

# WAR *For Anarchism*

# COMMENTARY

Vol. 5 No. 11.

APRIL, 1944

TWOPENCE

## THE SOLDIER'S PAY

LONDON HAS JUST witnessed a "Salute the Soldier" week. Military bands have played; everyone from Home Guard to Wolf Cub with a uniform has donned it and bashed off thousands of coupons-worth of shoe-leather on the London paving stones. Flags have waved and dust has risen. Politicians, mayors and pompous nonentities have made copy-book speeches and on alternate days have told us the war would last for years, or, with sly winks and solemn nods, have hinted its end in a couple of

months. A target of not less than £165,000,000 for London alone is spoken of.

But in all this noisy, shabby circus we seek in vain for one word or thought of the Soldier we are called to salute.

Certainly, if heroism and fortitude are qualities to be admired apart from the cause in which they are aroused, we would not deny the soldier's salute. But all this speechmaking and hullabaloo has nothing to do with the soldier. The persons who play their



AFTER ALL, BOYS, I MUST GET MY PAY PACKET FIRST — AND ADVERTISEMENTS HAVE TO BE PAID FOR, TOO.



cheap commercial traveller tricks in the sale of war loan certificates are not interested in the soldier. In so far as the soldier's name is associated with the campaign the latter verges on "obtaining money by false pretences".

For, even while the "Salute the Soldier" week was being organised, Parliament and the Government led by Churchill were refusing even a slight increase in the soldier's pay.

We should use every displayed gun, poster and flag as a reminder of the most underpaid workers of the war, miners, railmen or soldiers. Discontent is growing in the Army; the soldier is not satisfied with salutes. Small as is the soldier's pay when considered in the cold blood of mathematics, it is even smaller when set against the human needs of a soldier in barracks or camp.

Members of the Churchill cabinet have evaluated the soldier's pay, including the worth of his board and lodging in their little sums of addition. What they so carefully concealed was the fact that the soldier spends the greatest part of his "pocket money" on food. Army food is so dull and monotonous and often so badly served that it is no wonder that N.A.A.F.I. makes an annual profit of over £8,000,000. Little wonder, too, that in the neighbourhood of military concentrations fish and chip shops and the little café with "beans and chips" abound.

Add to his food problem the question of "evenings out" and the soldier must become a trained accountant to make ends meet. If anything he needs more, not less, than his civilian brother to brighten his evenings. Most often without any comfortable place to relax, without armchair or radio, his only solace is the pub or cinema—if he has the money.

But of even greater concern to the soldier with wife and children dependant upon him is the bitter issue of dependants' allowances. His brief leaves, the unguarded sentences of letters from home reveal the desperate struggle to make ends meet.

The increasingly acute problems of soldiers and their dependants are answered by Churchill with a refusal of relief and the promise of a long war—or wars. The bog of inflation is raised.

What is inflation? When the issue of money is increased and the manufacture of commodities is kept stationary or decreased then a greater amount of money is set against a lesser amount of goods, therefore, money lessens in value—inflation begins. Inflation is here. All there is to discuss is degrees of inflation. Every day and in almost every act the Government increases inflation, the economists mystical word for rising prices. The Government urges, even forces, men to work overtime. It forces housewives into factories. It increases the aggregate wage bill. At the same time, by quotas, rationing and the

depopulating of factories devoted to civilian needs, it decreases the supply of commodities.

But if the soldier asks for an extra bob a day—that would be inflation! A government which inflates by millions of pounds a day of wasteful expenditure is horrified at the financial instability which they conjure up from the soldier's bob.

But the soldier is ever less content with annual salutes; he is moving closer to his brother in industry. The man in khaki looks with sympathy on the struggle of the miner. Fearing this, the employing class and their lackeys the trade union leaders seek to drive a wedge of misunderstanding between workers in uniform and workers in civvies. To the soldier they say, "the miner is stabbing you in the back." To the worker they say, "the soldier will cause inflation by his unreasonable demands."

When soldiers and workers remember their common problem, when they remember the homes of worker and soldier side by side in the same street, the two shopping baskets going to the same shop, the same problem of children's footwear they will see clearly their identity of interest. Turning to the solution of their own economic problems the untiring efforts of industry and the fortitude and determination of Cassino, they can win the wage fight and the battle of the soldier's pay—but only together.

United with his fellow workers in industry the soldier may win his pay and leave the salutes to the generals.

## APPRENTICES STRIKE

As we are going to press, apprentices in 15 Clydeside engineering shops have come out on strike in sympathy with the Tyneside apprentice strike. It is expected that apprentices in all trades will come out as well.

Apprentices in Tyneside shipyards, engineering works and electrical and other works came out on strike to protest against being called up under the mines ballot.

## MAY DAY MEETING

For working class solidarity across the frontiers

Sunday, April 30th, at 6.30 p.m.

in the

LARGE HOLBORN HALL

Grays Inn Road.

Speaker: Tom Brown

Chairman: Mat Kavanagh

Film:

"KAMARADSCHAFT"

An incident of class solidarity between French and German mine workers.

Tickets: 1/- at the door or from Freedom Press  
27 Belsize Road, :: :: London, N.W.6.



# ANARCHIST COMMENTARY

## CHURCHILL'S SPEECH

THE significant part of Churchill's speech (we can neglect the to-be-expected purple bits about the Hun, what fools the Japanese are, and the flashing eyes of our soldiers, sailors and airmen) was his peevish attack on all who so much as criticize the Government. Leaders don't much care for criticism, and the National Government is not in a very favourable position to meet it, so his rancour is not surprising. But his rasping scorn for the "wise-acres" who venture to criticize is quite inadequate to mask the facts. The Government have made no single concession to working class rights whether in the factories or the forces without being compelled to do so, manifestly against their will. Churchill's radio periods do not explain away the Miners' anger at the Porter award, or Grigg's curt refusal to consider increases in soldiers' pay. Nor the cheating of the farmers by income tax twists. His pretty picture of post-war housing scarcely explains away the actual conditions of housing, nor the thousands of empty houses of the absentee bourgeois evacuees, which could be used to provide shelter for the innumerable bombed out and crowded out families of workers.

More and more, government spokesmen are finding it impossible any longer to conceal the hard truths of class privilege in society behind the slogans of equality and justice. As their protests become increasingly shrill, the contrast between reality and their hypocritical pretences becomes more glaring, the class issues more heavily underlined.

## FRENCH BARGAINING

*LA MARSEILLAISE*, the de Gaullist paper which had to stop publication in London, a few months ago, for having dared to criticise the British and American Governments, is now appearing again in Algiers.

*La Marseillaise* reflects the fears, suspicions and disappointments of the de Gaullists at the attitude adopted by the Allied Governments. The speech of Field-Marshal Smuts rings painfully in their ears, and recent events seem to indicate that he is not alone in thinking that France will never become a major power again.

Though they are not back in France yet the de Gaullists don't intend to give up the smallest part of their Empire. *La Marseillaise* delights in the theme of the greatness of the French Empire: "France can only live if great. The condition of her greatness, the condition of her independence in a world governed by economic forces, is her Empire." And already the dead are thrown on the bargaining table: "France was one of the first to confront Germany. She formed the first trench of liberty. That trench was carried away. But she lost 1,500,000 in the first phase of this 30 years' war—more than any other of the allies had lost—110,000 dead in the short campaign of spring 1940—more than any Ally has lost up to now, Russia excepted."

This paper, so proud of its glorious dead, is now devoting three quarters of its big pages to women's fashions. It is certainly an inspiring thought that members of the Resistance Movement should risk their lives to smuggle the *Marseillaise* into France so that French women can make themselves attractive silver fox hats, coats with otter-fur sleeves and taffeta and organdie dresses.

## IRISH HUNGER STRIKES

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RECENTLY, the Glasgow anarchist, Frank Leech, went on hunger strike in Barlinnie prison. Since then there has been a widespread hunger strike among Irish political prisoners in Belfast prison. The authorities have, so far,

shown no signs of making concessions to the prisoners, and have, indeed, declared their intention of taking no action in the matter. In other words, they seem willing to allow the prisoners to die of starvation rather than to make any concessions.

It will be remembered that in the struggle in Ireland during the last war they adopted a similar attitude and that the unjustly imprisoned Mayor of Cork, McSwiney, was allowed to die in prison after a hunger strike lasting more than ten weeks.

McSwiney's death did the British Government no good. On the contrary, it helped to inflame Irish feeling against them and to propel the unconvinced into opposition. If any of the political prisoners die in the present hunger strike, there is no doubt that the effect will be similar.

