaviour of the 6,000 persons who packed the "stalls and boxes" was better fitted to a sensational theatrical performance than to an issue where the charges are so grave and the penalty death.

"He (the accused Capt. Langheld) blinked in the glare of the newsreel operators' arc lights."

(*Daily Mail*, 20/12/43.)

"Cries of indignation from the public seats greeted the strongest passages in the prosecutor's speech. Loud-speakers carried the verdict to all corners of the hall, and the words "sentenced to death by hanging" were immediately greeted by a burst of applause."

(*Daily Mail*, 20/12/43.)

If the most improbable happened and the accused in such trials were found not guilty the whole carefully built up propaganda scheme would collapse. It is obvious that such considerations will prejudice the case. In propaganda trials it is difficult to distinguish the judicial and the propaganda.

A most unsavoury feature of the affair is the execution *in public* of the four accused who were hanged in the public square before an applauding audience of 40,000 to 50,000. Public executions have, long ago, been abandoned by almost every government in the world. It is the contribution of "Soviet civilisation" to reintroduce this medieval show. They were abandoned in Britain, as elsewhere, because of their terribly demoralising effect on the spectators and even the greater public. Executions became the occasion of feasts—public holidays. Biographies of the condemned, souvenirs and ballads were hawked and orange-sellers, pie men and ginger beer pedlars enjoyed brisk trade. Children were lifted to see the doomed man or woman (it was an extra special holiday if the condemned was a woman) and the criminal became the public hero of a day. So much so that every executed man had his imitators. This welter of sadism and blood lust, these exhibitions of sordid depravity, did nothing to prevent crimes of violence; instead, such crimes increased. It was this effect of public executions which led governments to abolish them.

It must be difficult to find persons in England who will favour the retrograde course of re-introducing this public spectacle, even in wartime, unless the imitators of Soviet Russia here are more influential than we suppose.

That the general public feels such acts to be morally wrong is indicated by the unpopularity of executioners, not only in England, but in France and most other countries. Few will employ a hangman in his off season; he seeks to conceal his identity and shuns publicity, while even his family is shunned.

The whole business of execution is distasteful, even if it can be proved to be necessary, and to make it a public circus does not ennoble it.

The problematic feature of the Kharkov affair is the new principle of holding serving soldiers responsible for the conduct of the war and the reprisals which this may bring. The Russians have boasted that the Kharkov trial was in accord with decisions reached by Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill at the Teheran Conference and the German powers are quick to threaten retaliation on the nationals of Britain and the U.S.A. Already they threaten to send to trial American and British airmen accused of killing women and children, particularly in Hamburg.

Men of the R.A.F. engaged in operational flights can scarcely look on this threat with pleasure or even indifference, for airmen taken prisoner by the Germans seem to be treated reasonably well, as Luftwaffe prisoners are usually so treated here. Where airmen are wounded (this applies to both sides) great medical care seems to be given, and even in death consideration of the feelings of the airmen's relatives is shewn by giving a ceremonial funeral.

The lot of a prisoner of war, even if well treated is made sufficiently irksome by his confinement without any further penalties being devised by the big three of Teheran.

One reprisal will lead to another. A greater reprisal to an even greater until a halt to the nonsense is called. It may lead to a repetition in blood of the "men in shackles" race which followed the tragic raid on Dieppe. But it will be, as ever, the front line men who will suffer, not the Churchills, Stalins or Hitlers.

As to the truth of these atrocity stories, we cannot judge until some real evidence and the possibility of investigation is allowed. We can only be guided by our experience. Atrocities are committed in war of course, but not all the atrocities claimed by propaganda. War propaganda is not concerned with the truth or justice or the ethical merit of the tale it relates, but only with the hatred and blood lust the story may arouse.

It is interesting that during this war the official atrocity propaganda of the British Government has been most mild in contrast with the last war. We do not now see issuing from any British source the stories and pictures of the last war. There are in existence illustrated periodicals of 1914-18 which carry pictures of German infantry marching through Belgium with babies impaled on their bayonets. We now lack the old last war favourite of German soldiers playing football with infants and the mythical Canadian sergeant (who appeared in about 500 kilometres of front line all at once) who was crucified to a barn door by bayonets.

It is being left to the Russian Government to supply the bulk of the horror stories. It is worth

pondering on, why the British Government is so mild in its atrocity stories. True, people are more sophisticated and cynical than in 1914-18, but this is an insufficient explanation, for men can be made to *accept* what they do not really *believe*. Perhaps it is all in line with the British Government's policy of not waging total war and leaving the door open to possible new arrangements with anyone—ally, neutral or enemy. After all, the switch over on Russian policy has testified to the cynical wisdom of this canny line.

It remains to the Communists, "Socialists" and all those wishy-washy Lefts to be the vultures of atrocity propaganda, stirring up the filth of racial hatred.

We Anarchists do not see in atrocity stories, true or untrue, reasons for supporting war. Atrocities are the product, not the cause, of war. It is for those who support any war their masters bring them to seek to justify atrocities. We do not support

imperialist war, militarism or oppression, the authors of unnatural crime. They do; we must look to them for the apologia.

We oppose militarism, which makes men unnaturally repressed and cruel and places power in the hands of sadists and homicidal maniacs. We oppose the professional propagandists of racial hatred, who to the dark truth add their even darker lies. We do not admire the intellect which leads each side to use the same stories, to make the same accusations, each against the other.

It is not by adding blood to blood, or hatred to hatred, that the workers will find the solution of the social problem, but only by remaining faithful to the principles of the International. The present fratricidal struggle is not one which concerns the workers. They have their own issue—to sweep away authority, exploitation, militarism, war, hatred and ignorance, and to establish in fact what is now in the hearts of the vanguard—the world-wide international solidarity of Labour—and humanity.

## ANARCHIST COMMENTARY

**U.S. WAGES** DR. HINRICHS, American Commissioner of Labour Statistics has published some figures which effectively expose the myth of "soaring wages" which government spokesmen so frequently refer to:

The average wage of American factory workers to-day is just under £11 a week. In August, 1939, the average was just under £6.

But to-day one-fifth of the taxable income is deducted at the source, whereas in 1939 most factory workers paid no income tax at all.

According to Dr. A. F. Hinrichs, Commissioner of Labour Statistics, the net increase in income is 27 per cent. The average worker takes home £8 15s.

He emphasised that this is not an absolute increase. It's largely the result of longer hours with overtime pay.

"The average factory worker," he said, "is to-day working seven hours a week more than in 1939, and is paid for these additional hours at time and a half."

The Department of Labour has estimated that a single girl in Washington needed £350 a year to live on.—*Daily Mirror*, 13/12/43.

These figures, therefore, show that the "tremendous increase" in wartime wages in fact amount to ordinary overtime rates on work performed in excess of 1939 hours. It is only to capitalists, government officials, and the yellow press, that it seems unreasonable that a man should be paid for extra work. But it is not simply that American workers are getting the same wage rates as in 1939—they are in fact much worse off, because the calculations of Dr. Hinrichs do not seem to take any account of the rise in the cost of food and other essential commodities.

### MORE SCHOOL —LESS FOOD

15 as from April 1st, 1945, and envisages a further rise to 16 when teachers are available. On the face of it this might seem to be a progressive measure, although there

THE recent Government Education Bill provides that the school leaving age will be raised from 14 to

are powerful arguments against over-estimating the "value" of State Education. But leaving aside the general question for the moment, raising the school-leaving age can be criticised from quite another angle also.

Until a child leaves school, he is unable to work and earn, so that he must be maintained out of the parent's or the grown-up children's wages. For this reason poverty is particularly onerous to large families. An investigation into a Birmingham Housing Estate in 1939 found that families living definitely below the poverty line "constituted 3 per cent. of the families with one child, 11 per cent. of the families with two children, 27 per cent. of the families with three children, 55 per cent. of the families with four children, 60 per cent. of the families with five children, and 82 per cent. of the families with six or more children. A remorseless but significant gradation!" And the Report went on to remark that "the position of families now in poverty will improve in the future when the older children begin to work". Similarly the Pilgrim Trust's Enquiry into Unemployment could state in 1938 with reference to the economic position of the unemployed that "There comes a time, however, when the children begin to leave school, and to start earning; and then the family's position begins to improve." As soon as the children of such families (and it was calculated that 50 per cent. of the children in this country were undernourished) are allowed to leave school and earn, the nutrition of the family begins to improve. Such families are not likely to view with much enthusiasm the compulsory substitution of extra education at the sacrifice of extra bread which the new Education Bill offers them. Discussing the possible effect of raising the school-leaving age in her book *Working Class Wives* (1939) Margery Spring-Rice could declare: "Undoubtedly the age at which a child is allowed to earn will be raised still further, and the laws regulating the care and health of the dependent child, far from lessening the responsibilities of the parents, will continue to increase their obligations, financial and otherwise".

