

WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY

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TWOPENCE

Second Front or INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTION?

THE MUCH HERALDED Second Front is now taking a concrete shape and the next few months will see an attempt on the part of the Allies to invade the Continent.

The pretence that the Allied forces are going to arrive in Europe as armies of liberation has now almost universally been dropped. The myth of democratic troops helping the various European countries to make their own revolution was only used when it was completely impossible for Britain to invade the continent. With the possibility of victory the future conquerors drop their Jacobin mask and admit freely that the invasion of Europe is purely a military problem, to be solved by force. If Britain and America will win it is not because they are RIGHT or because they represent the forces of freedom and democracy but because they have more planes, tanks, invasion barges, machine guns, bombs and shells than the enemy.

In consequence the preparations for the Second Front have consisted in trying to shatter the armies and factories of the Nazis and not in trying to prepare the people subjected to their rule to revolt. From statements made by Allied statesmen it is obvious that their policy will not change once the fighting starts. One of them declared that the Americans alone were expecting half a million casualties. Rather than appeal to the European masses the Allies are sending millions to death but they will have plenty of corpses behind them when they sit at the peace conference.

It would have been easy for the Allies to show the European people the advantages of freedom. Have they not "liberated" Southern Italy? But the regime they established there does not seem particularly well fitted to encourage the others. AMGOT

bans anti-fascist meetings, but allows Quisling Victor Emmanuel to broadcast to the Italian people calling upon them to rally round him. Mustard-gas Badoglio remains premier and photographs of Prince Umberto of Piedmont visiting Italian troops going into action against the Germans, appear in British papers. *La Critica*, the paper of the Liberal philosopher Croce, which continued under Mussolini's dictatorship has now been suppressed by the Allies. So much for political freedom. But the Italian people have not only to keep their mouths shut, they must also endure starvation and epidemics. The *Manchester Guardian* correspondent warns that the food shortage may become a famine; the bread ration is five ounces a day. An epidemic of typhus has broken out in Naples and the city has been put out of bounds to British troops. It is reported that it is not "practicable" to inoculate the local population though it was apparently "practicable" to inoculate millions of British and American troops!

As in India the army of occupation is partly responsible for the economic disaster. British and American soldiers provided with liras bought at an extremely favourable rate of exchange are able to buy food and clothing at high prices thus causing inflation and creating a black market. German soldiers acted likewise in Paris and then British papers accused them of "looting" the city. The *Manchester Guardian* correspondent comments:

"So long as the troops are permitted to eat in public restaurants and Army clubs and regimental messes compete with the local inhabitants for the restricted supplies so long will prices soar and the plight of civilians grow worse. The troops ought to be forbidden to eat in public places and Army messes, clubs, and hostels, compelled to buy

through controlled channels. It is difficult to understand why this had not been done."

It is also difficult to understand how AMGOT after openly encouraging black marketeering can set up courts and send them to prison!

Bombing, starvation and epidemics, this is what Britain and America are bringing to "liberated" Europe. What is Russia going to bring her, if her advances continue? From Russia's declarations she seems to have only in store: reprisals, monster trials, Quisling Junker generals, plans for importing foreign labour to Russia and for obtaining compensation in raw materials.

The European people find themselves imprisoned in a gigantic vice. One claw, the Russian armies, filled with jingoistic propaganda, with lust for revenge, led by grasping, ruthless leaders determined to make "Germany pay"; the other claw, the British and American armies accompanied by shifty politicians, avid capitalists and idiotic bureaucrats out to conquer markets, control industry and banks.

The European people are expected to give the Allies their help by carrying on sabotage and guerilla warfare. No doubt many of them, though having no illusions about the policy of the Allies, will give that help at the risk of their lives. The beginning of the invasion will be followed by a number of risings and political assassinations. Revolutionaries would take part in a desperate struggle rather than remain inactive. But instead of getting help from the Allies in their struggle against the Nazis they will probably be bombed, their cities destroyed, their forces dispersed, as the Italian workers were bombed in Milan and Turin in the Summer of 1943. And when the fighting is over the British and American governments will collaborate with the local quislings to suppress them.

The policy of the Allies is a logical one. Their chief concern is to avoid revolution, and revolution is consistently fought by them all over the globe. That is why Spain, probably the most revolutionary-conscious country in Europe, which could play an important role in the freeing of the continent, has been kept under Franco's heel with the help of the Allies. Spain, where during 1943, according to the National Director of Public Security, the police handled 18,577 cases of a "politico-social character", this, in spite of the fact that close on a million people are still imprisoned. Spain must be prevented from rising and the B.B.C. carefully bans all broadcasts which may inconvenience Franco even to the slightest extent. As soon as Franco loses his Nazi backing the people would rise. The prisons would be opened, the barracks attacked, the police made powerless and Franco would fall. This is what the Allies are careful to prevent and they are preparing to take the

place previously occupied by Hitler, as supporters of the régime.

The Allies will have planes and arms with which rebellions can be crushed, they will have food and clothing with which to bribe the masses into submission. What chance do revolutionary movements physically weakened by years of underground struggle, atrophied by inactivity, their ranks decimated, stand? If they find in British and American troops ruthless conquerors their future seems hopeless. But if these conquerors become comrades, ready to join their fight for their own liberation against not only fascist but also capitalist oppression, then the International revolution will begin.

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ANARCHIST COMMENTARY

NEWCASTLE 'BUS GIRLS LAST October six 'bus conductresses from Newcastle were directed by the Ministry of Labour to work on the 'buses in Birmingham. They went there, but in a few days returned home, complaining of the bad conditions, dirty rooms and insufficient food which they had experienced in Birmingham.

Early this month the Ministry of Labour again directed them to Birmingham. The girls refused, as did certain others who were so directed. Furthermore, their example was followed by girls in County Durham who have been similarly directed.

The girls are still standing out, the Ministry of Labour are considering prosecution. Meanwhile, the Newcastle Transport Undertaking are continuing to employ the girls on the Newcastle 'buses.

This incident is a typical example of bureaucratic insanity. The girls are all needed on the Newcastle 'buses. A transport official said "Newcastle's need of conductresses is as keen as Birmingham's, yet transport is being neglected". Instead, however, the morons at the Ministry propose to send the trained girls to Birmingham and provide Newcastle 'buses with untrained girls. It does not appear to have occurred to them that Birmingham might just as well have untrained local girls as Newcastle.

The action of the girls themselves is a good example of the independent spirit which the wartime conductresses have brought into the 'bus industry. In many cases they have shown themselves even more militant than the men, and, as they have shown many times in London and elsewhere, have learn quickly to use spontaneous direct action to good effect, without waiting for the slow and fruitless working of trades unions, arbitration tribunals or other class-collaborationist bodies designed to gull the workers.

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CAPITALIST DIRTY LINEN ALTHOUGH united in their actions against the workers, the ruling classes of the world do not always show unity among themselves. There are often fierce rivalries between capitalists in general and the state bureaucracy, between the various national ruling class and, in recent years, between the forces of nationalism and the new tendencies among large capitalists towards widespread international organisation.

This last factor already played a part in the last war, and in the present war it has become even more prominent. The latest manifestation of this internecine struggle is shown in bringing of a case by the United States Attorney General against Imperial Chemical Industries and the great American chemical firm of Dupont de Nemours for maintaining an international cartel agreement to restrain trade in the manufacture of chemical products, firearms and ammunition, in violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. Named as co-conspirators are explosives and chemical firms in Canada, Great Britain, Chile, Argentine, and Brazil. It is further alleged that I.C.I. and Dupont instructed their representatives to co-operate with a German chemical corporation in Bolivia and Chile after the outbreak of the war.

This is no quarrel in which the workers should take a side. The internal strife among the ruling class is of interest to us only insofar as it shows the complete insincerity of their pretensions, and insofar as it reveals the internal stresses which will eventually produce the opportunity for overthrowing the governmental order and precipitating the revolution.

TRAGEDY OF OBSCURANTISM

A YEAR ago the Government issued its Defence Regulation 33B for the control of Venereal Disease. They made it compulsory for anyone whom a doctor or two informers suspect of having venereal infection to present themselves for investigation and (if found to be in fact suffering from venereal disease) to undergo compulsory treatment. We pointed out at the time that this compulsory measure would only succeed in driving venereal disease still further underground, since it was not coupled with a campaign for regarding VD as just the same as other diseases or any endeavour to lift the moral taboos associated with them. No success will attend attempts to make people co-operate through fear.

Since we wrote, the government has carried on the most inept propaganda through posters. Everywhere they have tried to stress the "sin" aspect of the question, and have invariably advised the abstinence from all sexual intercourse as the ideal way of avoiding infection. The following quotation, which appeared in the *News Chronicle* for January 1st under the heading "The Man Who Was Afraid", illustrates the inevitable sequel to the propaganda of fear:

Bertie Alan Hughes, 30-year-old soldier and father of twins, went home on leave with a great fear weighing on his mind.

He thought he had contracted a disease and had given it to his wife.

Hughes killed his wife and then himself.

At the Beckenham inquest yesterday the medical evidence proved that the diseases existed only in Hughes's imagination. The coronor was told that Hughes was a devoted husband.

