

# WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY

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TWOPENCE

## ITALIAN TANGLE

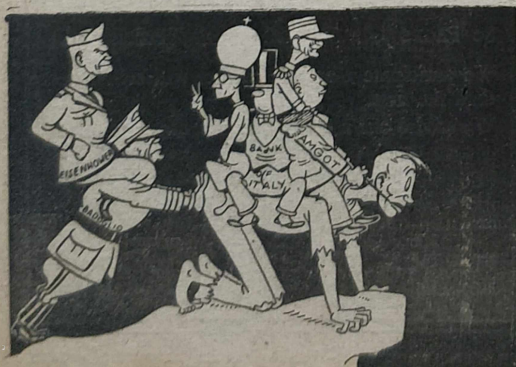
DURING THEIR YEARS of exile Italian Anarchists refused to collaborate with republicans and social democrats. They declared that these people would be more concerned, when their moment came to return to Italy, with gaining important posts in the government than with the liberation of the Italian people. Whether simply greedy politicians or men of sincere goodwill, their political creeds—all being authoritarian and governmental in outlook—would compel them to take the course of trying to take the fruits and prizes of the anti-fascist insurrection of the Italian workers and peasants.

Count Sforza, a Republican of socialistic sympathies, shows the validity of the Anarchists' argument. He has now returned to Italy to ally himself with the Italian Darlan, Badoglio. Indeed Sforza well illustrates how the political "convictions" of such men are the servants of their opportunity. On October 1st he declared "emphatically that he will in no circumstances become a member of the Badoglio government." On October 10th, he is quoted by



*Reynolds News* as making a similar statement. Next week (October 17th) the same paper reports that "the Leader of the Free Italy Movement said he had nothing to add to his previous statements until he had visited the Italian mainland." But on October 21st he speaks of his political differences with Badoglio almost as if they were merely differences of temperament: "Marshal Badoglio was an old friend of mine. I knew him as a good general. We went two ways—he to Fascism, I into exile. Now he heads the Italian Government which has declared war on Germany. As long as he prosecutes the war loyally (!) and energetically, supported by the Italian people, I shall do what I can to help him." The *News Chronicle* reporter (S. L. Solon) states: "I understood from his reply that he would not refuse a place in the Government if it were offered to him."

In spite of the fact that he and his friends have been for 20 years denouncing Badoglio as a collaborator with Fascism, in spite of denials of a few weeks ago, politician Sforza will jump at a ministerial post under his old friend the Duke of Addis Ababa, who unfortunately plumped for Fascism, and so regrettably dropped mustard gas on the Abyssinians. Now that it suits his ends, and those of his British and American Allies, Sforza is quite prepared to "believe" that Badoglio has the support of the Italian





people. Yet only a few months ago the British and American soldiers were told to die to liberate the Italians from this same government and its rulers.

Apart from his work in Abyssinia, the Italians have quite a lot to thank Badoglio for. They will not easily forget his martial law decrees, his repression of the striking workers. But now, on his own admission, it is he who saved Mussolini from the "mob" (this is the Marshal's word for the Italian people). In an interview reported in the *News Chronicle* on 23rd October, he stated that after he had, at the King's request, formed a government, one of his first acts was to "place the fallen dictator under protective custody 'for his own sake'". Mussolini appreciated this act, which very likely saved him from the wrath of the mob, and I later received a letter from him thanking me".

Together with his British and American masters, Sforza is, of course, in favour of trying war criminals, but Badoglio, who was a member of the Fascist Party, who gassed the Abyssinians, who saved Mussolini from the "mob", and then tried to crush the insurrectionary forces which ousted the dictator, who turned his coat while his soldiers were still fighting with Eisenhower's on the beaches, and who now includes men with the record of Ambrosio and Roatta in his government—this man is accepted by the Republican "anti-fascist", Sforza, as the Leader of the Italian people. Yet Sforza acts merely as other politicians in this war have already acted; Quisling and Darlan, Weygand and Badoglio—utterly without principle in the pursuit of power. It is to be hoped that when the people rise again they will destroy not only the Darlans but also all those who have been prepared to collaborate with them.

Sforza is not alone in depending on the military to govern (or "liberate" as the Allies term it) the people he hopes to rule over. The refugee Queen of Holland, Wilhelmina, told the occupied Dutch in a recent broadcast that "A considerable number of our compatriots have been trained for the application of a state of siege. *Under the leadership of a soldier, they will be charged with the exercise of military authority which will be present in the hour of liberation provided with orders for the cleansing and the revival of civil authority.*"

We have repeatedly declared that the war will only end when the revolutionary forces of the workers join hands across the frontiers to overthrow their warring rulers. This insistence on military régimes which has been a historical feature of the war (Pétain, Darlan, Giraud, Badoglio), as the likely form of government after the war shows that the **ruling class have also grasped the truth which we enunciate.** The clearest statement on this issue comes from that seasoned Dictator, and friend of Fascism and the British Government, Salazar, when speaking on the mobilization of the Portuguese; "It

may be necessary to reinforce the colonial garrisons . . . In the unfortunate times in which we are living, (the military) may have to be used against foreign enemies *as much as against internal enemies of national disintegration*". So for Salazar, the Army is for use primarily against the Home Front of the Portuguese workers, but it may have to be used against "foreign enemies" also. Not many are so frank about the real function of the Army.

Where do the Sforzas, the Liberals, Socialists, and Republicans of the "Free Governments" of exiles come in? In the militaristic post-war world, Anglo-American imperialism uses them to sugar the pill, to provide the "progressive" touch for which the "League of Nations" did service in the last war. Willing traitors, they seek to dupe their working class compatriots into accepting domination from without by the Allies, just as Laval and Quisling acted as the willing tools of the "New Order".

Anarchists would not support them in the past, and do not do so now. They have no use for the Darlans, the Girauds, and Badoglios, who hunt with the Axis until it suits them to sell themselves to the Allies, nor with the hangers-on like Sforza who hope to cash in on the government jobs. The Anarchists' struggle is with the people over whom these politicians seek to rule. With the anti-Nazi workers of Germany and the occupied territory no less than with the anti-Fascist workers in Italy oppressed by the Gestapo, Badoglio and the R.A.F. bombs. And with the working class in Spain and Portugal, who fight on while their hangmen rulers hob-nob with Hoare and Eden and Churchill, the enemies of the people at home.

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I have a tale to relate which I think may interest you all at home. First, though, you must know something of the conditions leading up to the events to be related. I think I told you when I was home, something about the ship I am on. You know too of the crew for I mentioned their condition of mind to you. There had been a strong rumour that we were "going foreign" for some time and this was supported by several happenings of an indicative nature. Firstly, tropical kit was brought aboard. Secondly, candidates for commissions who are normally sent to sea for three months were transferred from our ship and replaced by other seamen. The peculiar fitting of the ship too was an indication of its probable destination. Even authority hinted that we were good guessers and to cut a long story short we were all convinced as to just where we were going. Now I must tell you of those amongst us who have fallen by the wayside during our stay here. Every single member of the crew, including two P.O.'s and every leading seaman except one has been "In the Rattle," in other words has been reported to First Lieutenant or Captain for various offences ranging from "breaking ship" which means leaving ship without permission, to one brave and gallant seaman who flouted authority when caught playing cards. The Canadian Lieutenant came on to the mess deck and said: "Playing cards, eh? Better turn in now, you know the Navy's views on gambling." 'Taffy' faced his accuser and made his speech slowly and distinctly. "There is no bloody amusement on this ship for a man," he said and proceeded to tell the officer just what he thought of him, ending up by saying: "And if you send the Coxwain here I'll take him apart." Well, this was enough in itself, but, the officer having left to sign the "Rounds book" Taffy followed him up and read in the book, "Rounds correct, hands found gambling" and wrote across this something which I prefer not to write but which was sufficiently indicative of his contempt. He was placed under close arrest and has left the ship for an unknown destination. Incidentally, he was sober and pleaded so. That was the day before yesterday.

One more thing I must mention. Two of the

crew are in hospital suffering from minor ailments and having these things in mind we will pass on to to-day's great happenings. At ten o'clock we got the order "clear lower deck." This meant that we all had to muster on this occasion, below decks. Silence, but much inward speculation reigned over the crew until a sharp order "Gangway there, gangway!" came from our own skipper who was escorting a man who until this moment had been known to us only as "Captain D" the mysterious, unseen hand of extreme authority who controls all ships in the harbour. Of course he really was a captain, there is no disputing eight nice golden rings, four on each arm, and we patiently waited for him to say his piece. Every man amongst us was and still is distrustful of any word spoken by a "Naval Pig" as all officers are called in the messdeck. The glances of mutual understanding which passed between us were a sign of our contempt and lack of belief in any speech that any officer could or would make but those glances lost meaning before the ones we treated each other to after Captain D's speech.

Tall, gaunt, and shifty-eyed, he adopted immediately the pose of the tough, well-experienced sailor, willing to be friendly but brooking no indiscipline. He constantly sought throughout his speech to impress his unwilling listeners with his "Man-of-the-world-ness" by using fockle slang, which sounded very quaint since his voice was very "refeened".