The hunger strike is a most effective method of struggle, because, if it is maintained by the striker, either of the two possible outcomes is certain to discredit his opponents. If the authorities make concessions, they have given ground and weakened their position. If they cause him to die or even to suffer considerable illness by their obstinacy, they incur an inevitable increase in unpopularity. Even the Ogpu have been so perplexed at the dilemma into which they were forced by hunger strikers that they have made concessions as the lesser of two evils that faced them.

## IRISH NEUTRALITY

THE attempts of the British and American governments to force the Irish Government to dismiss the German and Japanese Ambassadors, and the subsequent embargo on journeys to Ireland and closing of the frontier between Eire and Northern Ireland, are interesting in the way they refract rather than reflect the principles enunciated by our mealy-mouthed leaders in the Atlantic Charter and other hypocritical documents. They show that the "rights of small nations" will be respected only when they can be expressed in a picturesque and unoffending manner—that anything in the way of real independence will always be treated with hostility. We do not suppose that the given excuse is the real reason for the action of the Allied governments. The expulsion of the German and Japanese diplomats will make little or no difference to the information which passes out to the Nazis through Ireland or by any other means. Some deeper political move is evidently contemplated.

These events only prove more clearly that the political independence of small nations is even less possible now than it was in the last century. True regional freedom will only exist in a world that does not recognise political nationalities, but only the free federation of socially integrated regions.

## DEBATE

in the  
Central Halls, Glasgow, on Sunday 2nd April,  
Subject:  
Anarcho-Syndicalism  
versus  
Industrial Unionism

JAMES RAESIDE, Anarchist Federation

v.  
ROBERT NICOLL, Workers Open Forum.



## ENGLISH WHEAT

BEFORE the war we were always being told that this country couldn't possibly produce enough food to feed the population. The idea that food production could be significantly increased was ridiculed by Press Lords and others whose interests lay in importing food from abroad as payment for exported industrial goods and as interest on capital invested abroad. After the war doubtless, we shall again be told by these same people, that Britain cannot possibly feed itself. . . .

Recent, however, the Ministry of Agriculture has been pointing triumphantly to the fact that whereas farmers produced only one third of the total food consumed before the war, now they produce two thirds. And now comes the news that the total wheat yield of this country has also been doubled—from 1,500,00 tons in 1939 to 3,150,000 tons in 1943. Yet the total area under wheat is stated to be 3,250,000 to 3,500,000 acres, whereas in 1874 it was 3,630,000 acres, so that it is clear that still larger yields can be obtained, even if the acreage of seventy years ago is not exceeded, and yields per acre remain the same as to-day.

## DOLE PILES UP

UNEMPLOYMENT Insurance Fund continues to pile up, and is now said to amount to £248,700,000. This money is taken out of workers wage packets, and might reasonably be expected to be put to a use for the benefit of the working class who provide it. But in fact, it is the Government of the Bosses who reap the benefit, for the money is invested in Government securities. Interest on it in 1942 brought in £2,194,371.

## CHILDREN AS WAGE EARNERS

A FEW days ago, 135 Labour M.P.s, led by Mr. Arthur Greenwood, voted against the government, and demanded the immediate raising of the school leaving age to sixteen. The Labour Party has sponsored so many reactionary measures since they entered the National Government that they have to seize what opportunities they can to appear progressive. Of course, the Government won on the division, but Greenwood and the Labour Party had made their gesture, had put themselves right with the progressive elements in the electorate!

Unfortunately, it is the Labour members, who claim to understand and represent the workers, who ought to know best what raising the school leaving age will mean for many working class families. And, of course, they do know—Greenwood especially since he has sat on many committees concerned with health and poverty and working class conditions. But the canvassing of progressive votes is more important to M.P.s than considering in concrete terms the effect of such legislation. Hypocrisy is the Labour Party's middle name.

One hundred years ago, parents used to send their children up the chimneys, or into factories, or down the mines. They did not expose their kids to these hideous conditions through ignorance, but because their own wages were so low that unless their children earned also, there was not enough to eat. Conditions are only different to-day in degree. Many kids are compelled to earn a few shillings as newsboys or assistants to milk roundsmen, in their spare time from school. But particularly in large families, the time when the eldest children can legally leave school and begin to earn wages in full time employment, is a time which the whole family looks forward to, as providing considerable relief by adding to the total family income. This fact has been frequently noted by investigators into health and diet conditions among large families. Here are some examples.

In one family, consisting of mother and four children, the father being in the Army, total income was the Forces Allowance. But when father was invalided out of the Army and went into hospital, the family would have had only a sick allowance of £1 5s. od. to live on, if the oldest child, a girl, now 14 years old, had not been able to leave school, and add £1 4s. od. to the weekly income. Raise the school leaving age by two years, and their income would be halved.

In another family (again with the father in the forces), mother and eight children, ranging from fifteen to two-and-a-half, live on a Forces allowance of £4 16s. 3d. The eldest child is able to supplement this by earning £1 5s. od. a week—an amount which would immediately be cut from the family income if the school leaving age were raised.

Children over fourteen are an asset in such a family, those below fourteen a responsibility. It is no doubt revolting that children should be compelled by poverty to enter the labour market at this early age; but it is much more revolting to see so-called working class politicians, merely for the sake of currying favour in bourgeois progressive circles, advocating legislative measures which would materially increase that poverty. It is merely another example of the effect of tinkering with capitalism. A reformist increase in the "advantages" of State Education for another two years, depresses the standard of life of the poorest, and brings more misery from malnutrition.

## A Chance for the Middle Class

Middle class women who denounce the striking miners will, doubtless, be glad of the chance to volunteer for pit head work—and at increased wages.

"Women and girls working at Lancashire and Cheshire collieries are to have more pay.

Under an agreement reached at a meeting of owners and miners in Manchester yesterday adults of 21 and over will receive an advance of 3d. a shift, bringing up the minimum wage to three guineas a week, and there are also to be increases ranging from 1d. a shift to girls of 14½ to 8d. a shift for girls of 19."

*Manchester Guardian, 14/3/44.*

If patriotism fails to attract the magnificent salary may.

## F.F.P. MEETINGS

N.W. London Group Every Tuesday 7 p.m.  
27 Belsize Road, London, N.W.6.

North London Group Every Saturday, 7 p.m.  
The Adult School Hall, Palmers Road,  
Arnos Grove, N.11.

Hammersmith Group Every Sunday, 7 p.m.  
3 Churchfield Rd., next Acton Central (L.M.S.)

Bristol Group Every Monday, 7 p.m.  
Elm Cottage, Clifton Vale, Bristol 8.

Kingston Group Outdoor Meetings  
Every Saturday and Sunday at 6.30 p.m.  
Kingston War Memorial, Nr. Market Place.



# Russia's Reactionary Policy in Italy

The *Daily Worker* on the 10th of March in an editorial declared:

"The mass strikes of the Italian people against the Nazi domination in North Italy represents one of the most significant developments of this crucial period of the war.

This movement of a nation overtops and dwarfs alike the ludicrous "Mussolini Neo-Fascists" that the Germans are trying to build up, and the court camarilla around Badoglio and King Victor Emmanuel."

The recognition of Badoglio by Stalin came a few days later and even our English communists were left speechless for a few days. The embarrassment of the Italian Communist Party must have been even greater, for they were the loudest to proclaim at the Bari conference that Badoglio and the King must go. Now thanks to Stalin, Badoglio raises his crest, has completely forgotten that he was to resign when the Allied troops would occupy Rome and starts making plans full of confidence in the future.

The Italian masses will not have been altogether surprised. The relations between Soviet Russia and Fascist Italy have always been very cordial. Italian workers resented trade treaties being made between the two countries and they will not have easily forgotten that only a few days after Matteotti's murder Mussolini was given a reception at the Russian Embassy.

This is how D. N. Pritt rather boastfully describes the relations between Russian and Italy after the rise of fascism.

"In June, 1929, General Balbo, commanding a squadron of hydroplanes, made an official visit to the Russian Black Sea ports, and in May, 1933, this was followed by the tour of a flotilla of Italian submarines which sailed to Batum; this latter visit, the first of its kind since the revolution, was made the occasion of Italo-Soviet demonstrations of friendship. Throughout this period, of course, Fascist Italy negotiated and signed commercial agreements with the U.S.S.R., and, like Germany, granted them considerable credit.