To underline the irony of this "progressive reform" which promises to starve the children of the working class

still further, it may be remarked that Education Authorities have for long been aware of the fact that without adequate nourishment, children cannot absorb education which is therefore wasted on them. The Government cannot therefore plead ignorance. Perhaps these considerations will help so-called "progressive" people to understand why the piecemeal, gradualist reforms which they condescendingly offer to the workers, are not greeted with outbursts of gratitude. Tinkering with this evil capitalist system is not merely futile, it is pernicious. Such experimentation in social reform is paid for in increased starvation and consequent illness for working class kids.

## THE FUNERAL MARCH OF A REVOLUTION

We have little comment to make. However, we must remind readers that the *Internationale* was never intended to be the "national anthem" of any nation, but, as the title obviously indicates, the battle song of the international working class.

The new anthem is but one more sign of a process which has been developing in Russia ever since the Bolsheviks gained power, a process which began with the Bolshevik Lenin and has reached its fruition in the Bolshevik Stalin. It is in accord with the other works of "Soviet" Russia. The alliances with the capitalist governments, the support of counter-revolution and blacklegging, alliances with Hitler and Churchill in turn. It is in accord with the suppression of Social-Revolutionaries and Anarchists, with the new establishment of the reactionary Russian Orthodox Church, with the new titles and insignia of the Russian General Staff, with Stalin's gold and diamond dog collar, with the ostentatious gluttony of Kremlin and Teheran banquets.

It only remains to place the Imperial crown on Stalin's head (though this is rather unfashionable with modern dictators) and to name him Josef the Great or Josef the Terrible. It is a sign that the Russian revolution is not only dead but buried.

For our part we welcome the admission. Anarchists may now without misgivings sing the fighting song of the International Labour, "Arise ye starvelings from your slumber, Arise ye wretched of the earth."

## THE FAVOURED FEW

and daughter Sarah (Mrs. Vic Oliver) are already with Mr. Churchill."—*Daily Herald*, 18/12/43.

War workers in billets are lucky if they are allowed to travel home when they get 'flu. But Mrs. Churchill can hop on the first 'plane to see her husband.

Imagine the face of a commanding officer if asked for compassionate leave on the grounds that father had a touch of 'flu! It might be granted in serious cases, but never would a special posting be made, we believe. Certainly it would not come off if it involved travelling overseas! Yet both Major Randolph and W.A.A.F. Section Officer Mrs. Oliver manage it.

Nor do we believe that many other recruits to the Women's Forces have been granted commissions when they have married men not of British nationality. We say nothing against Mr. Vic Oliver—he is probably the most intelligent member of the entire family—but the fact re-

THE Stalin Government has at last abandoned the *Internationale* as its self contradictory national anthem and adopted a song of different words, music and content.

mains that his wife would not have got a commission so readily had she not been her father's daughter. Most certainly she would never have got posted with her father had he not been the Prime Minister.

On these things being pointed out, there is always a cry of "personalities!" The fact remains that though Prime Ministers hold a responsibility for the decrees which the average man and woman must obey, there are always exceptions made for their families. The same goes for all the higher-ups. They are all so valuable!

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### NOTE TO OUR READERS

The "Letters to the Editors" and "From the Ranks" have had to be left over until the next issue. *WAR COMMENTARY* is getting too small for all the material we get. Give us a weekly paper!

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*Principles of Syndicalism VII*

TOM BROWN

**THE COMMUNE**

IN PREVIOUS ARTICLES we have considered the vertical organisation of syndicates, from the factory or job committee to the district and national Council of Labour. We are now to consider the horizontal organisation, from the job committee to the local federation of syndicates.

The workers of each factory, mine, shop, garage, or other place of work in any one town or locality are affiliated to the local federation. Thus, any city, town, or group of villages may have an organisation representative of engineering workers, railmen, busmen, teachers, shop assistants, tailors, municipal workers, builders, clerks, musicians and other workers. Certain localities will have delegates from dockers, seamen, miners and textile workers according to local constitution.

However, besides the delegates of the industrial workers organised in syndicates at their places of work, there are delegates of other groups, the unemployed, housewives, and small groups of odd trades.

The syndicates will endeavour to retain the membership of workers who become unemployed, unlike the wealthy craft unions which consider an unemployed man a liability. An out-of-work member will be thought of as, say, an unemployed carpenter, instead of just "one of the unemployed". Where men are in and out of work continually this will not be difficult, but in "normal" times of depression there are hundreds of thousands of men and women who lose all touch with their previous job and organisation and fall back into the vast anonymous ranks of "the Unemployed". It is the task of Syndicalism to organise these men and women to fight against their miserable conditions, to prevent their being forced into blacklegging, and to become part of the forces of emancipation.

Where women are working in industry the syndicate organises them with the men, but millions of working women, particularly in certain parts of Britain, never return to industrial work or service after the day of marriage. Yet these women, who have no proper place in the orthodox organised labour movement, are at once a weakness and a great strength of the workers' movement. They are a weakness in a strike if they do not understand and appreciate the issues; they can slowly and steadily sap the will to victory of their struggling menfolk. But, if they understand the issues, they are a tremendous addition to our battle forces, as particularly the women of the mining areas have shown. They can organise food collections and communal kitchens, nursing service, entertainments and propaganda.

They can carry out boycotts and strike picket lines. The industrial North has shown that women can do the latter job as well as men. Without doubt our Syndicalist movement must organise the housewife as well as the industrial woman worker.

As well as the factory committees, unemployed and housewives, the local federation of syndicates has to organise certain individuals and small groups who, because of the nature of their employment, cannot be organised in the syndicates of industry and service. Writers, artists, small dealers, odd job men and many others who have no syndicate will desire a part in the struggle. The local federation will organise them in local groups.

The chief task of the local federation in present circumstances is the mobilisation of all labour forces for strike action. In a rail strike they will ensure that busmen are not used against railmen. In a miners' strike they will see to it, that blackleg coal is not moved. The local forces of labour will be swung from sector to sector of the class front as the need arises.

As a centre of strike propaganda, particularly in the case of small "unofficial" strikes now so familiar to us, the local is invaluable. Almost every such strike is greatly weakened by lack of propaganda and information issued by the factory strike committee, which usually lacks the means of propaganda. With a well-organised local, any strike in a factory, shop, or mine will be immediately reported to that local. Supplied with all necessary facts the local operates its permanent propaganda and news service. Other jobs in the town and neighbouring locals are informed of the facts of the case. Public meetings are held and local bulletins issued. Unemployed and workers from other jobs swell the picket ranks.

But the strike activity of the local is not limited to propaganda. Collections must be made to augment the strike pay. Perhaps it may even be necessary to organise the collection or cheap mass purchase of food, or the formation of communal kitchens.

In the case of certain strikes the boycott is applied. In disputes of cinema or theatre workers, shop assistants, newspaper printers or the employees of firms selling branded goods, the boycott is an effective weapon.

The local form of Syndicalist organisation is not limited to cities and thickly populated industrial areas. The mining areas and the countryside also have their own type of local federation. In the

country we usually find small villages grouped around a larger village or small country town. The same is true of the semi-rural semi-industrial mining areas. In these cases each village would have its sub-federation affiliated to the federation of the parent village, corresponding to the town federation.

It is natural that the delegates of the local will desire to establish contact with the delegates of neighbouring locals. To this end the local federation of syndicates in any region are affiliated to a regional confederation of labour, as Clydeside, the North East Coast, Birmingham, South Wales or London. The Syndicalist mode of organisation is extremely elastic, therein is its chief strength, and the regional confederations can be formed, modified, added to or reformed according to local conditions and changing circumstances.

The opportunities of the local federation during the revolutionary struggle are too obvious to need underlining; organisation of workers' militia, propaganda, supplies and co-ordination of factory defence are the greatest of these.

With the triumph of the revolution and the passing of the class struggle the local organisation of Syndicalism changes character and becomes the Commune, an organisation of people who live together, for the purpose of living together. The Commune will take the place of the present unrepresentative borough council.

However, most of the functions of the municipalities will be carried out by the industrial syndicates. Local transport will be the responsibility of the Transport Syndicate, hospitals that of the Health Workers' Syndicate, education that of the Teachers' Syndicate, and so on. All of these services need men and women of experience, persons with some knowledge of the technical and intellectual problems, a knowledge not usually possessed by the typical town councillor. Local Education Committees, for instance, are usually bossed by elderly brewers, publicans, pork butchers, speculative builders, religious bigots and such like. Of course, the control of schools may be modified by the creation of teachers', parents' and scholars' councils, but such problems are a matter of experiment; we are now concerned with the creation of working class organisation which can take over education at once.