When he commenced by saying "I am that person known to you as 'Captain D,'" it sounded something like this: "Ay arm thet parson known es Ceptainr Deh."

I told you he was shifty-eyed but he did his best, his very best to look fixedly stern as he proceeded with his story. It had come to his ears that there was a "Buzz" going around to the effect that we were going foreign. He spoke slowly, and paused for effect after his most dramatic phrases, some of which I will treat you to in a moment. On the occasion of this particular pause he glanced sharply round looking apparently directly into the criminal soul of the men he was about to denounce. "Well, some of you; some mark you, I do not of course



say all of you," he remarked charitably, "have not been playing the game." His look now changed to one of pained surprise and I could imagine how deeply he felt the decadence of fellow-men who supposedly were averse to the plagues of the tropics and perhaps even to torpedoes and bombs. "Some of you," he said accusingly, "Have been going sick." (How dare we be ill, any of us, at such a time!) "Of course some of you may be really sick, but I don't know, there are those amongst you who are slacking." (Well, I can appreciate his feelings, after all, why anyone should want to be ill in such healthful times is beyond me. There is positively nothing which can make one sick, except perhaps a speech by "Captain D"). "I am sure," he continued, "you all of you want to do your bit but there are those of you who, who, who, well—SHIRK," he said, bringing the last word out as though he had fought a hard fight within himself before he had finally decided to use such harsh words to such good friends. "Now we all know that our job, whether we are going foreign (I am not saying you are and I am not saying you are not) or whether you are on convoy work across the Atlantic, our job is TO KILL GERMAN!" "Captain D's" eyes here focussed them-

selves to hard pinpoints and his general attitude registered unmistakably for the whole world to see (and in particular the crew) his intense loathing of the sub-human Germans. "Indeed," he said, "I was howled down only last night when I included women and children in this statement," and he continued apologetically, "anyway THE MEN MUST BE KILLED! How many? shall we say TWENTY MILLION" he said invitingly, and I wondered what his contorting face would look like if I disagreed and suggested nineteen million, five hundred thousand and two as the most desirable number.

We had much more in that strain and he said of course that we may be out for months and never see a submarine but if we did, or a plane, the thing to remember was that he did not want any prisoners brought back. "I shall be satisfied," he said, "if you BRING ME BACK A PIECE OF HAIR WITH BLOOD ON IT." And that was that. He left in stony silence but if he could have entered the men's quarters unseen when they had returned he would have been rewarded in the proverbial coin of eavesdroppers and there is no doubt he would have learnt some foc'sle slang quite new to him. I wonder if he has a tender moment!

## Is it Cricket?

After the Battle of Matapan, Sir Andrew (Cunningham) told this story of how our intentions immediately before the battle were masked.

"As a screen I played golf in the afternoon before the Fleet put to sea, with the blunt end of the Axis—the Japanese consul in Alexandria." (Daily Sketch, 5/10/43).

This revelation of Sir Andrew's must come as something of a shock to the sensitive military souls that levitate upon the clouds of cigar-smoke and campaign memories among the whisky-and-soda shades of Park Lane lounges.

There was a time when war took its honourable place for military men with polo, hunting, and the Governor's ball. It was all good fun and scrupulously 'on the level'. The clean stroke, the clean shot and the clean shirt were the marks of the worthy Englishman. The 'tricky customer', the 'slippery eel' were outsiders, bounders quite beyond the pale.

It was a cause of despair in many a high up British heart when the extent of oriental cunning, in the matter of Pearl Harbour, was first realised. Here was something off the straight and narrow sporting path of our true-blue leaders—a smiling, inscrutable physiognomy while the blow was being dealt beneath the belt. This was not 'playing the game', was definitely not according to the rules; and nobody of course has greater respect for rules than the ruling class.

Things are on a better footing now. Sir Andrew has shown the way. Golf becomes an adjunct of military strategy—a round with one's foe before laying him low! Fake pleasure before real business!

Now that we have shown capacity for adapting the

methods of our enemies to our own ends, we must not stop there. Success lies in the widest possible application of a tried principle. Mr. Churchill must cultivate social relations of a more civil nature with Hitler. A trip to Berchtesgaden and tea with the Fuhrer. Whilst sampling the hospitality of the Bad Man, the P.M. could be getting the Second Front privately under way. Herbert Morrison could invite Himmler over here and show him the rounds of London. In the meantime, paratroops could be dropping in the Wilhelmstrasse. And Bevin could really enjoy a drink with Goering at Transport House if he knew that the R.A.F. were setting out in force as never before to blot out Berlin.

Yes, Sir Andrew Cunningham has given an earnest of living up to his name, if not entirely, at least to the first part of it. That's the new spirit! 'Getting one over' on one's opponent à la Cunningham must henceforth become part of our war technique. But it must be done with aristocratic smiles and consular golf clubs, and only in the right circles.

One can understand how incapable the common soldier must be of this sort of thing. Those with unpleasantly persistent memories can still recollect the discomfiting frankness and generosity of the lower orders on the occasion of Christmas Day, 1914, when both British and German soldiers came out of their trenches, suspended the mutual slaughter and entertained one another in honest camaraderie. This outrage was discovered, of course, and they were driven back by their officers into their respective trenches before much damage was done, and compelled to get on with the carnage. The common man just hasn't the right touch in duplicity.



# ANARCHIST COMMENTARY

## CHILD FLOGGING IS LEGAL!

THE case of Dennis Craddock, sentenced to be birched and separated from his parents for 7 years by the Hereford Juvenile Court magistrates has brought the workings of the legal system out into the daylight. What shocks people is the punishment inflicted—it is, so obviously cruel and inhuman. But the Bench was not castigated by the Appeal Judges on that account. They were only concerned in irregularities in the procedure. *The sentence was perfectly within the law.*

What happens when a child is birched is described by Ethel Mannin in an article in *Forward* for 23rd Oct. 1943. She quotes the following description from the *British Medical Journal*, 20th March, 1937.

"The child is taken into a bare gloomy room, his clothes are removed, and he is then tied up hand and foot to a tripod after the police surgeon has examined him to see if his heart will stand the whipping. A police constable wields the birch—a heavy bundle of twigs that has been soaked in brine—and after each stroke the doctor examines the child. He makes a final examination after the child is released, and administers any necessary treatment. The child is not usually fit to attend school for two or three days."

Ethel Mannin quotes the writer of this article as remarking that such treatment "seems the best way to make a boy of eight years look upon society as his natural enemy" and that it is "bound to cause a mental injury that will result in neurosis or criminality."

Yet this is the treatment which the Mayor of Hereford, Alderman R. C. Monkley, described as "only touching with twigs"! He said that he thought "juvenile offenders in extreme cases, should have more birching than they get." (*News Chronicle*, 16/10/43). District Justice Goff, an Ulster magistrate ordered four boys to be birched, one of them twice. He said "There is a lot of spurious sympathy about birching boys."

Faults in legal procedure have brought the Hereford case into the limelight. And this is all the official enquiry will go into. It is clear that as far as the law is concerned there's nothing wrong with birching as such. To divert public feeling the Hereford magistrates are being held up as monsters of cruelty. But, as Ethel Mannin points out, they are all devoted to "good works", charities and the like. No, the indignation aroused should fall on all who administer the beastly and brutal legal system which provides for birching and flogging and the whole hideous penal system.

Birching is a punishment reserved for working-class children—who ever heard of a child of the well-to-do being birched or even appearing before a magistrates' court? It is a treatment meted out especially for "crimes" against property. This was the crime alleged against Dennis Craddock and the other little boys at Hereford. Mrs. Bentley-Taylor, the Chairman of the Magistrates said to them on January 22nd: "We are absolutely shocked to think that boys of your age and intelligence should do something which you knew was wrong, and which was so utterly stupid and malicious." Mrs. Bentley-Taylor is the wife of a retired Bank Manager, and property is evidently much more sacred to her than humanity. But she is only typical of the whole legal set-up.

The cruelties revealed in this case simply show that the law exists to maintain the present inequality in society, and that it will stop at no cruelty in order to protect the

sacred rights of property. This is the cause for which the children of the poor are tied naked to a tripod, and flogged by policemen.

## DENMARK

THE decision by the Nazis to declare "a state of emergency" in Denmark did not of course come as a surprise to anyone in the world except those few Germans and others who still believe that the Nazi doctrine of "Nordic unity" was meant to be taken seriously. In future, Denmark, the same as Norway, is to be under direct military rule, a vassal state under the Gestapo.

Already arrests of all elements suspected to be anti-Nazi have been carried out, and with the renewed terror in Denmark this will be completed as far as it can be, for the Nazi authorities cannot arrest the entire working class. The persecution of the Danish Jews who had up to now not been persecuted to the same degree as elsewhere in Europe, is intensified, and mitigated only by the solidarity shown with them by other Danes, who are reported to have sabotaged many of the boats leaving Denmark for Poland (where the majority of the Jews in Europe have been rounded up into slave-ghettos) and to have materially aided those who eventually managed to escape to Sweden.

