

# WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY

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TWOPENCE

## WAR and FASCISM

IN THE YEARS before the war the British working class often expressed their hatred of Fascism. The spontaneous erection of barricades in the streets of the East End to frustrate Mosley's Marches were an example. Workers hated Hitler for the brutality of Nazi concentration camps and the vicious anti-semitism. They hated Mussolini for the Abyssinian war. During those pre-war years when our ruling class were friendly towards the Fascist powers and coldly sacrificed the smaller states as they successively fell victims to Fascist aggression the workers were solidly anti-fascist.

Unlike Sir John Simon and Mr. Amery, the English people have been particularly sympathetic towards the Chinese in their fight against Japan. And the fact that Britain and America at long last formed an alliance with China did much to strengthen the propaganda of the ruling class about the anti-fascist war for freedom. But sympathy with the Chinese struggle, like sympathy with the Russians, has made people idealize the Chinese Generalissimo, Chiang Kai-Shek as a front-line fighter for freedom. But the *Observer* (10/10/43) is nearer the truth when it describes China as "no more than a self-constituted dictatorship of the Kuomintang", and Chiang Kai-Shek as "frankly a military dictator."

But now that China is in the news, more information is forthcoming which is likely to undermine idealistic hopes about the Sino-Japanese war. Thus the source quoted above reveals that China has now been fully opened up as a field for imperialist investment:

"Immediately after Chiang's election (as President), and in response to a powerful speech made by him last month, the Central Executive Committee (the highest governing body) lifted all restrictions hitherto applying to Sino-foreign enterprises in China. Henceforward the bulk of the capital need not be Chinese, the general manager may be a foreigner, and foreigners

may be permitted to finance their own enterprises in China."

In England it is an offence to trade with the enemy. It is therefore doubly disillusioning to find that the Chinese Government still trades with the territory occupied by Japan! The *Manchester Guardian* (19/11/43) correspondent in Chungking states that:

"Trade between Japanese-occupied and Free China has recently taken on larger proportions on account of the Chinese Government's endeavour to attract useful goods from enemy territory . . . Value of the known imports from occupied areas to Free China during the last six months, according to a Governmental spokesman, was £1,250,000 sterling on Government account, and £25,000,000 through commercial channels."

China's struggle "for freedom" is carried on under a "frank military dictatorship"; and while millions of Chinese workers have died fighting the Japanese, the Government and the Chinese capitalists do business with the other side to the tune of more than £26,000,000 a half year.

Hatred of Hitler and the desire to join with Spain and China in the fight against Fascist Aggression, provided the British Government with the support it required when, four and a half years ago, they entered the Second Imperialist War. In 1939, it was to avenge and defend freedom and small nations that we took up arms. But things are changed since then! Now even the blah-blah propagandists mix their "ideals" with a strong materialistic flavour. Here is the American paper, *Life*:

"America is the symbol of freedom . . . And all over the world, now, there are living fragments of this symbol, and all over the world they are being shot down . . . When these living units of freedom are extinguished we cannot bring them back to life. All we can do is to give meaning to their death.

"And this is to say that when freedom falls, as it has here on the beach at Buna, it is our task to cause it to rise again; not in living units, which we cannot



make and to which we cannot give life, but in the mighty symbol, America, the beacon for all men, which is ours to have, to hold, and to increase."

Yet for all its absurdity, this patriotic blurb does attempt to give idealism and meaning to the sacrifice of life which the war involves. But statesmen are becoming increasingly blunt, virtually declaring the "war for freedom" to be a war of conquest. Smuts in his recent speech stated that there would only be three great powers after the war—the British Empire, the United States and Russia. Harry Hopkins, Lease-Lend Administrator and close friend of Roosevelt is even more frank in an article quoted in the *Daily Mirror* on December 3rd.:

"We will emerge from this war the richest and most powerful people in the world. Make no mistake about it. When the "cease fire" is finally sounded we alone of all the Great Powers will find our lands unbombed and unscarred; our people well nourished and strong; and our breadbasket still filled to overflowing."