The abolition of the money basis of society will relieve the Commune of the chief task of the borough and county councils—the collection of rates. Nor will the Commune be concerned in running businesses, as many municipalities do, in order to gather profits to aid the rates.

The Commune, a much smaller and more intimate and decentralised body than the borough council, will be entirely devoted to improving the communal life of the locality. Making their requests to the appropriate syndicates, Builders', Public Health, Transport or Power, the inhabitants of each

Commune will be able to gain all reasonable living amenities, town planning, parks, play-grounds, trees in the streets, clinics, museums and art galleries. Giving, like the mediæval city assembly, an opportunity for any interested person to take part in, and influence, his town's affairs and appearance, the Commune will be a very different body from the borough council, which is largely an organisation for the protection of the big ratepayers, hobbled and controlled by the Ministry of Health from Whitehall.

In ancient and mediæval times cities and villages expressed the different characters of different localities and their inhabitants. In redstone, Portland or granite, in plaster or brick, in pitch of roof, arrangements of related buildings or pattern of slate and thatch each locality added to the interest of travellers. Scotland, the North of England, London, the West Country and East Anglia, each expressed itself in castle, home or cathedral.

How different is the dull, drab, or flashy ostentatious monotony of modern England. Each town the same. The same Woolworths', Odeon Cinemas, and multiple shops, the same "council houses" or "semi-detached villas", £50 down and 25/6d. for the rest of your life. North, South, East or West, what's the difference, where is the change?

With the Commune the ugliness and monotony of present town and country life will be swept away, and each locality and region, each person will be able to express the joy of living, by living together.

(Next article—"Defending the Revolution").

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# UNRRA - a dangerous quack remedy

WHAT IS THIS thing called UNRRA?

According to "Pertinax", writing in *France*, the first task of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration is to ward off "famine, epidemics, disorder, anarchy and chaos" and its long-term task is the rebuilding of towns and villages and the reconstruction of the economic stability of the occupied countries.

But are the rulers of Britain and America capable of warding off famine and epidemics when they haven't prevented the man-made famine in India, and when, in other parts of the Empire and the Southern States, millions live on a diet below subsistence level and in squalid conditions? (The UNRRA Conference decided not to discuss the Indian famine—it might embarrass the British).

Are they capable of preventing disorder, when there are brutal racial riots in Harlem, Detroit and Chicago, and the hysterical "zoot-suit" riots in California; when there are big increases in hooliganism and drunkenness, in prostitution and other sex offences in both Britain and America?

And is not "chaos" the only word which can describe the present state of the "civilisation" we are fighting to defend?

The only thing on the list that we haven't got already is anarchy—for that means absence of government and restrictions—and we swarm with governments—emigré politicians and out-of-work royalty, though it must be confessed that most of them haven't anything to govern at the moment. As for restrictions on liberty . . .

Turning to the long-term tasks, it is hard to see that we are very well qualified for them either. Although we *do* know a lot about rebuilding, because we're going to build 3,000 cottages (4,000,000 is about the number required) and we've actually built 2 of them. But I don't think we even know that much about restoring economic stability, because our economic system, in its whole history, has never, at any time, been stable, anywhere in the world.

At the UNRRA conference in November 1943, ex-Governor Herbert H. Lehman was elected Director-General. Gov. Lehman whom the *Daily Express* describes as a "practical business man" is a partner in the New York banking firm of Lehman Bros. He is Director of the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation, which earlier in the year was incorporated in the American Department of State "in order to keep its transactions in harmony with the higher decisions of foreign policy"—(*Foreign Affairs* July 1943).

Leader of the British delegation to the conference was Col. Llewellyn, the new Minister of Food.

One of the "men of Munich" and the Tory "Old Gang", it was fitting that he should be accompanied by Sir Frederick Leith-Ross. Who is he? None other than the Government's Chief Economic Adviser since 1932 (*i.e.* through the glorious reigns of MacDonald, Baldwin, Chamberlain and Churchill). It was he who negotiated the financial agreements with Germany in October 1934 and with Italy in April 1935. It is ironical that the man who thus helped to reinstate Hitler's rocking economy and to pay for Mussolini's Abyssinian War, and who, as Director-General of the Ministry of Economic Warfare since 1939, has been responsible for the policy of starving friend and foe alike in Europe, should now be concerned with their relief.

Is it surprising that the smaller States are worried about the future? In the *Observer* of 17/10/43, it is admitted that "there naturally appeared to the Governments of at present occupied countries a possibility that the, at present, luckier 'big four' might, however, unconsciously, usurp excessive power in the administration of Europe," and the *Daily Express* of 9/11/43 refers to "some anxiety on the part of smaller nations, that the Big Four . . . are going to be dominant in the use of food as a political weapon."

Says Gov. Lehman: "Our troops will be unable to take the offensive successfully in countries where famine and pestilence are generating riot and revolution." Revolution against whom? The Nazis? But we want Europe to revolt against them. Against us? But why should they want to revolt against us, if our aim is really to liberate them?

Finally let us consider the lofty motives of UNRRA, described by Gov. Lehman to the American Foreign Policy Association. Said the worthy Director-General:

"We in America must not lose sight of the fact that, once this war has been ended, we again will be the greatest producers in the world, and will want world markets for our grain, our cotton, our tobacco, and other agricultural staples as well as our steel, our automobiles, and the thousands of products of our mills and factories."

" . . . By emergency relief and rehabilitation measures now, we can make it possible for the liberated peoples of Europe and Asia to become in succeeding years the customers for our goods."

UNRRA may be an unqualified physician, but, like most quack-doctors, it will do its best to keep the bleeding and agony-stricken body alive, so as to extort its crippling fee. Gov. Lehman modestly calls this "enlightened self-interest".

COLIN WARD

## ITALIANS CAN FIGHT NOW

New details of the Italian troops' first action with the Fifth Army show that they fought bravely.

They launched their attack on Hill 353, north-east of Mount Camino, at 6.20 on Wednesday morning.

By sheer gallantry a company of Italians fought their way to the crest of Hill 353 and were on their objective by 8.10.

They were unable to hold their gains. Their losses were dangerously high. In one company every one of the five officers was a casualty with two killed outright and three gravely wounded.

In a second company only one officer remained an effective. Four out of every five men were casualties.

*Daily Express, 13/12/43.*

## ON MIRACLES

A Catholic piety leaflet, invoking "Mary Immaculate, Patroness of the United States and of the U.S. Armed Forces" and urging the wearing of her miraculous medal, says:

"Bombs fell at Our Lady's feet twelve different times and did not explode."

It won't do. A good gal who could do that much could and would do much more without waiting for invocations and medal wearing.

*Truth Seeker, U.S.A., Oct 1943.*

## ABOUT TIME, TOO

The "Internationale" will cease to be the National Anthem of the U.S.S.R. on March 15 next.

Moscow Radio announced last night that the Council of People's Commissars has decided to replace it with a new national anthem "corresponding with the new spirit of the Soviet regime."

*Daily Herald, 21/12/43.*

We would suggest "God Save the King". Since Britain shared this song with the late King of Prussia there is apparently no national copyright on it.

Other suggestions include "Thanks for the Memory" which might be appropriate to the departure of the "Internationale"; and "Farewell to Dreams". The Kremlin bureaucrats around Stalin might feel it expedient to echo the sentiments of the "Vicar of Bray", while for the Communists abroad we have a most excellent suggestion, that popular number, "I Came Here to Talk for Joe".

## INFORMATION ?

I read with particular and bitter amusement the reports of Brendan Bracken's speech at the B.B.C.'s 21st birthday party.

It was a vigorous and lively speech. With much of it I agreed warmly. But I was astonished by one misstatement of fact, reported thus:—

"Though he was always willing to take absolute responsibility for all the B.B.C.'s doings, he had refused to interfere in the Corporation's policies. No attempt had ever been made by the Government to influence the news-giving or any other programmes . . ."

Having myself been put off the air quite recently, as a result of Right-wing political pressure, of which Bracken himself was the instrument, I can only ask him how he dare commit himself publicly to such reckless untruths.

Tom Driberg in *Reynolds News, 12/12/43.*

## FARMER COMPLAINS

I farm in Kent, "the most favoured county" referred to by Mr. Spong, but instead of hops and fat lambs, I produce T.T. milk, I completely agree that the prices of T.T. milk, at least, are not sufficient to give the cowman and W.L.A. girls employed by me a decent wage for their labours or a fair return to the farmer.