Verdict: Hughes murdered his wife and committed suicide while of unsound mind.

These unfortunate people are victims of the Government's obscurantism. Their slavish adherence to the teachings of the Church—to views which are held by only a small section of the population, most of whom are hypocrites—can only lead to a multiplication of such tragedies of ignorance.

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JIM CROW JUSTICE

A COLOURED American soldier, Thomas Bell, from Tennessee, has been sentenced to death for assaulting an English girl, and the sentence of hanging has been confirmed by the high authorities. Significantly, the proceedings of this court martial have been kept secret, in order that the British public may not gain too great an insight into the methods of Jim Crow justice or the probable flimsiness of the evidence on which the prosecution rested.

This is the first time for a century that a man has been condemned to death in England for an offence short of murder or treason. Such a return to barbarism has been made possible by the fact that the British government have allowed the American authorities complete extra-territorial rights in their jurisdiction over American troops while on British soil. This means that American soldiers cannot avail themselves even of the small proportion of equity which tradition retains in the English courts of law, but, for whatever offences they commit, are tried by American courts martial, according to American state laws,

(continued on p. 4)

A Red and Black Notebook

BUREAUCRACY AT WORK

IN THE "UNOFFICIAL" strikes which occur nearly every day we always hear the same plea of the trade union leaders and their allies, "The workers should use the well established machinery of negotiation evolved by their unions".

This only means passing it from one conference to another until either the case is dropped or it reaches a central conference. In the case of the engineers this takes place at York and to the members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union "York" is synonymous with futility. Here is the last list of "York" cases, a long list of drawn out failure. We might have taken any other month, each month's list is about the same.

"Coventry Reference—After discussion, the parties were unable to arrive at a mutual recommendation.

Birmingham Reference—As above.

Burnley Reference—As above.

Belfast Reference—As above.

Leicester Reference—As above.

Rochdale Reference—As above.

Manchester Reference—Referred back locally for final settlement.

Liverpool Reference—As above.

Aberdeen Reference—Employers could not agree to the Union's claim. Agreed to refer matter back locally for investigation of individual cases."

From the *A.E.U. Monthly Journal*, December.

(continued from p. 3)

and, where necessary, with American methods of frame-up. Sentences are carried out in prisons governed by the American authorities, and American courts have the power to keep secret their findings, as in the Paignton case, or their proceedings, as in the case of Bell, for fear they might offend the delicate sensibilities of the British public.

Under such conditions, it is not surprising that negro soldiers find the scales of justice tipped against them from the start. Racial discrimination must be maintained with the full power of the law, and it is hardly to be expected that a bench of Tennessee colonels and Kentucky captains, before which the prisoner is defended lukewarmly by a white officer, will consider impartiality an important consideration in reaching their verdict.

The fact that American soldiers are tried under American state laws may seem of comparatively little importance until it is realised that the laws differ materially between the various states, and that in the Southern states, from which the majority of the Negroes come, the law discriminates savagely against the negroes, who can be sentenced to death for assaulting white women. It is under such despicable race law that Bell is about to be hanged. Thus we find in England courts giving sentences which in our own law were abolished a hundred years ago, as atrocious relics of a barbarous past. It is a melancholy reflection that in those days a Negro slave from America who set foot on English soil became automatically a free man, while to-day his modern counterpart is given no refuge from a tyrannical and discriminating code of law.

(Bell has now been reprieved, and his sentence commuted to life imprisonment.)

Up In The Morning Early

Many workers ask me how they may obtain an alarm clock. The Press has made a fuss about the thousands of alarm clocks being imported and, with the price at 16/9d. for what was once obtainable for 2/11d. or 3/6d., one might expect the things to be there for anyone willing to pay the price. But it is no so easy as all that. Bureaucracy is not so simple.

First of all you must regularly rise between the hours of 12 and 5 a.m. But that is only the first of your punishments. Here are the other obstacles.

1. You get a note from your foreman.
2. You give the note to the secretary of your trade union branch; he gives you an application form.
3. You fill in the form and he too signs it.
4. The Secretary sends the form to the General Secretary of the T.U.C.
5. The form is studied at Transport House. If it is passed, Sir Walter Citrine issues a Board of Trade certificate.
6. Permit is returned to the branch secretary.
7. The branch secretary sends you the permit.
8. You find the 16/9d., go out and try to buy an alarm clock.

Simple? In the meanwhile a trader says "I have not yet exhausted my September or November quotas and, when I receive my January supplies, I shall have 10,000 clocks in stock."—*Star*, 8/1/44.

But, remember, you can still be pinched for being late for work, even if you can't get a clock.

An Old Enemy Of The Workers

Factory workers are well acquainted with the activities of the "Economic League", an employing class propaganda body which distributes capitalist leaflets and holds meetings at factory gates. The propaganda is most reactionary and anti-working class. I have just read their latest London leaflet, called "Why Strike?" and the old line is maintained with slight changes.

It uses the words of Bevin, Lawther the President of the Miners' Federation and Harry Pollitt, Secretary of the Communist Party, to condemn strikes. Pollitt's words are quoted from the *Daily Mail* of 20/9/43, Lawther's from the *Daily Herald* of 31/8/43.

Are Lawther and Pollitt proud of their new admirers so many of whom are renegade Communists and Socialists?

The leaflet goes on to condemn those who support strikes; the I.L.P., members of the 4th International and Anarchists. As for the last mentioned—we prefer the condemnation of such persons, rather than their praise.

Canteens Again

The struggle the workers at a Midland aircraft factory to remove the canteen caterers continues. The method used, the boycott, is often effective, but in most cases nothing less than strike action, or its threat is sufficient to compel the removal of the profit grabbing food spoilers. This method is always successful. Why hesitate to use it? You owe it to your innards.

SYNDICALIST.

From the Ranks

GLASSHOUSES WHITEWASHED

THE REPORT WHICH the "Glasshouse" Enquiry Committee recently published as a White Paper, is already almost forgotten. It ought not to be. Workers, soldiers, and especially those who have been in glasshouses ought to read this document in order to understand fully the arrogance and hypocrisy of those people appointed to investigate the system of punishment in Britain's military concentration camps. The public felt that if Britain was out to clean the Nazi system its own nest ought to be above suspicion. The committee has successfully covered the mess up under the snow-white cover of the White Paper saying, "The Committee is satisfied". The Committee "found no evidence of brutality". It speaks to the public like a teacher: Granted your indignation over the Clayton case was justly aroused, but the Clayton case has "stimulated the imagination of some persons of the exhibitionist type and caused others to exaggerate their impressions and in some cases to tell downright lies".

Only 91 men out of 5,200 complained and "the vast majority came from men of the recidivist type, the trouble-makers. Some 'complaints' were not complaints at all."

And the public blushes, gets confused and trusts the respectable gentlemen on the committee, rather than those who have actually experienced what the committee refers to. Said the Committee, "The worst of these Service offenders were men quite determined not to serve in any event, but who would rather spend their lives to the end of the war in detention or prison." These terrible "recidivists" are not, as the word actually means, "habitual criminals"; they are sometimes anarchists: they are "recidivists" only because neither injustice nor ill-treatment nor "firm discipline" can make them "perform the services demanded of them". They prefer to be victims rather than accomplices. We are more inclined to trust their testimony than that of highly-paid functionaries.

The Committee tries to discredit these so-called "recidivists" in order to disgust the public: "unlikely

ever to be of use to his country in any capacity, it could not be allowed to go forth that he could secure exemption merely by refusing to perform the service demanded of him."

According to the Committee they are merely punished to scare others and prevent them from "following suit". Would anyone without sufficient conviction face what they have faced?

Although the Committee claims that everything in the garden is lovely, that apart from mild criticisms of minor points ("A certain amount of shouting, 'chasing' and bad language does go on") there is no serious fault to find with the men in authority, nevertheless it cannot overlook the fact that "In some places members of the staff wearing a prominent red flash with M.P.S.C. on their shoulders, cannot appear in public without the risk of aversion, insult and assault." This is no new fact arising out of an occasional case!