Italo-Soviet friendship was solemnly confirmed by the signing of the pact of the 2nd September, 1933, which is still in force, whereby Italy undertakes not to participate in any bloc or diplomatic understanding calculated to injure the interests of the Soviet Union.

On the 30th October, 1933, a Soviet flotilla went to Naples to return the visit of the Italian submarines to Batum in the previous May, and was welcomed with great cordiality; and in December of the same year, Litvinov visited Rome at the express invitation of the Duce himself. This visit was described in the Italian press as 'an event of historic importance'."

*Light on Moscow, 1939.*

The Italian masses were well informed on the friendly relations which existed between Russia and Italy because the Italian Press gave them great publicity. Unfortunately for the Communist Party they were not so well informed as to the *motives* Moscow had and they were deprived of those ingenious explanations and dialectical justifications which accompany every twist and turn of the Comintern. An Italian Communist in exile explained the difficulties which confronted the Communists in Italy in understanding the various changes undergone by the Party. In an article published in the Communist magazine *Stato Operaio*, March-April 1943, he says:

"In Italy the best prepared comrades, from an ideological point of view are those who have lived long years in prison . . . Unfortunately that culture (acquired in prison) is almost always without any links with life.

An example in this connection will explain the situation. In 1929 and '30 were arrested in Italy, and severely condemned, some comrades who had taken part in the VIth Congress of the Communist International (which had taken place in the summer of 1928) and who knew perfectly the discussions and deliberations which had taken place there. In the various prisons where these comrades lived they gave to the other imprisoned comrades a report on the VIth Congress of the International, and this created, of course, long discussions. This went on for years. In 1935 just before and after the VIIth Congress in many Italian prisons the decisions of the VIth Congress were still discussed.

The line of the VIIth Congress, fixed in the historic speech of George Dimitrov, came therefore as a surprise, unexpected by many of those comrades who were completely unprepared to receive it. It created many difficulties and many 'crises' which were only overcome thanks to some stronger and better prepared comrades.

Let the comrades in exile think for a moment of the major political events of the last few years (policy of unity, of popular front; German-Soviet pact and the first-imperialist phase of this war; Nazi aggression against the U.S.S.R. and policy of national unity, etc.) and of the difficulties that even the best comrades have had to overcome in order to understand the necessity of certain turns in the policy of the communist party even when they had all the material necessary for discussion. If they think of that they will not be at all surprised that such difficulties should, in Italy, be almost insuperable and that they are overcome, almost always, with the passing of time."

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

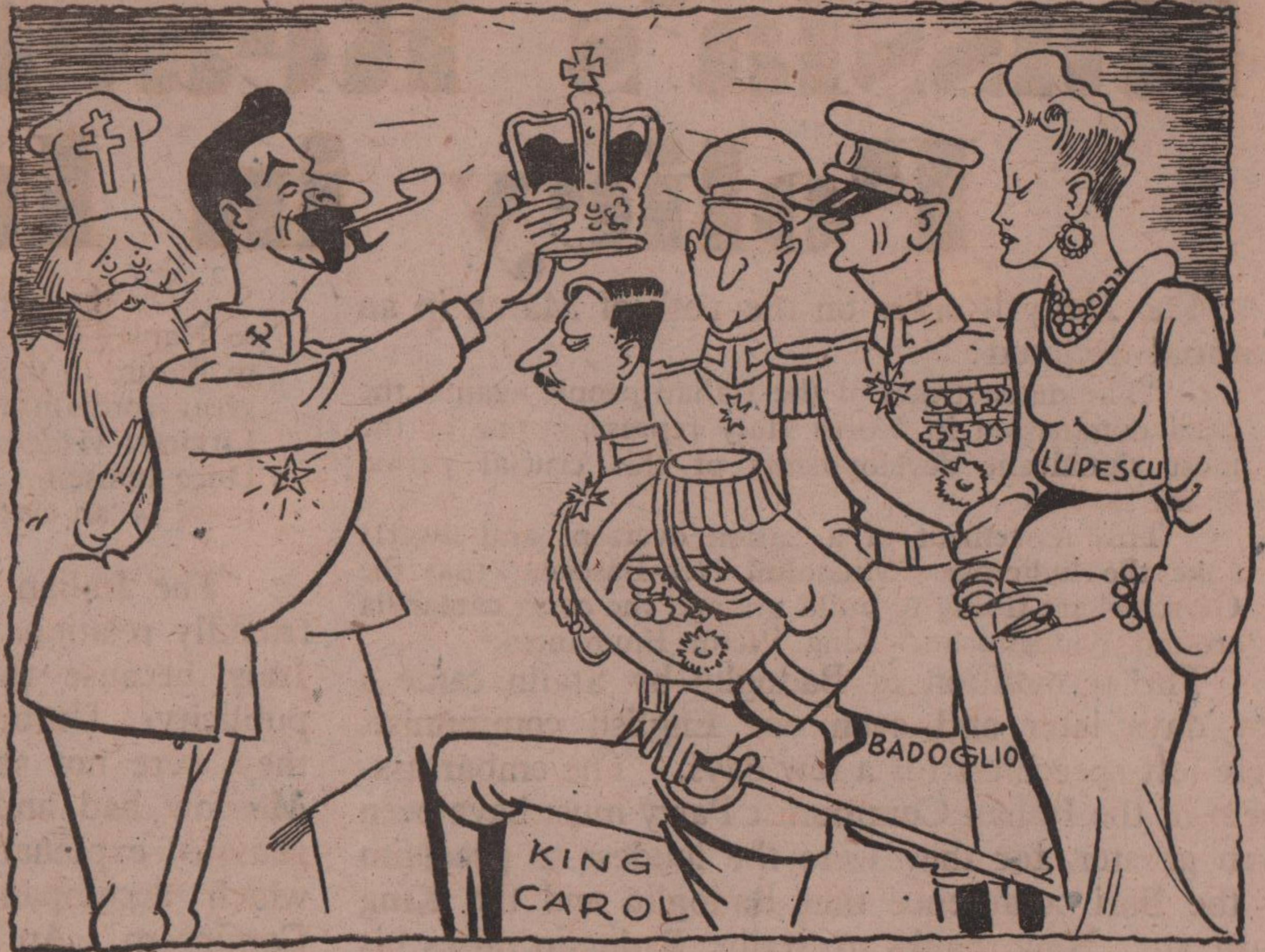
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**FREEDOM PRESS ROOMS  
27, BELSIZE ROAD, LONDON, N.W.6.**

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This is indeed a frank and candid statement in the mouth of a communist; it shows the amount of propaganda and persuasion which has to be used inside the Party to prevent it from going to bits when a policy is adopted which goes against the will of the majority. Though the Communist Party in Italy now has greater means of expression than it had during Mussolini's dictatorship, it is doubtful if it will be able to talk its way out of Stalin's recognition of Badoglio's government. The Italian people hate the King and Badoglio as architects in the building of the Fascist State. The fact that they have now become British and Russian Quislings can only increase the contempt the Italian masses have for them.



The help given by Stalin to fascists in Italy will no doubt have great repercussions amongst working-class movements in this country. The French may wonder if a compromise is not going to be attempted between de Gaullists and Vichyites, the

Belgians will expect a resuscitation of Leopold and the Rumanians will expect to see Stalin give King Carol (with his Madame Lupescu) his throne back.

M. L. B.

## Rats and the Empire

CALLOUS PEOPLE show themselves unmoved and indifferent when the Anti-vivisectionists tell their harrowing tales of the sufferings of animal creation for the base ends of scientific men. But for all their troubles under the knife and the pole-axe, animals score off man when it comes to questions of diet. Deploring the semi-starvation under which the children of the English poor are reared, Sir John Orr has pointed out that every stock farmer insists on full and adequate nutrition for his beasts. "A suggestion that he should use a lower standard would be regarded as absurd. If children of the three lower (income) groups were reared for profit like young farm stock, giving them a diet below the requirements for health would be financially unsound. Unfortunately," he added, "the health and physical fitness of the rising generation are not marketable commodities which can be assessed in terms of money".

But to get back to the animals; although in general they don't do so badly—or not so badly as workers at any rate—when it comes to food, this is not always the case. Some years ago, for example, Sir Robert McCarrison hit on the idea of feeding to rats the same diet as some human beings have to subsist on. His object was to demonstrate the freedom of well-fed animals from disease and disease-proneness of those fed on diets commonly used by the "poorer classes in England—namely, white bread, margarine and over-sweetened tea with a little milk, boiled cabbage, boiled potato, tinned meat, with jams of the cheaper sort." The wretched rats fed on this diet were stunted in growth and developed diseases of the digestive organs and the lungs (just as workers do). Rats fed on decent diets showed none of these diseases.