The occupation of Denmark therefore answers all the Nazi pretensions that they could form a "model state": the workers refused to lie down under the Nazis in spite of a promise of better treatment than the rest of Europe, and voluntarily chose the path of struggle—sabotage, strikes and illegal propaganda, and eventually counter-terrorism. The reason may be partly, as British papers and the official Danish circles in London suggest, that the Danish masses are pro-Allied. Certainly there are many in all the occupied countries who pin their hopes on an Allied victory, since they do not feel confident that they themselves can overthrow fascism. But the mass of the workers struggle against Nazism because they are forced to continue the class struggle, which they recognise as an international one.

## LEST WE FORGET

TO-DAY, when British and American bombers blast the heart of Germany, we are often reminded of the boast of Goering, made at the commencement of the war, that no enemy air attack could be made on the Reich. However, Goering was not the only supporter of Nazism to be deceived about the much-boasted Nazi air defences of Germany. We quote Lord Rothermere's statement, made a couple of years before the war, when German air defences were not even as far developed as they were when Goering spoke.

"I admire Herr Hitler for the way in which he has organised the effort of the German people to regain their former standing in Europe, and I wish we had the same vigour behind our air defence measures as that imparted by General Goering to Germany's supremacy-in-the-air campaign." (Bernard Falk, "Five Years Dead").

Had the nation listened to the *Daily Mail* campaign the conditions in Britain to-day would, we take it, be like the conditions in Hamburg and the Ruhr.

Lest it be said that this statement was made when Rothermere was a supporter of Fascism and that he later disassociated himself and the *Daily Mail* from Sir Oswald Mosley (when he didn't become a spontaneous success) we would point out that this statement was NOT made then, but is in the course of a statement apologising for his former support of Fascism.



# ANOTHER RUSSIAN ENIGMA

## SOVIET MILLIONAIRES EXPLAINED

IN THIS NEW pamphlet\* of the Russia To-day Society, Reg Bishop sets out to demonstrate that millionaires can exist without exploiting anybody. In 14 pages he gives the lie to all the weighty volumes of Marxist theoreticians. It seems that the Soviet Government has revived the capitalist myth, exploded by socialists generations ago, that anybody can become a millionaire if he is hardworking and industrious enough. Ford, Rothschild, Nuffield had always told the workers so but they wouldn't believe it; now that Stalin has joined them the workers are expected to fall for it.

Reg Bishop bases his arguments on a curious interpretation of socialism: "Even were a rouble millionaire to be possessed of as much money as a sterling one it would still not necessarily be either anti-social or anti-Socialist, because the atmosphere of social inequity which surrounds a millionaire is due not to the measure of his wealth but to the method of its acquisition and his use of it to exploit others". Before feeling any resentment against smartly dressed people, eating and drinking in luxurious restaurants while workers sweat and slave, we must make sure, in future, to find out where their wealth comes from, so as not to judge them unjustly!

Another of Bishop's statements which workers will find hard to swallow is that "... in the Soviet Union the millionaire has acquired his roubles by his own toil and by services to the Soviet State and people". Those Soviet farmers who can put aside a million roubles in 14 years while other farmers slaving all day have not a kopeck to spare, must have divine powers to produce perhaps 1,000 times as much as their fellow farmers!

Trying to explain this mystery Reg Bishop has to contradict himself a bit. It appears that the millionaire farmers don't have to rely on themselves alone to amass fortunes but that they are lucky to live on farms where the State has developed cotton growing to an enormous extent. The cotton crops are heavily subsidised by the Government. How does the Soviet Government get the money to subsidise those farmers if not by taxing other workers and by exploiting their labour?

In Russia all workers are employed by the State. To be able to pay some workers more than others the State must exploit a certain portion of the workers. Just like say, Vickers, is able to pay their directors and technical staff high wages by paying low wages to their engineers. Furthermore, directors of farms get a bonus when the requirements of "Soviet Millionaires" by Reg Bishop, 2d.

the Plan have been fulfilled. The bonus is not shared amongst all the workers but kept by the director who is in the position of the foreman or contractor in capitalist countries who derives a direct profit from the exploitation of his fellow workers.

Reg Bishop's pamphlet further reveals that the millionaire farmers derive part of their income from what, in this country, we would call, the black market! This is how the *Economist* politely, but neatly, puts it: "the collective farmers have become wealthy as a result of inflated prices on the uncontrolled sector of the market."

Black marketeering is not, in Russia, a dangerous occupation like in this country or in Germany. It is organised and sponsored by the State. The mechanism is simple. Explains Reg Bishop: "In wartime the great bulk of foodstuff was placed on rations from the day of invasion. Such small quantities as were available from sources outside the main stream of supply, such as the small private holdings of the collective farmers, were allowed to be put on the market to fetch what price they could. "And," he adds reassuringly: "Naturally this produce fetched high prices, but in the Soviet Union the people who were able to afford these prices and thus to supplement their rations consisted largely of the skilled workers in the heavy industries, whose requirements were greatest". It is curious that the black market foodstuffs, that is to say food sold outside the ration at higher price, should happen to go to the industrial workers. If the Government was so anxious that they should get extra food why didn't it send it to factory canteens? It would have prevented factory directors, high Government officials, Red Army officers, who get much higher wages than factory workers, from getting food outside their rations as well.

Charlotte Haldane in her book "Russian News-reel" describes the expensive shops in Moscow where, by Government order, you could get butter which in a normal shop would be sold at 26 or 28 roubles, at 50 roubles. "There was no limit," she says "at the higher price, to the quantity any customer might purchase". She says that the expensive shops would have big queues at the end of the month when the ordinary rations had run out. It is doubtful if workers busy on war work have time to queue up to get extra food, it is more likely that wives of officers or technicians who don't require to work, or who can even send their maids can better afford to buy in the "black market". Later in her book Mrs. Haldane describes how diplomats being evacuated



from Moscow stopped at railway stations to buy food and came back with their hats filled with eggs they had bought from peasants at exorbitant prices.

Farmers are not the only people who are able to earn big sums by the sweat of their brow. The Soviet Union can also boast Stakhanovite shepherds of souls: "Bishops of the Orthodox Church and the leading figures of other denominations vied as to which could make the most generous contribution. But the contributions made by the Church dignitaries does not represent the only effort of the clergy. Typical of many others is Vladimir Stefanov, priest of the Moscow Church of the Assumption, who

donated his life savings, 73,000 roubles, to the Defence Fund last year".

In a few days the Russian people will celebrate the 26th anniversary of the Revolution, which aimed at establishing freedom and equality for all. But the present régime has nothing in common with the aspirations of the Russian people in 1917. All liberties have been abolished and the gulf separating a privileged minority from the majority of the people has increasingly widened itself. Reg Bishop's pamphlet comes out at a timely moment when so many people are trying to forget or to conceal the dictatorial and unjust nature of the Soviet régime. M. L. B.

## Negro Mutiny

EVERYTHING SMELLS OF colour discrimination and Klu-Klux-Klan methods in the court martial held on the 16th of October, against 14 coloured soldiers who were charged with mutiny at Paignton. They were charged with marching from their camp to the square of a Cornish town where volleys were fired and shooting with intent to murder two Army police sergeants, and making inflammatory statements in the presence of other soldiers.

Findings and sentences were made behind closed doors and for all we know the soldiers might have been shot by now. Why all this secrecy? Is the injustice towards the coloured troops so great that the facts would have shaken public opinion even more than the Clayton case?

Though the events which have taken place in Cornwall have been wrapped in mystery, one can safely state that they have resulted from the policy of race discrimination which has been applied in the American Army. Every day incidents occur where coloured troops are insulted and victimized by white soldiers, officers and military police.

Typical of it is this case reported in *Reveille* 25/10/43.

"Indignation has recently been expressed by an A.A. battery at the colour bar regulations."

Apart from the fact that Negroes are often excluded from hotels, certain British Army Officers have supported this unfair prejudice by forbidding their troops even to talk to their coloured comrades-in-arms, and an M.P. is empowered to put on a charge anyone breaking this rule.

Efforts to enforce this segregation have been made all the more obvious by the fact that the "whites" are off duty one night and the Negroes the next.

Considerable resentment at this bigoted attitude is naturally felt by both parties. 'If they're good enough to fight for us, they're good enough to mix with,' is the general opinion of the British troops."

The attitude of the British people towards coloured troops is much too friendly for the taste of the Americans. Unable to poison the relations between negroes and English people the Americans have attempted to segregate the negro soldier from the public.

The unit to which the mutineers belonged was confined to camps or quarters both in America and since its arrival in this country. For eight weeks they were not allowed to leave their camp. The explanation given was that they had not been issued with great coats. An obvious excuse as few soldiers are seen wearing great coats at this time of the year. It seems that the C.O. seized the excuse of the lack of great coats to keep the men away

from the outside world.

It has also been said that the men had hardly any time to visit the recreation field because: "The company had been so busy, that there was little time to use the recreation field in daylight". In other words they were forced to work without being given the usual breaks. Confining men to camp is a punishment. In this case it was an undeserved and unjust punishment which drove the men to despair!