A day's work consists of: 5.30 a.m., milking; 8 a.m., breakfast; 9 a.m., cleaning out, &c.; noon, lunch; 1 p.m., milking; 4.30 p.m., break for tea; 8 p.m., milking; 9.30 p.m., bed. On top of this comes Home Guard and sometimes a night calving case. A total of 10½ hours daily,

# Through

Saturdays, Sundays, Bank Holidays, Christmas Day, every day. No industry is called on to work these hours. No trade union would allow it; if they did there would be strikes, &c.

Is it generally realised that a farm-worker gets only four days' holiday and four public holidays against the townsman's week or fortnight plus every public holiday?

Letter to the *Daily Telegraph, 17/12/43.*

## WHEN STARVING IS A CRIME

Photographs of the carcasses of five cockerels were produced in court at Oxford yesterday when a Cuttleslowe widow, Mrs. Dorothy Hunt, mother of four children, was fined £2 for causing unnecessary suffering to the birds by allowing them to starve.

Mrs. Hunt, who pleaded "Guilty," said she had nothing to give the birds but scraps, and that during October her little boy had pneumonia and she could not leave him to attend to them. Her eldest child was aged seven.

*Oxford Mail, 16/12/43.*

The Government must be piling up a heavy fine in India!

## ONLY RUMOURS

There is no confirmation in New Delhi of rumours that Gandhi and other Congress leaders are to be soon released.

These reports were published yesterday in the pro-Congress *Sunday Call*.

It was suggested that the releases were likely to follow a statement by the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, at the annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta.

These reports were described in Government circles as "kite-flying".

*Daily Herald, 13/12/43.*

Such reports might have followed from the release of Mosley—but quite illogically.

## DEATH ADVERTISED

The Society has learned with regret that another old *Arethusa* boy has paid the supreme sacrifice, being killed in Convoy a few weeks ago. Who will give a chance to one more poor boy who desires training for a sea life? Address: 164, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.2.

*The Sphere, 30/10/43.*



## HOW RATIONING WORKS

For the first time in memory some of the exclusive London shops are offering second-hand fur coats for sale.

There is more than one reason for this.

The quota severely limits the number of new coats which they can secure. Purchase tax on new coats is high. Coupons tend to be used up on clothes that are strictly essential.

For the second-hand coats there are neither quota, purchase-tax, nor coupons to consider.

There is seldom any attempt when these sales are made to palm off old coats as new. On the contrary it is

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# the Press

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freely admitted that the house is offering the coat on behalf of a customer who desires to sell it.

Sometimes the coat was in first-class conditions when the firm received it, and could scarcely be told from new except by a fur expert. If there are any slight defects these are soon put right by a "reconditioning" process.

Even these second-hand coats are bringing higher prices than new ones did in peace time.

*Evening Standard, 10/12/43.*

★

Bury St. Edmunds Education Committee are to take up with the Association of Education Committees the difficulties of parents who say they cannot send their children to school in wet weather because they are unable to provide them with shoes.

Mr. V. Pettitt told the committee that head teachers were perturbed. The parents pleaded that they were unable to buy shoes because they had no clothing coupons.

*Evening Standard, 10/12/43.*

## CHRISTMAS PRESENT

At a meeting in the Lord Mayor's parlour on Friday afternoon preliminary arrangements for the distribution of 5,000 loaves of bread to the poor people of Hull were made.

The distribution is to be carried out on the same lines as last year, the Salvation Army being responsible for nine distribution centres and 3,500 of the loaves, while the W.V.S. will staff six centres and distribute 1,500 loaves. Each loaf will have a coloured band round it with the words "For our daily bread we give thanks." The number of loaves distributed to each family will depend on the size of the family.

*Hull Daily Mail, 27/11/43.*

To give thanks "for our daily bread" seems a slight exaggeration. The poor people of Hull get loaves only once a year, at Christmas time.

## UNEMPLOYMENT AHEAD

Replying in Parliament to a debate on the pits call-up, Mr. Bevin, Labour Minister, said the one thing he had in mind was to avoid the kind of situation which arose after the 1914-18 war, when too many people were left in the mining areas with nothing to do.

To an M.P. who remarked "There is not much danger of that happening again!" Mr. Bevin said: "Don't be too sure. You may have to conscript people to the mines to-day, but, before the war is over, you may have the same position as arose after the last war, and people may be going to the mining areas without conscription."

*Star, 17/12/43.*

# TWO MILLION DIE IN INDIA

(Press Statement issued by the Famine Campaign of The Federation of Indian Associations in Gt. Britain).

Two million persons have so far died in the famine in India, according to the unofficial estimate reported by the correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*.

During the first three years of the war the British Empire's fighting forces lost 92,089 in killed; or less than one twentieth of the lives lost in the famine.

Up to October 1943, the total number of killed by air raids in this country was 50,091; or about one fortieth of the lives lost in the famine.

## A Sinister Move

An effort is being made to persuade the public in this country and abroad that famine in India is over. The manner in which this is being done shows some degree of premeditation. On November 11th a dispatch which appeared in the *Daily Express* from its correspondent in New Delhi was captioned "Calcutta Famine is All Over". It said: "The back of the famine is definitely broken as far as Calcutta is concerned. After a fortnight's absence I can see an immense difference since the Viceroy's visit."

Two days later a dispatch appeared in the *Daily Herald* from its correspondent. It was captioned "Famine Area Has Month's Food Reserve." This dispatch also came from New Delhi.

## Wavell's Efficiency

The idea seems to be to show that Lord Wavell, in contrast to his predecessor, Lord Linlithgow, is a highly efficient Viceroy. Within a few days of his arrival in India, and hardly had he taken the oath of loyalty to the British Emperor, he made a beeline for Calcutta. There he walked among the destitutes lying helplessly on the pavements. The destitutes would have been happier had they got some food instead of the Viceroy's visit. Wavell would indeed be a miracle man if his mere presence could fill the stomachs of the hungry.

## The Army Arrives

One of the acts of Lord Wavell, during his visit to Calcutta, was to call in the help of the British-officered Indian Army. The people of India have had only one experience of the Indian Army, an instrument of oppression used by the British Government against them. But this time the Indian Army is going to play a different role! Its job is to distribute food by making transport available and a hundred Army doctors have been allocated to give medical aid. We have no precise knowledge of how useful the Army has been, except that so far it is reported to have carried 50,000 tons of grain outside Calcutta.

This figure looks big when it stands alone. It is only a fraction when one considers that no less than 750,000 tons of grain has to be immediately made available if the worst fears of famine are to be overcome.

One significant job the Army has performed is the transporting of destitutes from Calcutta to "relief" centres. In these centres the destitutes would be looked after for some time, and then returned to the villages in time to reap the harvest. The methods of removal applied by the Army are typical; they resemble the technique employed by dog-catchers of Municipal corporations. Here is its description by the correspondent of the *London Times*: "About 10,000 (destitutes) were rounded up and taken in lorries to reception centres". (10/11/43).

(continued on p. 12)

# North Yorks' Farmers Strike

(From an Agricultural Correspondent)

THE PROPOSED RE-OPENING of the Fernbeck and Dent Dairies which had been recently declared redundant by the Ministry of Food is the sequel to a prolonged fight resulting in a victory for the farmers.

The farmers of the Upper Nidderdale for years have sent along their milk to the Fernbeck Dairies and were well satisfied with the arrangement. For no apparent reason, but on the plea of unhygienic conditions (*i.e.* the same manner in which the Government worked the pasteurization racket), the Ministry of Food closed down the Fernbeck Dairy on May 1st. A milk strike ensued, and 85 Upper Nidderdale farmers withheld 1,100 gallons of milk daily for twelve days, and used it on the farms to feed young stock and pigs, and to make quantities of cheese.

Meetings were immediately organized by the Ministry of Food and the National Farmers' Union, and the farmers were persuaded to cease the strike pending negotiations.

But the elaborate tangle of the bureaucratic machine functions slowly. Negotiations dragged on spasmodically for more than six months. Naturally the farmers became restless, and this restlessness found expression at meetings organized at Pately Bridge and Skipton. At the last meeting, they decided to take further unconstitutional action unless Fernbeck Dairy was re-opened by December 1st. Mr. W. Corbett, Chairman of the N.F.U. West Riding Branch was very active and talked in a very loud voice in an effort to persuade the farmers to be "reasonable". The matter was finally brought to a head at a meeting at Harrogate on December 6th, at which it was agreed that the two dairies concerned should be given a chance to re-open on January 1st, or as an alternative to opening, compensation should be given on "generous terms".

