

# WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY.

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TWOPENCE

## HITLER'S BOMB

WITH THE NEWS of the attempt on Hitler's life on Friday, July 21st, attention has once more been focused on the situation inside Germany. Curiously enough this question was discussed by Cabinet Ministers some few days before the attempted assassination. On Monday, July 17th, Rhys Davies, M.P. asked Churchill whether the Allies, in deciding on their policy of unconditional surrender, had considered the possibility of the German workers rising up, overthrowing the Nazi government, and establishing a Communist régime? Mr. Churchill replied briefly, "Yes, Sir." He evaded further questions as to whether the Allies would welcome such an event, or whether they intended to repeat the Interventionist wars against the Russian Revolution.

On Wednesday, July 19th, Eden bitterly attacked the Catholic Labour M.P., R. R. Stokes, when the latter urged that appeals should be made to the German workers to assist in "achieving the liberation of Germany". Eden denied that Hitlerism had been forced on the German workers and declared that Hitler and Hitlerism are "symptomatic of the dominant sentiment and tradition of the German people", adding, "of course the German people supported him."

The next day there was some speculation as to why telephonic communication between Berlin and the outside world had been cut, and on Friday the news of the bomb attempt on Hitler's life was released.

It is exceedingly difficult to place any reliance on reports in the capitalist press. All one can do is to sift the news in the light of general principles, applying what history has taught us of the motives which underly the actions of power groups, to the particular situation. Views on such matters can only be speculative therefore; but at the same time events involving schisms between power groupings are of such importance to the class struggle that it is necessary to try and disentangle the threads, however tentatively.

There seems to be no doubt that a substantial number of high ranking officers in the German army are

involved in the present crisis in Berlin. Already several (Generals Fromm, von Sponek, Beck, Ensing, and Bertolsheim, Colonel Schmitt and Captain von Stauffenberg and his brother) are said to have been executed, while von Rundstedt and von Falkenhausen have been recently sacked from important positions.

It is said that many German officers opposed Hitler's attack on Russia, and many of those captured by the Red Army have joined the Committee of Free Germans in Moscow. The *Daily Worker* in its Editorial on 22/7/44 says: "The continuous appeals broadcast from Moscow by known and familiar colleagues now in the Union of German Officers set up by prisoners of war in Soviet camps cannot have been without effect." In a manifesto of just a year ago (*Soviet War News Weekly*, 20/7/43) reactionary German officers and German communists declared: "True to the Fatherland and the people, the army must play the decisive rôle," and offered "amnesty for all those adherents of Hitler who recant in time and join in the movement for a free Germany."

The Soviet government does not, be it noted, urge the German people to rise up against the reactionary army which put Hitler in power eleven years ago. Nor is it the first time that the Soviet government has sought contact with the Wehrmacht. When defeat became inevitable in summer 1918, Ludendorff turned to the problem of how to preserve the power of the army. When the Treaty of Versailles limited the Germany army to 100,000 men, the General Staff set up various camouflaged, illegal organizations of a military character, specifically counter-revolutionary in aim. One of these officer organisations, the FEME, was responsible for the murder of the Spartacists Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht and Leo Jogisches, and later the democrat Walther Rathenau, as well as for attempts on the lives of Scheidemann and other social democratic leaders. Behind this murder organisation stood Ludendorff, Count Reventlow, and Jagow, men who later helped to usher in Hitler and the Nazis.

But the Soviet government also helped the German General Staff to get round the "disarmament" terms of the Versailles Treaty. German armament factories were set up on Soviet territory and German officers helped to train the Red Army. Scheidemann, in 1926, spoke of munitions imported from Russia and of factories set up there. Dr. Gessler, the democrat Minister of Defence, declared: "The maintenance of the factories established in Russia for the manufacture of arms and munitions, and the import of such, is absolutely indispensable to the interest of the Fatherland." The Communists, of course denied it all at first, but in the same year Wilhelm Pieck admitted that "the supplies of munitions date back to 1921-22". In Russia Bukharin declared in principle that it was permissible for aeroplanes, grenades and poison gas to be manufactured on Soviet territory for the German Reichswehr on condition that they were paid for it.

It is needless to add that the governments of Britain, America, and France knew all about it. With the possibility of defeat, the German General Staff, the counter-revolutionary murderers of Luxemburg and Liebknecht, once more turn their eyes to Russia. The reception which von Seydlitz and others who sit on the Free German Committee have received in Moscow is sufficiently encouraging for them. Lieut.-Col. Hans Kahle, formerly of the International Brigades, now an executive member of the Stalinist Free German Movement in this country, declared in the *Daily Worker* (22/7/44): "The officer's revolt is a symptom of the deep crisis which is shaking Germany . . . The crisis is naturally most acute at the top of the Army, as the Generals and Staff Officers have a much deeper knowledge of the true situation at the front than have other Germans . . ." and he adds: "Now is the time for the German people to rise against Hitler . . ." For the German workers, however, to ally themselves with the reactionary Reichswehr officers who put Hitler in power would be disastrous. Kahle quotes the former anti-militarist Erich Weinert, now President of the "Free German Committee" in Moscow, as saying that "in all the army commands, in all army corps and almost all divisions, the National Committee has illegal groups which work on its instructions." If this boast is true, it is a dangerous look-out for the present-day counterparts of Luxemburg and Liebknecht. Can they be expected to revolt under the "leadership" of the modern counterparts of Ludendorff whose thugs assassinated their revolutionary predecessors?

The Allied leaders fear of revolution has repeatedly been made manifest. In Italy they were only too glad to treat with an Army leader, Badoglio, who combined the function of acting against Mussolini with that of crushing the Italian workers. Would our leaders be unwilling to compound with the German General Staff? They have explicitly refused to appeal to the German workers.

If the German workers rise up against Hitler they must crush not only the Nazi party but also the German Army General Staff. The Soviet government in Moscow has on its hands the murder of countless revolutionists from all over the world. Its support for the generals under the banner of the Hohenzollern's imperial flag, should be a warning to the German workers. The history of the officers' groups which assassinated the revolutionists in 1919-23, assisted by arms manufactured in the Soviet Union; the army's share in bringing Hitler to power; these are memories which properly prevent the German working class from casting in their lot with such counter-revolutionists.

Splits in the ruling groups may lead to a weakening of State power which provides the workers with their revolutionary opportunity. When such a movement comes it must be seized with both hands. But at such a moment also the German workers must be deaf to appeals over the B.B.C. or the Moscow Radio. They must not side with one group against the other. When the time for revolt comes, the counter-revolutionists of the German Army, no less than the Nazis themselves, must be brought to the reckoning.

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# ANARCHIST COMMENTARY

## A NEW EMPIRE ?

THE Imperialist capitalists of England and America are already looking for new markets and new fields of investment to take the place of those they have lost or will have lost by the end of the war through the growth of native industries in the former colonial or semi-colonial countries. The British government is optimistic in this matter, for the White Paper on Full Employment is based on the expectation of adequate foreign markets after the war. In fact, however, British imperialism will labour many difficulties. Markets in the Dominions will be reduced owing to the wartime development of industry in these countries. Overseas investments have had to be sold up to pay for war materials, and because of this the former markets and fields for British investments in South America have fallen into the hands of the United States. It is therefore natural that the British financiers should be turning their attention to the war-ravaged parts of Europe as possible fields for investment. Among these Russia appears to be the most promising, and an article by the Financial Editor of the *Manchester Guardian* (17/7/44) shows the extent to which British manufacturers are concerned with the prospect. Already the British government has made a start with investment in Russia by granting credits totalling £35,000,000. Here again, however, they have to face the competition of American capitalism, and the Americans are apparently talking in terms of colossal credits of £600,000,000. If, as is likely, the British try to go into effective competition with the Americans in the Russian market, it is easy to imagine that in the immediate post-war years the Russian government will become indebted to foreign capitalists to the extent of something in the neighbourhood of £1,000,000,000, or even more. This is a somewhat ironical conclusion to the attacks on foreign investors by Lenin. It seems as though the city is having its own back for the confiscation of the Lena Goldfields. It is also interesting to speculate on the extent to which the influence which the U.S.S.R. may be able to wield through her military power will be negated by dependence on England and America for industrial products. In these circumstances the Russian bear may very well turn out to be a very tame old sheepdog to the financial shepherds of Europe.

## MORE JIM CROW POLITICS

A MINOR race struggle is going on again in the Southern States over the question of the voting of Negroes in the Democratic primaries. These are the elections at which the Democratic Party in each state chooses its candidates for representation in the Federal Senate. As the whole of the South is controlled by the Democratic Party machine, it will be seen that these internal elections in fact determine the result of the final elections. In

most of the Southern States it is the custom to debar Negroes from the Democratic primaries; in some states they can vote in the Republican primaries, but as the Republican party machine is almost impotent in the South this means that their votes are useless.

A recent decision of the Supreme Court ruled that Texas had no right to debar Negroes from the primaries. Negroes in the South who thought this meant they would now be able to vote were disappointed, as most states appear to be defying the Court's decision, while South Carolina has gone to the extent of expunging all the 170 references to primaries in the state code, in order to deprive them of a legal basis and put them outside the jurisdiction of the courts. It appears from this that the white politicians are intent on keeping the Negroes out of Southern politics. This in turn makes the Negroes more concerned with politics and the drive to gain political influence, whose value is really negative and illusory. To sharpen the Negroes' appetite for the vote is quite a good way of preventing him from pursuing more direct ways towards emancipation.