"We will have the largest navy and merchant fleet on the seven seas, more aeroplanes than any other nation."

We have certainly travelled a long way since the 1939 protestations about "no territorial aggrandisement", about preventing one nation (Germany) seeking hegemony in Europe or even world domination.

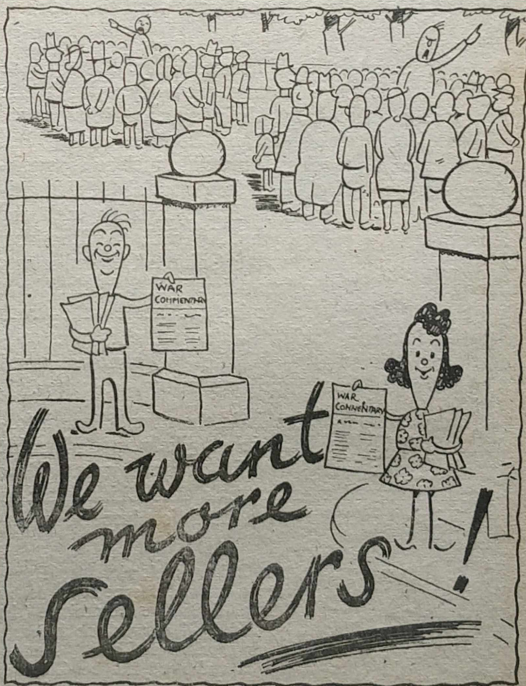
Fascism stands for the exaltation of the leadership principle, for the placing of the destiny of a whole people in the hands of one man, the leader. It was to destroy this spirit that the people of England fell in behind Chamberlain in 1939. Yet reporting the recent conferences of the "Big Three", such headlines as "These men shape the future of the world" have been common.

The change in war propaganda reflects the increasing control of the State over the individual lives of men and women (yet another attribute of Fascism) which war legislation has accomplished. Perhaps the clearest reflexion of the drift towards totalitarian and authoritarian conceptions is to be seen in the many plans for post-war reconstruction. The Beveridge plan and its revised and amended versions, as well as all the other propositions put forward to solve the post-war problems, are united in this: that they all envisage extended control by the State over everything that concerns the lives of men and women and even children, from questions of employment to questions of charity. Military and industrial conscription, and compulsory semi-military youth organizations to absorb the leisure of the young, are all put forward and extolled, not as the attributes of Fascism they really represent, but as benefits conferred by wise leaders of a benevolent State. Freedom becomes ever and increasingly an abstract conception, with a smaller and smaller place in the life of to-day, and still less, apparently, of to-morrow.

Thus as the war drags on—already it has lasted

longer than the war of 1914-18—it uncovers more unworthy and discreditable motives, while the tendency becomes ever more clearly to enthrone that form of authoritarian rule which it is alleged to be fighting against. Many who hoped (and some who fought against Franco in Spain are amongst them) to see the war against Hitler become in good earnest a war against Fascist reaction have become disillusioned. Events have proved that wars for freedom cannot be waged by the class enemies of freedom. Instead the principle of obedience to authority has been enormously strengthened.

In this issue of *War Commentary*, we publish a Manifesto of the Anarchist Federation on War. We have opposed the war because it is *not* a war for Freedom, because it has always been a war of conquest, a war for imperialist gain. We do not point only to theoretical considerations however to support our position. Events are the most cogent teachers of all. It is the logic of events that will bring the workers of the world in disgust to throw down the institutions of power and government whose rivalry has for the second time in thirty years soaked the whole world in blood. Events will bring them to join hands across the frontiers in the Social Revolutionary fight against Fascism, and the reconstruction, not of the old, evil, cruel world of Capitalism, but of the free associations of free men holding their destinies in their own hands.





# ANARCHIST COMMENTARY

## MOSLEY'S RELEASE

EVEN now the political "anti-fascists" are still trying to make capital out of Mosley's release. The general tenor of C.P.'s propaganda, of course, gave Morrison just the handle he needed, and he grasped it with both hands. In the debate he was able to appear (what an irony!) as the most democratic of them all!