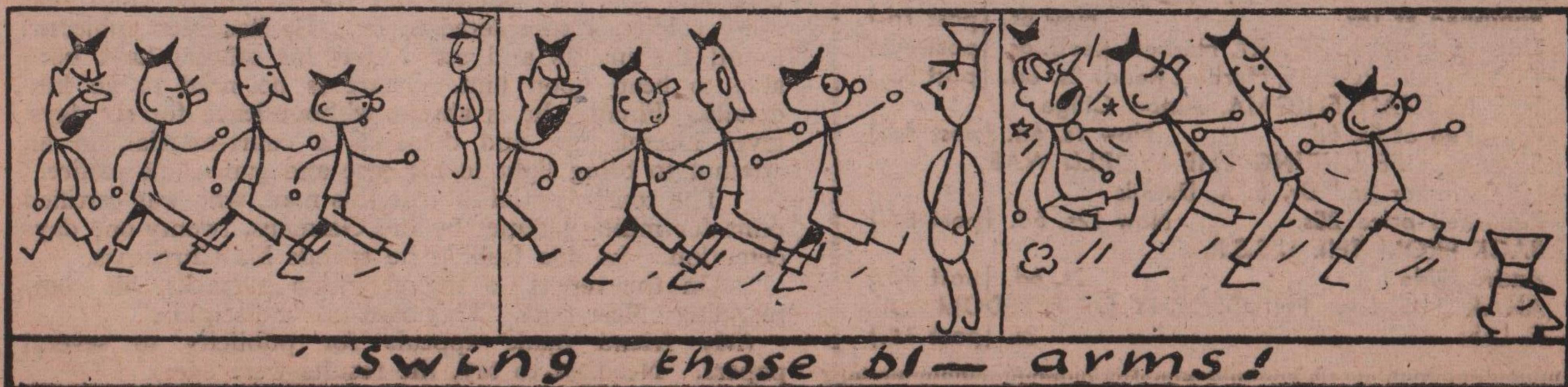
The Committee nearly brings us to tears! Why waste your pity on the "recidivists"? The real sufferers are the gaolers! The people whom the public were feeling sorry for are quite all right; it ought instead to feel sorry for the poor redcaps whose "work is hard and thankless enough in the nature of things" and who by the unreasonable prejudice against them "are deprived of even reasonable recreation and relaxation".

*

C.O. COURT MARTIALLED

Raymond H. Upton, a C.O. who was arbitrarily refused a tribunal when he registered as a C.O. has been court-martialled and condemned to twelve months hard labour. Before being sentenced he was able to send us a copy of the statement he read in court and which we are reproducing below.

I must apologise for the poverty of my defence, but then I am not desirous of a cast iron case. If I *did* have the necessary cash to engage a K.C. for my defending officer and secure an acquittal it would not benefit me, as I would then proceed to a unit and start this affair all



over again. The law was not made for my own benefit. Let me explain.

On May 5th, 1943, I received the last of several medical examinations. Being a conscientious objector to war, and as my later remarks will assure you, an Anarchist, I attempted to make known my conscientious objection on that date, both at the medical examination and in a letter to the Ministry of Labour. This would thus have enabled me to appear before a Tribunal, and saved the military authorities all this inconvenience, had not the Ministry of Labour ignored this and two subsequent notifications.

I did not receive any call up papers, nor any communication whatsoever concerning my application to be registered as a conscientious objector. On October 26th I was arrested at my work, and, like a dangerous criminal, was penned in a military detention cell for five days. Up to the present moment I have had five weeks close arrest, including one week in a detention room and 6 hours in a blacked-out cell. Quite a democratic reception.

I do not intend to become a soldier and fight for this system. I made up my mind about that a long time ago. I object to this rule by force by which workers of all countries have to suffer.

This war is futile, criminal and foolish. The destruction of civilisation, the utter debasement of every decent motive in our lives, the racial hatred, the tearing of son away from mother, the break-up of family life, the slaughter, as cattle, of millions of our fellow-humans, are thoughts at which I recoil with horror and disgust.

I claim that this war should not be supported by any lover of mankind, of liberty, and peace.

That is all I have to say in my defence, except that I now wish to read and hand in a statement for your reference.

IN MITIGATION OF PUNISHMENT.

I would now put forward a general plea in mitigation of punishment.

Since my arrest on October 26, I have received 5 days in a detention cell, 7 days in a detention room, and 6 hours in a blacked out cell.

The latter confinement was thoroughly irregular and surely quite illegal in view of the fact I have as yet had no trial. I refused a military order, a very stupid one and I was not charged but penalised.

This victimization was definitely of a prejudicial character and I view the matter with considerable alarm.

Since my arrest, I calculate I have received at the hands of the military, at least 15 days punishment without trial.

I am taking this opportunity of expressing my disgust at the treatment meted out. This may not be the right place to do this, but I am determined to air my grievances at all times. I do not expect anything to be done about it, and I am only sorry that I am helpless in your hands.

I am here through no choice of my own; my present position is the result of the duress used against me. You may hold tyrannical sway for a time; you may promise a paradise on the earth for those who serve you, while you make war on the workers a delightful occupation; you may also reap the benefit of the workers' bloody sweat, tears and toil; but the dupes won't exist for ever, nor will you quench the undying spirit of Anarchism. Do your darndest.

ANOTHER INJUSTICE

We have received the following letter from a reader:

Here are some facts about a friend I have in the Army. In 1939 he was conscripted. In 1940 he was sent to Libya, when he fought until December 1941. He stopped fighting then because he had shrapnel in leg and arm. But after three months he was back in the muck, till in June 1942 he was wounded again, with shrapnel in his chest and a bullet in the stomach. Taken prisoner at the same time, he remained in an Italian prison camp near Tripoli, living on bread, rice, and water for six months. . . .

In December 1942 he was taken to Italy—then to Germany for a few weeks, and back to Italy where he was prisoner in a hospital for six months.

During this time on the continent he began to discover certain things; that the Germans and Italians were not what they were supposed to be; and nor were the British!

In June 1943 an International Board found him "Unfit for all military duties", and he was repatriated.

Christmas 1943 finds him still in the British Army.

Ever since his return home he has been bullied and chased by the military authorities, oppressed by their red tape and spit and polish, and treated as the child that every soldier is considered to be. He has been subjected to all the insults and scorn that his officers have been able to heap upon him. There is no need to go into details. Finally, he is absent without leave for six days, gives himself up, and demands a court-martial, in an attempt to bring light to his case and gain some justice.

The court-martial awards this man, who was certified unfit for military duties by the Germans, twenty-one days detention. In this fashion he spends his Christmas.

On the report to the detention barracks, his commanding officer puts, "This man needs discipline".

(My friend made appeals for publicity to several papers. Needless to say, the results were bare).

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“Volunteer for the Mines”

By one who did

BOTH THE LOCAL and the National Press have recently carried stories, articles, letters and pictures extolling the glories and advantages of volunteering for the mines. These “tributes”, almost without exception are obviously due to stimulation and plugging from official sources. Of all the mines that have in the press, practically been likened to model dairies, I cannot speak with any personal knowledge. I am, however, intimately connected with one particular colliery company working two pits within a mile of one another in the Bristol Area. The Pensford and Bromley collieries were singled out for a special mention in a local Bristol newspaper with reference to volunteers or optants who have recently commenced work at the pits. Over half a page, the reader was treated to the reporter’s very favourable impressions of coal mining seen at 11 o’clock in the morning, the views of the manager and deputy manager, and a completely misrepresented garbled version of a statement (one sentence) of one of the volunteers, plus a thumb-nail “portrait” and appreciation of the local exchange official in charge of the department responsible for optants and volunteers. As a further proof of the ideal working conditions at this mine, in the same paper, at least half a page again was devoted to pictures of “volunteers at work” and a “shot” of the pit-head baths.

May I, in recounting my experience of volunteering and subsequent impressions, present a somewhat different picture, and leave to you to decide which version contains the greater amount of truth. After waiting 10 weeks from the date of first volunteering (during which time the “volunteer for the mines” campaign was raging at its peak, literally thousands being spent in the effort to induce men to take up this work) I was informed by the Labour Exchange official, that I would have to undergo “a medical”, having previously not been medically examined under the National Service Acts.

Knowing of the fallibility of the “Army Medical” panel of ten doctors, I fully expected a gruelling time at an examination for one of the most strenuous, disagreeable jobs of the moment. But no, with one, literally one swift backward glance over his shoulder, four masterly questions, “What’s your trouble?” “Do you feel you can do the job?” “No heart trouble I suppose?” and a final “How are your eyes?” the doctor immediately completed the superhuman task of filling in my form, at a distance may I add, of five feet and in as many minutes, pronounced me a fit and capable man, said “Goodnight”. I was ushered out of his presence by a third person without this medical giant even turning his head for the second time.

So much for the medical prerequisites for mine volunteering. The following day the local exchange official solemnly pronounced me as having passed A.I., then informed me that I was heir to the extra special advantages of, a bus to carry me to the pit 7 miles away from my home, pit-head baths, and a brand new canteen. On the succeeding Monday the “fly” began to appear in the proverbial ointment. I discovered I must rise at 4.15 a.m. the very latest, breakfast hurriedly and then a 45 minutes walk to the nearest point where I may board the special bus at 5.45 a.m. The bus arrives at the pit at 6.25 a.m. having stopped to pick up my slightly more fortunate work-mates en transit. Here it is true, I found the new canteen serving cups of tea and sandwiches to other yet earlier arrivals, but with only ten minutes in which to change from clean clothes, pass from one locker room into another, dress in working togs and be on the job at 6.35 a.m., my share of the canteen facilities are obviously reduced.

The “bread-time”, our only break in the shift, consists of 20 minutes squatting at the job. Admission to the canteen during this free period is denied to surface men and others above ground until the end of the shift, which for them ends at 3.10 p.m. Then and only then, if they can change from their duty clothes, 12 men in the space that only permits the possibility of 2 men changing at the same time, find a shower bath containing less than three other occupants, for there are only 39 baths to accommodate over 400 men, bath, pass from the baths to the clean clothes locker room and dress under the same conditions that prevail in the other locker room. If all this can be done within the space of 20 minutes, then like the doors of the Ritz the canteen is open to all to eat (sandwiches only), drink (tea), and be merry,—but remember the bus leaves at 3.30 p.m.