As an interesting sidelight on this minor war in Southern politics, the American magazine *Life* carries a photograph of an election hoarding bearing the words "Support the Democratic Doctrine of States' Rights and White Supremacy." An unorthodox but a least frank definition of democracy!

## OUR FRIEND FRANCO

WHILE Churchill, in his Foreign Policy speech, had fulsome praise for that "Christian Gentleman", Franco, and thought that the Spanish General had been badly insulted by British cartoonists, it is very evident from the news of the last few days, that the El Caudillo is still giving aid to the German military machine. According to *Reynolds News* of July 9, German units defending the Mediterranean coast are being supplied with mortar shells, packed in boxes bearing the inscription "Fabricacion Espanola". The Spanish factories Hispano Suiza, and Vulcano in Barcelona are working full blast for the Nazis.

Nitrate ships arriving in Bilbao have their cargoes transferred to German ships which take it to Bayonne. The soil of Spain badly needs nitrates in order to fertilize the impoverished soil, yet Franco prefers to hand them over to his Fascist masters. Another part of his debt owing to them, since when he made war on the Spanish Workers during 1936-39, and now being repaid!

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**Comrades who have not settled for their Solidarity tickets please do so NOW!**

# A HUNDRED YEARS OF CO-OPERATION

THIS YEAR THE Co-operative Movement celebrates the centenary of the Rochdale Pioneers, who made the first successful attempt to put into practice an idea which had been talked about and attempted all over England. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century England had been experiencing great social change. The long drawn out war against Napoleon had produced poverty and want, and famine conditions were constantly recurring. There had been the recent discovery of new industrial methods using steam and water power, which resulted in the same amount of work being done by less people, thus causing unemployment on a large scale. Added to this, the workers were not even politically free, they did not even have the doubtful privilege of choosing their rulers. There were many riots and demonstrations during this time, the navy mutinied in 1797, and the most bloody act of repression was probably the Peterloo massacre of 1819, when the troops were called out to crush a peaceful demonstration in Manchester. The Chartist movement was extremely active, calling for political rights for the workers. Against this background co-operativism as an idea came into being. The ideas of French socialists and communists reached England and helped to produce the movement towards co-operativism. But the most important advocate was Robert Owen, who influenced many people to adopt the idea and to carry out experiments in running co-operative communities. These early attempts were mostly unsuccessful, and they tried out nearly every different way of running their projects. Their common aim was to improve working class conditions, and in his book *History of Co-operation*, George Jacob Holyoake says of their method:

"It is thus that Co-operation supplements Political Economy by organising the distribution of wealth in the near future. It touches no man's fortune; it seeks no plunder; it causes no disturbance in society; it gives no trouble to statesmen; it enters into no secret associations; it needs no trades union to protect its interests; it contemplates no violence; it subverts no order . . ."

## The First Success

The Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society opened their shop in 1844. This small group of workers had saved up week by week until they had raised £28. With this money they bought a very simple stock of butter, sugar, flour, oatmeal and candles. At first the Society could use only volunteer labour, and opened two nights a week. But soon the workers realised that this was a practical idea, and rallied to its support; the membership grew and before long they could employ an assistant and keep the shop open all day.

The principle upon which the Rochdale Society worked was that all surplus profit made should be distributed amongst the members in proportion to the purchases made. This dividend system has remained as the most successful way of running a co-operative society, and the "divi" has come to many people to be the trade mark of the co-ops. Besides this, the co-ops are run on democratic lines; the movement is theoretically controlled by the members, each having one vote at business meetings; officers and committees are re-elected at regular intervals; and membership of the societies is open to all. During their growth and expansion the co-ops have been a working-class organisation which has been affected by the workers struggle, and has given valuable assistance in time of persecution. Especially in the North Country and in South Wales the co-ops have given money to strike funds and have given credit to strikers for food.

The workers have been grateful, and their first concern on returning to the job has been to pay back the credit extended to them. Worthy of special note was the way in which the co-operatives sent food ships to the Dublin strikers in 1913, when the police were doing their best to starve out the strikers and their families.

## The Co-ops To-day

The Co-operative movement has become to-day a powerful trading concern. In 1844 the Rochdale Pioneers started with a capital of £28, by 1872 the total capital of societies in Great Britain was £2,893,000 and by 1889 this had risen to £10,716,000. To-day its combined assets are given as £488,133,376, and it does a yearly retail trade of £302,246,329. Figures as large as this don't mean very much, but the influence of the co-ops is better illustrated if you realise that one person in every three has something to do with the Co-operative Society.

From a pitiful stock of grocery and candles, the co-ops now own factories, farms, departmental stores, cinemas, warehouses, offices; they run a savings bank and an insurance company; they build housing estates and are now planning to establish a residential college for employees and members. Up and down the country they organise meetings, lectures, educational courses, clubs for men and women, youth and children. And they own a weekly national paper—*Reynolds News*.

A mighty achievement, built on working class effort, and an effective answer to those who say the workers need educating or are not able to organise a movement themselves. Yes, a mighty achievement and a tribute to the constructive powers of the workers. But the movement is mainly sick and lifeless. The local stores is not obviously different to any other shop, and the goods sold there are no different or better than those sold by ordinary shopkeepers. Indeed a complain often made is that co-op goods are too standardised and lack imagination. And the business meetings are attended by only a very small fraction of the members; the vast majority are only "divi-conscious" and realise that they get a bit better treatment from the co-op. This situation of apathy is particularly true of the London co-ops, and the fact is recognised by many of its more enthusiastic supporters, who try to ginger up the movement and restore life to the tired bones.

## The Real Nature of the Co-ops

The reason for this apathetic attitude can be seen if we examine the real character of the movement. The Co-operatives, like the Labour Party and the Trade Unions grew up in a period when capitalism was expanding, and was thus able to make concessions to these organisations. Instead of becoming the enemy of capitalism, the co-ops became its competitor in the general market, and in order to do this successfully it had to adopt the essentials of capitalism—it had to become a capitalist organisation itself. To-day the movement betrays all the characteristics of capitalism; it exploits wage labour, collects rents, produces goods for profit and not for their use-value and takes part in insurance and banking activities. Apart from these purely domestic activities, the co-ops have large amounts of their capital invested in War Loans, Government Bonds, etc., over half their money is invested in non Co-op funds. This fact is the most effective in making the character of the Co-ops conservative. The Co-ops have a vested interest in the present form of society, and are bound to defend it against all comers. Not only

must they defend capitalist democracy from the onslaught of fascism, but they will also be forced to oppose a revolutionary movement of the workers which will try to put an end to property and privilege. But at the same time as the co-ops ally themselves with capitalism they are joining forces with something which must eventually destroy their independence. The whole tendency of modern capitalism is towards monopoly, combines and eventual state control. Instead of the state being the servant of the ruling class and the expression of its will, the modern state is itself becoming the ruling class. This is most clearly seen in Germany and Russia. In Germany all independent organisations were ruthlessly stamped out, the co-ops with the others, and the same would occur in the case of a Fascist movement gaining control of this country. We already know that Lord Beaverbrook's papers would be only too pleased to see the co-ops closed down, continually do the *Daily* and *Sunday Express* carry on a dishonest campaign against the movement. The establishment of State socialism in this country would result eventually in the destruction of the co-ops and an independent organisation. In Russia the co-operative movement which exists is not a free and independent body, its life and activities are controlled from above by the state machinery. The politicians of the left wing can only offer us the kind of system which exists in Russia, if we allow them to take the power. So long as the State machinery remains in

existence it must become more and more oppressive, whether because of a Fascist revolt, a State socialist dictatorship or because of the gradual evolution towards totalitarianism which goes on in a "democratic" society.

The only alternative to this situation is the workers revolution which will introduce a free society where the State and capitalism no longer exist. Where can the co-ops fit into such a society? We have seen that in spite of the fact that co-operativism has been created by the workers, has had to fight against reaction in order to establish its position, and has given valuable aid to strikers in the class struggle, yet in spite of this it is a capitalist institution. In a revolutionary situation we should therefore expect to see a conflict between the revolutionary elements within the co-operatives, and the bureaucracy who will be forced to defend the property and investments which the co-ops hold by virtue of law and order. The leaders of the co-ops can be expected to come out on the side of reaction, just like the Labour and Trade Union leaders, even though that does not represent the true voice of the majority of the members.

We can learn a lot from the co-operative movement, both from its achievements and from its mistakes, and if as much effort and devotion goes into the building of a revolutionary labour movement in this country, then the success of a free society will be assured.

JACK WADE

## "YOUR" COUNTRY

ONCE AGAIN THERE is a major exodus from London—once again the conception that in England there are two nations—the rich and the poor—is seen to be broadly true. It was inevitable when evacuation took place first that there would be certain class-discrimination—the well-to-do would object to billeting what they term "the slum-dwellers", while the middle-class would insist on middle-class evacuees. That this would inevitably work to the disadvantage of the working-class is apparent, since it is the better-off who have the larger houses and the most room and assistance. But we saw in Evacuation No. 1 what we see in the present evacuation, that the upper-classes just refuse to do anything at all which will inconvenience themselves. In many cases they form clubs for officers in order to avoid being billeted with evacuees. In one wealthy district the Council, composed of clergymen, retired officers and lawyers and the like, backed the demand of its professional class residents and landlords to ban a Dr. Barnado's Home, which was only over-ridden by outside pressure. In Blackpool a few days ago a J.P. was fined the trivial sum of £5 by his fellow magistrates for failing to take in flying-bomb evacuees. The report is interesting and illuminating:

A Blackpool J.P. was fined £5 by his fellow magistrates yesterday for failing to take in evacuees from London flying bomb areas.