The Nidderdale farmers did well in forcing their demands by such methods of direct action, and it is plain that their demands would have been met much earlier had they not listened to the ranting rhetoric of their officials.

When future action is contemplated, the farmers would be well advised to widen the sphere of

the strike by publication of the facts. Sympathy of the farm workers and the surrounding populace could be thus enlisted. The whole farm staff could take part in the strike and only do essential work to keep stock alive. Instead of wasting the milk by feeding it to the stock, distribution in the nearest villages and towns could be arranged and a pamphlet printed explaining the reasons for this unique procedure. In this manner the farmers would ensure success and overcome the antagonism of the townsmen.

(continued from p. 16)

Mrs. Foster, one of the Strike Committee, whose husband is in the Navy dealt with the usual slur bandied around during strikes, that:— 'Strikes are an injustice to the men in the forces'. Her reply was: "We are fighting for better conditions for the men to come back to" . . . "We must not expect the men to have to fight again when they come back . . . We must fight for them."

Beaverbrook's local rag the *Evening Citizen*, as usual ready to misrepresent the workers' case, reported an interruption by a member of the "Communist Party" "Isn't it a shame that we are on strike in the middle of a war?" (This was jeered by the women strikers), but did not publish the reply of the A.E.U. Convenor, Charlies Menzies, that "At the time of 'Dunkirk', the party of which Miss Higgins (the interrupter) was a member, was advocating strikes."

The A.E.U. Convenor spoke of veiled threats to himself, because of his stand in allowing the women to vote on the question of strike. He was also warned that he must not advocate strike action. He expected he would have his head put on the block, but his first duty was to the workers. He was their servant.

We Anarchist-Syndicalists are wholeheartedly with the strikers in their struggle. To them we say: "You have demonstrated that you can organise without the Trade Unions. The "Leaders" are against you. Their funds are closed to you. And yet you have taken part in one of the most solid strikes of recent years. The form of organisation you have set up *i.e.* The Strike Committee and the Hardship Committee is the beginning of the form of organisation advocated by Syndicalists, whether you know it or not. You must extend this form of organisation. Form Food Committees, to prepare food supplies for the strikers. Solidarity Committees, to extend the strike to other factories. Entertainment and Sports Committees if you wish or any Committee you feel is necessary. We would like to see you forming Committees to prepare for the taking over of the factory and commencing the production of the goods you require."

## GLASGOW MEETINGS

ANARCHIST FEDERATION HALL

23 WILSON STREET, C.I. (2nd Floor)

Sunday, 7 p.m.

JANUARY 2nd.

Eddie Shaw

New Methods, New Forces, New Alignments

JANUARY 9th.

Garracher

"The Counter-Revolution"

# IMMORALITY and WAR

*By Cyril Hughes*

IF TRUTH IS the first casualty of war, morality is a very close second. Morality, that is, in the sense of that respect for human personality which alone can make the relationship between one human being and another a tolerable or even a lovely thing.

For it is true that even in peace-time morality is generally identified with legality. Peace, as our generation has known it is merely a period of preparation for war, a time when the inherent contradictions and insanities of an acquisitive machine-society based upon power and violence accumulate, until they inevitably resolve themselves in the more acute form of world-butchery, "the continuation of politics by other means" in the words of Clausewitz. And so to new power-adjustments, and new insanities.

Morality, in the common mind, has almost invariably meant sexual morality, which is the least important aspect of morality, especially in its popular connotation of sexual orthodoxy. A man can be the most inveterate scoundrel, greedy, selfish, idle, an employer of sweated labour, a seeker of political or economic power, a liar, an exponent of policies which lead the people to ruin and war; but as long as he conforms to the popular code by remaining faithful to a wife whom he has obtained legally as if he had paid his money for a glass of beer, as long as he rears and infects with his own despicable ideas a number of strictly legitimate children, he stands a very good chance of achieving the status of a respectable citizen and pillar of the state. Or, if orthodoxy is too much for him, he is quite safe if he rings the changes on his sexual partners according to the established and expensive procedure of the divorce court. On the other hand, a man may be the most saintly of social philanthropists and the most inspired of human geniuses, but if he lives with a woman for whom he has not first paid 7/6d. and entered into commitments as legal and binding as those of a commercial contract, if he offers his partner only love instead of legal forfeiture, he is condemned to be a social outcast until he is driven either into compliance with the law or into cynicism and social misanthropy. If he is really a saint, he may be driven into neither. But those who are not quite saints (saints are rare) find that it does not pay to live according to the best that is within you, but only according to the laws of the State, which is designed to serve the interests of the State, not of the majority of the people in it. Virtue is not a socially valuable quality. And in the sense in which it is implied in sexual orthodoxy, it is in very truth merely the trade unionism of the married.

But in peace-time people did display qualities which are the attributes of true morality. They conformed to the sexual code; but in addition they were kind, tolerant, merciful, generous. If they knew it, and could help, distress did not go unmitigated, nor suffering unrelieved. The ordinary common folk, law-abiding enough, also did many things which were not demanded by law, but were demanded by human decency and human feeling. These examples of positive morality were usually on a small scale, it is true, because the capabilities of the people were not large. But helpless pity for human pain went far beyond capability, and was a very real thing.

The war has largely changed all that. Quite early on in the war I recall a correspondence in the *Daily Telegraph* concerning alleged immorality on the London stage.

The "immorality" involved, of course, the display of naked or nearly naked female human bodies to the public gaze. Somebody suggested that this sort of thing aroused sexual passions. I think it was Clifford Bax who made the obvious answer to that: "Why not?" But nobody mentioned the important thing. This was the time of the "phoney war", but even so a certain number of human beings were being shot and blown to pieces every day on the French-German frontier. Yet the respectable middle-class citizens of Britain were not writing to the *Daily Telegraph* to complain of the immorality of this. They were merely objecting to the sight of nude chorus girls—a sight which could hardly be said to do anyone any real and lasting harm! Presumably, as long as the soldiers being murdered at the front had the decency to make sure they were murdered with their clothes on, public opinion was not offended.

The process of straining at gnats and swallowing camels has since that time grown to much larger proportions. Sexual immorality is still the only kind of immorality against which any general protest is made. Leaders of State and Church publicly express alarm at the enormous increase of venereal disease since the outbreak of war—but one listens in vain for any condemnation of the vast immorality of war itself, of which sexual license and venereal disease are merely inevitable and incidental consequences. There is still an intolerable amount of public ignorance concerning the realities of a healthy sexual outlook. Necessary information and education are still withheld by the authorities. On the other hand, great pains are taken to ensure that young and old shall take a soundly patriotic and enthusiastic view of this glorious war. War is a manly subject, sex is still not quite nice. One is reminded of the comment of Swift, when he observed that when men go to destroy life, they set out with torches and trumpets; but when they go to create life, they blow out the candle.

The orthodoxy alone remains. Spontaneous experiences of true morality are rapidly disappearing. Condemnation of crime is now confined to acts committed by the enemy and by individual miscreants at home. More clearly than ever before, it can now be seen that what the State forbids to the individual citizen it is nevertheless prepared to do itself, and in fact expects that citizen to do in the name of the State what he is not allowed to do on his own behalf. The simplest example of this is, of course, the fact that a man is forbidden to commit murder in civilian clothes, but is ordered to commit murder in uniform. Some weeks ago the newspapers reported the conviction of a man and his wife for allowing their child to starve to death. Yet the British and German Governments together are deliberately starving to death thousands of men, women and children in occupied Europe, and now the process is repeated in India.

The divorce between national and individual morality and the appalling deterioration of national morality, are the two most significant results of the war. Certainly this state of affairs existed in peace-time, but not in so acute a form. Its manifestations had to be disguised, or public opinion would not have stood for it. Now public opinion will stand for anything. For the gloating and ghoulish presentation of stories concerning our bombing of German cities, for instance, such as this one from the *B.U.P.*, told by a Swiss traveller, and believed to refer to Munich:

"A few miles outside the city," said the traveller, "there was a cemetery. After this particular raid a stream of lorries and cars carried thousands of battered corpses to the cemetery from dawn to dusk.

"At the cemetery, squads of German soldiers in special rubber suits just dumped the bodies into huge mass graves. As each pit was filled with its ghastly contents they covered over the top with sand. So the raid victims were buried.

"Some of the after-effects on the city's inhabitants were even more horrifying than the bombing itself," said the traveller. "Many people, especially women, went insane, and children lost their speech."

