

WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY

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TWOPENCE

Back to Civvy Street WHEN ?

WE ARE CONSTANTLY hearing suggestions from government spokesmen that conscription be retained after the war. It is even said that we must be on our guard and fight for the retention of this fine democratic safeguard against "reactionaries" who will attempt to get it repealed! Government publicists remind us that demobilization cannot follow the defeat of Germany because there also remains Japan. They tell us the old, old tale that the best way of getting peace is to prepare for war. Then the red herring of "good or bad Germans" is drawn across the path. We are told that Germany must be "policed" for ten, twenty, thirty years after her defeat. We are treated to long discussions as to whether we shall have to police the "bad Germans" longer, or if we could "co-operate" with the "good Germans". The fundamentally important factor is carefully ignored; the fact that it will be the German workers themselves who will deal with the Nazis. And having cleared out reaction at home, the German Revolution will, in the long run, be able to deal also with the would-be despots from abroad. But meantime, the important question for workers in uniform is not so much the problematical future of Germany, but *who* is to do the policing of Germany?

For the policing of Germany and the rest of Europe—a job which is politely referred to as an "International Police Force"—cannot be done by resolutions at patriotic meetings. It requires that men be still kept in uniform, under arms, and still on active service; just such work as the Regulars and Reservists experienced in policing Palestine in 1937 during the Arab rising, and in policing India during the riots of this time last year.

They will not be required to police Europe, nor even Germany, in order to suppress Fascism.

The Fascists are only able to keep down their oppressed subjects by the use of unlimited force and terror; once they lose their organizations of violence, they will be instantly set on and killed by the workers. The International Police Force will not have to suppress Fascism because the Fascists will already have been suppressed. Witness the fate of Darlan, of Heydrich, and of the Italian Fascists during that brief taste of a workers' Italy that might have lit up all Europe, had not the Allies let in the Germans by bombing the workers of Milan, Turin, and Genoa. No, it is not the Fascists whom the soldiers of today will be required to police to-morrow, it is the workers of Europe after they have risen and overthrown the Fascists who will be the objects of Allied policing.

And who is to do this counter-revolutionary police work on behalf of the vested interests that will rule an Allied Europe? It will not be a force specially recruited for the purpose. Nor will it be drawn from the Metropolitan Police Force. It will be those who are fighting now, who have fought throughout the war, who will be ordered to go on fighting, to be replaced only gradually by younger men as they come of military age.

Captain Quintin Hogg, 35-year-old M.P. for Oxford City, has given a detailed explanation of the plan for demobilization put forward by the Conservative Sub-Committee on Demobilization and Resettlement, in an interview with the *Star*, 6th Oct., 1943. As one of the members of the committee he made it clear that:

"One of the outstanding points made in the report is that for many years, even after the war against the Japanese has been won, the youths of Britain will have to be conscripted for the armed forces when they reach the age of 18, so that tens of thousands of men who have fought for four, five, or six years can be freed to follow civilian life again." . . .

"... Whatever happens" said Capt. Hogg, "it will, we believe, be necessary to retain conscription for an indefinite period. We do not expect the war in the Pacific to be over for a number of years, and even afterwards we will have to maintain large armies of occupation in Europe and elsewhere."

"And if after this, we feel there is even the remotest danger of attack from any quarter, we will have to maintain large regular forces..."

... According to Capt. Hogg, it is inevitable that many men now in the Forces will still be serving ten or more years hence.

He put it in this way: "If the War Office lay down that they must have a definite number of skilled men, they will have to have them, and the only men available will be those with experience of actual fighting. We must not, at any cost, be left with an army of 'rookies'."

Nor let there be any illusions as to their ability to carry this scheme out. Captain Hogg speaks for the Conservative Party who command the important places in the Government, who have the prestige which Winston Churchill has carefully built up for himself (assiduously marking for the Tory leader the glory of the whole war effort), and in addition the newspaper prestige built up for "non-political" Generals, such as Alexander and Montgomery (we have seen in America that General McArthur is already mentioned as a possible candidate for the Presidency. French and Polish Generals have already risen politically, and most important, Marshal Pétain, Marshal Badoglio, and Admiral Darlan and their like have come into politics in time of crisis as "non-political" soldiers!).

It is precisely because the military forces are marked out for a long job of occupational reconquest that they have been kept in the state of serfdom proper to the early days of the last century. Not even the pretence of freedom is allowed to the armed forces, and that in spite of the fact that the political events of the world have compelled them to talk of "freedom" and "anti-fascism" and "a new social order". People outside the army may prate of the "democratization of the Forces", but soldiers know well enough what it amounts to in practice.

The men must be kept in uniform as long as possible in order to "solve" unemployment; to police Europe for as long as the vested interests wish, to reconquer Asia, and to get ready for the next war—sometimes alluded to as "maintaining a strong Britain". And in this state of continual serfdom, men who have three, four, or even more years of service, are expected to go on for still further years. For the Tory officer class, such a prospect is not so bad. The young sons of peers usually go into the army anyway as a career to while away their time till the old man passes out and they take over the management of the country estates. Members of Parliament take good care to look after their own political freedom, though they look on it as mutiny if the rank-and-file should ask even for the right of organization conceded to Merchant Navy men, equally in the front line.