Add to this the continual strain on muscles unaccustomed to pushing “skips” weighing about 5 cwts. containing loads up to 10 cwts., the working in showers of ash and dust (I work under the “dirt tipper”), having to cope with rush periods and subjected to bullying overseers, such is the lot of the volunteer for his training period of six weeks. Training proper at this particular pit consists of not more than 5 or 6 one-hourly talks, spread over this period, by the Mine Manager on what to do and not to do when working down the mine. At the end of which the underground work commences for the volunteer. In addition to the above niceties, the wages paid are, I believe, amongst the lowest in the country and the output bonus, as the following figures show, the very lowest. In Somerset where this pit is situated, the output bonus per shift is 3d., South Derbyshire it is 1/3d., Leicestershire 2/-. The bonus does not even cover the deductions from an already low wage. All the men volunteers, optants, and life-long miners alike, look anxiously towards the outcome of the recent demands by the miners all over the country for increases to £6 a week for underground workers and £5 10s. for surface-men. Many realise that such increases, even if they are granted, are long over-due and will only be a temporary respite in the face of the high cost of living. For only under real workers control, with the mining industry relieved of the parasitic, blood-sucking (53 miners killed in the month of October 1943), Royalty and mine owners, shareholders, dividend-drawers, high salaried officials, etc., with the establishment of each according to his needs will the lot of the miners and mine workers be satisfactorily bettered.

KINGSTON
SUNDAY LECTURES
KINGSTON TRADES & LABOUR CLUB
GRANGE ROAD (back of the G.P.O.)
at 7 p.m. sharp.

JANUARY 23rd. Don Coventry
"Christianity and its relation to Mythology"
JANUARY 30th. Bob Duncan

GOD'S AGENT

If undecided what to do, leave it to God. Should you find this difficult, some helpful individual guidance is obtainable by post, from 2s., from Grant, Psychologist, Burley, Hants.

Advt. in "Peace News", 7/1/44.

NOBLESSE OBLIGE

I said: "I wouldn't mind betting that you get up in the morning to make them coffee?"

She was silent for a moment; then she said: "Tell me, how do Italian boys like their coffee?"

I said: "I bet they never asked our boys how they preferred their tea . . ."

She replied: "Ah, but don't you see? We've got a duty to these poor dark-skinned people. We're British—don't you see that? . . . They're sort of like black men . . . We're their superiors, so we don't ill-treat them. We aren't like *them*, thank God!"

The People, 2/1/44.

PATRIOTISM MADE EASY

"My God, our people who strike over in England ought to be shot or sent out here to have a basinful of what the lads have had."

So writes Beryl Formby in a letter which comes to my desk to-day. George and Beryl are deep in the heart of their ENSA tour in North Africa, and from the letter I gather they have been stirred more than somewhat.

Blackpool Evening Gazette, 8/9/43.

George Formby is the highest-paid comedian in the country. He pays so many thousands of pounds super-tax that it is not worth his while to work in the commercial theatre or on the films more than a few weeks a year. (This is neither striking nor absenteeism). Naturally, this means that the amount of money he has left over is considerably excessive. Doubtless if "people who strike over in England" had his terrific income for playing a banjo, they would be less inclined to strike, and would be quite glad to do an E.N.S.A. tour as their contribution to the war.

THOSE LUCKY MINERS

Robert Hudson (76), Swinton, Yorkshire, worked at the local Kilnhurst Colliery for nearly 60 years.

Now he has been killed by a train of waggons in the pit sidings.

News Chronicle, 5/1/44.

POOR RESULTS

For over two years Soviet poets and writers have been searching for a suitable text as the new anthem of the U.S.S.R. Many were submitted to the special Government Commission, but all were found wanting until the two famous poets Sergei Mikhalkov and El-Registan submitted their successful effort.

Daily Worker, 31/12/43.

If the *Daily Worker* tells us so it must be true but we would have never guessed that so much trouble had been taken.

Through

WORKERS' HUMOUR

Although meat packers in San Francisco have not worked for a week, they told the War Labour Board to-day that they are holding a continuous prayer meeting and are not on strike at all, reports British United Press.

All the men are members of the Butcher Workmen's Union. Recently they put forward a demand for a rise in wages.

They did not get it.

Since December 23 none of the men have been to work and a meat shortage is now threatened in the San Francisco area.

When local War Labour Board officials ordered the men to return to work the union's vice-president said: "But we are not striking. We are attending continuous prayer meetings protesting against the refusal of our application for a wages increase."

Evening Standard, 1/1/44.

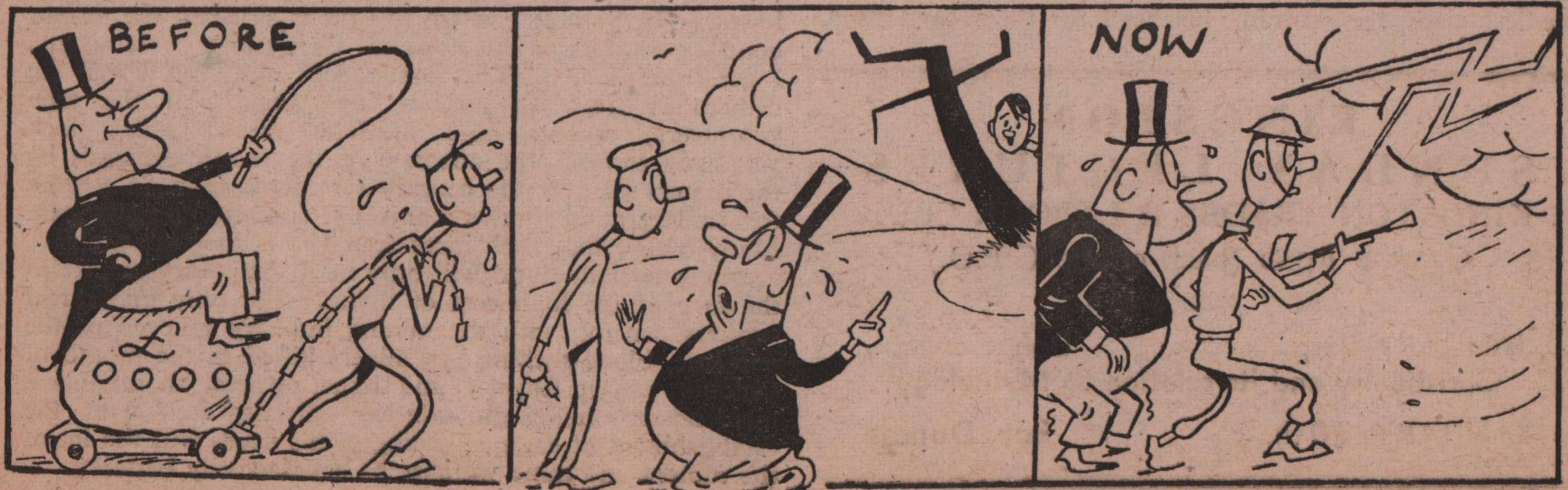
DEATH MONEY

By midnight to-morrow the Federal Government of the United States will have spent more money in 1943 than was spent throughout the first 150 years of the nation's existence.

The 1943 total of approximately 88,000,000,000 dollars (£22,000 millions) covers war costs of more than 82,000,000,000 dollars (£20,500 millions) or roughly 241,000,000 dollars (£60,250,000) every day.

From the establishment of the U.S. Treasury in 1789 to 1939 U.S. Government expenditures totalled little more than 87,000,000,000 dollars.

News Chronicle, 31/12/43.



B.B.C. TACT

The New York newspaper *P.M.* says the B.B.C. has removed from the air its Spanish broadcaster, Antonio Torres, to spare Franco's "tender feelings," cables our New York correspondent.

Torres is regarded as hostile to the Franco Government, and Sir Samuel Hoare, British Ambassador to Spain, is understood to have complained repeatedly to London about him, *P.M.* declares.

Daily Mirror, 17/12/43.

the Press

INDIANS LIVE ON £3 A YEAR

As the new Governor of Bengal, Mr. Richard Casey will be paid more than any other Australian holding an official post in the world to-day. His salary is £9,600 yearly, plus allowances of £2,000 sumptuary, £28,000 for staff and household expenses, and £8,000 miscellaneous expenses.

He qualifies for the Provincial Governor's salute of 17 guns, which compares with 31 for Viceroy Wavell and 21 for the most senior Indian prince.

It is considered certain that he will receive a knighthood or baronetcy because Provincial Governors are usually titled and at present the only "Mr." holding a Governor's post is a *locum tenens* in one province.

Another privilege of Mr. Casey's appointment will be freedom from Customs duty on many items he will use in the maintenance of his establishment, including food, drink, tobacco, furnishings and cars.

Although Mr. Casey's salary and allowances will seem staggering to Australians (the total salary bill of the Australian Cabinet is about £20,000) the high standards and cost of living in Bengal will consume every penny of it.