He is Abraham Fielding, of Hull-road, Blackpool. Seven other apartment-house-keepers in the same road were summoned with him.

Fielding asked him: "How many evacuees have you?"—"None," was the reply.

How many has the mayor?—None.

How many the town clerk and the other magistrates?

Mr. Parry Hughes, who prosecuted, objected to these questions, but the clerk ruled them in order.

Mr. Hughes told the court that each house in Hull-road could accommodate between 30 and 40 people.

*Daily Herald*, 18/7/44.

From the *Herald* of the same date we learn what is further proof for our contention:

Mr. Ivor Saunders, Swansea's billeting officer, commented: "The response from the better-class districts has been extremely disappointing. With the exception of about half a dozen, all the offers come from working-class homes."

A lot of nonsense is talked in wartime Britain about how democratic we are becoming all of a sudden. By their deeds shall ye know them. The propertied classes of Britain have not given up one iota of their privileges. They will not go to fight in even their own total war except in first-class reserved carriages.

But though town councillors safeguard their interests in the matter; though the residents of exclusive rural resorts keep their skirts clear of the common folk; though profiteers in the north-west coastal towns keep up a barrage of petty persecution to "persuade" evacuees to return home; though the magnanimous landlords give their dwellings to the National Trust to avoid taxation, and go on living there without any thought that the women and children leaving London might be equally trustees for the nation; though dispirited mothers with small children prefer to face the blitz of the Nazis abroad rather than that of the Nazis at home; we nevertheless feel convinced that the residents of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire gentlemen's country clubs will echo the sentiment, "London can take it!" However, even a worm will turn.

A. M.

### BRISTOL AREA F.F.P. MEETINGS

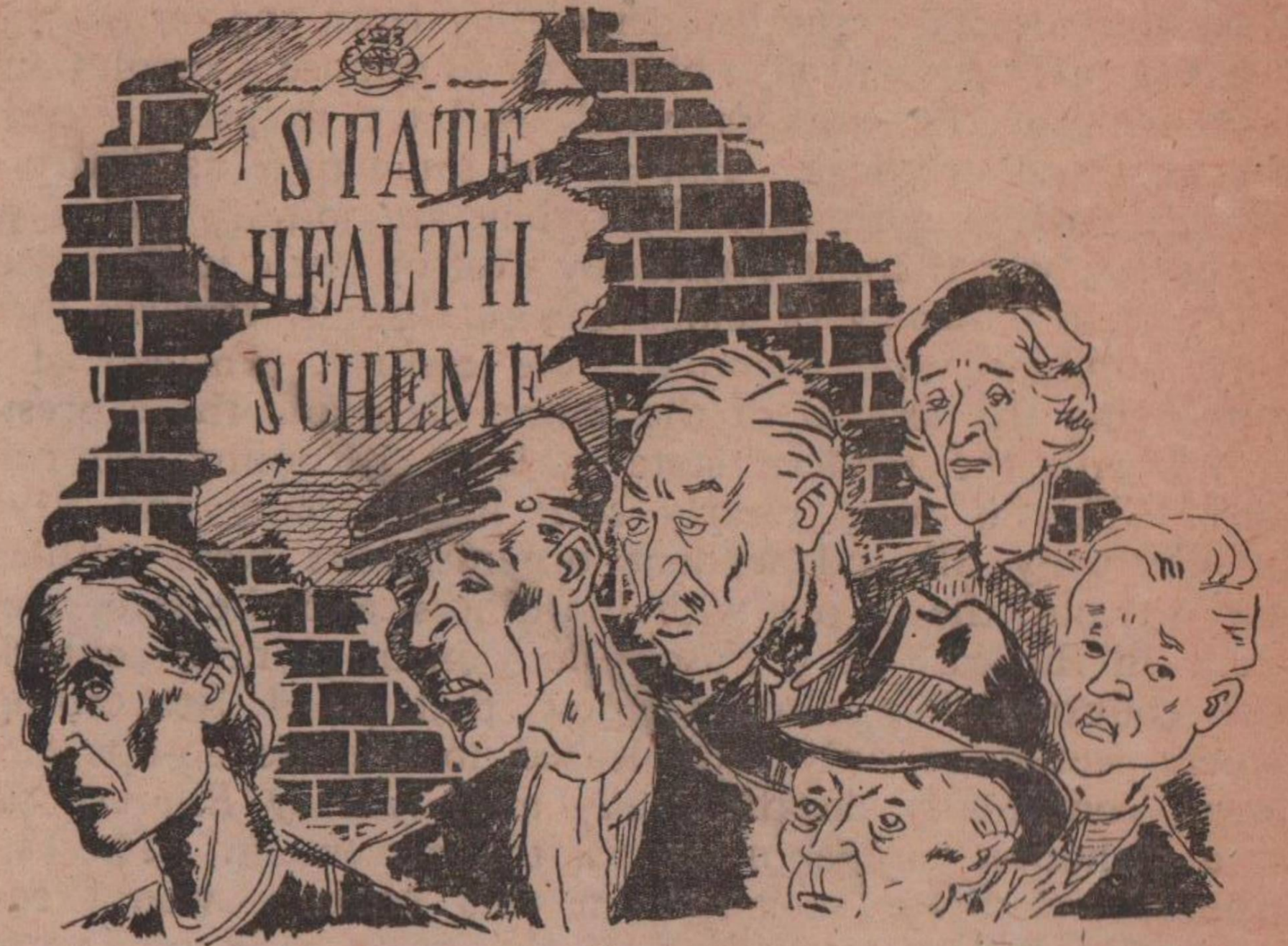
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# REFORMISM IN PUBLIC HEALTH



## The Government's National Health Scheme will be a failure

CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION has taken place in recent months around the Government's White Paper on a National Health Service. There has been much political wrangling about it both in the medical and lay press, chiefly on the question whether a State Medical Service is more desirable than the present private practitioners and panel system. In the heat which this has engendered very little attention has been paid to the central question of whether the new scheme will materially reduce the present volume of ill-health. As is usual in political discussions, side issues dominate the field.

From the working class point of view, the National Health Scheme is immediately open to the criticism that it makes no attempt to remedy poverty itself. Yet the medical press have at last recognized the primary part which poverty plays. Commenting on the Beveridge Report, more than a year ago, an editorial article in the *Lancet* (5/12/42) declared: "The greatest single cause of ill-health and sub-optimal health, mental and physical, is not a virus or a bacterium but poverty. So it is the doctor's duty to fight poverty with even greater vigour than he fights the diphtheria bacillus." The Government's proposed new Health Service, however, does not concern itself with the elimination of poverty. Reforms which do not touch the central cause of the trouble are not likely to bring in substantial results.

It is worth while, in passing, to note that many of the most progressive doctors, those who are under no misconceptions about the effects of poverty, nevertheless cherish the most rosy illusions about the State. Dr. Aleck Bourne, who devotes the first half of his Penguin *Health of the Future* to outlining the poverty diseases, suggests as a remedy state control of hospitals and doctors, without explaining how that is going to alter wage levels. Sir John Boyd Orr, whose work has been of the utmost value in demonstrating the relationship between malnutrition, ill-health, and inadequate income, seems to think that the State is somehow interested in reducing the volume of poverty in spite of its palpable negligence in the past. More recently, Professor John Ryle, who occupies the chair of Social Medicine at Oxford University, has expressed the view that social advances in medical care can only be achieved through increased subordination of the medical profession to State regimentation. In the whole controversy about the National Health Service it is generally taken for granted that the scheme itself is progressive, whilst those who point out the advantages of medicine not subservient to centralized State direction are labelled as reactionary.

The history of State interference in matters of health does not encourage such optimism. In 1842, just over a century ago, Sir Edwin Chadwick, speaking for the Poor Law Commissioners in their report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Classes, enunciated the great principle that pre-

vention of disease provides a more important method of advance than the treatment of established disease. Yet the Poor Law administration continued to be dominated by the State's attitude that people must not be encouraged to be ill by the knowledge that they could be treated free at the expense of the State. More than sixty years had to pass before a Government undertook any serious preventive measure, apart from drainage schemes.

Nor have subsequent advances sprung from any disinterested desire on the part of the Government that people should be happy and healthy, but rather from fear lest the state be deprived of adequate cannon fodder during wars. The relationship of Health measures to recruiting statistics has been pointed out by many sociologists. Thus the high percentage of rejections for the Army during the Boer War, led the Government to set up a committee of enquiry, which issued its Report on Physical Deterioration in 1904. Sir Charles Booth's Survey of London Life and Labour of ten years before, or Mr. Seebohm Rowntree's revelations regarding the condition of the working class in York (1900) had occasioned the Government no concern. But recruiting figures were another matter. In 1906 the School Meals Act was passed, and a few years later Lloyd George introduced his National Health Insurance Scheme. Even then, and even now, the acts regarding the provision of meals in schools for necessitous children were not made compulsory on the local authorities. They were merely permissive, so by no means all local authorities provided them. In 1911, 200,000 elementary school children in England and Wales were receiving free meals; but in 1935-36 only 143,000 children—one in thirty-eight of all elementary school children in England and Wales—were getting free meals.