But there are indications that the Tories have seen the red light and are already seeking to allay prospective unrest. They are scared of the problem of demobilization—they remember last time. The end of the last war brought mutinies on the Western Front, while frank insubordination was the rule after the Armistice. The troops refused to go on parade, camps were burnt down, and the soldiers even seized Calais as a demonstration. Armed demonstrations marched from Waterloo station to the War Office, Winston Churchill was besieged in Whitehall, and the troops at Aldershot seized Army lorries and drove to London to join the demonstrations. So scared were the government that many of the troops in Europe were disarmed before they were embarked for home.

In the last war too, there was this talk of "gradual demobilization". But the soldiers themselves decided the issue in their own way—they demobilized themselves. With this in mind, the Tories have put forward their "Points" plan. It is only right, they say, for those who have been in service longest to be demobilized first. Their object is not, however, to be fair; it is to divide the interests of the soldiers. Just as the schedule of Reserved Occupations made many men not bother about opposing conscription, because they thought they would get out of it anyway, so the Tories hope that men who think they will be early demobbed will not make trouble. Divide and Rule; it is the old never forgotten method of Government. The Points plan will probably resemble the Schedule of Reserved Occupations in another respect: it will be chucked aside as soon as it has served its purpose of producing disunity among servicemen.

In the last war Lloyd George and President Wilson bamboozled many with their wonderful words about the glorious new world order. Adolf Hitler admits he copies Lloyd George. To-day, however, the politicians are as cynical as Clemenceau was then. In spite of the pretences by Liberals, Labour, and the reform merchants like Beveridge, the truth is often put to us by such as Quintin Hogg, speaking for the real intentions of Britain's rulers. Let us face the realization that we have nothing to expect after the war but professional militarism. The sooner they realise that the sooner will the workers turn to the path of struggle, as the European masses have done.

The Anarchists have always declared that a new world of freedom and social opportunity could only come with a complete change: it could not come through supporting politicians, or through supporting States. The fact that having got power over the masses the capitalist politicians are unwilling to let it go after the war, proves the anarchist contention made at the beginning of the war, that only by taking action for themselves will the masses achieve a new world of freedom.

ANARCHIST COMMENTARY

BETRAYERS OF THE WORKERS

AS the old proverb has it, "Put a beggar on horseback and he will ride to the devil". Members of working class political parties, attaining positions of power, show themselves to be even more ruthless oppressors than birthright members of the ruling class. Instead of fulfilling the mandates on which they reached their positions, to safeguard freedom and to build a society where the workers can live in freedom and equality, they turn into able assistants of the property owners and become in their actions 'more royalist than the king', so that we find them advocating restrictions of personal liberty and extensions of State power which even some Conservatives find it hard to swallow.

Among these gentry who are so vigorous in their support of the anti-society, the most vocal are, of course, those who have already acted so ruthlessly against the freedom of the workers, Bevin and Morrison, each of whom has made recently a public speech underlaid by the most sinister implications.

At Bolton, on October 1st, Bevin gave an address on the post-war training of youth, in which he put forward ideas on behalf of the ruling class similar to those exposed in an article in the last issue of *War Commentary*. The whole tendency of his proposals lay in the direction of increased compulsion and regimentation. While he pretended to dislike militarisation (the dragooned workers of England will know how to judge this pose) and disclaimed any intention of creating a "Youth Nazi Service", the ideas he put forward were couched in terms which might have been used by an advocate of the Hitler Youth. After detailing his proposals of extended education and youth service, keeping the child in the hands of the State until the end of adolescence, he continues:

"If you develop an educational system taking care of the adolescent on the lines I have indicated and at the same time training him in the elementary arts of defence on a purely citizen basis it will produce in this country a race capable of making an amazing contribution to international security."

This sounds very much like the ideas of building a master race which made ancient Sparta and modern Prussia such international nuisances. It should also appeal to the Anglo-Indian bureaucrats and officers who put their racial superiority into practice in their dealings with 'natives'.

Morrison's speech two days later at Dundee, was in the same spirit. He defended the various controls which had been established, and advocated their continuance after the war.

"What we need to understand is that if we are to avoid social and economic catastrophe after the war we shall have to continue this system of control subject maybe to suitable and sensible modifications, for as long as abnormal conditions persist."

Conditions, of course, will continue to be abnormal as long as it suits the government so to regard them. Morrison spoke of the continuance of a control of spending power by means of taxes and savings schemes, of continued rationing and state control of industry. He even gave a hint of extended control in certain directions when he said:

"But this is merely the negative side of the programme. The positive side of public control and the use of State power is the adoption of a programme of full prosperity under the necessary measure of public guidance and control."

Such statements are not unexpected. The Labour Party has long ceased to be concerned with freedom, and, if they support it, the workers will pay the price that comes from trusting to politicians to bring them welfare. It is, however, not unreasonable to hope that, the actions of Bevin and Morrison will be remembered by the workers, and that the Labour Party, by its dismal failure to bring the workers anything but oppression, will unwittingly teach them to act directly for their own good.

DOCKERS RESENT SPIES

IT was reported in the press on the 30th September that the dockers at certain north-east ports had issued an ultimatum to the National Council for Dock Labour, in which they protested against spying by military police and declared "withdraw the military police from the quaysides immediately or every docker will stop work." The spokesman of the dockers said: "The men resent the military policemen being there. Dockers at north-east ports have never had the name of being pilferers."