Evening Standard, 29/12/43.

THIS ENGLAND

Sir Oliver Leese's appointment to command the Eighth Army makes our Mediterranean war an Eton and Harrow affair. Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, Eisenhower's successor at Algiers, was at Eton; so was Leese. General Alexander is an Old Harrovian.

Evening Standard, 6/1/44.

L.P.T.B. ARMS

Passengers arriving at a Central London Tube station yesterday were surprised to find freshly printed notices warning transport employees and passengers that armed guards were being posted at the station with orders to fire at anyone not obeying their instructions.

The notices are posted in obscure positions, and would not normally be noticed by passengers unless they were travelling in one of the first coaches of a train. The notices, which are printed in red, are headed "London Passenger Transport Board. Warning," and read:

'A number of armed guards are being posted on this property. All employees of the Board and others when challenged by these guards must immediately halt and obey the sentry's instructions.

'Men passing to and fro on routine duties must obey the instructions of the sentry, however many times they may be halted by day or by night. Failure to do so may result in tragic accidents, as sentries have orders to fire on all persons who do not obey their instructions.

"By Order of the Board."

A Passenger Transport Board official said: "The notices were first posted some time ago. They became dirty, and new ones have been posted during the past few days. The guards are all senior members of the Board's staff, who have been sworn in as special constables. They have been specially trained in the use of revolvers, and take turns of duty guarding certain vulnerable points."

Daily Telegraph, January.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Mr. Earl Browder, general secretary of the Communist Party in America, has asked for the organisation's name to be changed, and has invited the American public to help them to choose a new title.

A Party committee resolution said: "It is evident that post-war reconstruction will be carried out under a system of free enterprise."

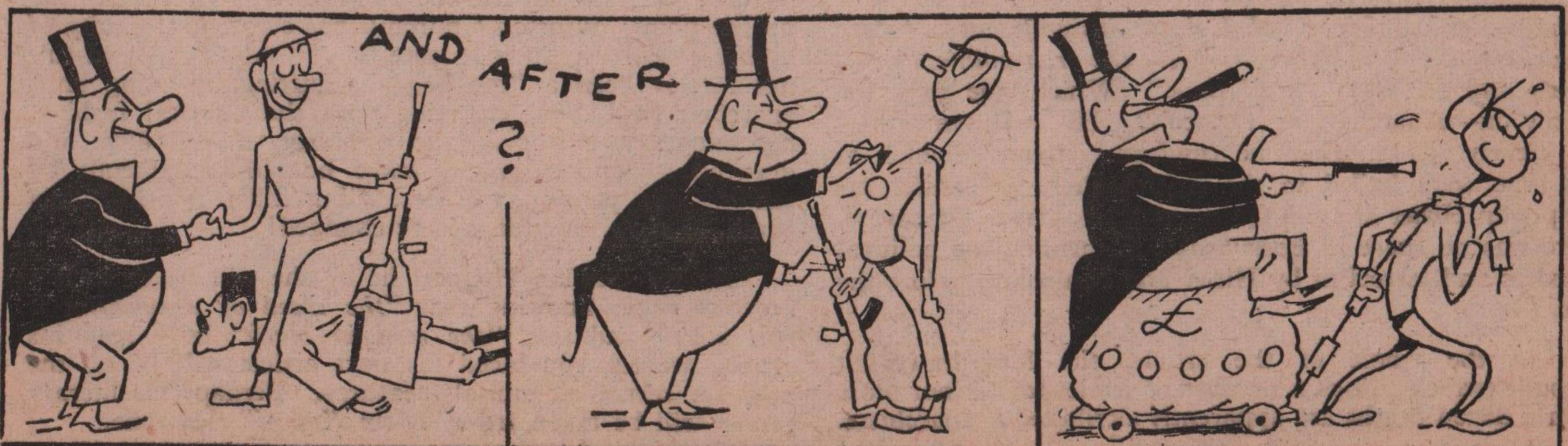
Evening News, 10/1/44.

They smell as bad under any other name.

*

Earl Browder, general Secretary of the United States Communist Party, at Madison-square Garden last night promised the help of Communists in "making capitalism work effectively in the post-war period."

Daily Mail 12/1/44.



EVERYBODY'S, ANYBODY'S & NOBODY'S

By "THE MAN IN GREY WITH PIN STRIPES"

A VERY STUPID article recently appeared in a very stupid paper (*Everybody's*, 11/12/43). Some hack writer called Guillan Hopper wrote a sensation article called "*The Men In Black*". We turned to it thinking it was an article on undertakers' trade unionism, but it turned out to be a bloodcurdling tale of anarchism, "*The very word Anarchism means 'without rule'; it is one of the most brutal political doctrines mankind has ever devised.*" We would gladly send a copy of the Selections from the writings of a certain desperado referred to in this article as "*one Prince Kropotkin*", to the editor of *Everybody's* if we thought he could understand it.

However as reading anything published by anarchists would in any case give him the jitters in case secret formulas filtered through the paper and poisoned his lily-white fingers, we refer him to Vizetelly's stupid book "*The Anarchists: their faith and record*", published some thirty years ago, from which this Guillan Hopper has cribbed every example, mistakes and all, which he gives in this article, and so earned his fee very easily. In this book Vizetelly publishes a singular story of murder and violence from anarchist assassins, but as his idea of such ranges from Jack the Ripper to Martin Luther he may not be taken too seriously!

Avoiding arousing any Lutheran prejudices, the writer in *Everybody's* treads on Mr. de Valera's corns by attributing certain happenings in 1884-5 to "*the anarchist plague spreading to Britain*". Alas, a slight knowledge of history, always an advantage to a historian, would have told him that these were the years of the Fenian conspiracies, and the fact of their "*destroying the seat usually occupied by Mr. Gladstone*", may be attributed to the fact that as he elegantly puts it, "*Ireland, just recovering from the Great Famine, has to undergo further tribulation in the shape of the Young Irelanders.*" Strange how respect for fascist Spain's neutrality makes such people overlook Franco's atrocities, yet no restraint for Ireland's ever holds them back! The Young Irelanders, the Fenians and their successors are Mr. de Valera's forerunners in Irish Home Rule.

We may mention further the trend of the author's political tendencies, which he attempts to cloak by a belated admission that "*In Spain there were many followers of Bakunin's theories as recently as the Civil War. But their activities have paled into insignificance before 'achievements' of the Nazis—surely the arch-political murderers and terrorists of all time.*" Which side were the Nazi's on—Anarchy's or Franco's? His real sympathies are clearly shown when he condemns attempts which at the time were hailed in the British Press as similar attempts on Hitler and his Quislings are to-day. Of course, there was no space in *Everybody's* to mention the political murders and terrorism by Hitler and Mussolini, before the war.

In the whole of the article, the long-drawn-out account (which brings a number of irrelevancies) not more than a dozen deaths are apparently attributed to anarchism.

Of these, those of the Russian Czar, the German Kaiser (this actually is erroneous), Kings Umberto of Italy and Carlos of Portugal, happen to be dictators. There are also mentioned two Presidents, one Carnot of France (which took place soon after the bloody massacre of the Commune in which thousands of workers were shot) and McKinley of America. This is very, very little, since the list goes back to 1848! Several hundreds must have been killed in a raid any night this week alone, by the emissaries of law-and-order! We agree anarchists made attempts against dictators who allow no other means of redress of popular wrongs, but to mention the few solitary attempts and omit the story of thousands and thousands murdered by these despots (after such fictitious stories such as the Spanish "Black Hand", universally admitted to be a pretext of the monarchy to institute a reign of terror but to which our hack gives credence) is obviously to repeat the stories of Goebbels on the attempts in France to-day, when the deaths of a few gauleiters and quislings is "anarchic terrorism" but mass murder and torture merely preserving law-and-order and defending the continent.

In the conclusion of the article in this paper for tired business-men, who must fall fast asleep after reading some of the stuff that passes in it for humour, we are told that "*in 1910 the trail reached London once more, with the famous battle of Sydney Street, described fully in a recent issue of 'Everybody's.'*" Alas, we missed this stirring episode through getting our fish-and-chips on a plate. But evidently the battle of Sidney Street was passed off once more as engineered by anarchists. Strange that though the identity of the criminals concerned was never discovered, their nationality and political affiliation have ever since been known! The hack press of the day put them down as "Russian anarchists", to cover up its conscience at having previously approved of the attempt of anarchism *versus* the Czar, since the Czar had switched from menacing India to menacing Germany. Mr. Winston Churchill, then Home Secretary, himself called in the troops to dislodge these gangsters, but a long-drawn-out siege hardly enhanced his military prestige, since finally they burnt themselves to death. Only one man ever dared to suggest he knew the identity of the mysterious "Peter the Painter" and he happened to be no less than the inspector in charge of the case. In a Jubilee book of reminiscences, a quarter-of-a-century later, his statement was that this Russian escaped home, and later became famous (notorious, he put it; this was 1935) under the name of Joseph Stalin! This is quite a new line of conjecture! Let us end this Sidney Street story by clearing up the point: Winston Churchill has every opportunity of asking Joseph Stalin if it were true! And if instead this has merely been a "red bogey", starting by being anti-anarchist, and then, changing with the political fashion, becoming anti-bolshevik, the inspector, if still alive and drawing a pension, might make honourable amends by sending his pension to Mrs. Churchill's Aid-to-Russia Fund, to show how times have changed!