The men had also been submitted to all kinds of provocation before the incident took place. Sgt. Berry stated that on the night before the incident five coloured boys went to a dance at the town hall. A lieutenant asked for their passes, and as they did not have any they were asked to leave. Their money was obtained for them but they took their time in going, and one made a threat about "If you white boys touch me . . ." "Two English Royal Engineers started butting in," stated Berry, "and told the American police they were picking on the coloured soldiers".

On the night of the incident 18 coloured boys entered the lounge of a public house where Sgt. Berry was sitting off duty. He saw some American soldiers leave the place and others remained standing until the coloured soldiers had gone. The man behind the bar told the negroes that they could not be served in that part of the house, and there was a lot of mumbling about the men.

The procedure which accompanied the trial seems also fishy. According to the *News of the World*, 17/10/43 "Several of the accused gave evidence that statements which they had signed and which had been submitted by the prosecution were not as related to them. Others said that, having made statements, they were not sworn, as was customary under American procedure."

This is what is known about the case. It is enough to show that negro soldiers are treated with the greatest injustice and it is inadmissible that the Press, including all left-wing newspapers, should not have voiced a word of protest against the secrecy which has surrounded the mutiny and all the circumstances which have led to it.

The British tommies have shown more dignity and solidarity. They have protested against the action of the military police and they daily manifest their indignation of any case of race discrimination. They at least know what to think of a trial of people who are denied elementary human rights.

The Clayton case proved the barbarity of military law and the injustice of the British courts in dealing with the killer sergeants. The Paignton events will stand as an example of American brutal injustice against coloured people.



## A SCANDAL

One stolen kiss cost Arthur Hughes, 24, a sentence of life imprisonment at Columbus, Ohio, yesterday, cables John Walters.

"Guilty," said Hughes, a negro, charged with breaking into the apartment of a pretty schoolteacher, Marian Will, creeping up to her bed, and waking her with a kiss on the lips.

"Women must be protected, especially when so many husbands are in the Forces," said the Judge.

A petition is to be raised on behalf of Hughes, who said he acted on a sudden impulse and intended doing Miss Will no harm.

*Daily Mirror, 21/10/43.*

Another blatant example of American race discrimination. The Judge can get away with such an incredibly inhuman sentence because the man is a negro. The court can't lynch him; a life sentence is its substitute.

## BETTER HUNS

WE DROP 100 TIMES AS MANY BOMBS ON THE HUN AS HE HAS DROPPED ON US.

*Daily Mirror, 21/10/43.*

## MAN-MADE FAMINE

"It was pathetic to see starved babies desperately attempting to get some nourishment from their emaciated mothers."

Just back from an area south-west of Calcutta, Mrs. Nehru said that from 600,000 to 700,000 people were on the verge of collapse.

"The roadsides are littered with women and children gasping even for water."

"There is no sign or symptom of any great hurry about tackling the problem rapidly and effectively."

Mrs. Nehru charged that the non-official relief organisations had to conform "to the most incredible restrictions and regulations."

"Apart from cyclone and flood, this is definitely a man-made catastrophe," she said.

*News Chronicle, 21/10/43.*

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

NOVEMBER 7th. Betty Wallis  
**The Quaker Movement**

NOVEMBER 14th. Don Coventry  
**The Colour Bar**

*Admission Free*

**QUESTIONS — DISCUSSION**

## DELICATE SUBJECT

Yet there must be some decent Germans. He had known only three good things come out of Germany—music, sausages and Marlene Dietrich.

*Admiral Sir Edward Evans at  
Edmonton Town Hall, 15/10/43.*

Rather disloyal of the Admiral not to include the Royal Family, and not to have boosted his colleague Lord Louis Mountbatten.

# Through

## NO CAUSE OF ABSENTEEISM

I am satisfied that the prohibition of hunting is not necessary in the national interest.

*Mr. R. S. Hudson, Minister of Agriculture,  
in a written answer. Star, 15/10/43.*

## NOT ONE CLASS ONLY



"The Conservative Party never has fallen and never must fall into the error of the Labour Party in claiming to represent one section or class of the community alone." Viscount Hinchinbrooke, M.P. for South Dorset, is the chairman of the Tory Reform Committee. The

signatories to the document include Lady Astor, Sir Edward Grigg, Captain Quintin Hogg, Earl Winterton, and Major S.V.T. Adams.

*Daily Herald, 13/10/43.*

Practically plebeians, you might say.

## FRANCO—THE CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN

On Monday afternoon I was informed that Generalissimo Franco was to receive me the next day. My impressions of him are in accordance with his reputation as a very sincere, serious and intelligent man. He smiled half-a-dozen times during the course of our conversation and when he does so, he is indeed very pleasant.

Whatever criticism had been made of General Franco—and it had been considerable—I cannot doubt that he is loyal to his God, devoted to his country's welfare and definitely willing to sacrifice himself in any capacity and to any extent for Spain.

*Archbishop Spellman in the  
Sunday Dispatch, 17/10/43.*

Archbishop Spellman is not a Nazi . . . he visited Franco as an American citizen whose country is at war with Hitler, Franco's best friend. The Archbishop has never heard of the three million people who have been sacrificed to Franco's lust for power during the civil war and of the million of men and women still lying in Spanish prisons.



## BRIGHT FUTURE

Someone asked Mr. Brown in the House of Commons recently the following question:—

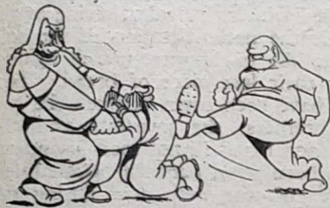
"If it takes so many months to build two cottages how many centuries will it take to build the proposed 3,000 cottages?"

At this rate our present children will be great grandfathers or great grandmothers before the necessary pensioners' cottages are built.

*Cardiff & Suburban News, 23/10/43.*

# the Press

## JUSTICE ?



On the very day that the bishops were denouncing "the break-up of home life" it was being made plain to the nation by the highest legal authority that children are being torn away from their parents by savage sen-

tences of seven years and that for months the parents may not even know where their children are. No farewells are allowed and correspondence is opened and censored. In the now notorious Hereford case, where nothing was proved against the child's home condition, the whole proceedings were dismissed by the Lord Chief Justice in stinging terms as utterly illegal. "Everything has been done wrong that could be done wrong," he said. "Absolutely outrageous," was the opinion expressed by Mr. Justice Charles. And all this amid the holy calm of a Cathedral City! It is odious that Children's Courts should be administered with complete ignorance of the law: it is no less odious that the flogging of small children, to be followed by legalised kidnapping, for a period of seven years, should be in any way permissible.

*Observer, 17/10/43.*

## AMERICAN YOUTH TO-DAY

You see it in the papers every day . . . five boys caught stealing automobiles; a 15-year-old girl charged with 30 sex offences; in Detroit, a juvenile mob invades night clubs, bars, movies, smashing windows and furniture; in Los Angeles, a gang of boys requires new members to have seduced a girl, or stolen; a father reproves his 17-year-old son, and next day the father's mutilated body is found beside a railroad track. J. Edgar Hoover reports 1942 arrests for drunkenness of girls under 21 up to 40 per cent. over 1941, for prostitution 64 per cent., other sex offences, 104 per cent. . . . with 1943 arrests mounting.

*Look, (U.S.A.), 21/9/43.*

Isn't it time we stopped talking about re-educating the German youth? British and American youth is getting more corrupted every day, with the tacit complicity of those people who talk so glibly of re-educating the Germans!

## THEY DID ALL THE TALKING

Women Civil Servants who attended the all-women's conference at the Albert Hall have sent a report to their Union complaining that Ministers did all the talking and the women had no chance to answer back.

Among other complaints made by the delegates were the suggestions that the presence of an army of Civil Servants on the platform to select the questions to be answered by the Ministers followed Civil Service traditions of saving the chiefs from embarrassment. It is said that none of the questions put on behalf of the 50 delegates from the Association were answered.

The delegates add that "the secrecy of the conference and the exclusion of the Press appears to have been a clumsy and not altogether complimentary attempt to make the women feel that they were being 'let in' on Government secrets. In fact, nothing was said that any reasonably intelligent woman did not know, and although most members of the Government spoke, nothing of importance was said.

*Reynolds News, 17/10/43.*

The cost of this meeting which has aroused so much criticism was about £17,000. Mr. Bevin declared himself "satisfied" with it.

## BIRDS OF A FEATHER . . .

The German General von Seydlitz appealed over Moscow radio last night to German commanders on the Russian front to compel Hitler to abdicate and to lead their armies back to Germany.

Von Seydlitz, described as the president of the German Officers' League in Moscow, and vice president of the Moscow Free German Committee, was captured at Stalin-grad with Von Paulus a year ago.

*News of the World, 17/10/43.*

The Bolsheviks in the last war did at least appeal to the German soldiers even if they finally made their peace not with the masses but with the Junkers at Brest-Litovsk. Stalin, however, directly makes his appeal through the Junker Generals to the officer class.