The Chief Medical Officer to the Ministry of Health has said in one of his annual reports (1933) that diseases of the digestive organs and the lungs accounted for more than one third of all illness in the insured population of England and Wales. . . .

Sir Robert McCarrison also made his rats demonstrate why the Indians from Madras die so readily under the benevolent tutelage of the British Empire, and manage to suffer from so many diseases during their short lives.

But it is not only Indian experimental rats that have merited human sympathy because they have been forced to endure some of the conditions under which the Indian subjects of His Imperial Majesty live and easily die. Recently South African rats have also been given a taste of native conditions. A Johannesburg doctor remarks in the *British Medical Journal* (29/1/44) that "Malnutrition among the Africans is widespread in South Africa. The overwhelming majority feed on a diet consisting largely of maize meal (mealie pap) and sour milk. This forms the staple from the time of weaning throughout life." Now South Africans suffer from cancer of the liver to a much greater extent than Europeans, so Dr. Gillman set out to see if this might be due to their diet, which he proceeded to feed to 135 normal rats in liberal amounts. After fourteen months of South African native diet, twelve of these unfortunate rats were killed and examined. All of them showed diseased livers. They also had enlarged hearts, inflammatory disease of the lungs, excessive fat, thickened skulls, loss of hair and bad teeth. Dr. Gillman comments: "The production of liver damage by means of a diet which forms the staple of the overwhelming number of Africans in South Africa is not without its sociological implications. It may also have repercussions in other parts of the world where economically impoverished individuals are forced to live on a diet similar to that of the African in the Union of South Africa."



# From the Ranks

## Royal Visit

DEAR COMRADES,

A very interesting example of the manner in which militarism debases the individual occurred recently in our camp, the occasion being a visit by His Majesty.

Extensive preparations were made during the week preceding the auspicious occasion, roads were swept clear of mud, tanks were spotlessly cleaned (only 8 gallons of petrol was allowed for the cleaning of each tank owing to the scarcity!) and rehearsals of the day's programme were carried out.

"Mock" instruction classes were held with specially picked pupils, fires were lit (though they are never lit normally in huts used for instructional purposes), cloths were put on the tables. Tanks were placed in prominent positions with picked crews working on them—they wore well-creased battledress and white belts and gaiters though normally any soldiers not wearing overalls for such work would immediately be put on a charge.

The finale was a "spontaneous" outburst of cheering as His Majesty left. The soldiers were packed into huts near the road and a runner was detailed to warn them when the King was about to leave. Everybody then had to run out on the road, raise their hats and give three hearty cheers. It was emphasised that it must not look like a parade but appear spontaneous. I was pleased to note that the cheers were very faint—a good number did not utter a sound or raise their hats.

Only a few days previously we were honoured by a visit from General Montgomery when we stood four hours on parade in the freezing cold waiting for him to arrive. When he did it was to make a stupid speech about the "good, successful battles" which we are all to enjoy in the near future.

The feebleness of the military mind is well brought out by such events—it seems that there is no depth to which its victims cannot be made to descend.

Fraternally,

TROOPER D. L. M.



## Soldiers' Attitude to Strikes at Home

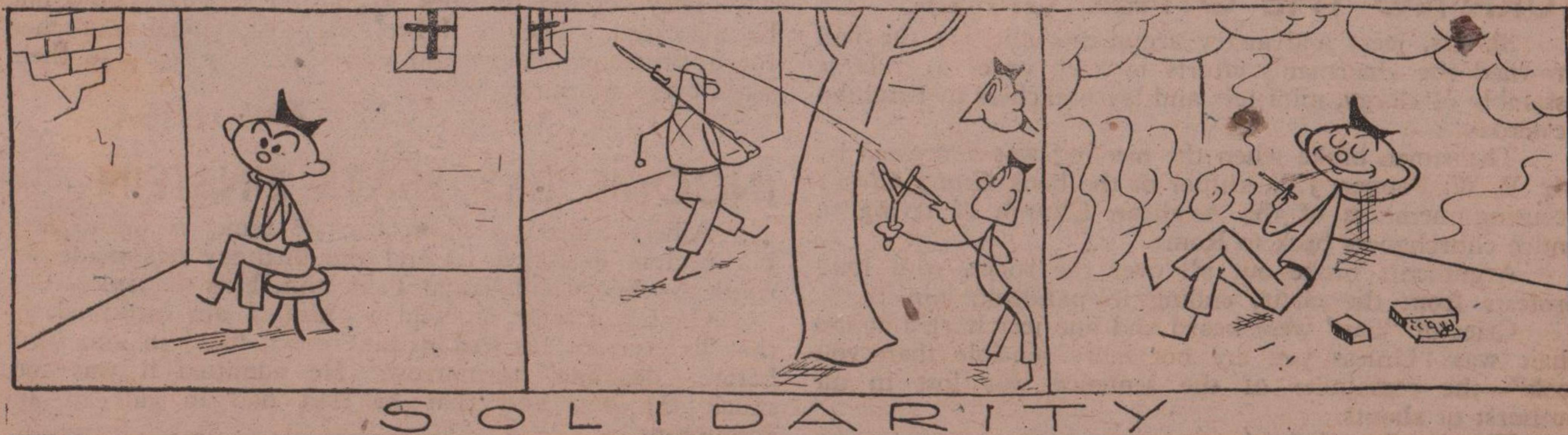
Men in the Forces, especially overseas, have been writing to me about the coal strikes.

They are not, as you might expect, irritated that the miner is demanding a minimum wage which is twice what the soldier gets. The attitude is: "We should get an increase too."

In fact, judging from these letters, we are deluding ourselves if we think the soldiers are angry with the miners.

One writer says: "We want a decent wage when we come back to civilian jobs, and we are glad some one is fighting for it. There is a good deal of feeling here (Eighth Army front) that the miners don't know how well off they are, but at the same time, like some of the Bevin boys, none of us wants to leave the Army and go down the mine."

Alan Moorehead (famous war correspondent),  
in the *Daily Express*, 17/3/44.



SOLIDARITY



## "JUDGE NOT, LEST YE BE CONDEMNED"

On being made a magistrate in 1940, Miss Elliott sat in judgment upon people charged with petty theft. She even spent some time on the bench in the juvenile court and listened to charges against children who had probably, in a childish prank, done nothing more than break a corporation street lamp.

At this time, Miss Elliott was defrauding her company of sums totalling in one year, £28,349, and she, with autocratic demeanour, frowned, and is believed to have passed caustic comment upon those charged with theft of shillings.

*News of the World, 19/3/44.*

## BRITANNIA'S HEROES—THE COAL-OWNERS

It was because of my faith in the future of British coal-mining that I extended my Seaham collieries at a cost of £1,000,000. The new colliery is the very last word in colliery construction and underground lay-out, and embodies the findings of the most famous mining engineers.

It will employ about 3,000 men, and should eventually produce a million tons annually. But before that million tons a year can come up, a million pounds sterling must have been sunk down it or in surface equipment.

It was private enterprise that succeeded in these hazardous undertakings and I wonder if they would have been attempted with the State in control.

Marquis of Londonderry in  
*Sunday Express, 19/3/44.*

We are glad to know that in spite of his previous friendship for the leading Nazis, the Marquis of Londonderry is engaged in some "hazardous undertakings"—his courage in making money is undisputed.

## THIS ENGLAND

Why scalded cat? Why not scalded Hun? The reports of our air offensive would lead one to believe that the latter is far more appropriate. In any case, there is already enough suffering in the world, to-day, without suggesting that a very lovely animal is to be compared with a death-dealing machine, with the consequence that he may be lowered in the eyes of some and experimented on by others.—E. KEITH ROBINSON (secretary), Our Dumb Friends League.

*Liverpool Echo, 15/3/44.*

## TURNING THE OTHER CHEEK

Shouts, jeers and angry arguments all over the hall drowned the chairman's efforts to keep order at a large assembly of clergy, ministers and lay preachers in Brighton yesterday.

The storm broke when the meeting was addressed by Mr. P. W. Pepper, J.P., author of the book *Guilty Clergy* accusing members of the Anglican Church of trying to entice churchgoers back to Rome.

Arguments broke out all over the room, with loud protests from the chair, ending in pandemonium.