As for Guillan Hopper, he or she will be in such a nervous sweat knowing that "*the creed of Anarchism is still alive*" and that "*the men in black*" have read his article, we are convinced his next article will be on the need for severe dictatorial measures. Perhaps his literary genius will be taken from "*Mein Kampf*" this time.

Principles of Syndicalism VIII

TOM BROWN

DEFENDING the REVOLUTION

THE SYNDICALIST OBJECTIVES we have outlined in previous articles will not, of course, be carried out without arousing the fiercest opposition and most bitter hatred of the employing class. The expropriation of that class, the control of industry by the workers, the abolition of money and the wage system and the establishment of the principle of each according to his need can only be when we are prepared for the most revolutionary of struggles.

Our first weapon is the highest technical development of the principle of non-co-operation; cutting of economic supplies and services from the employing class and switching them to the workers; generally, refusing to do any work for or co-operate in any way in the observation of the laws and orders of the employers.

We do not need to be warned that the enemy will not, if our forces be weak enough, willingly accept this new condition. We know that he will if possible use against us the armed forces, the police and Fascist bands. But, acute social problems, particularly in the twentieth century, sweep across the whole population including the armed forces. The Revolution will have as many adherents within the armed forces as it will have in the civil population.

Nevertheless the Revolution must be defended, by armed force if necessary, against those remnants of the armed forces the enemy may rally and against the Fascist militia, "Black and Tans" or whatever they may call the new counter-revolutionist army they may raise.

To that threat the Syndicalist reply is the creation of the Workers' Militia. The chief base of the new workers' army will be the place of work, factory, garage, mill, pit or dock. There men know one another, know the man who is loyal to his class and he who might be a counter-revolutionist. Already a high degree of self and group discipline and of working and struggling together have been practised. In the Spanish Civil War of 1936 the Workers' Militia was largely based on the squad of ten men known to one another and choosing their own squad leader or delegate. The squads of ten were united into *centurias* of one hundred men and seven or eight *centurias* formed into a column, all on the federal principle.

The choice of the factory, etc., as the chief base of the Militia has an extra advantage in the present day warfare of highly mechanised forces. Thus, shipyard, dock and seamen's syndicates form naval units; bus and lorry drivers—transport and mechanised units; miners, bridge builders and construction workers—engineer battalions and so on. Not only is the skill and experience already assembled, but, also, the necessary machines are at hand to these units. Further, an industrial population can be trained much quicker than an agrarian populace in the use of weapons, for a gun is just another machine.

As to the arming of the workers, the approach of revolutionary struggles has always forced the workers to acquire small arms in their own defence, for the impending struggle has usually been anticipated by Fascist squads, "Black Hundreds", "Black and Tans" or other named terrorist bands of the ruling class.

But such arms are few in the aggregate. The chief sources of supply of modern revolutionary forces are the class-conscious units of the army, and the factories. In modern revolutions the munition factories take the place of the armouries and gunsmiths' shops of the 18th and

19th centuries. Not only the munition works, but every engineering factory, workshop or chemical works, is turned to the manufacture or improvisation of weapons.

Highly industrialised countries such as France, Belgium, U.S.A., Germany and others will not suffer the tragic lack of the means of forging arms suffered by agrarian, revolutionary Spain in 1936.

Armchair Socialist theoreticians and Anti-fascists will sneer at the Workers' Militia and tell us that the barricades of 1848 are outdated, but revolutions have a way of taking these fine weather men unawares. Some years ago the celebrated Anti-fascist and Liberal Professor Salvemini wrote a learned article against the principle of workers' defence forces. He pointed out that the German Social-Democratic *Reichsbanner*, the German Communist *Rotfront*, and similar military organisations of the Liberal and Catholic parties in Germany had surrendered or dissolved without firing a shot when the Nazis took power in 1933. Therefore, reasoned the learned professor, workers' defence corps are useless. The advice of such gentle Anti-fascists is to call a policeman.

What the professor concealed was that the Social Democratic *Reichsbanner* and the Communist League of Red Front Fighters did not fight because they were built upon authoritarian principles of orders from above and rigid obedience to leaders. The Socialist leaders were too compromised by political practice to give orders to resist the Nazis. The German Communist leaders were under orders from Moscow, and Stalin wished to, and did, make a treaty with the new Nazi Germany. It was not the principle of workers' defence which failed, but the contrary principle of blind obedience to "leaders" and the subjection of judgment and self respect to that "leadership".

Within a few years of Salvemini's article came the Spanish Fascist uprising of July, 1936. The spontaneous uprising of the workers in defence against Fascism and the rapid organisation of workers' militia, not authoritarian as the German, but federal and Syndicalist, blew to smithereens the learned discourse of the professor. Life is stronger than theory.

The revolutionary workers everywhere in Spain were rapidly defeating the Fascists when foreign intervention, allowed by the Labour movement of the world, came to the assistance of Franco. The defeat of the Revolution after three years of war was due to that, to the Franco-British policy of "non-intervention" which allowed arms to Franco, but prevented arms and war supplies reaching the republicans. The efficacy of workers' militia as a defence against Fascist terrorism remains proved by the events of 1936.

We shall anticipate the objections of legalistic Socialists and Liberals who will be ready with tales of "the streets running with blood and corpses mountain high" by recalling that most revolutions have overthrown the old regime with the loss of a handful of men. The French Revolution of 1789, the overthrow of Tsarism and the October Revolution in 1917, the Austrian and German Revolutions of 1918, were accomplished with an almost unbelievably small roll of casualties.

Of course, if the revolutionaries fight as do the professional armies of states, with a solid front and two armies facing one another with tanks, aircraft and big guns the revolution would be quickly crushed. But, revolutions cannot be fought like imperialist wars, the

social factors are greater than the military. Strategy, tactics and weapons must be designed to wage a *social* war without fronts.

An excellent case of this is found in the history of the Irish struggle against the British Government during 1919-20 and 21. The Imperialist forces were increased to about 100,000 men, army, Royal Irish Constabulary, Auxiliaries and "Black and Tans", with resort to any weapon they needed and the experience of the World War behind them. The Irish Republican Army of about 10,000 armed with automatic pistols, revolvers, home made bombs and a few rifles and machine guns defeated them by adopting their strategy and tactics to the social soil.

Let no one mistake the Workers' Militia for just another army. The Spanish Militia of 1936-37 had no officer caste or badge of rank, no privilege, or special ration, no saluting. The ranks were filled, not by conscription, but by the revolutionary knowledge and enthusiasm of the workers. Love of the Revolution took the place of professional military discipline founded on the death penalty. The daily pay was equal to all whether the least experienced militiaman or Durruti.

As well as the Workers' Militia, other bodies of armed men were organised by the Spanish Syndicalists—Frontier Control Committees to prevent the flight of Fascists—and Republican ministers and Workers' Patrols to prevent disorder or counter-revolutionist outbursts in the towns and villages.

It is obviously necessary for the Revolution to disband the instruments of the old regime, the judges, magistrates and police. But as well as counter-revolutionist attempts, criminal and hooligan elements useless to anyone may remain as the legacy of capitalism. Indeed the counter-revolutionists will encourage these by bribes, arms and alcohol. The Workers' Patrols organised by the ward and town federations of the Syndicates will easily handle such who would overthrow or discredit the Revolution.

It will be seen that these armed bodies of workers have no resemblance to the forces of the State—capitalist or other. The street patrols will be carried out in the worker's spare time, like firewatching—only of his own free will. The factories and railways will be guarded by armed workers while doing their everyday work. They will continue to carry arms until the need has passed. Then, with no danger present, men will cease to carry arms as they ceased to carry gas masks when they found no danger of gas attack.

But, if, instead of the *general* force of the workers, the Revolution gives birth to the *special* force of a new army, police and judiciary, a new state and a new master class will arise. If a new police force were created to arrest counter-revolutionists the policemen would naturally try to preserve their new jobs even when the old regime had been crushed. Let us recall the story of Napoleon's wolves. It is said that while Napoleon was emperor the number of wolves increased in France, so Napoleon offered a large reward for each wolf's head brought to the local authority. Wolf hunting became a lucrative profession until the wolves began to disappear. Fortunately for the hunters the decline in the wolf population was mysteriously checked and their numbers even began to increase. Upon investigation the authorities discovered that, rather than lose their jobs, the hunters were breeding wolves and even shepherds had turned from their flocks for the more remunerative work of wolf breeding and hunting.

For the defence of the Revolution there must be no new regular army, or police force, or officer caste, but the arming of the workers. If the workers allow themselves to be disarmed, even in the name of the Revolution, then at that moment the counter-revolution has succeeded.

(Next issue: concluding article, *The First Fruits of the Revolution*).