In 1914-18 the conception of a C3 nation became current, and again the recruiting figures were startling. In 1919 a Ministry of Health was set up for the first time. In 1935, 62 per cent. of recruits for the army were rejected on physical grounds. The same year saw the National Government inaugurate its rearmament programme. Two years later they launched a Physical Fitness Campaign. It is not therefore surprising that so many writers have observed that it takes the fear of war to make a government take any interest in the health of its subjects. As an unemployed Durham miner remarked ten years ago: "I don't know, war is horrible and a waste, but you get something to do and usually enough to eat, and you have friends with you and you feel you are of some use—but you're a bloody fool really, because they don't really want you, and they don't really think you're a hero or they would not let you go on the scrap-heap when it's all over. Look at me, one of the poor b——s who made the world safe for democracy, what has

it done for me? . . . It is clear that it was only when I was asked to kill or be killed that I had a chance to live." (Quoted by John Newsom: *Out of the Pit*, 1936). The present concern for health and adequate nutrition comes suspiciously during wartime after all those years of peacetime neglect and indifference.

Nevertheless, it may be objected, the new scheme will bring a more adequate medical service to the working man. Maybe it will—on paper. At the present time there are very few parts of England—mostly remote country districts—where hospital and specialist services are not available, free. The trouble is that our economic system makes it impossible for the working man and woman to make use of the services provided.

Doctors are always lamenting that they have to cope with disease when it is already far advanced. "If only patients would come along earlier!" Yet the detection of early signs of disease is very difficult, much more so than the later and more obvious manifestations. The Out-Patient Departments of hospitals are so crowded that it is only too easy for patients who have (as yet) no definite signs or symptoms of disease to be dismissed after a brief examination with reassurances, a bottle of medicine, and a recommendation to "come back if they are any worse". The same is even more true of panel practice. Such early cases are bound to be considered less urgent than those who are critically ill and who, therefore, must of necessity receive priority. Will the National Health Scheme change this state of affairs? I doubt it.

Yet even if hospitals and clinics were more thoroughly equipped and organised for the earlier detection of disease, the patients most in need could still not avail themselves of such an improved service. A working man is dependent on his wages, for his means of life. He cannot afford time off from work to go up to hospital. Visits to a hospital, however free, however well equipped with specialist services, still entail loss of working time and therefore of wages. Hence a man does not go to hospital until his disease is already incapacitating him and itself decreasing his earning power. If one goes up to hospital in the evening with anything less than an emergency condition, one is received with very scant courtesy and told as often as not to "come back in the morning"—i.e. during working hours.

The same difficulty presents itself to women, who may be even less able to afford the long hours of waiting in Out-Patient Departments. Margery Spring Rice, in her *Pelican, Working-Class Wives*, sums the matter up: "As to the degree of ill health which must be reached before the mother asks advice for herself, and the further stage at which the advice is taken, it has already been shown that owing first to poverty, then to the weight of other cares and to the arduousness of their work, the great majority of these women postpone seeking advice and treatment till the last possible moment. There is, besides the pressure of everyday life, a good deal of scepticism about the efficacy of a doctor's remedies. A doctor cannot get employment for the husband, and unemployment is put down over and over again as the real cause of the life's illness, 'Husband's work the only cure'; 'no remedy but employment'. What is the use of spending money and time on a doctor in these circumstances?" Or, we might add, on a hospital, however well equipped by a National Health Service Scheme? When a woman's condition gets too bad, she is compelled to seek medical advice. But then, more often than not, it is impossible to take advantage of the advice given. The cause of her complaint is most likely overwork and undernourishment; the treatment requires as a first necessity, rest. But how can a working woman, with a husband and children to look after, rest? And when an operation, or other in-patient

treatment is necessary, it frequently has to be refused, because when the mother goes into hospital, there will be no one to look after the children. How can improved health services alter this state of affairs, which derives directly from poverty?

In these ways poverty not only produces disease, but also prevents its victims from getting full advantage from medical treatment. A National Health Scheme which takes no cognizance of the fundamental factor of poverty cannot possibly succeed. However efficient and all-embracing its health and hospital services are, those who are most in need of them are unable to take advantage of them. It provides one more demonstration of the futility of the half measures which are called reforms; and by contrast it underlines the truth that only radical measures, revolutionary measures which destroy the unequal property relations on which poverty and ill-health depend can succeed in bringing health to the population.

If a further demonstration of the ineffectiveness of reformist measures is required, it can be supplied from the official figures of the Registrar-General for Infant Mortality rates. In the past fifty years these have been steadily declining—a fact which the adherents of gradualism are never tired of pointing out. But the recent researches of Titmuss have shown that they have declined much more sharply among the children of the rich than among those of the poor, in spite of the health reforms of the last thirty years. Thus although reforms are designed to reduce the differences which exist between the rich and poor as regards primary human needs, they have failed to do so, for instead the gulf has got larger. The comfortable reformist view that a reformist measure like the National Health Insurance Act of 1911 has "of course" been effective in reducing class differences in health is simply an illusion. The *Times* was compelled to say in a leading article on Titmuss' work (reviewed in an earlier issue of *War Commentary*); "Mr. Titmuss's startling conclusion is that between the census years 1911 and 1931 a 50 per cent. reduction in the national average infant death rate was accompanied by a widening of the difference between the economically favoured and the economically handicapped . . . There is thus a strong *prima facie* case for believing that one-third of the nation's parents, and half the nation's children, did not benefit to anything like a proportionate extent from the important social advances of the period since 1911, notwithstanding the great expansion, precisely during those years, of social services intended primarily for their well-being."

I have attempted to outline the questions that have to be considered when evaluating the likely effect of official measures designed apparently to promote the nation's health. In the light of these considerations the National Health Service scheme must be judged a failure. It nowhere goes to the root of ill-health—poverty itself—and does not even alter those factors which make existing medical services only partially and inadequately effective.

J. H.

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War Commentary can be obtained at special subscription rates by members of H.M. and Allied Governments Forces. Comrades in uniform, get your War Commentary fortnightly for 6d. (6 months sub.) 1/- (one year sub.)

## BLOOD AND GUTS

The Germans are expecting General George (Blood and Guts) Patton to appear in Normandy at any moment.

Patton's substantive rank in the U.S. Army is that of Colonel. The Senate Military Affairs Committee did not approve his promotion to the permanent rank of Major-general as the result of an incident during a visit Patton paid to a military hospital in Sicily last year.

He is a legend in the American army—a legend built around his flamboyance, his language, his physical strength, his marksmanship, his uniforms (designed by himself), and his courage; but above all, around his undeniable ability as a general.

He wears two pearl-handled Wild West pistols in his belt. He is the best pistol shot in the American army. He can run 100 yards against most West Point graduates. He has been known to recite poems of his own composition to his troops.

*Evening Standard, 12/7/44.*

He can also hit in the face a soldier lying in a hospital bed . . . this is the incident tactfully referred to in the above cutting.

## TWO VIEWS ON LANDLORDS



The Duke of Sutherland and his new Duchess—they were married in London last week—are among the more fortunate. Not for them the troubles of house hunting. Sutton Place, the Duke's Surrey home, has 36 rooms (11 sitting and 25 bedrooms).

He still retains a wing of Dunrobin Castle for his private use. It is true that Sutton Place for some time housed evacuees, 16 of them, a number which later fell to eight, but still left a pretty handsome acreage of housing for two people.

Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Cook and their five children, who occupy a cottage on the edge of the Duke's Surrey estate, are not so fortunate. They have been given notice to quit, despite the fact that alternative accommodation is almost impossible to find.

*Reynolds News, 16/7/44.*

Compare with what Lady Astor said in a debate in the House a few days ago. The noble lady asked an M.P. who had dared to attack landlords' selfishness: "Do you really believe that the landlords, who have given their sons' lives to the country and are suffering as much as any other people, are going to stop the people from getting their homes because of their vested interests?"

## SHADES OF GOEBBELS

Michael le Troquer, prominent Paris lawyer and son of the de Gaulle Commissar Delegate for Liberated Territories, recently escaped from France.

He has since written the following curious suggestions in the official French newspaper in Algiers, the *L'Alger Rpublicain*:

"If the French Jews now living under the appalling Vichy anti-Jewish laws, should automatically have their industrial, commercial, and political rights as French citizens restored, certain French (non-Jewish) elements in liberated France might be very irritated."

He tells responsible leaders of Free France that ". . . undoubtedly a proper solution can be found (of the problem of the dispossessed French Jews) if great prudence and political wisdom is exercised by those in charge of repairing injustices, without making psychological errors . . ."

*Sunday Dispatch, 16/7/44.*

## CHEERS FOR THE NIZAM

A popular person in the City to-day is the Nizam of Hyderabad. He has just put £708,000 down on the counter to buy a colliery situated in his own State, but owned by British investors. Up to a few days ago the market thought this property was worth about half the sum now offered for it.

This is a modest deal for the Nizam, who is worth about £500,000,000 and is reputed to be the richest man in the world. Most of that fortune is invested in gold and jewels.

*Star*

Advice to "Bevin boys"—there's money in coal.

# Through

## MONTY'S TACTICS

Monty never loses a chance to build up a feeling of comradeship between himself and his men. Just before the invasion of Italy he was addressing a group of his veterans. "We have had great adventures together," he said. "I hope that, wherever I go in the future, I will always have you with me." A groan arose from the men, who felt pretty sure that Monty would always be where the fighting was heaviest. For a moment the General was taken aback. But the next moment he had them with him again. "Ah," he said, "but maybe I shall go home to England."

He permits no one to smoke in his office or caravan, but this is the result of personal distaste, not moral disapproval. He has even relaxed this ban when the welfare of his troops demanded it. For a long time the only cigarettes available to the Eighth Army were the British "Victory" cigarettes, a particularly foul variety which the men at first refused to smoke. To popularize them, Monty made a practice of singling them out, sniffing appreciatively and saying: "Now, there's one kind of cigarette I like." His staff officers and correspondents lost no time in taking advantage of him. They procured "Victory" packages from the soldiers, filled them with standard-brand cigarettes and blew smoke all around the General. Monty, unaware of the fraud, was compelled to keep on commenting, "Ah, a fine aroma."