## ON GENEROSITY

Mr. Hemingway Plinge, of Bevin Drive, Much Bumping, Beds., has handed over his bijou villa, "Ma Solitude," to the National Trust. "I can't keep it up myself," Mr. Plinge explained yesterday, "but I expect the taxpayers can." Mr. Plinge will continue to live in "Ma Solitude" rent free, and its art treasures will be on view once a week to the public, including a fine fretwork moustache-cup-bracket dated 1889 and several oil paintings by Mr. Plinge's late aunt, Miss Wabbick. Lighting, heating, cleaning, restoration of art works and upkeep will be at the public charge. "Hemingway is in on a good racket, I guess," said winsome, petite Mrs. Plinge yesterday, laughing herself sick.

*Timothy Shy in the "News Chronicle", 20/10/43.*

## T.U. OFFICIAL LEFT £10,000

Mr. William Mosses, of Hervey Road, Blackheath, S.E., retired trade union official, who died in May, aged 85, left £10,011.

He was formerly secretary to the United Pattern Makers' Association and to the Engineering and Shipbuilding Federation of Trade Unions.

*Daily Mail, 5/10/43.*



# SPIRIDONOVA ON THE BOLSHEVIKS

As early as 1918 the Bolsheviks were imprisoning and assassinating anarchists and revolutionary socialists. The following letter to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, was written in November 1918 by Maria Spiridonova, the famous Left Social Revolutionary (see biographical note at the end of the letter). In a devastating criticism she shows how less than one year after the October Revolution Lenin had effected the counter-revolution. Just over a year later the brutal suppression of the Kronstadt workers and sailors by Lenin and Trotsky was to confirm her tragic accusation.

*Open Letter to the Central Executive of the Bolshevik Party, 1918.*

On July 6th I came to you voluntarily, so that you might have at least one member of the Left Social Revolutionaries in your power on whom to wreak your anger, and offer up as an expiatory sacrifice to Germany.

Those were the personal considerations which influenced me. I hid them from the members of my Central Committee when I proposed to them that I should be their representative. I hoped that I should be able to manage better than anyone else to shield with my own body both my own party and those peasants, workers, sailors and soldiers who followed us.

I was convinced that you would settle with me in the heat of the battle, then, perhaps, have some regrets afterwards. Such an action would be terrible, from whatever angle you looked at it. After disposing of me you might perhaps come more quickly to a clear consciousness of what you had done, and a more sober mood.

Whether by accident, or by your will, or whatever the cause may have been, everything turned out differently from what I expected. The guiltless blood of Alexandrovitch, and others who had no responsibility for the assassination of Mirbach,\* flowed. That made my purpose in voluntarily coming to you practically vain. But I nourished the hope of using as a platform the tribunal before which I wished to place myself.

Never in the most corrupt of Parliaments, never in the most venal papers of capitalist society has hatred of opponents reached such heights of cynicism as your hatred. And this hatred of yours was the hatred of one group of Socialists for their closest comrades and allies, who had certainly failed in loyalty to German imperialism but had certainly not failed in loyalty to the Revolution and the International.

The Cheka killed members of the L.S.R. because they were unwilling to betray their comrades. For example, at Kotel'nichi two comrades were killed like that, Makhnov and Missuno, two members of the Soviet Central Executive. These men were real children of the present Revolution, to such an extent that legends have already grown up around their names—heroes, on whose shoulders we brought about the October Revolution together with you. Missuno paid dearly for the refusal to dig his own grave. Makhnov accepted on condition he was given permission to speak before he died. He spoke, and his last words were: "Long live the Socialist World Revolution!" How many such Missunos and Makhnovs are there now in Soviet Russia—unknown, nameless heroes!

Your party had great tasks and began them finely. The October Revolution, in which we marched side by side, was bound to conquer, because its foundations and watchwords were rooted in historical reality and were solidly

\*Mirbach, the German Ambassador to Russia, was assassinated by the L.S.R.'s as a protest against the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk between the Bolshevik government and the Kaiser's government.

supported by all the working masses.

But your policy developed into a betrayal of the working classes. Instead of the socialization of industry you introduced State capitalism—a capitalistic State. A system of coercive exploitation remains in force, with a minute difference in regard to the division of the profits. I say "minute" because your innumerable officials will devour more than the limited number of the bourgeoisie ever could. What you, with a combination of force and cunning, offer the peasants instead of the socialization of the soil, which was decreed with universal rejoicing at the Third Soviet Congress, is the nationalization of the soil. Workers, in order not to die of hunger, march against peasants, and take away their last piece of bread. Terrible seeds of dissension have been sown between the two groups of inseparable brothers, the peasants and the factory workers—a dissension that will not soon disappear. Seeds of dissension have been sown between nationalities, because German prisoners of war were used during the food supply dictatorship.

And now, your Cheka. In the name of the proletariat you have wiped out all the moral achievements of our Revolution. Things that cry aloud to Heaven have been done by the provincial Chekas, by the All-Russian Cheka. A bloodthirsty mockery of the souls and bodies of men, torture and treachery, and then—murder, murder without end, done without inquiry, on denunciation only, without waiting for any proof of guilt. To whom could your counter-revolutionary conspiracies to such a menace if you yourselves had not so dreadfully related yourselves to them? When the power of the Soviets rested on the support of the masses Dzerzhinsky only had a few fiendish murderers shot—and that after great hesitation and moral doubts.

But when Lenin was wounded by a shot, thousands of people were distractedly condemned to death. People were killed hysterically right and left, without inquiry, without the faintest shadow of justification, to say nothing of moral grounds. Certainly Lenin is saved—no single fanatical hand will ever be raised against him again. But in that catacomb of expiatory sacrifices the living spirit has abandoned the Revolution. How much better it would be for Lenin to live in insecurity if only that living spirit were preserved! And how was it possible for it not to occur to you, Vladimir Ilyich, with your great intelligence and your personal disinterestedness, to have mercy on Dora Kaplan? How invaluable mercy would have been in this time of frenzy and anger, when there is nought but gnashing of teeth and only evil and fear are abroad, and not a single accent or sound of love is heard?

These nightly murders of fettered, unarmed, helpless people, these secret shootings in the back, the unceremonious burial on the spot of bodies, robbed to the very shirt, not always quite dead, often still groaning, in a mass grave—what sort of Terrorism is this? All this cannot be called Terrorism.

(continued on p. 16)



*Principles of Syndicalism III*

TOM BROWN

**ABOLITION OF  
THE WAGES SYSTEM**

IN THIS STUDY of the wages system we are not concerned with some imaginary system which does not, has never, and is not likely to exist. Nor shall we discuss what would be the effect of the wages system if it were entirely different. We are content with the scientific method of observing what exists and from careful observation forming our generalisations. This is economics, not metaphysics, and economics ought to be objective. Primitive men seeing lightning and hearing thunder imagined them to be the signs of an angry God. The growth of scientific knowledge dispelled this view and enabled man to control this force.

We do not seek to explain economic manifestations by referring to good or bad employers or good or bad governments. We seek nothing less than the abolition of the wages system, for it is the system which is wrong. Without a knowledge of social economy we are as the savage facing natural forces. With knowledge of the subject we can control our social course.

**What Is Wages ?**

We live in a commodity society where everything is made for sale. In other societies this was not the case. Savages and barbarians gathered or grew food for their own use and not for sale; built houses to shelter themselves and not to rent. Truly mediæval society produced most things for consumption in the immediate locality, and even household, and sold only the surplus.

Capitalist society, however, produces everything for a market. The coalowner is interested in the production of coal, not for his own hearth, but to put upon the market. The mill-owner initiates the manufacture of cloth not, like those of old, because he needs a coat, but to sell the produce on the market. Everything in capitalism is for sale. Books and beer, coal and cosmetics, horses and haberdashery. And not only manufactured goods, but every human relationship is offered for sale—politicians and patriots, love and friendship, art and science, and (see *Major Barbara*) even the soul's salvation.

Thrust, at an unripe age, into this world market, the worker, the proletarian, the man without property, finds he can live only by selling and buying. But what has he to sell? Without patrimony, having no goods and lacking access to natural resources, he must sell the only thing left to him, his labour power, his ability to work. He sells his time, portions of his life. That part of his life which he hires to his employer, eight, nine or ten hours a day, is not his, he has sold that part of his life. And the price of this labour commodity is called wages.

**How Are Wages Governed ?**

If we consider how the price of a commodity is arrived at we shall understand the nature of the wages system. In a free market the final factors in fixing prices are supply and demand. Of course there are substantial economic reasons for the existence of any supply or demand, but for the purpose of this article we shall be content to consider the final factors. We all know if a certain commodity is scarce and the demand is great the price tends to rise sharply. If there is a glut of another commodity and a small demand (as herrings in the height of season) the price will fall, if the free market exists.

Wages too, are so regulated in a free labour market. If labour is relatively scarce and jobs are plentiful, wages rise; but when depression comes and jobs are scarce and millions of unemployed seek jobs, then wages fall. The same principle applies to particular industries and jobs. A certain industry, as engineering in the 'twenties of this century, may have more workers than jobs; then wages fall in that industry. Another industry, as the building trade in the 'twenties, may have almost more jobs than workers, there wages will, compared with other industries, rise.