On the next day the *Daily Telegraph* attempted a deliberate misrepresentation of the issue in an item headed "Strike Rumour Puzzles Dockers." On reading the article, it appeared that it was not any real docker who was mystified, but merely a bureaucrat of the Transport and General Workers' Union, Donovan, who declared "In so far as the use of military police at ports and Government property is concerned, there is a perfect understanding between the Transport and General Workers and the Security Police."

That there should be an understanding between Bevin's underlings and the military marks is not unexpected, but that these bureaucrats do not represent the attitude of the dockers is shown by a statement made by another union official, Mark Hewitson, of the General and Municipal Workers' Union, who said: "I have found the dockers' complaint well justified. These dockers are honest chaps, who require no watching over while doing their job." (*Daily Express*, 30/9/43).

This is a good instance of the way in which both the capitalist press and the trade union bureaucracy deliberately obscure issues where the workers' interests are concerned. The dockers will not, we hope, be content to abide by the arrangements made in their name with such servile tools of the state as Security Police. Rats of this kind should be expelled from every place of work, and it will be a good step in defiance of the state if other workers follow the example of the dockers in refusing to work under the watch of paid sneaks and informers.

PARIS AND ROME

DURING the last few days the daily newspapers have been full of indignation at the vandalism of the Germans in Rome who, we are told, are stealing works of art and preparing to destroy many of the important buildings of the city.

Such talk seems out of place among those who a week or so ago were telling triumphantly of British air raids on the city—which cannot have avoided damage to ancient buildings—and who in a week or two will be applauding military operations which may involve a bombardment by Anglo-American artillery.

Rome, at the time of the bombing, was an "enemy" city. But the British and Americans do not scruple to bomb their former allies whom they claim are suffering

unwillingly under German oppression. During the last few days there have been further air raids on Paris. This is a city which contains as many artistic treasures as Rome. Its inhabitants are not officially considered to be our enemies. Yet we hear no protests at the Vandalism of the Allies. Of course, the official accounts give the impression that the raids are on definite military targets. In fact, as has been revealed by information reaching the Free French, bombs have been dropped during recent raids on heavily-populated districts on the Left Bank, in which there were no important military targets.

The inhabitants of the occupied countries are being oppressed by the Nazis; at the same time they are being bombed by the British. They are learning bitterly that the ruling classes of all countries, whether enemy or 'friend', have no scruples to prevent them destroying the workers when it suits their convenience. The British leaders have the effrontery to expect the co-operation of people they have bombed when the Allied armies enter France. If, however, the French act in a truly revolutionary manner, their rising will aim at expelling all intruders, whether German or Anglo-American, and setting up a free society which will need no rulers, either alien or native.

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Four Years of War Commentary

WITH THIS number of "War Commentary" the paper completes its fourth year of publication. Those comrades who have read "War Commentary" since the first issue will know what development has taken place in the paper during these four years. Not only have we tried to continually improve the standard of the articles but we have also done our utmost to present the paper as attractively as possible. We are now publishing at least one drawing in each issue and have increased the quantity of reading matter. All these improvements have added a further strain on our already inadequate resources and yet we have maintained the price of the paper at twopence. But in order to meet our commitments we have asked our comrades and friends to raise £500 for the Press Fund during 1943. As our figures below show we were still £200 short of that total at the end of August. Four months to raise £200! Surely that is not a superhuman task among so many comrades and interested readers?

We have completed four years of "War Commentary", and we want to ask all our readers to do two things in the course of the next few days.

1. To write to tell us what they think of "War Commentary"; to let us have any suggestions or constructive criticism to improve the paper: tell us which features in "War Commentary" are their favourites (e.g. Editorial, Cartoons, Through the Press, Red and Black Notebook, Pages of Revolutionary History, etc. . . .)

2. Send us as large a contribution as they can possibly afford so that we get that £200 by December!

Don't put off doing both or either of these things (preferably both!) Let us know what you think of YOUR paper, and by your contributions we shall see whether you wish it a long life!

PRESS FUND

AUGUST 1943.

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Los Angeles:							
per J.S.	12	6	11	August Total	£37	3	2
Newark, N.J.:							
per l'Adunata	5	12	0	Previously			
Selby: J.H.B.	2	6		acknowledged	£264	9	11
Wigan: W.H.	5	3		Total to end of			
				August	£301	13	1

A number of friends have still not settled for tickets for the Conway Hall. We once more ask them to attend to this matter without further delay so that we may draw up our balance sheet.

LONDON F.F.P.



Government Starves Indians

by John Hewetson

IT IS DIFFICULT to grasp the realities of famine in a far away country, especially when that country is so vast and remote as India. Even photographs, such as those of Viennese children published after the last war, or of Polish children in this, have an unreal quality which fails to touch people's imagination. Nevertheless, the present famine in India has set many people thinking. The possibilities of food production to-day are so immense that the frequency of food famines during (not to mention those occurring before) the war immediately suggests that there is something desperately wrong with present day society. India is not alone in starvation. Already in Europe the Poles and the Greeks have been decimated by food lack, while French children were fed by American relief organizations until America came into the war. More recently the famine involving twenty million people in Honan province of China has been reported on in the press. It is the aim of both the Allies (by the blockade) and the Nazis (by the submarine campaign) to produce starvation among the civilian population of the respective enemies. Clearly war is very productive of famine—so obviously so, that the U.S. government have set up food commissions to "feed starving Europe after the war".