Cries of "liar" were heard and one jeer hurled at the chair was "Unless you are not more sensible than you look"—the remainder of the sentence was lost in an outburst of shouts.

The meeting closed in prayer.

*Daily Mirror, 7/3/44.*

## DON'T FORGET RIBBENTROP-MOLOTOV PACT

Strange and baffling was the news last week. Russia—yes, Russia, of all the countries to do it!—officially recognised Badoglio! Russia, the most anti-Fascist of all the Powers, the one which had been critical of our parleying with Franco, decided to send an envoy to Victor Emmanuel's Government!

So the only Communist country in Europe is the first to make peace with the only defeated monarchy that backed Fascism and, indeed, made its bossdom possible!

Hannen Swaffer in *The People, 19/3/44.*

# Through

## BEVIN WON'T CONSCRIPT PRINCESS

Important decisions affecting the future of Princess Elizabeth, whose eighteenth birthday falls next month, have been taken by the King and Queen during the past few days.

The King is taking the advice of Mr. Ernest Bevin, the Minister of Labour, and of other Ministers of the Crown, on the question of what form of national service the Princess shall undertake when, at 18, she becomes liable under the National Service Act.

Present indications are that the King will hold that the work which Princess Elizabeth is doing in training for the day when she may become Queen transcends everything else in importance, and, therefore, the Princess is not likely to be called up either to the factories or to the women's services.

*News of the World, 11/3/44.*

## JUST FUN

### EMBARKATION LEAVE

Sheila carries daddy's gas-mask,

Peter carries daddy's gun.

Mother's chattering on and laughing

As if parting were just fun.

*Advt. issued by the National Savings Committee.*

## PRISONERS' STRIKE

Italian prisoners at a south-east England camp went on strike yesterday for 1s. a day instead of 8d.

They refused to work when told the pay could not be increased. They had been employed digging ditches for a catchment board and were taken by lorry to their work every morning.

*Daily Mail, 14/3/44.*

## INCOME TAX BEATS EINSTEIN

Albert Einstein, of "relativity" fame, is 65 to-day, but prefers to forget it, and the birthday has made no ripple on his placid life at Princeton, New Jersey.

Of far greater moment to him, I am informed, is that he has got his income-tax return filled in and filed before "deadline" to-morrow. He admitted it was too much for him and that he had had to call in an accountant.

*Evening Standard, 14/3/44.*



## COAL FOR FASCIST PORTUGAL

Fifteen thousand tons of coal from Britain arrived in the River Tagus, Portugal, yesterday. Electricity restrictions are to be relaxed next month in consequence, says a Reuter cable from Lisbon.

*The People*, 19/3/44.

Go down the pits to beat the fascists . . . and get coal for Dr. Salazar, fascist dictator of Portugal for over twenty years and one of our best allies.

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# the Press

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## A "DEMOCRAT" SPEAKS

Lord Bennett, former Prime Minister of Canada, elaborated to me to-day his warning about Fifth Columnists among refugees of which he spoke yesterday at a Salute the Soldier week lunch at Tottenham.

Lord Bennett told me: "There are about 60,000 people of German birth and parentage now in Britain. In man-power that is equal to four army divisions. I do not suggest every one is a potential spy, as the word is generally used.

"But I do say emphatically that in the final analysis these people are first and foremost German. If ever they are faced with an issue that in plain terms means Britain versus Germany they would take the German point of view.

"I have proof already that a number of these German refugees—whom we are feeding, clothing, and housing—have been working insidiously among prominent men in this country to influence the kind of peace terms we shall offer Germany," said Lord Bennett.

"That is where the main danger lies in my opinion. These refugees are undoubtedly Fifth Columnists in the propaganda sense."

*Evening News*, 17/3/44.

## POOR KING PETER!

King Peter of Yugoslavia was married, I hear, with a personal financial crisis overhanging him and his family.

He has been receiving something around £2,000 a month from the Yugo-Slav Government in Cairo. Queen Marie, his mother, has had an income of about £1,500 a month, and Prince Paul, the King's uncle, who is a prisoner-of-war in Kenya, has had £1,200 set aside for him.

In addition a good many friends of the Yugo-Slav court, together with officials, have been supported from the same source.

The Government in Cairo, however, is feeling the pinch. Its funds are running low. Bankers will have to be consulted.

*Star*, 21/3/44.

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**Don't forget to buy your  
SOLIDARITY TICKET  
with this issue**

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## POLITICAL QUIZ

BY WHOM IS THE ARTICLE?

*Lord Vansittart.*

*Daily Mail Editorial.*

*Daily Express.*

(answer bottom of the column.)

The seventy M.P.s who raised the flag of revolt against the Government following Mr. Churchill's statement that the Atlantic Charter does not apply to Germany "as a matter of right" are now in full retreat.

The motley crew quickly fell to pieces when the Prime Minister emphatically declared that their motion in favour of tenderness to Germany would be treated as a vote of censure on the Government and firmly resisted. Apparently, the incident is now closed, but it reveals a disturbingly widespread confusion regarding the character of the life-and-death struggle in which Britain and her Allies are engaged.

A number of the signatories were Labour Members who apparently thought that they were upholding the banner of Socialism and internationalism. Unfortunately, they were doing nothing of the kind.

Do these Labour Members really believe that the Germans will undergo a complete change of heart and that the influence of Prussianism will automatically disappear directly after the final victory salvo has been fired?

Are these Labour Members such Rip Van Winkles as to believe that 1944 is 1918 and that the long years of Fascism have left no mark in the minds of millions of Germans?

Are they so completely indifferent to the lessons of history as to discount the danger of the renewal of aggression by Germany?

It is not a principle of Socialism to be indifferent to hard facts or to answer cruel, evil deeds with flabby sermonising. The millions on the Continent who have suffered murder, outrage and torture at the hands of the Germans will not be appreciative of the sweetness toward the enemy emanating from the soft security of Westminster.

The democratic peoples are fighting this war in order to obtain lasting peace and security. But this they will never obtain if the power of Germany is left unbroken.

It is true, as Mr. Churchill has said, that the German people must not be enslaved or destroyed. But they must be made to pay for their crimes. Otherwise there will be no justice in the world. And Germany must be subjected to whatever territorial adjustments are necessary to bar the road to future aggression.

Never again must German Imperialism be enabled to take Europe in its filthy grip.

## EQUAL PAY!

These are some of the facts behind the present indignation of women workers.

A man comes fresh into, say, London's engineering industry. He starts with 1s. 7d. an hour. A woman is paid 1s. The woman may be put on semi-skilled machine work or fitting. She will still get 6d. an hour less than the labourer.

Take six typical cases of young women working in a great aircraft plant. These were their pay packets last week-end. The highest, who worked 53 hours, got £3 4s. 4d. The lowest, for 52½ hours, got £2 15s.

Three of these six girls have widowed mothers. Four of the six have weekly fares ranging between 8s. and 11s.

*Reynolds News*, 19/3/44.

Answers to quiz: *Daily Worker Editorial*, 18/3/44.



# A Nation of Slum Dwellers

"I don't take the view myself that we were a nation of slum dwellers before the war."—CHURCHILL.



TO-DAY THERE IS great talk of the housing problem, and among the select institutions of the ruling class, the House of Commons and the B.B.C., this talk has become a major smoke screen to obscure the more direct issues of the war. One is tempted to repeat the old gag about 'Homes fit for Heroes', but perhaps it is better to attempt an examination of facts which will give us some idea of the nature and magnitude of the housing needs.

For the time being we will ignore the special effects of the war, and give some facts which illustrate the housing facilities that existed for the workers just before the outbreak of war.

At that time it was estimated that, in London alone, there was a deficiency of something in the neighbourhood of half a million houses.

"In 1931 nearly two-thirds of all metropolitan families had no family front door; in London, at any rate, the Englishman's home is his neighbour's. Only 37 per cent. of London families enjoy a house or a flat or a maisonette. The remainder share their homes with other people, with no structural divisions between their domestic intimacy and that of their neighbours, and generally with the joint use of such necessities as a bathroom, if any. No fewer than 32 per cent. of families in inner London have been found to be living in groups of three or more families to an undivided house."