*Life (U.S.A.), 15/5/44.*

## "NO DANGER OF FAMINE" - AMERY

The Bengal Relief Committee, whose estimate of the mortality from the famine points out that a new class has emerged in Bengal, which is entirely devoid of any purchasing capacity, however low the prices of rice may be.



East Bengal, according to some observers, is heading for another famine. of last year is three and a half million, As it is primarily a jute-growing area it

is, therefore, even in normal circumstances, deficient in rice. East Bengal is, perhaps, the first manifest symptom of the coming danger. It was reported recently from Chittagong district that the price of rice was fifty rupees a maund, which was double last year's rate.

Describing the conditions Mrs. Sengupta said in the Bengal Legislature: "Women were in rags, dirt, and filth. Prostitution in Chittagong was simply terrible." Other speakers added that similar distress was discernible in other districts of East Bengal.

*Manchester Guardian, 7/7/44.*



## STALINIST DIRTY WORK

Last May a group of leftwing refugees in Mexico City joined with several Mexican radicals to form the "Socialism and Liberty" group. A month later, the group put out the first number of an illustrated review intitled "Mundo". Written in Spanish, the magazine justifies its title, covering the major regions of the world in special departments and printing the work of writers of a wide range of nationalities. Five numbers have appeared to date. Among the leading articles have been: "The Rebirth of Socialism" by Victor Serge; "Homage to Otto and Alice Ruhle"; "The Third Camp" by Julian Gorkin; "War Diary" by Jean Malaquais;

# the Press

"The Contradictions of Our Socialist Thinking" by Enrique Gironella. The Mexican Communists have denounced "Mundo" as "Goebbels' mouthpiece", and their adherents in the Mexico postoffice have sabotaged its distribution. (The Trotskyists dismiss the magazine as "miserable Centrist confusionism".) For some reason, very few copies of "Mundo" have reached this country, although many have been mailed to American addresses. Inquiry has so far not revealed whether this is due to Stalinist dirty work in Mexico City, or to the censors at the border—though it is hard to see what the latter could find to object to in the magazine, beyond its openly socialist bias.

*Politics (U.S.A.), April 1944.*

## DEEP SHELTERS NOT FOR NIGHT WORKERS

London's new shelters, where thousands of people sleep each night in an underground world of safety and comfort, are not for night workers.

After the last batch of shelterers, bedding slung round them, has stumbled out into the morning light, the wicket gates are closed. And they remain closed during the day.

Mr. Churchill, telling London citizens of their duty in his Commons speech on the flying bomb last week, said that "when the long day is done they should seek the safest shelter that they can find and forget their cares in well-earned sleep."

Night workers, after the long night is done, find the safest shelters closed to them.

When the *News Chronicle* inquired by telephone at the Ministry of Home Security whether the deep shelters would be opened during the day for the use of night workers, I was told: "There is nothing to be said on this subject: it is a very big question."

"Does that mean the matter is being considered?" I asked.

I was asked to hold on. Finally came the reply: "There is nothing more to say."

*News Chronicle, 15/7/44.*

## WHAT HIS READERS THINK

Memo to Mass-Observation: my note disagreeing with George Orwell's parallel between the flying-bomb and R.A.F. bombing of Germany excited 24 letters—of which 22 agreed with Orwell, accused me of "hypocrisy" and "peddling official dope." Well, well . . .

Tom Driberg in  
*Reynolds News, 16/7/44.*



## CONSCIENCE MONEY



The Western Cartridge Company, with great fanfare and show of patriotism, has announced that it voluntarily returned to the government \$20,000,000 because its profits were so large due to "favourable operating conditions."

The fact of the matter is, says labour, that this refund to the government actually is a conscience debt, publicized to cover up the malodorous truth that a number of the supervisory officials of the company's St. Louis plant are on trial in a Federal court on charges of having defrauded the government by palming defective ammunitions off on the armed forces by deceit and trickery.

The Department of Justice has filed a suit against Western Cartridge seeking damages for the fraud. If it makes the case stick, the government will collect many millions of dollars.

*The Call (U.S.A.), 3/3/44.*

## AMERICA MAY USE ROBOT BOMBS

A Senate committee is due to hear to-morrow details of the robot bomb the Americans had perfected at the end of the last war but never put into mass production.

It was a stubby biplane, with a 90-horse-power engine and it was launched from a 250ft.-long track.

The wings were 16ft. across. The bomb had 1,000lb. of T.N.T. inside it and tests conducted at Bellport, Long Island, in the spring of 1918 showed that it could be given any range up to 400 miles, according to the amount of petrol in the tank.

Two points brought to light by a party of newspapermen who have just visited the fantastic secret experimental laboratories of the Army Air Forces at Dayton, Ohio, have more than an academic interest just now.

*Point 1:* A complete duplicate of the German rocket-bomb launching installation was built some time ago in Florida.

*Point 2:* Gen. Meyers, commanding A.A.F. Material Command, said that there is an American robot bomb; that radio-controlled bombs were being tested before this country entered the war; and that, though they lack the precision the American bombing doctrine calls for, "if occasion should arise we would use them."

*News Chronicle, 10/7/44.*

So much for the "Indiscriminate weapon which raises grave issues" (Churchill).

## CROCE RESIGNS

In coming to Rome Signor Bonomi leaves one Minister without Portfolio behind, the philosopher Benedetto Croce. He has resigned from the Cabinet and announced his intention of pursuing his studies in Naples. No one in Italy will take this amiss, for Senator Croce's reputation has stood high all these years, and the decision will be taken as a genuine one, and one which leaves the way clear for younger men, of whom Italy has great need. His chief contribution to the first difficult months of Free Italy's life was his proposal to bridge the chasm between Italy's Republicans and Monarchists by a regency for the young Prince of Naples accompanied by the abdication of King Victor Emmanuel and Crown Prince Umberto.

When yet another compromise had to be devised Croce lent his support for the sake of unity, but not without an attack on the Crown Prince for a newspaper statement of his interpreting recent events. The strain of working under the Crown Prince as head of the State has obviously been considerable for Croce.

*Manchester Guardian, 15/7/44.*

# “END IT, COMRADES”

(Translated from the German)

THE TOMMIES ARE attacking like Hell. We shan't be able to hold our position much longer. Casualties are terrifically heavy on both sides. There were not many left of the Infantry that came back for a rest. The mood of despair is growing, and on top of it all the food and the treatment of the men by the officers are getting worse every day. The Pioneers are losing their nerve under the constant shelling; only the threat of harsh punishment keeps them going. So, of course, accidents are increasing.

The men who went to fetch coffee from the cookhouse told us they had just read, painted with tar in big letters on the cookhouse wall:

'Equal pay — equal food!'

Our old slogan! But underneath there was something new—something which gave them an uneasy thrill:

'End it, comrades!'

The inscription disappeared. We had to go on special parade and were threatened with terrible reprisals if such a 'swinish' thing were to happen again. But they didn't find out who did it.

Two days later there was a new sensation.

On the roof of a half-destroyed, empty house a door was resting neatly against the chimney, and on it, for everybody to read, was painted:—

Menu Card from G.H.Q.:

Goose Liver in Madeira gravy,  
Beef Bouillon with marrow  
Smoked Salmon

Pheasant on Pineapple with Sauerkraut  
boiled in Champagne

Tangerines and Cream,  
Cheese wafers — confectionery  
coffee and liqueurs

Menu Card for our Heroes:

Sausages and chips

END IT, COMRADES!

Well, it certainly caused some excitement. The door had to be removed at once—which wasn't as easy as all that, because the only ladder available was found with its rungs sawn through! Meanwhile the men of a convoy passing through read the Menu Card and

were carrying the tale to the front line.

Then the M.P.'s turned up. They searched our billets and cross-examined everybody. The officers thundered and cursed. They promised leave home if only we'd name the culprit. All in vain!

Then even more exciting things happened. The new reinforcements for the Pioneers found green leaflets everywhere they went to work. They were stuck on the grey concrete walls, stuck in the trenches, stuck in the latrines—they even flashed from the tangle of barbed wire. They were printed in German and English:

“Wohin kämpfst du, prolet?”

What are you fighting for, worker?”

They gave a short account of the cause, nature and aim of the imperialist war and ended up with that stirring—

“Macht Schluss, Kameraden!

End it, Comrades!”

The C.O. issued a brilliant order. The bills were to be scratched off without being read! The officers in charge were to report every man not carrying out this order to the letter.

But from this day onward, somehow the work wouldn't go smoothly. Shovel, spade and pick handles broke more than usual. Lt. Jorke happened to be under a roll of barbed wire when it fell from a lorry. Sacks dropped and burst, boxes fell to pieces, everywhere things went wrong. After duty the whole company was punished with extra drill. That caused so much ill feeling that even the officers got worried.

We soon learned that the unknown bill-sticker was at work in neighbouring districts as well. The M.P.'s were having hot days and busier nights. And then—we suddenly saw his dangerous activity in a new light as we were about to retreat. He was not only asking us—but also those of the other side! By Christ, they too would read it! After all, it was only the uniforms that made us seem different from them. Like us they were being driven through Hell. They too died—for what? Died in the mud and rotted in mass graves—for what? And we—for what? FOR WHAT?

RICHARD TECLAW.



# ONE YEAR OF STRUGGLE IN "LIBERATED" ITALY

SINCE THE FALL of Mussolini on July 25th of last year no movement has taken place in Europe which can be compared with the revolts of the Italian people after the fall of the dictator. Not even the opening of the Second Front has given rise to a wave of strikes and uprisings like that which followed the collapse of the fascist régime in Italy.