That is typical. Such reports, if they had emanated from the enemy in the early months of the bombing campaign, would have been vigorously denied by us. Much milder allegations were, in fact, denied. Now no attempt is made to pretend our bombing is confined to, or even aimed at, military objectives. Now we glory in the seeds of death we sow amongst the palpitating humanity that crowds the workers' quarters of German and Italian cities. The people have been toughened.

The situation is simple, if absurd. What is wrong for the citizen, is right for the State. What is right for the State, is wrong for another State, and *vice versa*. Thus, it is wrong for Germany to oppress Europe, but right for Britain to oppress India. It is right for the

miners and factory-workers of Germany and Europe to go on strike against their Fascist rulers, and the workers who do so are heroes. But it is wrong for the miners and factory-workers of Britain to go on strike against *their* Fascist rulers, and the workers who do so are rats! As long as you believe what the B.B.C. tells you, two and two will always add up to whatever you like to make it.

State officials can sometimes be a little ambiguous, however. At Liverpool recently, a young man who had killed his friend in a drunken brawl was treated leniently by the Judge, who earnestly entreated him never to fight again. What will happen to that young man if he takes the Judge's advice seriously when the time comes for him to register for military service?

The hearts of the people are sound enough, and their natural morality far higher than that of the inhuman State to whose decrees they bow. They are immersed in a flood of synthetic hate and lying propaganda, which "hardens all within, and petrifies the feeling." But truth cannot remain buried forever. Harsh facts are at last beginning to dispel the mirage which has led our people on a donkey-trot for so long. Fine phrases about freedom and democracy will not for much longer disguise the monstrous role of the State as a barrier set up against the yearnings and human aspirations of the common people of all lands. One day our people will realize that they have sold their souls for the morality of the money-bags, and the religion of the golden calf.

(continued from p. 9)

### Hush Hush Policy

But what point is there in this procedure, even if it conceded that callousness can be tolerated if good ultimately results from it. It is not enough to take destitutes to 'relief' centres for temporary feeding, and then pack them back to their villages. These villages have to be stocked with food first. There is little information to suggest that this is being done.

Actually the removal of destitutes from Calcutta is fraught with danger. While they were in the city the foreign correspondents could not help seeing them. They were a painful reminder of the existence of the famine. Their removal will help to put a thick screen upon the whole situation, and thousands, nay, millions will continue to die unknown, unreported. The censorship in India is scandalous enough. Now the Army is giving the censorship a helping hand.

We stress this point purposely. The Government of India has always relied on hush hush. We need only remind the public that the news of the notorious massacre at Amritsar was not allowed to go out of the province for several months after the event.

### The Relief Centres

The honest and satisfactory course for the British Government to adopt is to allow Indian and foreign newspaper men to visit these 'relief' centres. So far not a single report has appeared anywhere to tell the world what sort of conditions obtain in the centres.

### Famine Is Not Over, It Is Increasing

Famine is not over in India by a long way. Even its fringes have not been touched. This is revealed in a small, inconspicuous paragraph in the *Daily Express* in a report from Calcutta: "Deaths from all causes in the week ended November 13 totalled 1,960, against 1,875 for the preceding week, and 707 for the corresponding week last year". If this is the state of affairs in a city whose destitutes are being rapidly removed what must be happening in the interior where no statistics are available, and where no foreign correspondents may venture? Mrs.

Vijaya Lakshmi Pundit, president of All India Women's Conference, who, in the course of her relief work toured the rural areas of Bengal recently, has cast some light on the situation. She says that *about 100,000 persons are dying every week from starvation.*

### Food Before Army Vehicles

Army vehicles and tour of the famine areas by the new Viceroy are not enough. Mr. Amery, who excels in the art of offering excuses, told the House of Commons that food ships were on their way to India. But we are still waiting to hear from him how much food has reached India.

## KINGSTON SUNDAY LECTURES KINGSTON TRADES & LABOUR CLUB

GRANGE ROAD (back of the G.P.O.)

at 7 p.m. sharp.

JANUARY 2nd. Jehovah's Witnesses

JANUARY 9th. Jim Barker

"Local Government"

JANUARY 16th. G. E. R. Robson

"Money"

JANUARY 23rd. Don Coventry

"Christianity and its relation to Mythology"

The inaugural meeting of the Kingston Group of the Friends of Freedom Press will be held at the above address on

Saturday, January 8th at 7.30 p.m.

Speaker: John Hewetson.

# POVERTY KILLS

## *Reforms don't save children*

### "BIRTH, POVERTY & WEALTH"

By RICHARD M. TITMUSS. Hamish Hamilton, 7/6. IT IS A COMMONPLACE that the rich enjoy much better health than the poor. Children from well-to-do families seldom have a running discharge from their ears, and their grandparents only rarely suffer from crippling rheumatism and chronic cough. Yet these complaints are all too frequently found in working class families. Sir George Newman, when Chief Medical Officer to the Ministry of Health, expressed the general position in the remark: "Health is a purchasable commodity".

This disparity in health between rich and poor is officially recognized by the Registrar-General in his reports on Occupational Mortality. The main evidence from these has been summarized by a recent writer in the *British Medical Journal*:

"The Report divides the population into five social classes on the basis of occupation as given in the 1931 census returns. The professions are placed in Class I, skilled workers in Class III, and unskilled workers in Class V, with two intermediate groups. The following facts from the report are among the most significant from the point of view of social medicine. The mortality rates of diseases of the respiratory system, ear and mastoid disease, valvular heart disease, and gastric and duodenal ulcer, and the infant mortality rate, increase steadily as the social scale is descended, so that the rates are approximately twice as high in Class V and in Class I. In pregnancy and childbirth the death rate is 50% higher in Class V than in Class I, and in the second year of life the death rate in Class V is five times that of Class I.

"The social distribution of some of the commoner forms of cancer is often overlooked, although this report demonstrates a definite relation between social grade and cancer of the 'exposed' sites. Death rates from cancer of the tongue, tonsil, jaw, pharynx, oesophagus, stomach, larynx, skin and uterus are approximately twice as high in Class V as in Class I." (John Pemberton, M.D., M.R.C.P., *Possible Developments in Social Medicine*, B.M.J., 11/12/43.)

The method usually put forward and adopted for the remedying of this state of affairs has been what are called "progressive reforms". In the early years of the Nineteenth Century Public Health Services were based on the maxim that "People must not be encouraged to be ill by the knowledge that they could be treated free at the expense of the State". But with the revelations of unfitness which recruiting for the Boer War revealed, it was realized that the State must take a hand at rectifying the ill health which poverty carried with it. Since the introduction of Lloyd George's National Health Insurance Act before the last war, various State and Municipal measures have been brought in. These

have all had as their object the closing of the gap which exists between the level of health of the workers and the socially favoured classes. The Registrar-General's returns show that this gap is still of a formidable size, but after more than thirty years of health reforms, it should be possible to discover whether that gap is getting lesser or greater. On the answer to this question depends the elimination of the ill-health due to poverty—that is to say of the great majority of present day ill health, for, as Dr. Aleck Bourne has said: "From every angle of approach, in the light of all the influences which affect health adversely, it is abundantly evident that poverty is the great underlying cause of ill-health, disease and premature death". (*Health of the Future*, p. 84).

Recently Richard M. Titmuss has studied the trends in infantile mortality in the different social classes, as revealed in the Registrar-General's returns. The number of children per thousand live births who die under one year of age varies widely with the social conditions into which the child is born. How enormous that difference sometimes is, is shown by the fact "that the infant death rate from bronchitis and pneumonia in Class V in Durham and Northumberland exceeds that of Class I for the whole of England by 953 per cent." (p. 77). This means that if the standard of living of these Class V children in the north were raised to that of the children of the professional classes, nine out of every ten who at present die from these common illnesses would be saved.

The importance of this study of infant mortality is shown by the words of Sir Arthur Newsholme in the supplement to the 39th Annual Report of the Local Government Board 1909-10: "Infant Mortality is the most sensitive index we possess of Social Welfare and of sanitary administration especially under urban conditions" (quoted by Titmuss on p. 12). In the past thirty years infant mortality has fallen for all classes, and this fact is often taken not only as evidence of progress in medicine, which it certainly represents, but also of social progress generally. The results of Titmuss' survey refute the latter assumption.

The object of free treatment, free meals, public health assistance generally, has been to diminish the difference in levels of health between the working class and the well to do. Titmuss' work shows that so far from such having taken place, the exact opposite has occurred. The publisher's summary of the

book states the general position. "This is a study—sociological, medical and statistical—of the inequalities between the economic classes of England and Wales. It deals in particular with the widespread belief that the great decline in the total infantile death-rate during the between-wars period has been accompanied—thanks to our extensive and advancing social services—by a flattening of the gradient of inequality between the classes. Mr. Titmuss, by the application of the simple but ingenious statistical devices described in the text, arrives at the unexpected but deeply disturbing conclusion that this agreeable view has no foundation in fact. Inequalities between the classes have increased steadily in the present century and are now greater than ever before. In short, our maternal and infant welfare services have proved inadequate to the problems they were designed to solve; and it is evident that new and differently conceived measures are called for, not merely a multiplication of those on which we have depended hitherto."