In spite of the I.L.P.'s clamour about "Put Mosley On Trial" (a slogan which is exposed elsewhere in this issue), and their claim that "Mosley Case Proves I.L.P. Right On 18b", "the I.L.P. have always opposed 18b." etc., Maxton, McGovern, and Campbell Stephen voted in favour of the motion deploring his release as an 18b detainee. But most interesting of all was the outburst of Mr. John Parker, a Labour M.P. who seconded the motion. He declared that "he hated Mosley's guts" and that Fascists and other people should be denied all liberties under the constitution. Mr. Parker is secretary of the Fabian Society; his espousal of this most arbitrary interpretation of the most arbitrary section of the Emergency Powers Act illustrates a point we have often made; that State Socialists are wholly unconcerned about questions of liberty. In fact there is much in common between reformist Socialism and Fascism—especially in their belief in the final authority of the State. Parker's outburst merely parallels Bevin's acts—the Socialist Minister of Labour who has introduced more fascistic measures for the control of labour in two and a half years, than his tory predecessors had been able to do in ten.

We Anarchists believe in, and work for the organizing of the working class on a basis of class struggle as the only effective means of fighting fascism. The record of our Spanish Anarchist Syndicalist comrades sufficiently justifies our views. Hence we are indifferent to such merely political issues as the Mosley release business. We have from the first opposed 18b. and the whole Emergency Powers Act, and have stigmatized it as a Fascist measure. It is a matter of indifference to us if one of the principal victims of this weapon of reaction should be the leader of the pro-Nazi B.U.F. We opposed the E.P.A. when it was used to imprison our own comrades, when it was used to suppress the *Daily Worker* and attack the *Daily Mirror*. We are not now going to support it merely to secure the political detention of Sir Oswald Mosley. Let us repeat it: the danger of Fascism lies much more in the ranks of Churchill's Government than in Holloway Gaol; and that danger is not to be laid by petitions and processions to the Houses of Parliament (even when kept in order by Mr. Gallacher and the Mounted Police!) The seeds of Fascism lie in any form of authority, in all forms of government, and workers control of the means of life is the only way to destroy the danger.

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## OPPOSITION IN GERMANY

ACCORDING to the *Manchester Guardian*, "particulars of death sentences passed upon civilians have become almost a standard feature in the German daily papers. The details given include, besides the name, domicile, and occupation of the convicted persons, the crime of which they have been found guilty. Defeatist talk, treachery against the nation, and 'black listening' (that is, listening to foreign broadcasts) are among the offences for which Germans have paid with their lives in recent weeks."

The German anti-war militants in the last war were far more active than their fellow-anti-militarists in this country, and were far more conscious of the social issues involved. There is no reason therefore to doubt the testi-

mony of these reports as to the existence of an anti-Nazi opposition. That is an encouraging reflection. What is rather ghastly, however, is that men under the Nazi terror should turn with hope towards foreign broadcasts. What a shameful waste, that they should die for such trash! It is unlikely that the men who broadcast to Germany feel any qualms about the fate of their listeners, or feel any responsibility towards them.

Meanwhile, what we have said about the effects of bombing being felt almost exclusively by the working class in the poorest districts is borne out once more by the recent Berlin raids. "The main targets", says the *Manchester Guardian*, "appear to have been the industrialized districts of Spandau and Siemens-Stadt . . ." The *Daily Mail*, as usual, exults at the plight of the German workers. "Tens of thousands of people wended their way through the streets, their one thought being to get away. Many were bandaged—some still moaning with the pain of minor injuries. Most had only the clothes they were wearing, and perhaps a small bundle. All were blackened by smoke and soot . . ." But the road of escape was long. The marchers were constantly being diverted away from areas where delayed action bombs had not exploded, or from streets where buildings were on the point of collapse . . . There is no hope of saving the blazing homes of the people. Firemen are too busy dealing with the great blocks of buildings in the heart of the city and the burning factories."