**The Vanishing Craftsman**

Another example we shall take is that of the craftsman. Before the war of 1914-18 craftsmen received wages about double that of labourers. (Provincial engineering craftsmen received 37/- to 39/- per week; their labourers 18/- per week). Now some persons believed that the employer paid the craftsman double the labourer's wage because he admired his skill. Some even believed that he did it just to make the workers jealous of one another. The truth is that the employer could not hire men at less than the market price of 37/- per week. And if he paid more than he needed to he would soon cease to be a capitalist. A worker does not pay 10/- for an article whose market value is 5/- nor can he hope to obtain it for 2/6d. Likewise the capitalist does not attempt to put himself out of business by defying the principles of economics.

The truth of the foregoing is testified to by economic tendencies during and after the last war. Engineering employers successfully sought to lessen the demand for craftsmen by creating semi-skilled and unskilled jobs through the further sub-division of labour, by developing the use of machinery and the use of war-time dilutees, and breaking down the old time apprenticeship custom.

At the same time the wages of many unskilled workers were creeping comparatively upwards by the slackening of the supply of cheap unskilled labour much of which had come from overseas, as Irish labour in the chemical and constructional industries and Polish labour in the Scottish mines and jute mills. Further, certain sections of unskilled labour combined to limit the supply of labour to their job; as the dockers. So the tendency of economic development has been to greatly lessen the 100% gap between skilled and unskilled labour. I have known highly skilled craftsmen who threw up their engineering jobs at 1/2½d. per hour to take employment as dockers at 1/6d. per hour. The development of the wages system has almost completely destroyed the craftsman myth.

Let us here generalise our views of the wages system by declaring that in a free market wages rise and fall with supply and demand. The worker may by strike action increase the one or lessen the other, but he cannot change the general tendency. During trade depressions the employing class allows the free labour market to operate, but during great labour booms, as in the present war, they seek to close the free market by the use of such measures as Bevin's Essential Works Order. Thus while the worker may, once or even twice in his life enjoy a boom period, the general tendency of the wages system is to push him down to subsistence level; that is, to allow him little more than sufficient to fuel himself for the performance of his master's work and to raise more little wage slaves to replace him when he wears out.



## Reforms and the Wages System

Rather than oppose the wages system reformists have proposed modifications and additions which leave the system substantially intact. The wages system mocks reforms. Let us consider a few examples of reforms which have but strengthened it. Free education has been on every Socialist reform list from Marx and Engels' Communist Manifesto to the latest Labour Party election programme. Such free education as the State supplies has benefited the employers, not the workers. More general elementary education has increased the supply of apprentices and shop assistants. Scholarship matriculation has produced cheap clerks and vacuum cleaner salesmen. Working-class access to university degrees has lowered the wages of thousands of technicians to that of general labour, as the Association of Scientific Workers so often testifies.

Pensions are another good old stand-by of the reform merchants. Some years ago the granting of 10/- per week pensions to State-insured men over 65 years of age was hailed as a great step to the millenium. But the worker of 65 could not live on 10/- a week, he must continue work and many employers quickly reduced the wages of such men by 10/- per week. It was useless to try to disguise one's age for the State issued special insurance cards to the 65's and over. The 10/- pension went to the employer, not to the worker. It was the same in the case of war pensions. From the end of the last war to the beginning of the present armament boom, one might read in any Labour Exchange advertisements of jobs which ended "For disabled ex-servicemen only" or "only men with disability pensions need apply." It was not gratitude to the men who fought which led certain employers to insert such clauses in their wants. A glance at the wages offered soon convinced us that only a man with a pension could hope to live on such work. The employer was the true recipient of the ex-soldier's pension. We all know cases of ex-policemen retiring on pension and sharply competing for the jobs of public house managers and night watchmen.

One further example of the negation of reforms by the operation of the wages system. There have been many attempts to raise or pay wages by Acts of Parliament and Trade Boards, but the solid fact remains that in the trades and industries affected wages fall during depression as they do in uncontrolled industries. To prove this one could produce enough statistics to fill a hay wain.

## The Machine and Wages

Not only reforms but other doubtful forms of progress fail to benefit the wage worker. New machinery, which by increasing production, ought to enrich the worker and lighten his toil serves only to enslave and impoverish him. Let us imagine the case of a factory owner who employs 100 men working on 100 machines. New machines which can produce twice as much are introduced so that 50 men may do the work previously performed by 100. In a saner society the 100 would cut their working hours by half or increase their income by 100%. No so in this case. 50 workers are sacked and swell the ranks of the unemployed. The remaining 50 dare not demand a share of the increased productivity because of the threatened competition of the 50 unemployed. Indeed it often happens that the retained machinists are faced by a wages cut.

Is it not obvious that there is no hope of any substantial or permanent improvement of workers' conditions or solution of the social problem so long as the wages system exists?

## Wages in the Fifteenth Century

Lest some of our readers are yet unconvinced, let us examine the progress of the wages system over the greater length of its existence. Bourgeois economists usually point to the period of 100 to 150 years ago and contrast it against to-day, crying, "Look at the wonderful progress we have made." They attempt to conceal the fact that at that period labour had sunk to its lowest economic level of more than 1000 years. During the period in question modern British capitalism was getting into its full stride and in order to attain speedy supremacy reduced the workers and peasants to almost unbelievable depths. To get a true comparison of the progress of the wages system we must examine a longer period. Let us look back five hundred years.

Professor Thorold Rogers, M.P. in the best standard work on the subject "Six Centuries of Work and Wages" in illustrating the wages of the mid-fifteenth century takes as example a recorded building job at Oxford 1449 to 1450. The head mason was paid 4s. a week and the other masons 3s. 4d. a week. What could be bought with the 4s. or 3s. 4d. then? Thorold Rogers gives a list of average prices for those years.

Wheat 5/10d. a quarter; oatmeal, 5/-; beef 5/1d. the cwt.; mutton 4/6d.; pork, 5/-; geese, 4d. each; fowls, 1½d. each; pigeons 4d. a dozen; candles, 1/1d. the dozen pounds; cheese, one-third of a penny a pound; butter, ½d. a pound; eggs, 5½d. for 120; firewood 1/10½d. the load; shirting, 6d. a yard; and cloth 1/5½d. Thus, a week's wage could purchase 112 pounds of beef, or 12 geese or 96 pounds of butter, and so on.

Rent, now the largest item in a workers budget, often one-third of his income, was in the fifteenth and earlier centuries, about a halfpenny or less per week. The peasant for 2/- a year rented a cottage and very large garden; he had also a share in the common pasture; he was able to keep poultry, pigs and a cow. He had the concession of collecting loppings and wind wood from the woods.

Rogers demonstrates that the working day then was of eight hours: "The artisan who is demanding at this time an eight hours' day in the building trades is simply striving to recover what his ancestor worked by four or five centuries ago." Nor was the work very hard or wearisome, for tired or hurried men cannot produce good workmanship.

## Socialism and Wages

Almost alone among the movements claiming the support of the workers, Syndicalism opposes the wages system. While Marx opposed the wages system, most of the parties calling themselves Marxist or Socialist support it. The Communist Party approves of it, and calls upon Marx to witness their orthodoxy, while in Soviet Russia the wages system has been extended, consolidated and become more extreme.

The Independent Labour Party has never advocated its abolition. On the contrary the I.L.P. at one time advocate a "Living Wage Policy" which they alternatively called "Socialism in Our Time". The Labour Party has never looked beyond nationalisation of certain industries on the Post Office model. Now, even that is modified to "public utility corporations" on the lines of the London Passenger Transport Board, their own creation.

Syndicalism fights against the existence of the wages system, against a method of distribution based upon mens' market value and for a society based upon their needs and the infinite capacity of society to satisfy them.



# Freedom also Counts

*By George Woodcock*

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY has left us a mixed heritage, with more curses than blessings, and one of the worst of the curses is the tendency to think on the material plane almost to the exclusion of any other, and to accord to material goods a value out of all relation to that they intrinsically held.

The golden century of capitalism was the age in which the Mammon of material wealth was held in higher esteem than at any other time in history. Never was a society more dominated by material values. The aim of most men was to gain as much money as they could lay hands on, and the symbolical figure of the age appeared not in the guise of hero or saint, but blatantly as the man of property, the self-made man, carrying the banner of *Enlightened Self Interest*. A man was judged not according to his personal value, but according to the value of his bank balance. Art was destroyed, science prostituted, the towns made ugly and the country derelict, all in the name of material gain. Never in human history were the needs of society so subordinated to the pursuit of material wealth.

In every society the dominant class has produced its myths, moulded to suit the mental conditions of the men of its time, by which the people are gulled into submission. The organised religions of the world, with their pseudo-spiritual unrealities, are such systems of ruling class mythology.

Capitalism, like the other societies, had its own system of myths. But, because of the spread of scepticism, the ordinary Church was not sufficient and capitalism, Janus-like, had to acquire a double set of myths, one for the 'religious', one of the 'enlightened'. Priest and scientists alike were used and, although they spoke in different phrases, their meaning was the same.

The church spent its time busily enlarging the eyes of needles for rich camels, and in justifying the acquisition and possession of goods. Its social outlook was expressed in a well-known hymn.