All these famines have this in common; it is the poorest who starve. In Athens two years ago, people were robbing graves in order to secure money to buy food—the food was there for those who could buy it. Vichy officials do not go short; and we quoted an article on Chinese famine in which the causes of the famine in

Honan were discussed by the Governor of the province over a banquet. So in the present famine in Bengal, the Anthropological Department of Calcutta University has shown that the Depressed Classes have been the worst to suffer, and especially those who are already destitute and refugees from villages destroyed in recent cyclones. All reports agree that a principal cause of the shortage of food is hoarding and speculation. In short, the food once more exists for those who have money.

AMERY DENIED FAMINE DANGER

As long ago as last January, experts like Gangulee had warned the government that famine was imminent. Amery, Secretary of State for India, merely denied the danger. Later when the facts spoke louder than his denials, the government promised to stop the export of grain from India after March 1st. This "promise" has, of course, not been carried out. *War Commentary's* editorial article for Mid January, was headed "British Rule in India—Mass Death Sentences and Starvation", and discussed "Famine as a Political Weapon". We indicted the government and predicted that no effective measures would be taken against the approaching starvation.

We were right. A dispatch from New Delhi, dated September 27th, stated that already 4,000 deaths had occurred from starvation in Calcutta alone since the middle of August, adding that these figures probably contained gaps. As a result of the diminished resistance of the

population, cholera—always only just round the corner in India—has broken out, and is spreading through Bengal and the neighbouring provinces. The same dispatch concludes with these words: "Public Health conditions deserve the closest attention, particularly because after a period of similar food scarcity during the last war, *though much less acute*, came two successive waves of influenza, killing between 10,000,000 and 13,000,000 people in the course of a single year." (our italics).

And now comes the news that the situation is worsening rather than getting better. B.U.P. states that more than a thousand people died from starvation in Calcutta last week, official figures averaging about 175 daily all through the week.

The British Government, characteristically, has attempted, though unsuccessfully, to fasten the blame onto the provincial Legislature. Meanwhile it was stated in the debate in the Houses of Parliament that even during the famine, rice was being exported from India. The Australian Commonwealth Minister of Commerce, Scully, has stated that Australia could supply all the necessary wheat to relieve Indian starvation, and only requires that the United Nations provide ships.

REFORMIST ANTICS

As long ago as the famine in Athens, *War Commentary* derided the reformist sentimentalists who "petitioned" or "demanded" that the government "lift the blockade", and send food ships. Derided them because we knew that the government is alike indifferent to workers' starving (whether at home or abroad), and to sentimental "petitions". Governments are only deviated from their reactionary ends by force—by working class action. Anarchists look for and learn the lessons of history. During the great potato famine in Ireland, potatoes were still exported to England. After the last war, the Allies deliberately maintained the blockade against Germany for seven months after the armistice was signed, thereby consigning hundreds of thousands of workers to starvation deaths. They openly boasted that their aim was to use their control of food relief in order to put down revolution in Europe. During the Spanish War, the insurance companies refused to insure ships which ran the gauntlet of Franco's blockade to bring food to the starving Spanish people. "Potato" Jones won honour for himself and his crew by defying this criminal measure.

But it is not necessary to consider only the grosser famines. It is familiar history how crops were ploughed into the earth, fish thrown back into the sea, farmers paid subsidies not to breed pigs, thousands of head of cattle slaughtered and then burned, bananas used to lubricate slipways for launching ships, coffee used as fuel for locomotives, milk poured into rivers or sold at rock bottom prices to manufacture electric light switches; all this in order to keep up prices, to "prevent over-production" at a time when millions of workers all over the world were undernourished and unable to buy enough food for their families. And while all this was going on, the League of Nations was setting up a Commission to study the state of nutrition of the working class, and reporting on it. Under pressure, capitalist governments are prepared to study malnutrition, but that's as far as it gets.

These facts of recent history are plain enough to show that the mere human horrors of the Indian famine are a matter of indifference to the British Government. Already, in our editorial of last Mid-January, we had pointed out that famine was used as a political weapon by the ruling class, and in an article on Spain we discussed the "Strategy of Starvation" as a means of keeping a rebellious people down. In the face of such a weight of historical fact, it is idle to conduct propaganda on the assumption that if enough people tell their rulers about the starvation in India, they will at last come to recognize that it exists, and do something to relieve it.

The present famine provides an especially striking instance of the government's indifference to workers' starving. They had at least one year's notice of the danger of famine, while its imminence during the last nine months has been evident. That they have done nothing about it (Lord Linlithgow gave £375 out of his salary of £19,000 per annum to the Indian Red Cross for famine relief!) and are even now taking no active steps indicates clearly that the famine possesses some advantages for them. The way in which they have calmly watched it develop over the past twelve months, is to be related to the insurrectionary movement which showed itself in India last autumn. India is the central pivot of the British Empire, and there can be no doubt that the Imperialists are using the famine situation to stamp out the revolts and will to resistance of the Indians. That such a method of maintaining imperialist domination involves the deaths of 4,000 people in a few weeks in one town alone (2,000 famine dead have been picked up by the corpse carts in the streets of Calcutta alone—apart from those who have died in hospital) is nothing to them. If one thinks it incredible that men can act so callously, can exhibit such massive cruelty, let him remember the maintenance of the blockade after the armistice at the close of the last war, the near famine of the industrial depression, the denial of medical supplies (including anaesthetics) to the Russian Revolutionary armies during the wars of intervention. Let him consider the day to day brutality of capitalism; and then let him consider again the present plight of India, the persistent neglect of warnings, and the curious inactivity of the Government. If a final pointer be needed consider the following, in a dispatch from a New Delhi correspondent: "The precise extent of the deterioration in public health cannot be determined in the *absence of statistics*, the Government of India's annual review having been suspended for the last two years, *partly as a measure of paper economy*." In other words they have long foreseen the present events, but did not choose to let others foresee them too. Unfortunately for them the facts have for months spoken louder than all the statistics in the world.