(*Metropolitan Man*. Robert Sinclair).\*

There exists, of course, a distinction between mere lack of privacy and overcrowding. The legal limit for overcrowding is two persons to a room. Life at this closeness may seem unbearable to the average suburban villa dweller, but a survey of the London County Council in 1936 revealed that 310,000 people lived at the two-a-room level, while a further 387,000 lived in even more overcrowded conditions. Living below the two-a-room level, but still at or above the rate of three people to two rooms were more than another 800,000 people. These congested families totalled more than a third of the population of London. The position has changed little, for the 'thirties were a period of slow rehousing, and in respect of overcrowding the law has remained hardly more than a dead letter. Even in the L.C.C. estate at Becontree, built to relieve overcrowding, 4 per cent. of the families exceed the official limit, and a new slum arises out of a slum clearance effort.

Even these figures do not convey the full unpleasantness of the conditions in which these overcrowded families live. Some live below pavement level—"even in the present decade there were 20,000 basement dwellings in London, medically marked as unfit for human habitation!" (Lewis Mumford *The Culture of Cities*, 1938). It is estimated that these basement dwellings house 60,000 people. Such homes are theoretically illegal, but here again the law has operated only sparingly.

In Bermondsey the last census found four families of nine and ten families of eight living in one room homes.

\*Obtainable from Freedom Bookshop (see advt. in this issue).

In the City of London itself, the wealthiest square mile in the world, fifty-four families were living at seven or more to a room.

Robert Sinclair in his *Metropolitan Man*, the most formidable indictment ever written of living conditions in London, quotes individual cases, all from authenticated sources, which convey the picture even more mordantly.

"(a) In one room live a tuberculous man, his wife, two adult sons and a schoolboy. (b) Two rooms are occupied by a married couple, three boys (aged fifteen, ten and six years); the house is dilapidated and it is stated that repairs are only executed when ordered by the sanitary authorities. (c) In one front basement room live a man and wife, a boy aged seven years, and six girls whose ages range from three to eleven years; most of the room, which is very dark, is taken up by two large beds, one of which consists of rolled-up bedding which is put down on the floor at night for some of the children . . ."

Describing a large house in a decayed residential area which has declined into a slum, he says:

"In the basement are four rooms, in which live three families, numbering sixteen persons. On the ground floor are four rooms—one a bathroom—holding three families who number eighteen persons. On the first floor five rooms, some of them small, contain sixteen persons in three families. The three small attics overhead are occupied by thirteen persons in two families. We have not finished. In the garage lives a family of nine."

I have dealt first with London, because in that area the overcrowding is of the greatest magnitude, owing to a fifth of the population of Britain being crowded into a limited radius. But the problems of overcrowding, slums, bad houses, exist in all the cities of England and in the rural districts as well. A recent Ministry of Health statement, quoted in the *Evening Standard*, said that 100,000 families in the country are living in premises legally condemned as unfit for habitation, and that a further 300,000 houses would have been condemned had the war not intervened. This does not include the houses that have been put out of action through bombing.

The City Engineer of Birmingham, speaking in 1941 to a Conference of the Town and Country Planning Association, said that in one area alone of the city, out of 6,800 dwellings 5,400 were classified as slums to be condemned. More recently the Medical Officer of Health for Manchester said that there are some 70,000 unfit houses in his city.

In the provinces the workers enjoy more privacy than they do in London. In the industrial towns tenements are not so common—although Glasgow and Edinburgh have some notable examples—and there are not so many gentlemen's houses gone to seed and crowded out by working families. As against London's 38 per cent. of individual homes there are 95 per cent. in towns like Birmingham, Leeds, Huddersfield.

But the individual houses of the industrial districts are often as overcrowded as the rooms of London. More-



over, the Northern towns have their own form of unhealthy dwelling in the back-to-back house.

"Back to back houses are two houses built in one, each side of the house being somebody's front door, so that if you walk down a row of what is apparently twelve houses you are in reality seeing not twelve houses but twenty-four. The front houses give on the street and the back ones on the yard, and there is only one way out of each house. The effect of this is obvious. The lavatories are in the yard at the back, so that if you live on the side facing the street, to get to the lavatory or the dust-bin you have to go out of the front door and walk round the end of the block—a distance that may be as much as two hundred yards; if you live at the back, on the other hand, your outlook is onto a row a lavatories."

George Orwell. *The Road to Wigan Pier.*

Of these back-to-back houses there are still 70,000 in Leeds, 60,000 in Sheffield, 38,000 in Birmingham and 30,000 in Bradford, as well as proportionately high numbers in the other industrial towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

In the rural areas there are thousands of cottages which are unfit for habitation, but which are still afflicting the farm labourer and his children with rheumatism and kindred diseases. Moreover, the situation in many country districts has been further aggravated by the fact that the best cottages, even before the war, had been bought up or rented by middle-class people anxious to retire from town life.

Of the old houses in both town and country, which are still legally fit for habitation the majority, in all probability, have defects which prevent them from being healthy homes. Damp, darkness, lack of ventilation are the principal of these faults.

In the mining towns there are many houses which are threatened by the peculiar circumstances of the district—either in danger of being submerged by a slag-heap pressing against the back door or sunk in a subsidence of the earth owing to mining operations underground.

"Some of these towns are so undermined by ancient workings that the ground is constantly subsiding and the houses above slip sideways. In Wigan you pass whole rows of houses which have slid to startling angles, their windows being ten to twenty degrees out of the horizontal. Sometimes the front wall bellies outward till it looks as though the house were seven months gone in pregnancy. It can be refaced, but the new facing soon begins to bulge again. When a house sinks at all suddenly its windows are jammed for ever and the doors have to be refitted."

George Orwell. *The Road to Wigan Pier.*

The effect of bad housing and overcrowding on the health and expectation of life of slum dwellers is devastating. A comparison shows that in the overcrowded borough of Finsbury the death rate is 44 per cent. higher than it is in the middle-class suburb of Lewisham. Infant mortality for the whole of England is 54 per 1,000, but for the industrial cities it is much higher—Glasgow 104, Liverpool 86, Newcastle 80. Finally, Professor J. R. Mackintosh (Professor of Public Health at Glasgow University), writing in *The Practitioner*, September, 1943, gives the following comparative death rate for homes of varying smallness.

House of	General Death Rate	Pulmonary Tuberculosis Rate	Child Death rate under 1 child	Child Death rate 1-5 years
1 room	100	100	100	100
2 rooms	64	72	78	74
3 rooms	44	52	61	44
4 rooms	41	34	49	25

(The figure of 100 is taken as comparative number applied to a home of 1 room).

These figures should suffice to show that the objections to over-crowding are not merely those of inconvenience. To have adequate space in which to sleep and breathe properly is literally a matter of life and death to every human being. The man who lives in a spacious house stands a good chance of living to a ripe age. The man who shares one room with his family will only survive so long by an extraordinary feat of tenacity.

Not only is the slum dweller robbed of light and air by the overcrowded atmosphere in which he lives; he is robbed by the rapacity of the landlord of the money with which to buy food. Again, an extract from the facts quoted by Robert Sinclair will suffice.

"One eight-roomed house in a Southwark slum brings in the handsome rental of £6 2s. 0d. a week. The ratepayers, having helped to pay for the council houses in the suburban estates, also help to provide this Southwark landlord with his £300 a year: in a small triangular room in that house are a man, his wife and child, paying 14s. 6d. a week—and receiving poor relief. Customers are always knocking at the doors of these landlords, who alone in the business community are unaffected by trade depression. A married man with two children paid £1 6s. a week for a half-furnished room; after living in it for nine years he was expelled with his two children because his rent became one week in arrears. A fellow-tenant of his, whose weekly wage was £1 5s. paid £1 in rent. One house in South London, with seventeen rooms, is let to twelve families, numbering 72 people, at rents of 16s. to £1 8s. per family. Cases have been known in Southwark of a house of eight rooms, mostly small, yielding £318 a year, of another eight-roomed house, rented at £71 a year, being sublet at £226 a year; some landlords acquire a number of houses and let them all at excessive rents. The high rents are the most easily demanded in that the rooms are technically furnished in many cases." (*Metropolitan Man*).

Profiteering in housing is particularly bad in London, because of this breaking up of houses into small one-room units. In the provincial cities the small houses of the slums tend to come under rent restriction. However, with the wartime shifts in population there is a tendency all over the country, and even in the rural districts, to let cottages and small flats inadequately furnished at disproportionately high rents.