*The rich man in his castle,  
The poor man at his gate,  
God made them high and lowly  
And ordered their estate.*

Scientists and sociologists, using the idea of evolution, which biologists were then beginning to regard as a natural law, soon reached theories which were very useful to the prevailing order. In the process of creating their scientific materialism, they destroyed the whole foundation of organised religion, but the rationalists, for all their hatred of the Church, were rarely more inclined than the priests to countenance any revolutionary change in the present society.

Out of the idea of evolution, the materialist apologists produced the idea of a universal struggle for existence. This was later disproved by Kropotkin in *Mutual Aid*, in which he showed that co-operation is a more important factor in evolution than the struggle for existence. But while it lasted it was a very useful theory for the individualist capitalists of the age to justify the means by which they obtained their wealth.

Another variation on evolution was the theory of continual material progress, by which the affluence and conveniences of capitalist society were to increase in a steady progression. The experience of the present century should perhaps have taught us to regard such optimism with the

cynicism it deserves. There has been progress in invention and in the potentialities of better living, but these gains on the material plane have benefited humanity little, or, as in the case of war inventions, have positively harmed it, precisely because the progress in material achievements was not accompanied by any progress in non-material, i.e. intellectual and moral, development.

Out of this material civilisation rose the concept of the economic man. Man's needs were primarily material, it was contended, and provided he had a sufficiency of food, clothing, shelter and superficial amusement, he would be content. Aldous Huxley, in *Brave New World*, has given a horrifying picture of what might happen to a society which concentrated merely on the fulfilment of material needs, but we need not go into the realm of fantasy to imagine what such a society would be. During the days of American prosperity, in the 1920's, many of the workers—although by no means all—lived in a state of comparative economic prosperity, but the lack of any values in their society made their lives ugly, regimented and dominated by a continual desire for superficial variety.

During the nineteenth century, material considerations governed people in every stratum of society, and it is unfortunate for humanity that not only the ruling class, but also many of those who imagined themselves to be revolutionaries were dominated by exclusively material ends. The Marxists and Social Democrats in general adopted without resistance most of the pseudo-scientific ideas which justified the basic ruling class ideologies of the time.

There were a few exceptions, like William Morris, but to the majority of Socialists and radicals, so long as a man got a sufficiency of satisfaction for his material needs it did not matter a great deal in what society such a satisfaction was obtained.

This idea that material ends outweighed in importance all others was a potent factor in rendering so ineffective the Socialist and trades union movements of our time. In England, after the collapse of revolutionary unionism in the 1830's, the unions became concerned almost entirely with the material betterment of the workers' conditions under capitalism. They may have paid lip service to a social concept based on better principles than those of capitalism, but by devoting themselves entirely to material issues of wage disputes and death benefits, they lost sight of their former ideals and sank into a tacit acceptance of capitalism, which led them, by easy stages, to becoming, as they are to-day, the administrative organs of the capitalist state.

In Germany the Social-Democrats in a similar manner became more and more concerned with gaining minor improvements in material conditions under the existing social system. Their materialist and reformist tactics led them into alliance with the Junkers against revolutionary Socialists in 1919. During the period before the rise of Nazism they were the most powerful party in Germany. Yet, for all their millions of voters, their reformist ideas roused so little enthusiasm among the workers that when their party, their trade unions, their co-operatives, were destroyed by the Nazis, the workers registered no effective protest.

The fate of Social-Democratic parties in all countries where the counter-revolution has attacked has been similar. They have gone down with, at best, only a slight



struggle against their destruction. The workers will not sacrifice themselves in a fight for mere material reforms, for sixpence on or off the pay packet or to preserve the trade union bosses who have grown fat on exploiting their grievances. But there are times when they will struggle to the bitter end for a principle of freedom or justice.

Thus, while the Marxists and trade unionists allowed themselves to be impregnated with the materialist ideas bred by nineteenth century capitalism for its own protection, to join enthusiastically in devotion of the illusion of material progress and to disregard the moral nature of man in attempting to satisfy his material efforts with the least possible effort and disturbance to established interests, they were in fact betraying the interests of the workers, and preparing their own eventual liquidation.

One trend of social thought, and one only, has remained throughout impervious to doctrines of materialist expediency, and has based itself on principles which appeal to a higher faculty in men than their mere desire for the physical comforts of life. That trend is anarchism.

The anarchists do not destroy the value of material well-being, nor do they in any way discourage the continual struggle which goes on in every property society for the obtaining of good conditions of living for the workers.

But they recognise that it is not enough for a man to be fed, clothed, sheltered and provided with amusements. A slave can have all these and yet retain his servitude, and a man who has all the material necessities may yet lead a stultified and intellectually empty life if he lives in an unfree society. Apologists of certain forms of authoritarian society, such as the managerial state, have claimed that the system they support can, by means of authoritarian control, provide a sufficiency of material goods to allow the workers to live in comfort. I do not believe that the economic stresses within a property society would make this possible for any long time. But, even if it were possible, the anarchists would still not accept such a society precisely because the price to be paid for material comfort would be a complete lack of real freedom and real opportunity for development.

The anarchist, while he recognises the need for a sufficiency of material goods, recognises that a natural and good society cannot be built if material considerations are allowed to outweigh the principles on which such a society can be founded. These principles are, broadly speaking, freedom, justice and mutuality. They are reciprocal, and all three must exist if we wish to build a society based

on natural law and not on the artificial and restrictive institutions created by men for the domination and exploitation of their fellows. Freedom denotes that complete liberty, comprehending freedom from economic exploitation, freedom from political coercion and freedom from intellectual tyranny, without which a man cannot develop his intellectual and spiritual capacities to their full extent.

But freedom incurs responsibility, and can only live if it is used in such a way as not to injure the freedom of others. Therefore it is necessary that free men should observe the principle of justice, by which is meant not the so-called justice of law courts and hangmen, but the natural justice which arises from the respect of another's integrity. This justice cannot exist without freedom, just as freedom is impossible without justice. The principle of mutuality, which in one way contains both of the foregoing principles, is the natural law of co-operation which exists in the animal kingdom and which is necessary for any species or society to evolve on natural and fruitful lines. The society which the anarchists wish to see rising from the ruins of the old acquisitive systems is the manifestation of these principles. It can only grow and live if they are applied continually in the individual lives and common dealings of men. When they are applied the individual human being will at last stand free to develop his personality and inner potentialities in a manner which to-day is possible only to the few.

Such a society cannot come into existence without effort and consciousness. Not, like the political parties, by a merely nominal declaration of principles can we bring about their acceptance. It is necessary to teach these principles continually so that men may be ready to observe them when they start to build the free society. While the material ends of anarchism are important, they alone will not make anarchy. It is only by appealing to these desires for freedom and justice which lie within all men that they can be brought to realise and gain their liberty.

## FRANK LEECH SUMMONED

Frank Leech, Secretary of the Glasgow Anarchist Federation was summoned to appear before the Sheriff Court at Glasgow on the 8th October, to answer charges of (1) failing to provide a scheme under the Fire Prevention (Business Premises) No. 2. Order 1941. (2) Failing to register for 'Firewatching'.

*He raised the following objections:*

(1) That these Orders and Regulations, under which the charge is libelled, have been arbitrarily foisted upon the common people of this country. Further that the principles behind these Orders and Regulations are the same as those operating in Nazi Germany, i.e., Obey or be punished.

(2) The Fire-Prevention (Business Premises) No. 2 Order 1941 ordered notice to be given to the appropriate authority within twenty-one days from the 22nd September, 1941. I have already been penalised for failing to do so within the twenty-one days. Therefore as the said twenty-one days had elapsed, I could not fulfil the obligation and in consequence the complaint should fail in law.

(3) The second part of the complaint raising a question of Civil right and status cannot be decided in a Court of Summary Jurisdiction.

The Sheriff repelled the objections. Frank then pleaded "Not Guilty". The trial takes place on the 11th November at 10.30 a.m.

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

OCTOBER 29th.	Jack Wade
The Penal System	
NOVEMBER 5th.	Frank Soden
The Child in Society	
NOVEMBER 12th.	Mat Kavanagh
Errico Malatesta	
NOVEMBER 19th.	Jim Barker
Socialism, Communism & Anarchism	
NOVEMBER 26th.	E. L. T. Mesens
Understanding Modern Painting	

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# Indian Finance

*The New Indian Rope Trick*, by Reg Reynolds\* (Indian Freedom Campaign Committee, 6d.)

IT MAY BE true that capitalism contains within itself insuperable contradictions; but it is quite certain that capitalists are wonderfully astute at getting round most of the difficulties which their system raises. British Imperialists in particular have always held the palm for sheer manipulative adroitness. The way in which they have faced the present wartime problems raised by India, and even turned them to their own account, is described by Reg Reynolds in his pamphlet "The New Indian Rope Trick".

The public debt of India plays a considerable part in the maintenance of British Rule. The pamphlet quotes an authority of 1858 as stating that "the inconveniences which it occasions are fully compensated by the connexion which it maintains between the Government and the fundholders, a large proportion of whom are natives of the country, and who are thus interested in the stability of the ruling power." The years before the war saw an increasing transference of the debt from British to Indian bondholders.