It was admitted several months ago, that certain provinces like the Punjab had a surplus of grain. The Government of India's Food Secretary admitted that Sind had made enormous profits through the sale of surplus wheat and rice. But the Government has done nothing to undertake the distribution of India's total grain and rice stocks. Therefore such distribution will only be carried out if the Indian people themselves take affairs into their own hands and solve the problem by direct action. Such action will involve the taking over of control by committees of workers and peasants all over India. They will have to assess the total stocks of food in the whole sub-continent and send the surplus directly to the famine districts.

It is time to face the realities. The Indian famine could have been prevented. It could have been relieved. But it was not avoided in the event. The reason is that it subserves a purpose in a world which is not regulated by humane considerations, but by class violence and Imperialist competition. The deaths in India, no less than the starvation of the depression years, are just part of capitalism. Poverty, disease, famine and war are but symptoms of the governmental organization of society—symptoms exhibited not by the rulers, but by the victims of that society. Face the ghastly reality, look back through history and recognize that under governments, these symptoms have always presented themselves—face the certainty that so long as men are kept in subservience to governments, these horrors will continue to be enacted. Then with the realization of the world as it is, join the revolutionary struggle to destroy the vile structure of present-day society, and permit men to build the rational society of freedom—to realize Anarchy.

House. Time and again the liberals have been pleading with the "great Messiah" of the "New Deal" to cleanse his State Department, which is honey-combed with reactionary pro-fascist elements. But all their prayers have fallen on deaf ears. And our liberals pull wool over their own eyes and only repeat their parrot-like pleas whenever a questionable action is committed by any branch of the "new deal" administration.

No liberal will term the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, as one of their brethren. For he is only too well known as a reactionary. His associate Under Secretary of State, Mr. Sumner Welles, is likewise known as a reactionary of the first order. He has, like Mr. Hull, been for scores of years with the U.S. State Department. He is known to have played a most sinister role in the United States' imperialist policy in Latin America. One of his most unsavoury acts has been in ridding Cuba of any President that dared to show the least concern for the welfare of the Cuban masses. His crowning achievement came when he enthroned as President of Cuba Fulgencio Batista, a former gangster-policeman. Thus the U.S. Sugar interests, in the exploitation of Cuba's chief industrial product, and also of the workers, were made secure.

Of course, the liberals as usual, protested at the time of Mr. Welles' actions. But was he the rightful one to hold to account? Not by a long chalk.

Only a few months ago the same dictator-President Batista was given a royal welcome by the United States. Furthermore, more than one Dictator from Latin American countries has recently been received in the same regal way.

This time, our liberal press didn't even raise a word of protest. Presumably, they acted thus so as not to embarrass the "great holy cause of democracy," as well as its chief apostle.

So much for one of the "little" and least known incidents—the mal-treatment and slandering of the working masses in the interests of American capitalists.

U.S. NOMINATE PEYROUTON

If further proof were needed to test the integrity and true aims of the United Nations one did not have to wait too long. This time the "little" event is somewhat larger in scope and, therefore, serves to indicate what is in store for the masses everywhere if and when the "cause of democracy" proves victorious.

Unlike most of the press men and radio broadcasters, the U.S. Columbia Broadcasting Company happens to have a man stationed in Algiers, North Africa. Finally, one day, Mr. Collingwood said something along these lines: Algiers is but a small place on the face of the world's map. Yet, what is now being decided here politically, behind closed doors, will ultimately effect not Algiers alone—but the fate of the whole of Europe.

The world did not have to wait too long in order to learn what Mr. Collingwood hinted at. For, less than ten hours after his broadcast came the United Nations' appointment of Peyrouton as Governor of Algiers.

This time the liberal element in the United States were aroused as never before. The black record of Peyrouton as an avowed fascist, anti-semitic and anti-labourite was too well known for anyone to attempt to defend. But who could have been responsible for the new perfidy that had just been enacted? The liberals once again thundered and directed their protests at the State Department.

Angered beyond control, Secretary of State Cordell Hull came back with an anti-semitic insult towards an inquisitive Jewish reporter along these lines: He and his associates in the State Department were but subordinates to the Chief Executive—President Roosevelt. Furthermore, all the tongue lashers and word fire-eaters would within a few days be forced to eat their own words. Mr.

Hull knew what he was talking about. Within a few days came the startling revelation of the secretive confab between Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt at Casablanca—both of them having given their approval and blessings to the importation of the Fascist Peyrouton from South America to assume the reins as ruler over Algiers. And when Peyrouton arrived—both saviours of democracy greeted him and later conferred with him as well . . .