ANOTHER GLASGOW COMRADE GAOLED

Our young comrade Allan Burnett, who is just eighteen years of age, appeared in Glasgow Sheriff court, in answer to a charge of not submitting himself to medical examination. On being asked if he had anything to say before sentence was passed, Burnett said, "By all means," and proceeded as follows:

"To-day I stand here as an Anarchist in the conscious realisation of the worth of my individuality, I stand as one devoid of care or fear of gods, kings or masters—"

Sheriff: "What, no fear of God?"

Burnett: "None whatever. I refuse to be pitchforked or led into slaughter, like so much human manure, or to be duped into the lunatic butchery of my comrades and fellow-workers of other geographical spheres who are likewise enslaved in a system of organised misery imposed upon them by their respective ruling classes. My enemy is therefore government of—"

Sheriff: "I suppose God will also be your enemy?"

Burnett: "I will mention my enemy. My enemy is government of any shape or form since it functions solely as an instrument of the ruling-classes' oppression. This then is my attitude, and my contribution to workers' international solidarity. In conclusion, in all sobriety I say only this—to hell with governments."

With his going we shall miss for the time being an active comrade, and with Frank Leech going inside soon too, and Eddie Shaw's case coming up this month, the movement will be needing all the support it can get in Glasgow. Who will come forward to take their places?

★

EDDIE SHAW IN COURT

In answer to a summons for failing to appear for M.A. Edward Shaw appeared in Glasgow Sheriff Court on 21st December. In his defence he put forward objections to the relevancy and competency of the complaint, and asked that a day be fixed for arguing the points in question. The prosecutor took exception to this, and suggested that the accused was being prompted by someone, and that as he had been before the court, and convicted on two previous occasions, that he was just attempting to delay proceedings. Eddie Shaw in reply said that he was a self-educated working-man, and that he was perfectly capable of standing on his own feet, and that the hidden hand which the prosecutor implied was behind him, was purely imagination, and appealed to the sheriff to allow him his legal right to argue them at a later date, as it was clearly stated on the summons that this was a pleading diet. The sheriff pressed Eddie for a fuller explanation, and he replied that it would come out in argument. As he hadn't a copy of the Acts in question he was at a disadvantage. It definitely raised the question of civil liberty, and that the prosecution was unique and unprecedented in that he had already been subjected to a court order, and that no one had yet been prosecuted twice under section 4 (1) of the act in question. The Sheriff held that he didn't see that there was a point of competency, and relevancy, and he overruled them without being argued. Eddie Shaw asked that they be noted, which the Sheriff agreed. Then he pleaded not guilty. The trial was then fixed to take place on 17th January before Sheriff Guild. It raises a point of importance to all C.O.s.

The Child and the State

By George Woodcock

IN A RECENT issue of *War Commentary* I discussed the tendencies in educational policy, as witnessed by the statements of typical members or representative bodies of the ruling class. This survey demonstrated the conscious effort that was being made to develop the mental growth of the children of the country in the interests of the State. It would not be complete and would not show in its full significance the parallel between English and German tendencies, if a reference were not made to the Youth Service, which has been launched with such zest by the Government in an attempt to drive every boy and girl into a uniform and a function in which he will serve the state in some useful or potentially useful way.

It is, of course, possible to over-emphasise the extent to which the British rulers have imitated the Nazis in building a youth movement. In fact, however, the Nazis merely elaborated an idea which had first arisen in the fertile minds of the British ruling class.

Until the Hitler Youth, the most successful youth organisation in the world was the Boy Scout movement, organised by a British General who had played an active part in the colonial wars in the latter part of the nineteenth century and had attained a certain sensational fame for defending Mafeking during the Boer war. He was a man of great insight into the minds of the young, and set out by making an appeal to the desire for self reliance and for the romanticised outdoor life which are to be found among most boys. His movement endeavoured to provide an environment in which the boy could find a world that seemed more free and more attractive than the restricting circles of family and school. Baden Powell and his upper class supporters realised that in these formative years it was necessary to turn the minds of children away from the injustices of society by providing them with absorbing interests and so sugaring the pill of patriotism which the movement sought to administer.

Political intentions were kept well behind the scenes. Nominally the movement was non-political and non-militarist. In fact, it was political both in the nature of its hierarchial internal structure and in its reactions to external society. Its members were pledged to support 'King and Country', and manifestations of radical opinions among its members were regarded with suspicion. It is true that the boys were not taught military tactics, but the movement reflected military influences in many ways, particularly in its ceremonial of uniforms, salutes, badges, flags, church parades, etc., and the general trend of its teachings was antagonistic to the rise of an anti-war consciousness among its members.

The British ruling class recognised Baden Powell's value by giving him a peerage. The movement he founded proved more useful to them at that time than any youth movement overtly connected with a political party would have done.

Nevertheless, when the Fascists and Nazis introduced their Youth movements, which were at least frank in their intention to prepare the youth of their respective countries for military service, the British 'democrats' were loud in their condemnation of the Fascist corruption of child minds.

Times change, however, and politicians change their guises with the times. As the war progresses, the methods of 'democracy' become less and less different from those of fascism. The teaching of hatred and warlike glory ceases to be regarded as a corruption of the child mind, and it is not surprising that the British Government should now decide to imitate Hitler by establishing a Youth

Service system into which it desires to force every boy and girl who has been released from the influence of the State educational system.

Much has been said in favour of the Youth Service on the grounds that it will prevent the demoralisation of young people and give them objectives which will enable them to live happier and fuller lives. The prime object of the scheme is, however, the subordination of all young people to the interests of the State. This is shown clearly in the outspoken words of the Conservative Second Interim Report on Education, September, 1942.

'We advocate the setting up of a Federation of all the existing youth organisations, to be called the Federation of Youth, of which all boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 18 will be members

'Statutory powers should be taken to control a specified part of the unemployed time of all youths of both sexes between the school leaving age and 18

' activities should be designed to promote the interests of the State and the development and future career of the individual as regards body, mind and spirit

'Youth Committees should have power to require adolescents to show that they are undertaking some form of approved service, and to ensure that (unless their permitted hours of work and travelling are excessive or unless their occupation is in itself a form of strenuous national service) they are enrolled in one or other of the approved organisations They should also have power to require attendance at a minimum of meetings of these organisations.

'During the process of building up the Federation of Youth special consideration for its staffing needs (by releasing or seconding a sufficient number of suitable instructors or leaders) should be enjoined on the three fighting Services, even in war-time, since they are deeply concerned in its success.' (My italics—G.W.)

These passages show clearly that the Conservatives, the most frank and energetic section of the ruling class, in reality desire from the Youth Service the same functions as those of the Hitler Youth, i.e. to produce willing slaves and plentiful cannon fodder. It is interesting that the other energetic ruling class party, the Communist Party, should, in its report on *Britain's Schools*, have voiced a similar desire. 'Youth Organisations must be strengthened, and particular attention must be paid during the war period to the pre-Service Training Corps.'

The political factions, in spite of their superficial differences, show themselves in this, as in all similar questions, unanimous in their desire to subordinate the individual to the state and to crush out all real desire for Freedom before it has had time to grow.

GLASGOW MEETINGS

ANARCHIST FEDERATION HALL

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

Sunday, 7 p.m.

JANUARY 16th. James Dick

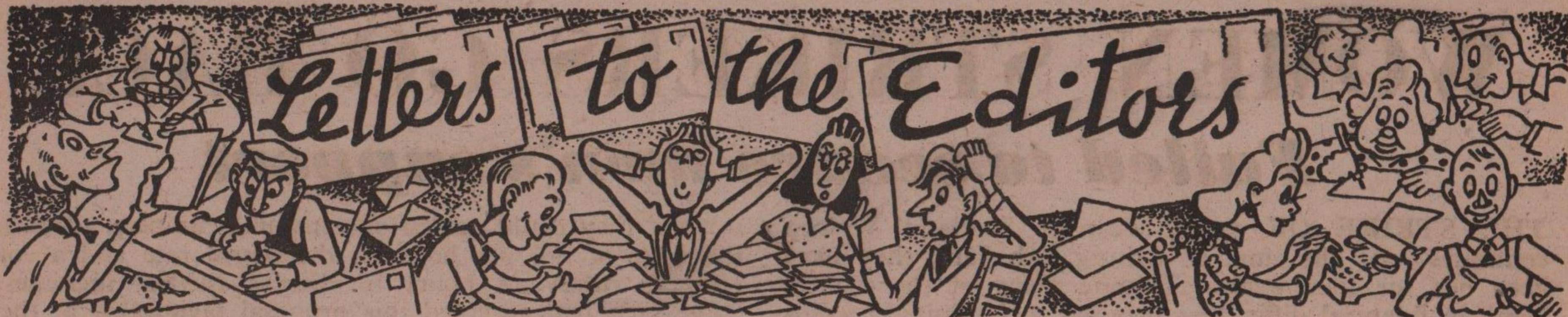
"Mutual Aid and Mutual Extermination"

JANUARY 23rd. James Joss

"A.B.C. of Anarchism"

JANUARY 30th. Denis McGlynn

"Beggars on Horseback"



DURATION OF EMERGENCY

When I was called up for military service, I understood I was being conscripted for the duration of the war. Recently the entry "Duration of War" in my army paybook was altered to "Duration of Emergency". When I asked why it had been altered, I was informed that the authorities have felt that the phrase "Duration of War" did not cover the position of soldiers who will be required to fight in the Far East when Germany is defeated, or others who may be required for armies of occupation in some countries of Europe. It was therefore necessary to alter it to "Duration of Emergency".