In effect, what the British have done is to bleed India by taking Indian goods, and then repaying the debt by sending India money. This tendency has been accelerated by the war. As a result there is a shortage of goods in India, but plenty of money. The result of course is inflation and a rise in prices. The *Financial News* is quoted as stating that "The general rise in wholesale prices was reflected in the cost of living. The working class cost of living index at Bombay indicated in August 1942, a rise of 60 per cent. above the immediate pre-war figure. The cost of food had doubled during the three years, fuel and light had advanced by 64 per cent. and clothing by 60 per cent." These, being official figures, are unlikely to exaggerate. This result of Imperialist financial jugglery in India is one of the causes of the present famine. But the thousands of starvation deaths a week are more than worth it in the eyes of the British rulers, because, as Reg Reynolds says, "while the people of India drift further into debt, the Indian capitalist becomes more closely associated than ever before with the defence of the status quo. Instead of investing his money in industrial or commercial enterprises which might (in the past) lead him into conflict with the capitalist interests of Great Britain (and consequently into

\*Obtainable from Freedom Press, price 7d., post free.

some form of political nationalism) he is investing his money with the imperialist government itself."

In short, the British have made use of the financial difficulties which the war has put upon them to divide the Indians still further and so place the stranglehold of British rule more firmly than ever round the necks of the Indian workers and peasants. The present famine shows with what ruthlessness they have pursued their ends. *War Commentary* has always pointed out that freedom for the Indian will not come through the Nationalist struggle. In our issue of July 1941, we wrote that "just because the Indian

bourgeoisie are weak they will also look to the British to protect them when their struggle with the Indian workers becomes acute". The present pamphlet shows that British financial policy is already cutting away from underneath Indian property owners the grounds which made a "Nationalist" movement seem feasible, by removing grounds of conflict between British and Indian capital, and by binding the latter's interests firmly to the Imperialist wagon. As a study in the actual methods and workings of Imperialism this pamphlet should be read by everyone interested in the revolutionary struggle for human freedom. J. H.

## THE MARCH TO DEATH

By JOHN OLDAY, cheap edition 1/6d. (postage 3d.)

Lack of space has prevented us from reviewing in these columns one of the most important of Freedom Press publications, *The March to Death*, an album of 54 drawings representing a powerful indictment against capitalism and war.

The first edition of this book, published at 2/6d, has been rapidly sold out and we have now issued a second edition, containing the same number of cartoons but on cheaper paper.

*The March to Death* has received very good reviews in left wing papers and we have received many letters of congratulation from our readers. But our American friends of the *Industrial Worker* (the organ of the I.W.W.) have surpassed all our expectations by the enthusiastic review they have given our publication on the 11th of Sept. issue of their paper. We shall let them review the album for us as we are sure our readers will be pleased (and proud) to see in what high estimation our American comrades hold *The March to Death* and all Freedom Press publications.

On the front page of this issue, the reader will note a cartoon showing excellence of drawing, mastery of position, and an excellent sense of humour. This is merely one of a collection of fifty cartoons issued in one handbook by Freedom Press, London, the publishers of "War Commentary."

The working class movement has been the forcing ground of most of the finest artists of the age. Examine the background of the ten ranking cartoonists of any country, and its dollars to doughnuts that at least six of them began their work and did their finest drawing in the working class movement.

John Olday is a new one to most of us who have studied the work of our artists. Yet for biting irony, for a stiletto touch, and for excellence of craftsmanship, he ranks with the best of the old-timers. Using a thin line

technique, (better adapted to the drafting board than to newspaper reproduction), he yet manages to give a graphic portrayal of his subject matter.

The *March to Death* is a "must" in any rebel workers library. Six inches by nine, in notebook form, printed on fine magazine paper, it can be carried around in the pocket without harm, studied at leisure, and wedged in the vacant spaces between more heavily bound volumes.

Its price—sixty cents American. Address of its publishers Freedom Press, 27 Belsize Rd., London, N.W.6, England. And while you are writing, don't forget to enclose an extra nickel or so for Fellow-worker Tom Brown's handbook on Unionism, one of the very best in its field. Better make it an even dollar while you are at it, and tell them to make up to the value. You can't lose. All of their listed publications are a real buy for any worker's money.

There is one shortcoming in *The March to Death*. The artist is exercising his talents in the social rather than the industrial field. This is understandable. Very, very few cartoonists can get material from the every day grind of the factory, mine and workshop. Men like our own XI3 are very rare in modern society. The average workers either lacks the craftsmanship necessary, or having the drawing ability, lacks the background and the imagination necessary to depict the lessons which every worker should be learning daily from his hours of slavery.

This shortcoming aside, the handbook of John Olday is a lulu. The captions appearing on the pages opposite the drawings are quotations from the speeches of Churchill, Cripps, Morrison, and other slimy politicians, newspaper clippings of pre-war days. Together, the drawings and the captions are a blinding searchlight on the hypocrisy and chicanery, the treachery and murder of the civilization we are suffering because of "private" enterprise.



## SPIRIDONOVA ON THE BOLSHEVIKS

(continued from p. 10)

In the course of Russian Revolutionary history the word Terrorism did not merely connote revenge and intimidation (which were the very last things in its mind). No, the foremost aims of Terrorism were to protest against tyranny, to awake a sense of value in the souls of the oppressed, to rouse the conscience of those who kept silence in the face of this submission. Moreover, the terrorist nearly always accompanied his deed by a voluntary sacrifice of his own liberty or life. Only in this way, it seems to me, could the Terrorist acts of the revolutionaries be justified.

But where are these elements to be found in the cowardly Cheka, in the unbelievable moral poverty of its leaders?

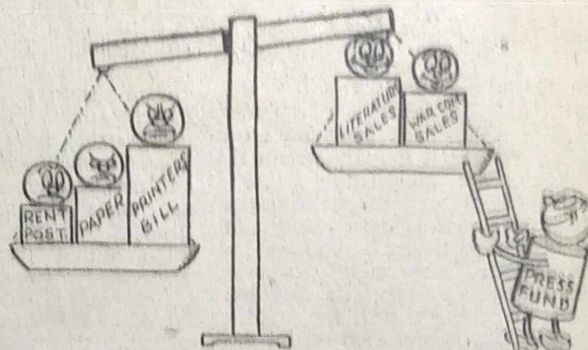
So far the working classes have brought about the Revolution under the unblemished red flag, which was red with their own blood. Their moral authority and sanction lay in their sufferings for the highest ideal of humanity. Belief in Socialism is at the same time a belief in a nobler future for humanity—a belief in goodness, truth and beauty, in the abolition of the use of all kinds of force, in the brotherhood of the world. And now you have damaged this belief, which had inflamed the souls of the people as never before, at its very roots.

You have shown, and helped to give the people a little justice. But you have taken monstrous power upon yourselves, and, like the chief inquisitor, have assumed absolute authority over the bodies and souls of the workers. And when the people began to reject you, you laid them in chains in order to combat the alleged "counter-revolution." And now you place upon the order of the day of the Revolution a trial of the Central Committee of the L.S.R. and of me. But I reject your jurisdiction, I do not accept you as a tribunal fit to judge our ideas. I do not accept your jurisdiction over them or over me. If any tribunal is to sit over us, I appeal to the International and the verdict of history.

Your tribunal consists of party members. In the name of party discipline it will have to carry out everything decided by your party.

A time will come, perhaps not far ahead, when a protest will rise within your party itself against a policy which stifles the spirit of the Revolution. A struggle will arise within your own party. Your corrupt leaders, drunk with power, will be deposed; there will be a cleansing, an upward swing will take place. But now I will take no

## WHAT ARE YOU

DOING ABOUT IT  
COMRADE?

part in your staged farce of a trial. You can only eliminate me and my party from the Revolution by killing us. Just as the Jews have no home except that wherein they are born and live and work, so do we have no home except in the Socialist Revolution. We are slandered and persecuted, just like the Jews. But just as the future of humanity ripens in the souls of the Jews, so does the renewal of Socialism ripen in our movement.

M. SPIRIDONOVA.

(Reproduced from "Prison Anthology", A. G. Stock and R. Reynolds).

Maria Spiridonova—born in 1885—as a young girl joined Social Revolutionaries. In 1906 she shot Lushchinsky, tyrannical governor of Tambov. Tortured and raped by Cossacks, then condemned to death. The sympathy which her act aroused all over Europe compelled the Tsar to commute her sentence to life imprisonment. Released in March 1917, after 11 years in prison, under the decree of Kerensky's Provisional Government. When Left Social Revolutionaries formed a joint Government with the Bolsheviks after October 1917, Spiridonova held office. She was arrested on the 6th July, 1918, imprisoned for five months, then released. Arrested again 25th February, 1919. L.S.R.'s engineered her escape on 2nd April 1919. Hid in Moscow disguised as a peasant woman, as she had done under the Tsar. Arrested again 26th October, 1920 for the third time by the Bolsheviks. Exiled to Turkistan, then to Urals. Said to be still alive in 1938, in prison. If she is alive to-day she is 58 years old, and has been in prison except for two periods of about 18 months each, since 1906, i.e. for 34 years.

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