The Italian people have shown that they did not expect freedom to be brought to them at the point of Allied bayonets but believed in conquering it themselves; by fighting the fascist police and officials who had held them under their despotic rule; by occupying the factories of the capitalists who had sheltered for twenty years under the wing of Mussolini; by deserting the army and sabotaging the war industries.

All throughout August, 1943, in Milan, Rome, Turin, Bologna and dozens of other towns the Italian workers declared general strikes and fought in the streets. The revolutionary movement was so deep and widespread that it was obvious that it would succeed in uprooting fascism from Italy once for all. The Allies who had been talking for three years of the need for revolution on the Continent did not, however, greet with enthusiasm the revolutionary movements in Italy. Far from it; Churchill talked with alarm of the danger of anarchy in Italy and of being left with no responsible government to negotiate with. Faced with a revolution which was not concocted in the offices of the Ministry of Information or in front of the B.B.C. microphones, the only thought of the American and British governments was to crush it as soon as possible. Churchill had graduated in the art of counter-revolution with his attempts to suppress the Russian revolution; he was not able to send an expeditionary force to fight the Turin and Milan workers but he sent heavy bombers to sow destruction on the revolutionary industrial centres.

The delay of the Allies to conclude an armistice with Badoglio can only be explained by their desire to quell any revolutionary uprisings on Italian soil. For this purpose it was necessary to be able to treat Italy as if it were still an enemy country. Though the Italian people had given ample proof of their will to fight fascism, even if they had to pay with their lives for it, they were treated as enemies; American, British and Italian soldiers were left to kill one another in Sicily; the civilian population in the North was butchered by Allied bombs. For six weeks from July 25th to September 3rd the Allies carried on their counter-revolutionary measures while Germany was preparing herself to invade Italy. When at last the

Allies decided to negotiate with the Government of Badoglio they struck a final blow at the Italian masses. By recognising Badoglio as the "liberator" of Italy they gave the people a new master as hated and despised as Mussolini had been. The impudent message that Churchill and Roosevelt sent to Badoglio on the 11th of September gave to Badoglio and not to the Italian people the credit for having freed Italy from fascism:

"Marshal Badoglio, it has fallen to you in the hour of your country's agony to take the first decisive step to win peace and freedom for the Italian people and to win back for Italy an honourable place in the civilisation of Europe.

You have already freed your country from Fascist servitude. There remains the evermore important task of cleansing the Italian soil from the German invaders."

While Allied leaders sent complementary messages to Badoglio they were not so generous with the Italian masses, who merely got bombed in the North and starved in the "liberated" South.

When Mussolini fell the Italian people saw their task clearly; they had to cleanse the country of all fascist institutions and set up a new régime. Did the Allies help them in their task? On the contrary, they gave their support to Badoglio and the King who were both hated by the Italian people as Mussolini's tools; they demoralised and disorganised the population of the industrial centres by deliberate bombing; they crushed any attempt to set up a free régime in the South of Italy by handing over the administration of these countries to the reactionary rule of AMGOT.

One year has passed and the Allied governments have proved faithful to their initial policy of crushing revolutionary movements and giving their support to fascists who have made good by becoming Allied Quislings. The King, through pressure from Italian parties, had to resign after the fall of Rome but the Monarchy remains. Prince Umberto can hardly be described as representing the aspirations of the Italian people and it may not be out of place to remind our Allies that it was he who led the Italian forces into Nice when Mussolini "stabbed France in the back". Perhaps it is too much to expect Mr. Churchill to mention in his next speech that when that stabbing he never fails to mention, was carried out, it was his co-belligerent Umberto who was carrying the knife.

Badoglio has had to go but who has replaced him but the old, compromised politician Bonomi. Bonomi was expelled from the Socialist Party in 1911 on account of his support for the Italian aggression in Lybia. When, after the last war, he was Minister of

War in Giolitti's cabinet, Bonomi circularised all formations of the Italian Army with instructions to help the Fascist squads. Arms were given to the Fascist forces and Army officers joined them, thus greatly helping Mussolini to establish his reign of terror.

The fact that Communists figure in the Bonomi Government is far from reassuring. Togliatti, fresh from Moscow, can only be considered as a faithful tool of Stalin, Stalin who did not scruple to sign commercial treaties with Mussolini, to help him during the war against Abyssinia and to recognise his successor Badoglio (in Kharkov minor German officials who were accused of having gassed Russians were hanged; in Italy, Badoglio who has gassed Abyssinians is honoured). They give their loyal support to the Allied conquerors and prevent strikes of protest from taking place.

It is the tragedy of the Italian people that they have to fight not only against corrupt politicians and Allied reactionary administrators but also against the Communist Party which, exploiting the Russian victories and the myth of a Socialist Russia may, at least for the time gain considerable influence. Angelica Balabanoff, who was one of the most prominent members of the Italian Socialist Party sees this danger:

"Recessions as well as advances are to be expected (in Italy), not only because of the immeasurably difficult and tragic situation of the country now and during the aftermath of the war, but also because of the immediate menace: the bolshevik intervention in Italy, with its corruption, disintegration, intrigues and cynicism, political and physical terror and other despicable methods it connotes. The rehabilitation and salvation of the fascist monarchy by the Russian rulers is neither their first nor their last betrayal."

But she adds:

"Of one thing we can be sure: just as Fascism was incapable of subjugating the spirit of the Italian masses, so bolshevism will find that human dignity and class-consciousness are stronger than demagogy, allurements, terror and money."

*The Call (U.S.A.), 5/5/44.*

The hope of the Italian people lies in the class-consciousness and in the love of freedom they have displayed particularly after the fall of Mussolini and also in the deep-rooted distrust of governments and political parties. Foreign journalists have lamented the lack of interest of the Italians in the new governments, in the fight between parties, in Allied propaganda. They forget that the Italian people have been submitted for over twenty years to the most intense and all-pervading propaganda and that they have learned that the only way to keep their heads and not become mere robots was to shut their eyes and ears and try to work things out with their plain common sense. This explains how the Italian masses with practically no organisation were able to start a revolutionary movement which has not been surpassed since the beginning of this war. The French who have been under fascist rule for a much shorter period, who are apparently efficiently organised

and provided with arms, are yet to rise as the Italians did.

It is to be expected that the Italian workers will, in time, unite and co-ordinate their efforts and that they will turn to a syndicalist organisation, based on factories and peasants committees, which alone can give them guarantees of freedom and independence. It will be the result not of political intrigues but of the spontaneous action of the workers. It will have nothing in common with the *General Confederation of Labour* (the Italian reformist Trade Union) which has been formed again in Rome by agreement between various parties and which groups communists and catholics alike.

The Italian anarchist paper *La Rivoluzione Libertaria* which has begun to appear in Bari at the end of June of this year stresses the need to organise with the maximum freedom and autonomy: "The only vital syndicalist organs are those born in the factories and in the fields, from below upwards, from the free will of association of the workers". Underground anarchist papers have also appeared in several towns of Northern Italy. It is to be hoped that their appeals to the Italian workers to get rid of their fascist masters and to refuse to accept new ones whether they call themselves liberals, democrats or communists, will be heard and that Italy will once again give birth to a strong anarchist and syndicalist movement.

On this anniversary of the fall of Fascism we are sending to our Italian comrades and to all true revolutionaries our fraternal greetings. We shall help them by intensifying the struggle here against capitalism and war; the revolution is indivisible and anarchists all over the world can all help, by their work for justice and freedom, the Italian revolution.

M. L. B.

**ANTI-LABOUR LAWS VICTIMS DEFENCE  
COMMITTEE**

**WORKERS! TRADE UNIONISTS! COME TO A  
PUBLIC MEETING  
TO DEMAND**

**The Release of Haston, Lee & Tearse  
imprisoned under the Trade Disputes Act,  
and the Repeal of Regulation 1A(a)**

**Your Liberties are at Stake:**

**Speakers:**

FENNER BROCKWAY (I.L.P.)  
TOM BROWN (Anarchist Federation)  
DICK BEECH (Chairman)  
SID BIDWELL (R.C.P.)  
BILL DAVY (Tyne Apprentice Leader)

To be held in the Holborn Hall, Sunday 30th July,  
at 7 p.m.

# The New Monroe Doctrine

*The first part of this article has been published in the last issue of War Commentary.*

Beginning in 1936, the cultivation of the Latin Americans became a major assignment not only of the State Department but also of the Treasury, Labour, War, Navy Agriculture and Commerce Departments, and of virtually every other government agency and bureau (including the Indian Bureau) whose acts or decisions were capable of affecting any phase of inter-American relations. The State Department, in addition, has also established a special Division of Cultural Relations with Latin America, which has a tidy budget all its own. Hovering over all, as a kind of traffic manager, is the Nelson A. Rockefeller Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs whose \$3 million budget in August 1940 has expanded to some \$130 million.

Obviously the Latin Americans felt no compelling urge to bring good-will to us; the blandishments were all on our side. As a matter of fact, the military and upper class circles of South America were very much at home with the social ideas exported by the Nazis along with their binoculars and aspirin. Besides, Latin America's interests are best served when the great powers of the world compete for its products, rather than when a single great power such as the United States monopolizes exports and is the sole source of imports. But since South America is a "reflex continent," dependent on what happens in Europe and North America, the Latin Americans dutifully attended the conferences—the special Buenos Aires Peace Conference in 1936, the regular but much-augmented Pan-American Conference at Lima in 1938, and the special consultative meetings of Foreign Ministers at Panama in 1939 and Havana in 1940—but just as dutifully left the initiative, drive and control (and most of the rhetoric) to the United States.