LIBERAL'S REACTION

And what was the reaction of the liberals towards this unexpected bombshell that was hurled into their midst by the actions of Churchill and Roosevelt?

Wrote *The Nation* of February 6, 1943:

" . . . the French African laboratory test suggests that we are far from arriving at any coherent war-and-peace-aims policy. The European peoples will judge us by deeds, and solely as these suggest that it is profitable to run with the Axis hare and hunt with the democratic hounds, we shall continue to gladden the hearts of the quislings."

Strange as it may appear, a reader, Miriam Stuart, had a letter in the same issue of *The Nation* that proved to be far more clarifying and straightforward. We quote these pertinent parts from it:

" . . . Peyrouton cannot be regarded as a rat fleeing from a sinking ship . . . He has been assigned to his present part where he is in readiness for higher assignments—as the *Herald-Tribune* correspondent points out in a cable published to-day (Jan. 21, 1943) in order to assure . . . (1) Acceptance by the Allies of a French government which would keep intact the economic empire that the Germans with their French associates have established in France—with ramifications all over Europe; (2) peace proposals emanating from the same German group which lead to a definite stabilization throughout Europe of the German economic empire—with or without Hitler . . . "

And from *The New Republic* of February 8, 1943 came this editorial comment:—

"It is our considered judgment that as things are going, the United Nations may achieve a military victory only to be followed by a political defeat; a defeat which may itself be followed by a series of civil wars in many countries, and perhaps by the Third World War . . . Many of the men around Chiang Kai Shek come very close to being fascist; his government as a whole is still about as much concerned to fight the Chinese Communists as it is to fight the Japanese . . . Britain did great harm to the cause of world wide democracy when she bluntly announced a few weeks ago that she had not intentions of ever giving up Hong Kong . . . the British do not want China to become too strong . . . If this proves to have been a war for the preservation of empire, for the maintenance of the *status quo* . . . then the tragedy of the world predicament will be black indeed . . . "

The vague and ambiguous tone of the editorial is quite on a par with the entire history of liberal thought. The same *New Republic* had supported the last World War just as it has this one. And no one ought to be held more to account for the tragic predicament that the world is already finding itself faced with than the very pen wielders of liberal thought. For, these liberals know only too well that those who have led the world into the present war (and all past ones as well) are not only the powers that design and bring about military "victories"—but the political ones as well. The signs as to the kind of a peace the Allies intend to bring about are already clear enough. But the liberal world that supports the allied powers still keeps up its wishful thinking about "if" . . .

It is therefore somewhat of a relief to find a few of

the writers writing about what is actually taking place. Writes, for instance, Mr. Egon Kaskeline in *The Christian Science Monitor* of February 5, 1943:

"French industrialists and politicians, arriving in Portugal and North Africa, give evidence of an increasing effort on the part of certain influential French elements to switch their allegiance from Axis to the Allies . . . they are understood to feel now that their deal with the Nazis has been entirely to their disadvantage. They are hoping that a timely change of sides will help them to escape retribution from the French people and to keep their grip on economic life, metropolitan France and in the French Empire . . . Only a small, though influential minority of French businessmen has so feared a social revolution as to actually want republican France to be defeated by Hitler . . . These elements were delighted when Vichy destroyed the French trade unions and handed over to them—the business men—direction of French economic affairs."

Still more enlightening is a cable of the same newspaper's correspondent at Algiers, Mr. R. Millard Stead, appearing on Feb. 7, 1943. It states, in part:

"A source of anxiety to people long resident here and intimately acquainted with political undercurrents is the freedom with which American and British have been striking up friendships with leading pro-Fascist families. Politely smiling hosts are amicably discussing North African affairs with the visitors and entertaining them most pleasantly . . ."

Thus it becomes quite clear to anyone wishing to face the truth that Peyrouton's appointment was no mere coincidence. The Churchills and Roosevelts know what they are out to save, protect and perpetuate. Only the liberals and regrettably, some radicals as well, continue to blind themselves and their followers with a belief that lacks increasingly with every passing day any sound basis or justification for support.

In speaking about North Africa it is in place to mention the fact that thousands of Spaniards, the first to wage battle against the united fascist hordes of Franco, Hitler and Mussolini in 1936-1939 are still languishing in the jails of Algiers after having escaped from Nazi-occupied France. This fact fully attests how strongly the hearts of such souls as Churchill and Roosevelt beat for "freedom" and "democracy".

When U.S. Secretary of State Hull was questioned about the anti-Fascists imprisoned in Algiers he inadvertently revealed that the Franco government will be consulted before any of the victims will be released. This should have caused little surprise to anyone since but within a period of a few months the U.S.A. ambassador to Fascist-ruled Spain, Carlton J. Hayes, has recently assured Franco that all possible aid will continue to be given his régime, and that no social change will be affected in Spain, if the United Nations can help it. (This ought to serve as a good "reciprocal" act to all those anti-fascist elements that have all along supported the United Nations' present War—as a "war of liberation" . . .)