The state persuades us to accept conscription by telling us we are fighting for freedom, and then after securing us firmly in bondage, they force their will upon us. So that we who thought we had joined the forces to defend our homes, find ourselves forced into the position of either being used to suppress the workers in a country in Europe for the monarchy or a ruling clique or having to fight thousands of miles away to regain colonies for imperialistic reasons.

Yorks.

Tpr. W. L.

APPRECIATION AND CRITICISM

War Commentary came to my notice in the early days of this stupid blundering and plundering they call war—the title attracted and I asked you to put me on your postal subscribers list—with excellent regularity I have received your commentaries—read them with increasing interest and passed them on to folks who, I'm sure, have also enjoyed them and passed them on in due course.

At present we suffer from the general complaint of being pinned down by lots of really unnecessary work—or watching—which seems to be the deliberate aim of the blunderers and plunderers to prevent people thinking along dangerous critical lines.

There's only one thing that seems to stick out in the way of general comment on the contents of your "Commentary"—the great British Public have a rather soft spot for Joe Stalin and Soviet Union in general—however true the adverse criticism may be, Russia is now a really useful ally—taking the main weight of the Nazi military strength—and that exonerates from all past defects—quiet nights for over two years covers a multitude of sins.

Liverpool.

H.H.J.

THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT

The following may be of interest to the readers of *War Commentary*. The play *There shall be no night* by Robert Sherwood and starring Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontane which is now presented in the West End is a play dealing with Italian aggression in Greece but upon its first staging in March 1940 it dealt with Russian aggression in Finland!

The play was completed in its Finnish version in February 1940 and royalties went to the American Red Cross and the Finnish relief fund. In the first version the Doctor's name was Valhonen.

In the present version there are one or two hang-overs which betray the pro-Russian present to the anti-Russian past. The folk-song which is played on the piano is a Norwegian song which had a long way to travel to Greece. In two instances snow and ice are mentioned which I think are rare in the mountains of Greece but which were a feature of the Finnish campaign.

The various combatants of mixed nationalities are more easily explicable by the fact of their being volunteers than by their own explanations. The Doctor asks one of the soldiers, a Cockney, how he came to be there, if he was of the B.E.F., the question has no relevance, for the choice was not his own. A Pole, an American, a pacifist-poet, a Canadian ex-International Brigadier are all inexplicable in terms of the British forces sent to Greece.

Mr. Sherwood has not made a very expert job of changing his play to suit foreign policies, and in any case, decadent and sterile as the modern theatre has become it is surely a descent into the depths of prostitution for an artist (as Mr. Sherwood sometimes shows promises of being) to change detail and locale of a story in order not to give offence to a totalitarian ally.

Rochdale, Lancs.

J.R.

WOBBLE WRITES

The workers of the U.S.A. enjoy reading *War Commentary* very much. Here in America the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. labour fakirs have sold out the workers completely to the capitalist class assisted by the Red Politicians.

Fascism is spreading from coast to coast and the American workers are

little better than Simon Legree's Black slaves.—The American dollar is hardly worth 50c. on the hundred now.

The I.W.W. is carrying *War Commentary* in its various branches throughout the U.S.A.

Yours for the International Solidarity of Labour and the Free Society.
Seattle, Wash. G.B.A.

THE KHARKOV TRIAL

Dear Comrades,

In your excellent editorial on the Kharkov trial you are inaccurate on two points of fact, and I hope you will accept my correction in a friendly spirit, as it is so intended. (Not, that is to say, in any spirit of carping criticism).

You do not actually state that public executions have ceased in France, but the implication is there—or so it seems to me. The hangman may be 'unpopular' in France to-day, but the fact remains that it is only a few years ago—the end of the twenties, or the early thirties—that a murderer was publicly executed outside Paris, and for this occasion the whole of Paris was *en fête* the preceding night, the cafés packed, and no one going to bed, but stopping up for the execution scheduled for 7 the following morning. The approach to the place of execution was turned into one enormous car park, and people were standing on the roofs of cars as at race-meetings. Owing to some hitch the execution was late and the crowd grew restive and demonstrated with boos and cat-calls. In a personal record which was sent to me on all this, from a friend who was living in Paris at the time, the writer refers to it as 'the biggest and nastiest party' of all that party-mad *fin de siècle* period. He also refers to the 'start of dismay' which the condemned man gave when he saw the huge crowd that awaited him. . . The Kharkov horror is a mere repetition of this ghoulis scene.

The second point is that you say that the last war favourite atrocity story of Germans playing football with babies is lacking in current atrocity stories; but as a matter of fact this atrocity story was revived only last year, as many of your readers no doubt remember. They were Russian babies. . . Comparison with the alleged atrocities of the baby-murdering Bolsheviks of the October Revolution is interesting in this connection.

Fraternally,
ETHEL MANNIN.

WOMEN STRIKERS GO BACK

Failed to secure men's support

THE STRIKE OF 2,000 West of Scotland Women continues. At the time of writing, 9th Jan., they have been out for four weeks. Despite many of the strikers being in financial difficulties they are maintaining a solidarity which has been unsurpassed during this War. They are showing a determination to carry on until their demands for 12/- to 14/- per week on their basic rate is ceded.

I regret I cannot report the same solidarity from the men in this factory. The Women's Strike Committee have requested the men to withdraw their labour and support them in their claim. But the Comrats and the Pe-He wage-slaves have done their utmost to prevent this.

At the first mass meeting of the men on this issue the Comrats moved an amendment against the recommendation to take a ballot for strike action. But now, when nearly 900 men are also on strike they are demanding a ballot.

At the second mass meeting of the men on Wed., 5th January, during the meal-hour, after considerable discussion it was decided:— that owing to many men not being able to get to the meeting that all tools be dropped at 4 p.m. and a meeting be held outside the factory. In the interval, someone, not Shop-Steward convenors, approached the management for the use of the canteen for the meeting 'as some of the men might get a chill'. You can imagine the exclamations of the girls on strike when they heard this. They have held nearly all their meetings outside.

However, to get back to the meeting. The Canteen was packed, several hundreds of workers were unable to get in and had to be content with the speeches from the platform only relayed through loud-speakers to the passage outside. Their votes were not included when it came to the vote.

C. Menzies, A.E.U. Convenor, addressed the meeting first. "The Shop-Stewards Officials had approached seven Glasgow M.P.s to interfere in the dispute and had promised the M.P.s that they would recommend a return to

work if they could get an agreement in writing, renewing the offer of 2d. per hour on the bonus rate and a conference within 48 hours to discuss further increases." "The girls had accepted this proposal favourably at their morning meeting".

"Only a solid shop would bring the issue to a satisfactory conclusion." "The Women want the Men to line up with them."

Allan, District Organiser of the A.E.U. next addressed the meeting.

"He would like to see a renewal of the firm's offer" "but he couldn't understand the Strike Committee wanting the offer in writing."

"B. & S. were carrying out their agreements with the Trade Unions in regard to procedure, but the Strikers were not." "If their members were not prepared to keep to their side of the agreements, there was a danger of the Trade Unions being put out of the factory."

"He did not see why they should approach M.P.s. to interfere, he was as good a wire-puller as any M.P." "Wars were won by industry as well as by the men at the Front." "This was not the time to strike." "He would not like to have it said that any of our boys at the Front would not return as a result of your action in going on strike." There was a mass protest at this false assumption. He finished by stating: "There would be no negotiations until the Strikers returned to work."

Menzies put the resolution for Strike action.

McCulloch, Comrat, moved an Amendment against Strike action. The voting of those inside the canteen was approximately 50/50. Alland then stated that as theirs was not a 2/3 majority the result was 'no decision'.

Next day, Thursday 6th January, a meal-hour meeting of about 1,000 men decided that those who had voted for strike action would walk out at 3 p.m. At the moment 900 men are out in addition to the 2,000 women. There are still 1,800 men inside the factory.

I hear that disciplinary action is being taken by the A.E.U. Executive against those Shop-Stewards who are supporting the strike.

Appeals are being made to other factories for support by action. In the words of one Shop-Steward "We must empty the River".

There has been an encouraging response to financial appeals from some branches and districts. But not sufficient to guarantee success for the Strikers.

From Barrow has come £100, Albion £48, Parkhead £38, R.O.F. £20, W.O.F. £25, several £10. There is talk of Comrats at work endeavouring to sabotage any assistance to the women.

FRANK LEECH.

January 11th. Comrade Frank Leech writes: "The Strike Committee, following the failure of two thirds of the men to respond to the women's appeal for solidarity, recommended that the strikers return to work pending negotiations. At a mass meeting the voting by a show of hands for and against the recommendation was approximately fifty-fifty, but the meeting accepted the Committee's recommendation to go back to work."

(Frank Leech will give a summary of the strike in the next issue of War Commentary).

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