But the conferences, like the many scores of plans and projects that flowed from them, have been mere window-dressing for far more practical matters, namely, the winning away from the Latin American governments from German influence and the consequent taking over by the United States government of an imperialist function that the private businessman, by his fumbling and contradictory methods, had proved incapable of fulfilling.

In early 1940, the chief need of the Latin American countries was for loans to carry their unmarketable surpluses, to stabilize their exchanges and to finance purchases from the United States. But the money was not forthcoming from American bankers. Indeed, private investment bankers in the United States had quite openly lost their nerve, refusing to chance export capital because (1) profit opportunities were less attractive, and (2) the bold moves of Mexico and Bolivia in expropriating foreign oil holdings that had given them an unholy scare.

In late 1940, 1941 and 1942 the shoe was pinching the other foot: the United States was in desperate need of help from Latin American countries. The threat and then the actual cutting off of Far Eastern sources of vital war materials demanded immediate substitute development of these strategic supplies in the Western Hemisphere. But in this case, too, normal capitalist imperialist trade and investment channels were of little help.

*Therefore, since 1940 all loans to Latin America for such projects as armaments, naval bases, new industries, adaptation and expansion of old ones, new agricultural ventures, improvements of roads and other means of transportation—once the sacred precincts of exploitation by private capital!—have been made with government capital through*

*the Export-Import Bank and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation; which is to say, they have been made by the State power itself.*

According to official published figures, the Export-Import Bank has authorized the loan of nearly \$799 million in Latin America, of which the bulk has been made since 1940. A specific Export-Import Bank project, though not necessarily typical since conditions, loans and purposes of loans, vary from country to country, is the new Brazilian steel plant at Volta Redona. The Brazilian government retains a 50 percent interest in the project, and the rest of the stock has been distributed among native capitalists. The Export-Import Bank loan of \$45 million is guaranteed by Banco de Brazil; the money is drawn against credits established in United States banks. The equipment and materials are all specified as American manufactured, the engineering is in American hands, and the technical management and direction when the plant goes into operation will lean heavily on Americans.

More than a year before Pearl Harbour, the United States government organized the Metals Reserve Company, the Rubber Reserve Company and the Rubber Development Corporation. Since that time there have been organized the Defence Supplies Corporation, the Defence Plant Corporation and the United States Commercial Company. The total expended in Latin America by all these subsidiaries of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (up to November 1943) was well over one billion dollars. And in addition, there is the Foreign Economic Administration with its United States Purchasing Commission, concerned with purchases of a politico-economic nature.

This is not to say that the whole structure of private capitalist imperialism is threatened with liquidation. Far from it; private property relations still exist; surely profits have not been eliminated; and it is still as true to-day as it was before the war that in almost no other great section of the world are natural resources, trade and commerce so completely in the control of foreigners as in Latin America. No; the emphasis is not on liquidation but on the trend which has a new State-directed imperialism co-existing with the old imperialism.

But is direct State intervention in the imperialist process merely a temporary phase of the war economy or has it more permanent features? The answer is not easy.

There are at least two examples of government projects which very likely will revert to private ownership after the war. One is in Cuba and the other in Peru; in both instances, private American capitalists have been nervous over the possibility that the government plans to hand these properties to the two countries in question after the war, and have conducted a campaign among interested United States Senators to forestall any such likelihood.

The Cuban project is a nickel mine on which the Reconstruction Finance Corporation has spent nearly \$33 million for the construction of production facilities, and which the R.F.C.'s Defence Plant Corporation has leased for operation to the Nicaro Nickel Company, a subsidiary of Freeport Sulphur Company, for 10 years. Ownership is clearly in the name of the Defence Plant Corporation. The same is true of the vanadium mine project in Peru on which \$4,000,000 of government funds have been spent and which is leased to the Vanadium Corporation of America.

Further evidence of the intention of private business to step into government's big shoes in Latin America is to be seen in the volume of advertising placed by American firms in Latin America. Most of these companies are on war orders to-day and cannot fill Latin American orders in

any quantity; yet their expenditures for institutional and prestige advertising in 1943 totalled \$1.6 million.

On the other hand, the case for the carry-over of the new State imperialism—at least for a considerable period after the close of the war—is much the stronger. As matters now stand, the American State holds a financial and military control over Latin America that can quite easily, with intelligent administration, dictate the future of the continent. To-day the great areas of the world are rapidly being assembled into a few vast inter-continental empires, each to be dominated by a single great heavy industry power. In such a world the process of domination may be “rationalized” to a point where for military-security reasons the old imperialism of seeking greater profit may weigh less heavily in the scale than the *new imperialism of guaranteeing raw materials*. In this set-up Latin America would be, as it is, invaluable.

As has already been indicated in passing, nearly everything that was once produced in the African and Oriental empires of the British, French, Belgian and Dutch, or an accepted substitute for it, is now being produced in tropical and sub-tropical Latin America. Neither the quality nor the quantity of some of the products may be all that is desired, but both factors are subject to correction through time, technical skill, agricultural improvements—and above all, a planned economy.

The potentialities of this war-produced transfer of United States purchases from Africa and Asia to Latin America are enormous. Manganese that once came from India, South Africa and the Gold Coast now comes from Brazil, Mexico, Cuba and Chile. Manila hemp and other hard fibres that once came from the Philippines, the East Indies and the South Seas now comes from tropical Brazil and some of the West Indies. The Latin American countries are now the only sources of sisal, flax, castor oil and rape-seed oil, furnish us all our imported supply of tung oil, 10 percent of our requirements of certain oils used for soaps, glycerins and plasticizers, and large quantities of balsa wood and mahogany required in the naval and aviation programmes.

It is estimated that over a period of about 10 years a considerable portion of the rubber and all of the quinine needs of the United States could be developed in Brazil, Bolivia and the Central American countries, freeing us of dependence on British and Dutch colonies. In Haiti alone, for example, the Rubber Development Corporation has spent nearly \$5 million planting cryptostegia, a rubber-bearing vine.

Obviously if there is substance to the proposals that are being made by leading industrialists and Army officials to place the war economy on a permanent footing, then Washington's long-term plans for Latin America must inevitably include retaining a hold over raw material sources through the present system of State-dominated imperialism. A return to old-style exploitation would be risky, even if possible. The Latin Americans are already much too sophisticated, and the United States will not wish to see a revival of widespread anti-American feeling. State control, plus the system of Pan-American conferences, apparently keeps this down to a minimum.

I think it is significant that the classic symbol of 19th century imperialism was the missionary who, in all-too-unconscious innocence, paved the way for glass beads, trade gin and Maxim guns with theology and hymn books; and that the equally unconscious forerunner of the more subtle and persuasive form of imperialist enterprise in our time should be the doctor.

This doctor, as is well known, works out of Nelson Rockefeller's Office of the Co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs. It is his job—and he is doing very well at it—to bring health and sanitation to those areas in Hispanic-America from the low state of health of the workers.

Along with the doctor there goes the industrial technician and engineer, the radio script writer, the public rela-

tions expert, the artist, the poet and the movie actor—all of whom are part of the Co-ordinator's Office or secured through it. Indeed so many Americans of these and related professions have appeared in Brazil that the Brazilians have taken to referring to their coming as “an invasion of friendly paratroopers,” with an ironic inflection on the word, “friendly.”

A million words or more a month of canned news and feature stories, describing the might of American arms and industry, flow from the Co-ordinator's Office to Latin American newspapers. A flock of short-wave radio programmes and documentary films hammer away at the same point. Eighty thousand copies of a huge, expensively-printed, slick-paper magazine called *En Guardia*, its format patterned on *Life*, are distributed monthly among Latin American government officials.

When this magazine is not backing up the job of the radio, film and news services, it publishes articles lauding notorious Latin American dictators as zealous defenders of liberty, freedom and the good life. What matter if these dictators maintain the only concentration camp in the Western Hemisphere in which a country interns its own nationals (Paraguay); torture and murder political opponents (Peru, Brazil, may others); stifle the press and free assembly (practically every Latin American “republic”)? The dictators are flattered into co-operation and invariably reprint the articles

(continued on p. 16)

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### SOLIDARITY

An incident occurred in Newmarket last week-end which I think may interest you. Four "white" American military policemen attempted to arrest a coloured American soldier who had been merry in the street. Within a couple of minutes the M.P.s were surrounded by a hostile crowd of British troops and coloured American soldiers. British military policemen tried to separate the British troops from their coloured comrades in the American army, telling them not to interfere and that it was none of our business. An Eighth Army chap gave them their answer, he said: "It is as much our business as when the Germans persecuted the Jews, and as long as we are fighting against that sort of thing, we are not going to tolerate it in England by the Americans or anyone else."

The American M.P.s were badly beaten up, and it was only because some of the coloured American soldiers prevented the crowd getting at the M.P.s, which stopped them being seriously injured. It was a grand sight to see the British and coloured American troops march off down the road leaving the M.P.s lying there minus prisoner. The workers in uniform showed a healthy sign of solidarity against racial victimisation.

BILL.

### BEVIN BOY'S EXPERIENCES

DEAR COMRADES,

The following account of my experiences recently may interest you. It is a good example of the inefficiency possible within a 'Democratic and bureaucratic state'.