And Drew Pearson, columnist, writes on February 16, 1943:

"In December, 1940, Secretary of State Hull issued a caustic categorical denial that he had ever offered a \$100,000,000 credit to Dictator Franco of Spain . . . To-day is published a book "Appeasement's Child" by Lieutenant Thomas J. Hamilton, U.S. Army, who was in Spain at the time and tells in detail how the American Ambassador Alexander Weddell offered Franco a \$100,000,000 credit . . . 'we offered \$100,000,000 credit . . . This sum was to be used for wheat, gasoline, rubber, cotton, meat—the five products necessary to prevent the régime from

collapsing . . . ' Hamilton goes on to report that later Franco got a credit totalling \$1,100,000,000 in a roundabout way from Argentina . . ."

A CAPITALIST PEACE

Facts speak louder than all the pretentious claims made on behalf of and by the United Nations. The "little" incidents we have enumerated foretell the kind of a peace that the powers reigning over the United Nations are secretly contemplating. *The capitalist system is to be saved at all costs.* The nazis and fascists of all sorts will be tolerated, but subdued and controlled by the democratic powers. For to achieve this aim millions of human lives have already been sacrificed. Millions more await their turn of ordained self-destruction.

Disillusionment within the ranks of some of the radicals who have been supporting the "democratic" powers is already making its appearance. First came the novelist Pearl S. Buck—declaring early this year at a gathering of Nobel Prize winners held in New York City—that this is no longer a war for freedom. Now the novelist-socialist Arthur Koestler is quoted in *Time* magazine of February 22, 1943 in these self-confessing words:

" . . . the character of this war reveals itself as what the Tories always said it was—a war for national survival, a war for certain conservative 19th century ideals, and not what I and my friends of the left said that it was—a revolutionary civil war in Europe on the Spanish pattern . . . *The coming victory will be a conservative victory and lead to a conservative peace . . .*"

The confession of Koestler is noteworthy and significant in more ways than one. He admits that the Tories claimed all along that this war was to preserve their kind of system of society. If this is so, then what moral justification had such people as he himself to support the war? Assuredly he was aware that the Government of Great Britain on September 1, 1939 was not Leftist but Tory. And the same Tory régime has been reigning all along since that date. The only explanation lies, as with the liberals, wishful thinking as to what they would have wanted to be the aims of this war.

Koestler's confession, belatedly as it is made, becomes nevertheless, a forth-right challenge to every sincere liberal, radical, socialist, communist and the few anarchists who have supported the war as being a war for "democracy", "freedom," and the dawn of a "new day" for the common man.

At the same time Koestler's stand is—indirectly—a vindication of the consistent position that the greater part of the anarchist movement throughout the world has taken from the start of the present war: Unequivocal opposition to the nazis, fascists, Tories, democrats and bolsheviks, who, by the very basic nature of their régimes, have all along been preparing to mislead the peoples of their respective countries into the slaughter.

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Principles of Syndicalism II

TOM BROWN

ECONOMIC FEDERALISM

IN THE FIRST article of this series published in the previous issue of *War Commentary* we outlined the Syndicalist organisation. First the assembly of workers and their job committee at their place of employment, factory, ship, mine, shop, office, etc. Next the federation of factory or job committees of each one industry into a district industrial federation, as the Scottish Miners Federation, the Yorkshire Textile Federation, the Midland Railmen's Federation and so on for each industry and each economic district. From these come the national federation of each industry, road transport, engineering, distribution, building, etc. Then all national industrial unions or syndicates are federated to the National Federation of Labour covering the whole economy of the country. In the other direction, each factory meeting and committee is affiliated to the local council of syndicates, somewhat like the familiar Councils of Action, though much more thorough.

In our first article we applied the Syndicalist principle of organisation to the present stage of the class struggle alone. But the same principle is applied during the Revolution when the class struggle bursts its normal bonds of social restraint and the two classes confront one another over the barricades.

The factory, pit and other job organisations take possession of the places of work and operate them for the working class and cut off the supplies and services of the employing class. The millers supply the flour to the bakers, the bakers distribute bread to the people. The power station workers send electric current to the factories while receiving coal from the revolutionary miners. The Farm Workers Syndicate collects food and sends it to the towns; the Municipal Workers' Syndicate maintains the essential services of town life and communications are re-established by the postal workers. Rail, road and water transport workers carry goods and services among the many industries and localities.

At the same time the grip of the Syndicates upon the social economy prevents the employing class obtaining the essentials of existence. No food, no water, no gas, no servant for their homes. The more time they spend cooking or carrying buckets of water the less time they have for blacklegging or shooting workers. No trains, no petrol for their cars, no ammunition from the factories, no telephone, no newspaper to print their obscene lies.

Other tasks are carried out by the various organs of the syndicates, chief of these is the extension and defence of the revolution. The raising and

arming of the Workers' Militia is chiefly the work of the factory committees and the organisation of Workers' Patrols to guard against hooligans and counter-revolutionists is that of the local Council of Syndicates. Without goods and services to be bought, the cheque books of the capitalists become useless; they can no longer hire the services of thugs and blacklegs.

With the triumph of the Revolution the functions of the Syndicates change and develop, but the constructional principle remains the same. The purpose of the committees and federations is now solely that of running the social economy, the industries and services. What men consume no longer depends on how much money each possesses or on the oscillations of the market, but upon what men need and the capacity of industry to meet those needs.

The National Federation of Labour will meet quarterly, monthly, or at whatever intervals are found necessary, to consider the economic programme. Guided by the trends in taste, the rise and fall of particular demands and information supplied by the Distributive Workers' Syndicate they will form the programme of each group of utilities. If 200,000,000 yards of wool textiles are likely to be needed for the coming year, then that task will be handed to the Textile Workers' Syndicate who will divide the task among their districts. In turn each district will allot the share of the district task to each mill, according to the number of workers and the machine capacity of the undertaking.