The importance of these results were recognised by the *Times* which remarked in a leading article that, "Mr. Titmuss's startling conclusion is that between the census years of 1911 and 1931 a 50 per cent. reduction of the national average infant death-rate was accompanied by a widening of the difference between the economically favoured and the economically handicapped . . . There is thus a strong *prima facie* case for believing that one-third of the nation's parents, and half the nation's children, did not benefit to anything like a proportionate extent from the important social advances of the period since 1911, notwithstanding the great expansion, precisely during those years, of social services intended primarily for their well-being". In other words, social advances intended to benefit the working class do not in fact filter through to that class, although they prove a great benefit to the well-to-do. It is not possible in the space of this review to go into all the evidence which Titmuss brings forward: it must be sufficient to say that it renders his conclusions irrefutable. Here they are:

"Now we have statistical proof that not only has the social differential persisted for at least twenty years but it has widened greatly. The rigidity of the class structure holds, it seems, in the field of health just as it does in the realm of money. Even by 1931 the risk of death to infants of a considerable section of our population was higher than it was for children of the peerage during the period 1800-1855. For the period we have covered, the social structure of our community has become increasingly immobilized; yet all the time the illusion of social mobility has been gently fostered. In 1911 a smaller working population in a poorer nation had to support a larger child population; to-day, more workers, a wealthier community and one and a half million fewer children to care for, yet we maintain a grosser range of health inequality.

"The lesson, the inescapable lesson, of this study, is that the infants of the poor are *relatively* worse off

to-day than they were before the 1914 war. They are, in other words, dying in relatively greater numbers. And from the fact that their constitution is not relatively worse, it follows that the influences to which they are subjected must be . . . the well-to-do have been able to avail themselves *at a greater rate* than the poor of the knowledge and opportunities for better infantile health which, in theory, are available to all. Yet practically the reverse might have been expected, *i.e.* that the well-to-do, who had already benefited greatly from the march of knowledge and the improvements in medical and nursing care, would have been, in consequence, far less affected than the poor on whose behalf this knowledge and care were being exercised and extended for the first time. We are in fact further away from the goal of equalized health than we were thirty years ago and this despite a rise in the annual cost of the social services from £55 millions in 1911 (£1 11s. od. per head of the population) to £420 millions in 1930-2 (£10 10s. od. per head)." (pp. 99-100).

The social significance of these findings is tremendous. Calculations of wage trends, money-wages and real wages, or discussions on the standard of living of the workers usually provide and estimate of society's "progress" (or otherwise) which is necessarily abstract. But one gets a concrete picture of conditions when one considers how many babies die because of those conditions. And this study of the trend in infant death-rates shows that reforms have wholly failed. Over the whole period during which health reforms have been practised, the difference between the health of the wealthy and that of the workers has been increasing. The reforms have provided merely a soothing syrup.

The attempt to mitigate the effects of poverty without abolishing poverty itself has lamentably failed, as revolutionists have always insisted it would. It is now time that the working class movements ceased to deceive themselves and others by supporting the reformist "solutions" of to-day, such as the Beveridge Plan and other such-like tinkering with the problem. The abolition of ill health requires nothing less than the abolition of poverty itself.

JOHN HEWETSON

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## PUBLIC LECTURE-DISCUSSIONS EVERY FRIDAY EVENING 7.30 p.m

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JANUARY 7th. Albert Meltzer  
"Intellectuals—Their Cause & Cure"

JANUARY 14th. E. L. T. Mesens  
"Understanding Modern Painting"

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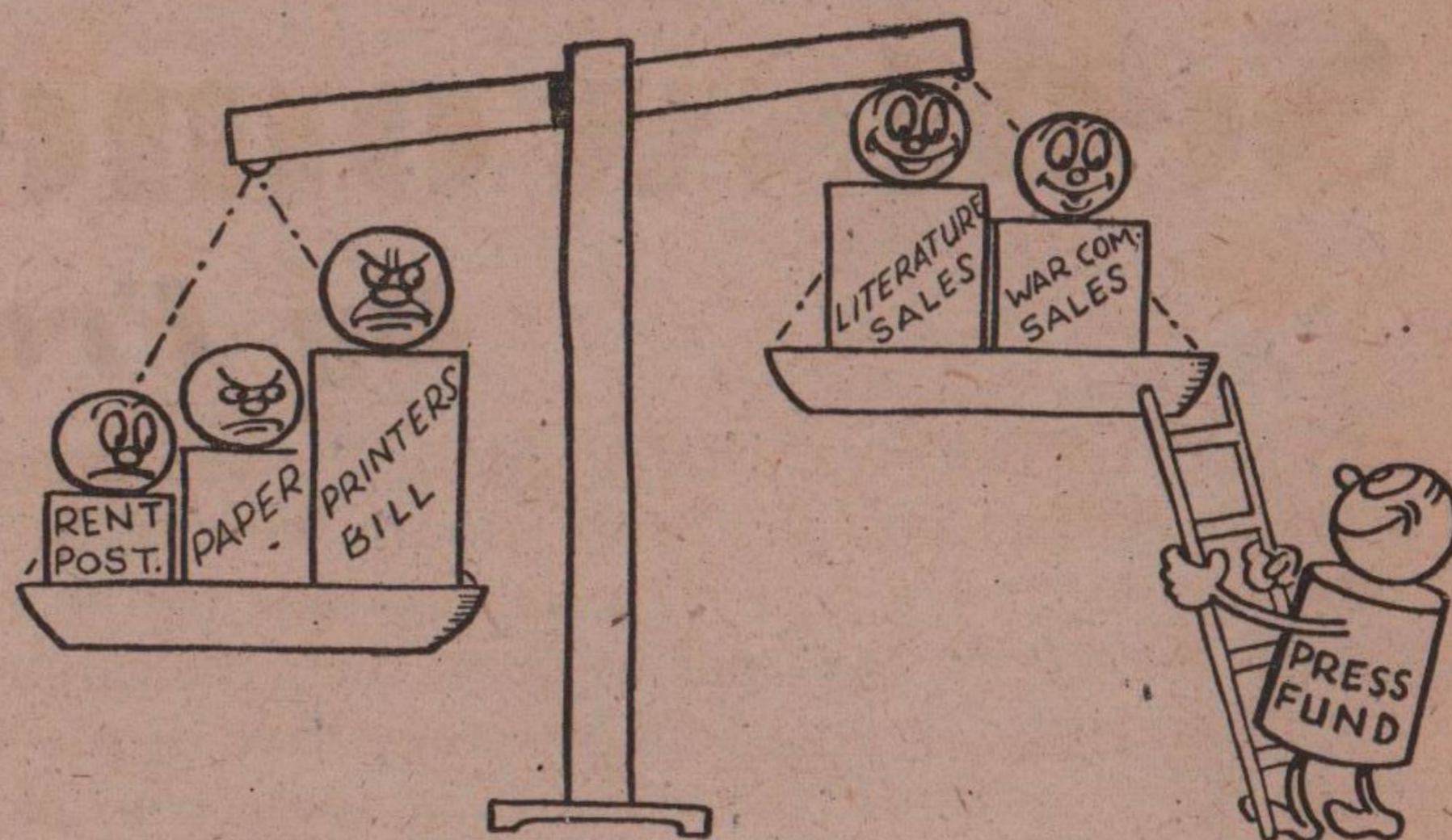
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# Goal Reached!

1943 PRESS FUND : £541 14s. 7d.

The Secretary of the I.W.W. Branch in Los Angeles in a letter received during December sends us a contribution to the Press Fund which, he says, "we sincerely hope will reach the £500 sterling goal you have set yourselves". Many readers were as anxious as our Los Angeles comrades that we should not fail at the last lap and as they will see for themselves the £500 has not only been reached but passed thanks to a record December list in which two large contributions from American comrades figure prominently. Our thanks to all those comrades in this country who have assured the success of the Press Fund by regular contributions throughout the year.



With ever increasing responsibilities to shoulder, our movement needs more and more financial support... In order to carry through the programme we have in mind we have decided to ask our readers to make £1000 the Press Fund goal this year. This will call for increased support from all our groups and individual comrades, and in particular from those friends who have not yet given the Press Fund their active support.