After receiving four week's training, in coal mining work, at a Government Training Centre in Derbyshire, I was directed to a colliery at Nottingham for the remainder of my training and subsequent employment on work below ground. The most important part of the direction seemed to be a note printed in heavy type, threatening me with either three months' imprisonment or £100 fine, or both, if I should fail to comply with the direction. Strange so much stress should be placed on non-compliance, considering I had volunteered for the Non-Combatant Corps of the army and in consequence would not be likely to risk a

return to the army by refusing to obey such a direction.

The billeting arrangements at the training centre had been efficient, though it is true those unfortunate enough to be billeted in one of the Government hostels were not at all satisfied. I was so impressed by the ease with which I was found billets at the centre that I assumed it would be the same when I reported to the colliery in Nottingham. I began to give credence to large parts of the Stationery Office pamphlet *Man Power*, especially those naive stories concerning the accommodation of workers when transferred from one part of the country to another.

I reported, as directed, to the colliery last Monday and was given an address where I was told I would be able to lodge. I was not too confident, for earlier in the day I had met another trainee who was on his way to visit his eighth house in search of lodging. At the seven previous houses which he had tried there had been no accommodation, although the colliery had supplied him with these addresses. None the less I proceeded to the address given to me by the colliery, only to find no accommodation. I phoned the colliery, they supplied me with two more addresses, both of which on enquiry proved to be full. In all I wasted some 5 hours in search of accommodation, visited some 27 different houses, applied at a Salvation Army, a Y.M.C.A., Police Station, several shops and finally to a billeting officer at the Guildhall. This billeting officer was pleasant enough, but unable to help me as he was responsible only for members of H.M. Forces. He did tell me that I was not the first to call on him with such a tale of woe. Apparently it is quite common for workers to be directed to Nottingham, then to find no arrangements have been made for their accommodation.

I made no more attempts after that; instead I returned home to London. I wrote a reasonably polite explanation to the colliery manager, which as yet he has not bothered to answer. The Ministry of Fuel and Power have taken it a little more seriously. After pointing out that it was wrong to return although staying would have meant sleeping on a bench in a park in Nottingham, they now state that accom-

modation has been obtained and that I am to report again to the colliery on Monday. After this experience I have little faith in the ability of the State to organise the mining industry.

Yours fraternally,

D. J. M.

P.S.—My four weeks at the training centre were similar to those described by V.B. in the June issue of *War Commentary*. I learnt a great deal about coal mining from the instructors during informal chats. In fact if the instructors (all of them experienced miners) had arranged the training programme, the result no doubt would have been very much more satisfactory. Instead we were held fairly rigidly to a programme prepared by a Ministry of Fuel and Power official, an ex-army man who is said to have admitted that he knows nothing of coal mining, but that he does know how to organise a large body of men. It would appear that Dingle Foot is not alone in his ignorance of mines.

### ZENSL MUEHSAM

DEAR COMRADES,

In the July number the excellent article on Erich Muehsam makes one important omission. The hypocrisy of the Communists in claiming the Anarchist Muehsam as one of their own is proved by the subsequent history of his wife, Zensl (Cenci).

Zensl Muehsam escaped to Russia thinking that she would receive protection from the "Red Aid" which had declared its defence of this anti-Nazi writer. She was arrested on arrival, and nothing has been heard of her since, save one letter to her friends in England, assuring them of her safety, but all typed, even the signature! It was at the time declared to be patently forged, and this view was confirmed when a few months afterwards the *Daily Worker* announced the detention of Zensl Muehsam under the heading "Plotter's Catspaw". That she would not have been the catspaw for a Nazi plot goes without saying. She may have associated with Russian Anarchists and revolutionaries or have merely incurred the displeasure of the Kremlin. For eight years there has been silence.

Fraternally,

M.

(continued from p. 14)

in their controlled press; their benumbed populations cannot fail to see the point when they read such articles side by side with those expounding the power of American tanks, planes, guns; quite clearly democratic American might is on the side of those who trample on democracy at home.

The control of the imperialist process has thus slipped from the hands of private finance capital to the State. Its new superstructural form has made possible plans and projects that were beyond the scope of the old apparatus. An obvious example is Lend-Lease to Latin American countries. Another is the long-term loan for projects such as roads, irrigation and drainage which will be a long time, if ever, in returning direct income. A third example is purchases made entirely because of political considerations. The United States government has bought for instance, Chile's output of gold, which does not rate shipping space to New York; the cotton crops of Peru, Nicaragua and Haiti, which surely have no market here and hence are staying right in their respective countries; and has put \$1 million into Brazilian nuts, which Leo T. Crowley, administrator of the Foreign Economic Administration, admits represent a 75 percent loss. All these obviously uneconomic transactions are defended by the State on the grounds of higher political interest, which means simply that economic unrest in any one of these countries might upset the whole Pan-American appletart.

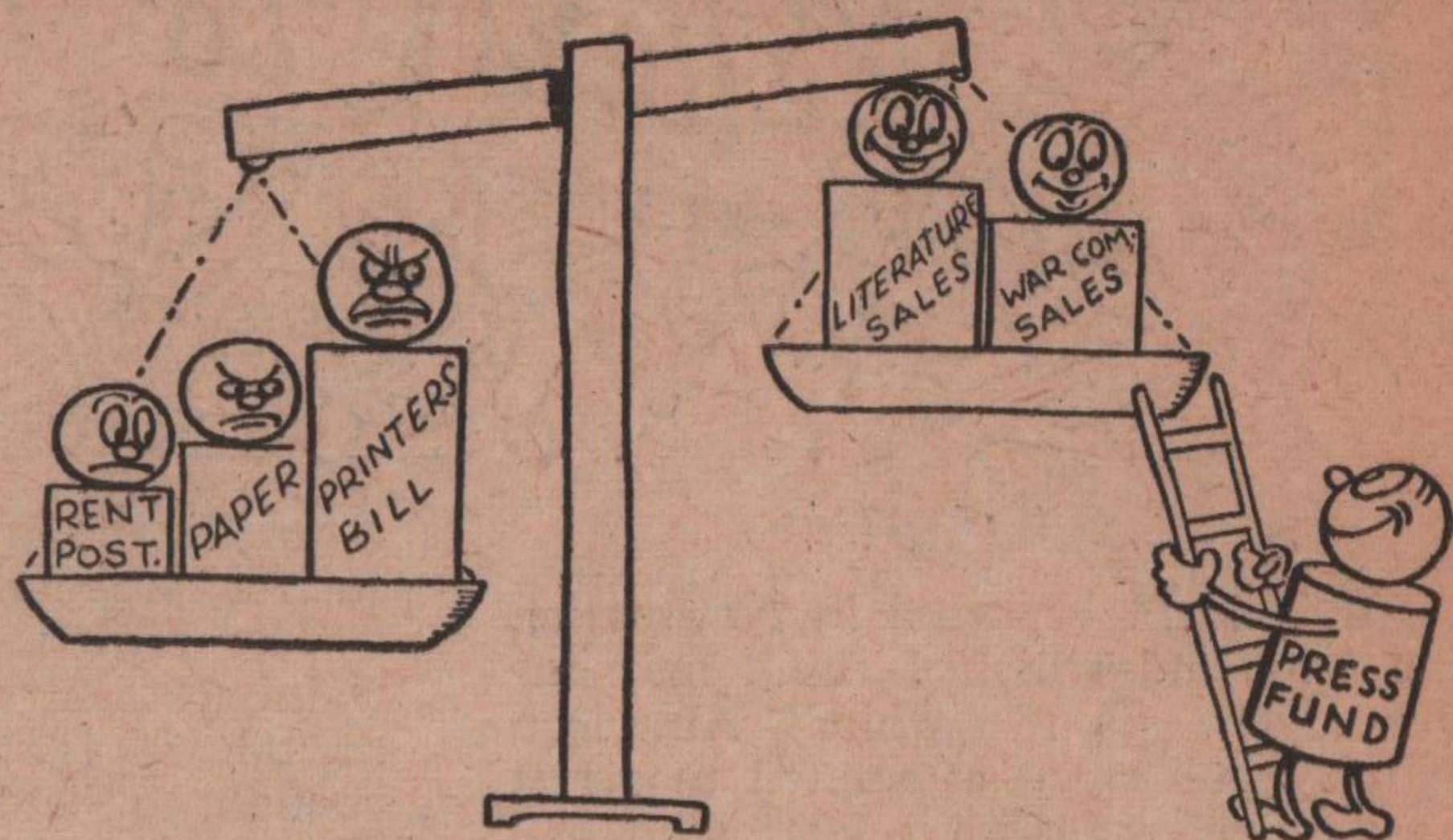
Thus pursuit of greater profit may, for the moment, not be the primary driving force of the new imperialism. Actually it is responsive to other drives, particularly the pursuit of political-military-monopoly control over raw material sources, which may better serve the national interest.

Its larger pattern of control makes possible not only a greater degree of economic control than we have known heretofore; its orderliness and reasonableness imply a more easily maintained degree of political control. The buying of dictators is a relatively simple job.

Practically every telling voice against *Yanqui* imperialism in Latin America has been stilled, including of course the Stalinists who are to-day the most fervent drum-beaters for Good Neighbour collaboration and trust in the United States' good intentions. More important than the Stalinists are men like Haya de la Torre and Manuel Seoane, leaders of the Aprista movement; Américo Ghioldi, outstanding figure among the younger Argentine Socialists; and the scores of liberal, Socialist and trade union leaders in Chile, Columbia, Uruguay, Cuba and Mexico. They have led their followers to believe, as indeed so many liberal and left leaders of our own country believe, that the power of the One can be offset by the power of the twenty at the open inter-American conferences—which decide nothing; overlooking the closed session in the Latin American office of the State Department—which decides everything.

ARTHUR PINCUS

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