To the Clothing Workers' Syndicate will be given the work of producing so many suits, coats, etc. To the Miners' Syndicate the responsibility to raise so much coal, the Iron and Steel Syndicate so much finished metal, the Wood Workers' Syndicate so many articles of furniture.

Through the same channels will be expressed the needs of the Syndicates as well as the needs of individuals. The Iron and Steel Syndicate requires ore, limestone and coke. The Construction Syndicate needs timber, bricks and cement. The economic council of labour makes possible complete economic planning instead of the present chaos. It is not Syndicalism which means chaos; it is the present capitalist system which has brought society to the greatest chaos, economic and political, ever known.

The considerations of the national economic council will not, of course, be limited to one particular country. While each country and region will develop its own resources, as against the ways of international finance capital, there will remain many utilities which can better be made, or grown, in

Lanarkshire Miners in Court

NINETY-SIX Wester Auchengeich miners who took part in an illegal strike on August 18th were summoned to the Sheriff's Court of Glasgow on October 12th.

24 pleaded Not Guilty and come up for trial on November 12th. The remainder were fined £3 (or 20 days imprisonment). The men say that they are determined not to pay the fine. The continued prosecution is getting the miners' backs up, and in spite of the threats of Bevin and the younger Lloyd George they are talking of adopting the same position as on September 20th when they went on strike against the imprisonment of 16 miners for taking part in an illegal stoppage last May.

War Commentary and the Anarchist Federation sends fraternal greetings of solidarity to their fellow workers in the mines in their struggle against the tyranny of the State.

* * *

The issues involved in the Lanarkshire strike are described in detail in the special October Supplement to *War Commentary* (price 1d.) Briefly, they are as follows.

The strike commenced at Wester Auchengeich Colliery on the 20th September, as a protest against the action of the contractor at the colliery, who had accused three men of malingering. The issue behind the strike later broadened into a fight to abolish the whole system of coal contracting, which exists only in a very few pits as a survival from the early days of the industrial revolution, when the miners were treated with as little consideration as native labourers are in the Empire to-day.

Three days later the miners of Cardowan Colliery decided to come out on strike. Their grievance was the imprisonment of sixteen men who had been fined for taking part in a strike in May but had refused to pay their fines. During the next few days miners in the pits in Lanarkshire, and even in Stirling and East Dumbartonshire struck in sympathy, until between 8,000 and 9,000 men were standing out.

War Commentary

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BARROW MEN GO BACK

The Barrow engineers' strike has ended in a victory for the workers, but the victory is incomplete, a small advance of wages having been obtained. Further, the settlement contains dangers for the workers. The old rotten premium bonus system has been dropped and a piece-work system adopted. The latter system is yet to be tried and here is the danger, for Vickers-Armstrongs are experts in giving way and giving nothing else. New arrangements are to them, new opportunities.

In these circumstances a strong workshop organisation is needed to watch the operation of the new agreement and to renew the fight at the first sign of shuffling. Happily, the conduct of the strike promises the factory organisation and spirit needed. In spite of the threats of employers, state and press and the most treacherous activity of the Communist Party and the opposition of trade union officials like Tanner of the A.E.U., the strikers were solid.

The women stood loyally by the men and took their place on the picket line. As many as 1,000 at once turned out to picket the blacklegs. The Electrical Trades Union, in spite of the threats and pleadings of Foulkes the National Organiser, never wavered in their support of the engineers. In spite of Communist strike-breakers in the branches, money from A.E.U. branches throughout the country came to the strike committee.

The Communist Party made their most frantic efforts to break the strike. A series of their most active saboteurs of working class solidarity were sent down to Barrow to attempt to disrupt the ranks of the workers. Personal threats were made to try and frighten C.P. members and ex-members who had sufficient class consciousness to support the strike. Pat Devine and other scab leaders held public meetings, which aroused the greatest hostility among the strikers. Even within the Strike Committee the Communists attempted disruption, with the consequence that two party members were expelled therefrom. The C.P. then tried to represent the Strike Committee as an organ which did not represent the views of the workers. Jack Owen said "It is significant that so far the Strike Committee have not called one mass meeting." When, however a mass meeting was called, the activity of the Communists were seen to have had so little influence that out of 8,000 men a mere handful, less than 50, voted against a continuance of the strike.

(continued from p. 7)

how further state control will solve any of the problems of miner or coal consumer or raise the diminishing output they are all so anxious about. When we advocate social ownership of the mines with miners' control of the industry we indicate the benefits of such a policy and how they work, but the nationalists are satisfied to repeat their slogan like an incantation and leave it at that. How, why, where and when somebody benefits from it nobody knows.

The *Daily Worker* of 28/9/43 in an article "Take over the Mines" tells of the disastrous effects of State control.

"When the Government's White Paper was issued in 1942, there were great hopes that the plan it put forward for dealing with manpower, efficiency, concentration, mechanisation, consumption and rationing problems, would lead to greater output. Instead output has decreased."

From that fact the *Daily Worker* draws the strange conclusion that what is needed is more State control. Government control is a failure so let us have more of it and that will bring success! If the pills don't cure you, swallow the box.