It may sound paradoxical, after reciting all these bad facts concerning housing immediately before the war, to admit that more than 3,900,000 new houses were built in the twenty years between the two wars. Yet a glance at the census figures will illustrate why this total was swallowed up without making any appreciable effect on the slums of the larger towns. Since the last war families have been growing steadily smaller and the figures of population, which increase slowly in the number of individuals, have risen sharply in the number of families. In the ten years from 1921-31 a total of 1,750,000 extra families appeared. We can say, then, that in the twenty-one years of peace some 3,600,000 new families were waiting for homes. The total of new houses barely provided for them—the remaining 300,000 were largely balanced by the large empty houses which remain even in wartime in such residential districts as Bayswater. On the whole, the apparently large housing operations between the wars did little more than keep pace with new demands. The slums remained, twenty years more dilapidated and foul by the end of the period.

A further analysis of these housing figures will show that, for the most part, the benefit was limited to people

(continued on p. 12)



# WOMEN IN INDIAN MINES

MORE THAN A hundred years ago, in 1842, women ceased to be employed underground in mines in the British Isles, and since that time this type of unemployment for women has come to be regarded among English people as a peculiarly unpleasant institution which characterised the barbaric days of the Industrial Revolution but which could not be revived in our own day. This attitude towards the employment of women in mines is so rooted, particularly among the miners themselves, that, in spite of the many encroachments the Government has made on the workers' rights and ameliorations gained in a century or more of struggle in industry and in spite of the employment of women in a number of jobs normally done by men, the Government has not made any attempt or even any suggestion to revive this evil old custom of employing women in the mines. They knew very well that the women of the mining districts of modern England have a sufficient horror of conditions in the pits to make it unlikely that any of them would consent to accept such employment and that, furthermore, the men employed in the mines would without doubt take immediate action in the form of a complete strike if such an attempt were made.

We find it impossible nowadays to think of English women working underground in the pits, and it is with this attitude in mind that we should approach the recent news that the Government have now re-introduced the employment of women into the coal mines of India. This retrograde measure has so far stirred little emotion in England—the mentions in the press are few and laconic and there is no evidence of the public figures who exploit grievances having had their consciences stirred sufficiently to have made it a subject for publicity. This is because the Indian women belong to a subject race and, unfortunately, many English people still regard the subject races as people who can reasonably be expected to work and live under conditions which no English worker would tolerate for a day. This attitude, of course, is deliberately fostered by the ruling class, as it is of the greatest assistance to

(Continued from p. 11)

with some capital or at least some security in their work. More than 2,800,000 of the houses were built by speculative builders and bought by their owners with the help of building societies. This kind of house could not be acquired by the casual worker who forms a large element in the slum population or by any of the great peacetime pool of the out-of-work. Only the man who could put down £50 or £100 in ready cash and looked as though he were holding down a safe and respectable job was a suitable candidate for one of these jerry-built villas. Of the remaining 30 per cent. of new houses, many were built by people who were too wealthy to need the assistance of building society, many more were built by manufacturers who wished to have their employees on the spot (the ambiguity is intentional) and the figure also includes the many blocks of relatively expensive flats built in the large cities for business men and women. When we consider all these factors, it is obvious that only a small fragment of the four million new houses of 1918-1939 were available to ease the overcrowding of the poorer workers in London and the industrial towns.

GEORGE WOODCOCK

(A later article will criticise more closely the between-wars housing 'achievements', will illustrate how the war has aggravated the housing problem, and will examine the promises made by the authorities for a great reform in housing after the war).

them in maintaining their rule and exploitation in the Empire.

The employment of women underground in the Indian mines ceased in 1939. The work on which they were employed then and on which they will presumably be re-employed was, according to the report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India in 1931, 'the loading of the cut coal into tubs'. This is a type of work which demands considerable physical endurance if it is to be done without great injury to the health, and it is obvious that such heavy work is unsuitable for women—particularly in view of the low standard of health owing to malnutrition among Indian workers.

Conditions of work in Indian pits are poor, and have become worse during recent years. In some respects there are advantages over English pits, in that the seams which are worked are relatively thick—rarely less than five feet, and the incidence of the usual miners' industrial diseases is lower. On the other hand, the lack of proper ventilation in many pits and the lack of sanitation of any kind in almost all of them assists the spreading of disease. The Royal Commission of 1931 reports in two of the principal mining districts proportions of hookworm infection as high as 90% in one district and 73% in another among the adult workers employed underground. The accident rate also is high, and this is due to the fact that the workers in the mines are, for the most part, not trained pitmen like the English miners, but casual workers drawn from the local peasant populations and moving continually to and fro between the mine and the land. Very few of these workers have had adequate training in safety measures.

A recent report in the *Manchester Guardian* shows that since the Royal Commission's report there has been little improvement on the poor conditions of that time.

The report states:—

"The Contract system, the source of most of the evils, still flourishes, wages continue low, trade unionism has been discouraged, and medical and educational facilities are few.

A series of major mining disasters compelled the Government of India to appoint a committee seven years ago to consider improvements in safety measures and the conservation of the country's coal assets . . .

Picturesquely the committee described the coal trade in India as 'a race in which profit has always come in first, with safety a poor second, sound method an also ran, and national welfare a dead horse, entered perhaps, but never likely to start'.

Wages, according to the commission, had decreased 45 per cent. and the president of the National Association of Colliery Managers described them as ridiculously low. Since the start of the war two increases totalling 50 per cent. have been granted, but the average monthly wage, inclusive of this allowance, is only 14 rupees (21s.)."

These are the conditions into which the Indian women are being brought back to work. English miners and workers who have any knowledge of mining conditions will realise the barbarism which underlies this reintroduction of an institution the optimistic hoped had been reformed away for ever.

L. T. C.

LIVERPOOL F.F.P.

Liverpool Friends of Freedom Press should get in touch with Harold Franey, 34 Ashlar Road, Waterloo, Liverpool.



# Tolstoy on Property

ACCORDING TO TOLSTOY property means the domination of the possessors over the non-possessors. Property is the exclusive right to use some things, whether one actually uses them or not.

"Many of the men who called me their horse," Tolstoy makes the horse Linen-Measurer say, "did not ride me; quite different men rode me. Nor did they feed me; quite different men fed me. Nor was it those who called me their horse that did me kindnesses, but coachmen, veterinary surgeons, strangers altogether. Later, when the circle of my observations grew wider, I convinced myself that the idea 'mine', which has no other basis than men's low and bestial propensity which they call 'sense of ownership' or 'right of property', finds application not only with respect to us horses. A man says 'this house is mine' and never lives in it, he only attends to the building and repair of the house. A merchant says 'my store, my dry-goods store', and his clothing is not of the best fabrics he has in his store. There are men who call a piece of land 'mine' and have never seen this piece of land nor set foot on it. What men aim at in life is not to do what they think good, but to call as many things as possible 'mine'."

But the significance of property consists in the fact that the poor man who has no property is dependent on the rich man who has property; in order to come by the things which he needs for his living, but which belong to another, he must do what this other wills—in particular he must work for him. Thus property divides men into "two castes, an oppressed labouring caste that famishes and suffers and an idle oppressing caste that enjoys and lives in superfluity".

The significance of property makes itself especially felt in the case of the things that are necessary for the producing of other things, and so most notably in the case of land and tools, "there can be no farmer without the land that he tills, without scythes, wagons, and horses; no shoemaker is possible without a house built on the earth, without water, air and tools"; but property means that in many cases "the farmer possesses no land, no horses, no scythe, the shoemaker no house, no water, no awl; that somebody is keeping those things back from them". This leads to the consequence "that for a large fraction of the workers the natural conditions of production are deranged, that this fraction is necessitated to use other people's stock", and may by the owner of the stock be compelled "to work not on their own account, but for an employer". Consequently the workman works "not for himself, to suit his own wish, but under compulsion, to suit the whim of some idle persons who live in superfluity,

for the benefit of some rich man, the proprietor of a factory or other industrial plant." Thus property means the exploitation of the labourer by those to whom the land and tools belong; it means "that the products of human labour pass more and more out of the hands of the labouring masses into the hands of the unlabouring".

## Property Based on Force

The dominion which property involves, of possessors over non-possessors, is based on physical force.

"If the vast wealth that the labourers have piled up ranks not as the property of all, but only as that of a select few—if the power of raising taxes from labour and using them at pleasure is reserved to some men—this is not based on the fact that the people want to have it so or that by nature it must be so, but on the fact that the ruling classes see their advantage in it and determine it so by virtue of their power over men's bodies". "If men hand over the greatest part of the product of their labour to the capitalist or landlord, though they, as do all labourers now, hold this to be unjust, they do it only because they know they will be beaten and killed if they do not. One may even say outright that in our society, in which to every well-to-do man living an aristocratic life there are ten weary, ravenous, envious labourers, probably pining away with wife and children too, all the privileges of the rich, all their luxury and their abundance, are acquired and secured only by chastisement, imprisonment, and capital punishment".