Start sending your contributions now and let's have a steady flow of contributions right through the year!

## PRESS FUND

NOVEMBER 1943.

£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Halifax: H.S.	10	0	Acton: E.W.P.	8	3
Accrington: A.E.	2	6	Dulwich: W.G.	10	0
London: Hyde Park	1	2	London: Park	1	2
London: Anon.	2	6	Epsom: P.L.S.	4	0
London: A.M.	10	0	Liverpool: C.H.	5	0
Walla Walla J.H. (U.S.A.)	3	0	Hereford: J.H.	1	8
Minehead: L.S.	1	0	York: H.A.	1	3
Doncaster: M.D.T.	4	0	Leyland: H.C.	1	0
Wanstead: D.R.	1	0	Liverpool: H.H.J.	1	0
Plymouth: Comrade, (per J.V.)	10	0	London: E.R.	1	0
Rochford: C.W.D.	4	6	Oxford: A.H.	4	4
Dover: A.McK.	14	0	Bristol: W.K.G.	10	0
Harefield: Anon.	13	0	Glasgow: J.W.	5	0
Evesham: D.J.M.	2	0	Hebburn-on-T.: C.T.G.	5	0
London: W.L.	5	0	Bromley: F.J.R.	5	0
Bangor: H.E.J.	4	0	Hadleigh: T.McC.	1	8
Shipley: M.S.	4	0	Felixtowe: W.K.S.	1	0
London: D.O.	4	6	Cheltenham: R.C.	1	8
Ascot: M.W.	18	0	Bredbury: V.W.	4	0
Claygate: E.R.	3	3	Paisley: D.D.M.	1	0
Birmingham: W.B.	2	6	Manchester: J.E.B.	2	0
Cardiff: W.H.S.	4	0	Manchester: F.R. (per J.B.)	2	6
Hadleigh: T.McC.	1	0	Epping: N.H.I.	5	0
London: E.L.	1	0	Greenock: S.M.	6	0
Bristol: A.E.L.	1	6	London: V.R.	5	0
Kingston: T.W.B.	1	0	Gateshead: G.T.	2	9
London: E.S.	4	0	Gateshead: J.C.S.	2	6
Hounslow: P.P.	2	0	Gateshead: McK.	2	0
London: R.G. (per T.B.)	5	0	Birmingham: W.B.	2	6
London: F.C.D.	1	0	Newquay: S.T.	5	0
Gt. Yarmouth: A.G.	7	0	Kingston: R.F.D. (per T.W.B.)	5	0
Birmingham: W.B.	1	6	London: Park Sym.	5	0
Cambridge: M.E.J.	7	0	Bellshill: P.S.	5	0
Glasgow: Proceeds Social organised by Glasgow Anarchist Federation	9	12	Hadleigh: T.McC.	1	6
London: P.D.	1	0	Swansea: R.R.	4	14
Chicago: C.G.	1	10	London: T.G.	4	0
Chicago: per B.Y.	1	10	Total for Nov.	£46	2
London: J.H.	3	10	Previously acknowledged	£418	8
Bridgwater: C.B.	2	0	Total to end of NOVEMBER	£464	10

DECEMBER 1943.

£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Mansfield: J.L.	1	0	London: W.E.D.	6	0
Tring: W.A.R.	2	6	Morden: J.W.	6	0
Exeter: P.C.	2	9	Acton: F.C.G.	12	0
Oxford: D.T.	5	0	London: E.C.	10	0
London: Anon.	1	10	London: Anon.	1	6
Kingston: Kingston Group	2	0	E. Sheen: P.C.O.	5	0
London: T. & L.B.	1	0	Sheffield: H.W.	5	0
Chadderton: J.H.H.	4	0	London: H.A.M.	4	0
Norwich: S.V.P.	10	0	Bishops Stortford: M.J.S.	4	0
Bradford: N.H.N.	5	0	Bicester: C.F.	8	0
York: H.A.A.	5	6	Breaston: A.W.	5	0
Fordingbridge: A.J.	5	0	Compbelltown: Mrs. J.	3	0
London: J.H.	5	0	London: V.R.	5	0
Southall: A.H.	4	0	Ilford: S.E.	1	0
W. Acton: E.W.P.	14	0	London: E.G.	10	0
Bicester: C.F.	5	0	Los Angeles: I.W.W. Branch per N.S.	1	1
California: Comrades per L.M., \$75	18	13	Glasgow: per F.L.	7	0
Birmingham: W.B.	4	6	Hornchurch: A.J.	8	0
Llanelly: G.G.	1	8	Mountain Ash: G.R.	2	6
Long Eaton: C.W.R.	2	6	London: Hyde Park	3	2
London: D.C.	5	0	London: A.M.	10	0
W. Ealing: A.D.	1	0	Hounslow: Anon.	3	6
Aberdare: D.G.E.R.	1	0	Llandoverly: D.M.	5	0
Nottingham: K.N.	2	0	London: A.B.F.	1	0
Liverpool: G.I.	4	0	Banbury: F.L.D.	1	6
Newark, N.J.: Comrades per "I'Adunata" \$71.46c.	17	12	Cheltenham: J.O.N.	4	0
Accrington: A.E.	2	2	Dover: A. McK.	12	0
London: A.P.	4	3	London: T.B.	1	0
Sidcup: B.S.P.	1	0	Total for Dec.	£77	4
Brentwood: R.W.G.P.	2	0	Previously acknowledged	£464	10
London: G.W.	10	0	TOTAL for 1943	£541	14
London: V.P.	1	0		7	0
London: V.T. (per V.R.)	1	0			

# Scotswomen on Strike

*By Frank Leech*

ON SATURDAY 11th DECEMBER, 2,000 women workers walked out of a well known West of Scotland factory in support of their demands for an increase of 12/- to 14/- per week on their basic rate.

The initiative and solidarity they have displayed since, gives warmth to the hearts of those who have not forsaken the "class struggle".

The manager, a Mr. Garvie, after leading the shop stewards to believe they would be offered a substantial increase, offered an insulting 1d. on their bonus rate, and when the women workers declared their intention to strike, he doubled his offer. This was not acceptable. The strikers want a satisfactory concrete proposal before they return.

He has since withdrawn his second offer and obeying the rules of the Employers Federation refuses to negotiate until the women return to work. At the moment of writing, December 26th, it appears the strike will become a trial of strength. In the strikers' favour is the fact that their products are in great and urgent demand. Added to this is the solidarity amongst the striking workers which has grown during the two weeks they have been out. At first there was a little uncertainty as to whether they would get that solidarity, but as the days went by their ranks have been welded closer together. Even the "Communists" remained out, abiding by the majority vote, although they put amendments in favour of returning to work to allow negotiations to take place.

In the employers' favour is the weapon of

starvation. The men in this factory have not yet come out, but have instead voted to give 5/- per head to the strikers' funds. One thousand circulars appealing to T.U. branches for assistance have gone out. If the response is as it should be, the strikers are assured of success.

The strikers have their own strike committee, which is working in collaboration with the men shop stewards. Neither of the Shop Steward Convenors is attached to any political party. The Communist Party Convenor was deposed long ago, as reported in October *War Commentary*.

The role of the trade union bureaucrats was the same despicable one they have adopted throughout the period of the War.

First to appear was Oswald of the T. & G.W.U. who urged a return to work to allow negotiations to take place. He got his reply by the vote to remain on strike, the only dissentients being the stooges of the Communist Party.

Next to appear a week later was R. Armstrong, National Organiser of the A.E.U. His address to the strikers "Fellow Workers" was met with jeers from at least a thousand throats. From then on it took all he knew to put a similar case to that of Oswald. "He had taken part in many a fight in the Clyde Workers Committees during the last War, but there were different circumstances to-day." "The Country was at war with a ruthless enemy" . . . "the E.C. of the A.E.U. had decided that strikes were not to be tolerated." "We must abide by the 'York' Memorandum which had been the machinery for settling disputes for the past forty years."

He was met with a barrage of questions on the value of negotiations. He was one of the T.U. Officials who had conducted negotiations during the Powell-Duffryn Strike in Wales. The workers had got £1 per week increase before returning to work, he admitted, but Powell-Duffryn were not members of the Employers Federation. He also admitted that workers got nothing from "Arbitration". "He would guarantee a 'Works Conference' within forty-eight hours if they returned to work."

On the vote being taken again there was an almost unanimous decision to remain on strike.

At the mass meeting on Friday, 24th December, attended by 1,400 strikers, Armstrong again appeared, to address the strikers. He was asked if he had anything new to put before the meeting. He had not. It was decided by vote not to hear him.

(continued on p. 10)

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