Property is upheld by the police and the army. "We may act as if we did not see the policemen walking up and down before the window with loaded revolver to protect us while we eat a savoury meal or look at a new play, and as if we had no inkling of the soldiers who are every moment ready to go with rifle and cartridges where any one tries to infringe on our property. Yet we well know, if we can finish our meal and see the new play in peace, if we can drive out or hunt or attend a festival or a race undisturbed, we have to thank for this only the policeman's bullet and the soldier's weapon, which are ready to pierce the poor victim of hunger who looks upon our enjoyments from his corner with grumbling stomach, and who would at once disturb them if the policeman with his revolver went away, if in the barracks there were no longer any soldiers standing ready to appear at our first call".

The dominion which property involves, of the possessors over the non-possessors, is based on the physical force of the ruled.

Those very men of the non-possessing classes



who through property are dependent on the possessing classes must do police duty, serve in the army, pay the taxes out of which police and army are kept up, and in these and other ways either themselves exercise or at least support the physical force by which property is upheld. "If there did not exist these men who are ready to discipline or kill anyone whatever at the word of command, no one would dare assert what the non-labouring landlords now do all of them so confidently assert—that the soil which surrounds the peasants who die off for lack of land is the property of the man who does not work on it; it would not come into the head of the lord of the manor to take from the peasants a forest that has grown up under their eyes; nor would anyone say that the stores of grain accumulated by fraud in the midst of a starving population must remain unscathed that the merchant may have his profit".

### Distribution Based on Needs

Love requires that a distribution based solely on its commandments take place of property. According to the law of love, every man who works as he has strength should have so much—but only so much—as he needs.

That every man who works as he has strength should have so much as he needs and no more is a corollary from two precepts which follow from the law of love.

The first of these precepts says, Man shall "ask no work from others, but himself devote his whole life to work for others 'Man lives not to be served but to serve'." Therefore, in particular, he is not to keep account with others about his work, or think that he "has the more of a living to claim, the greater or more useful his quantum of work done is". Following this precept provides every man with what he needs. This is primarily true of the healthy adult. But the following of the precept to serve others also provides the sick, the aged, and children with their living. Men "do not stop feeding an animal when it falls sick; they do not even kill an old horse, but give it work appropriate to its strength; they bring up whole families of little lambs, pigs and puppies, because they expect benefit from them. How, then, should they not support the sick man who is necessary to them? How should they not find appropriate work for old and young, and bring up human beings who will in turn work for them?"

The second precept that follows from the law of love, and of which a corollary is that every man who works as he has strength should have as much as he needs and no more, bids us "share what you have with the poor; gather no riches".

### How Distribution Would Work

But what form can such a distribution of good take in detail? This is best shown us by "the Russian colonists. These colonists arrive on the soil,

settle, and begin to work, and no one of them takes it into his head that any one does not begin to make use of the land can have a right to it; on the contrary, the colonists regard the ground *a priori* as common property, and consider it altogether justifiable that everybody ploughs and reaps where he chooses. For working the fields, for starting gardens, and for building houses, they procure implements; and here too it does not suggest itself to them that these could of themselves produce any income—on the contrary, the colonists look upon any profit from the means of labour, any interest for grain lent, etc., as an injustice. They work on masterless land with their own means or with means borrowed free of interest, either each for himself or all together on joint account."

"In talking of such fellowship I am not setting forth fancies, but only describing what has gone on at all times, what is even at present taking place not only among Russian colonists but everywhere where man's natural condition is not yet deranged by some circumstances or other. I am describing what seems to everybody natural and rational. The men settle on the soil and go each one to work, make their implements and do their labour. If they think it advantageous to work jointly, they form a labour company". But, in individual business as well as in collective industry, "neither the water nor the ground nor the garments nor the plough can belong to anybody save him who drinks the water, wears the garments, and uses the plough; for all these things are necessary only to him who puts them to use". One can call "only his labour his own"; by it one has as much as one needs.

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# A Red and Black Notebook

## In Scotland Too

The annual conference of the Scottish Trades Union Congress is to take place at Dunoon next month. In the name of the Glasgow Trades Council is a resolution calling for the retention of the Essential Works Order—Bevin's Brass Collar—which ties the worker to his job, imprisons him for being late and imposes mock penalties on employers.

"Condemning the campaign against their retention, it declares that, despite their defects, Essential Work Orders are among the most solid achievements gained by the Trade Union Movement during the war. It advocates that the Government should be pressed to retain and improve 'this important piece of legislation'.

Glasgow Trades Council view, I learn, is that—whatever their shortcomings—Essential Works Orders provide valuable machinery which hitherto many workers could not achieve.

An official pointed out that the Orders gave the workers rights of appeal, rights of representation and expression in managerial questions, and a certain continuity of employment." *Reynolds, 5/3/44.*

## How the Londonderry-Castlereagh Fortune was Made

A Communist sympathising correspondent questions my last issue remarks on the Londonderry-Castlereagh family in reference to Viscount Castlereagh (heir of Londonderry) teaming up with Bolshevism through the Russia To-day Society.

The Londonderry fortune was built not only on Irish landowning but, more especially perhaps, also on Durham coal a hundred years ago. In 1844 occurred the strike of Durham miners against the existing conditions of hiring. Lord Londonderry as well as being a mine owner was also Lord Lieutenant of the county. In that capacity he ordered the eviction of the miners' families from their cottages. When the evicted miners sheltered in holes dug in the hillsides and moors Londonderry turned the Yeomanry against them with sword.

He used his Irish connection to import Irish labour to take the place of the Seaham strikers and then terrorised the Seaham shopkeepers into refusing credit to the

strikers. Here is his manifesto which appeared in the *Northern Star*, July 6, and July 27th, 1844 and recorded in the Webbs' *History of Trade Unionism*:

"Lord Londonderry again warns all the shopkeepers and tradesmen in his town of Seaham that if they still give credit to pitmen who hold off work, and continue in the Union, such men will be marked by his agents and overmen, and will never be employed in his collieries again, and the shopkeepers may be assured that they will never have any custom or dealings with them from Lord Londonderry's large concerns that he can in any manner prevent."

## Castlereagh Gives Up Nothing

By such methods was the Londonderry-Castlereagh fortune built. That bitter strike is still spoken of in Durham, not because Durham pitmen are any more bitter than other folk, but because the fight against the Londonderry family has been continuous ever since as a check up on the daily press will reveal.

Our "Russia To-day" friend objects that "Bakunin, Kropotkin and other well known Anarchists came of title bearing, wealthy, aristocratic families. You do not condemn them as you condemn the wealthy landowners associated with the Communist Party."

The point is, Kropotkin, Bakunin and the other Anarchists in question gave up their inherited wealth, titles and position and took up a life of revolutionary struggle, poverty and imprisonment. Castlereagh gives up nothing, wealth, title or position; he even remains Tory M.P. for County Down. Yet he is the friend of Bolshevism and Bolshevism is his ally.

## The Tragedy of The "Bevin Boy"

From the *Daily Mirror* of March 20, 1944 we quote the following:

"A grammar school boy who disappeared three days before he was due to register as a Bevin Boy was found drowned yesterday.

He was Glyn McHenry, of Westminster-road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, 17-year-old pupil at the Wirral Grammar School, Bebington. He left home on March 1.

A note found mentioned his fear of going down the mine and that he would be found in the canal. Police found his body floating in the Shropshire Union Canal at Ellesmere.

McHenry is described as being studious and quiet, and not the type of boy who would feel comfortable in a laborious occupation underground.

'McHenry was one of the finest pupils in the school,' Mr. J. Moir, headmaster of Wirral Grammar School, told the *Daily Mirror*. 'He was an excellent lad in every way and of outstanding character'."

We quote the *Daily Mirror* because most of the other national papers reporting the case omitted the reference to the Bevin call-up and reported the case as being one of over study.

## T.U.C. and Compulsory Training

According to the *Observer* the General Council of the T.U.C. is to recommend the following:

"The Compulsory registration of people looking for employment.

The compulsory use of employment exchanges and approved trade union machinery for filling vacancies; and

The direction of workers to employment."

And the compulsory training of unemployed workers. Why not send for Adolf Hitler? SYNDICALIST.

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