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## INDIAN FAMINE

The famine situation in Bengal and other parts continues unabated, and thousands are dying each week still. Parliament and the Press Lords who manufacture "public opinion" are, however, much more concerned with such important matters as Sir Oswald Mosley or the question of whether the Coal Owners or the State are best fitted to exploit the miners. They haven't much time for the deaths of a few million Indians.

Reformists and other dreamers will no doubt have been cheered up when Sir George Schuster declared recently in the House of Commons that Parliament had a great responsibility for India. The wish-thinkers comfortably tell themselves that so long as Parliament is alert it will all come all right. Sir George, however, also pointed out the difficulty for M.P.s in keeping themselves adequately informed:

"How can we discharge this responsibility? . . . We can read press telegrams and hear rumours. But we can never verify the facts by our own direct inquiry and observation. There is, however, one member of this House who . . . can command direct swift means of communication, who can be told all the secrets, and who has a large staff of officials to digest and analyse the information which he gets.

A heavy responsibility rests on the Secretary of State to keep Parliament truly informed of what is happening in India—to warn us of what is likely to happen, to ask for our counsel and support."

What has Mr. Amery done to keep the £400-a-year men informed? He told them a year ago that there was no danger, when in fact famine was already on the doorstep. He promised that there would be no more exports of food from India after March 1943, when in fact food was still being exported in the autumn. He said, three months ago, that the rice crop would be ready in December; now it appears that "the coming rice crop is expected to be excellent, but owing to the epidemics (of cholera, dysentery, smallpox and malaria) there may be a shortage of



labourers, and in any event the supplies of rice will not be large before mid-January" (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 3/12/43). In any case, said Mr. Amery, the famine is no concern of the Government of India, since it was "the fault of the Provincial Legislature". This is how the Secretary of State for India discharges his "heavy responsibility".

But even supposing he did discharge his duty of informing the House about Indian affairs in an efficient manner—would that help matters? When the question of the Indian famine was debated, there were less than twenty M.P.s present. Indians may starve, but M.P.s had to go to lunch.

When men, women and children—reduced to unrecognizable and repellent skeletons—are dying daily in hundreds in the streets of Calcutta, how light-headed and gruesome seems this liberal chatter about "Parliament's responsibility". How irrelevant and brutal the statement of Mr. Dean Acheson, chairman of the council of U.N.R.R.A., that the Indian famine is "not within the competence of the council to discuss at this session". He added that the scope of the administration's activities was limited to the relief of victims of war in liberated areas. Beyond a doubt, India cannot be considered a liberated area—the state of bondage is only too evident.

**ANARCHY!** ROOSEVELT declared on the Italian situation that the United Nations would only deal with a responsible government, for there could be no deal with anarchy.

Of course by anarchy he meant precisely what anarchists mean by anarchy: working-class revolution and freedom. He did not mean there would be no deal with chaos (as some suggest) since nobody expected there *could* be a deal with chaos, but some hoped there might be a deal with the people of Italy as against the oppressors.

The miners' leaders in this country have also been talking about anarchy, since the time of the Lanarkshire coal strike, when the national Press emblazoned the name of anarchism in headlines.

At one time—prior to the last war in particular—the name anarchism was used to scare the unwary—for this purpose it was revived by some papers during the Spanish War. Thus the *Daily Express* declared "let us assure the Socialist Party here that the Anarchists are not 'revolutionaries' of the Ramsay MacDonald or even former Ramsay MacDonald school. They are bitter, earnest, sincere, *real* revolutionaries." In the same way, some Catholic papers, and the French Right-Wing papers, gave publicity to Spanish Anarchism to scare off the pseudo-revolutionary-socialists from supporting the Spanish struggle. However, those who tell us the word anarchy is misleading are greatly mistaken. All these people do not misuse the word, but well understand it. The miners' leaders make it quite plain that when they say they disbelieve in anarchy what they mean to say is they disbelieve in the miners acting for themselves. The miners' leaders prefer the men to listen to their bureaucrats, to do what the government tells them, and to suffer their bosses gladly. When the bosses force a strike, the men should then refer matters to Whitehall, miles from the scene, and when the inevitable decision is for the capitalists, the miners should behave themselves and remain at work creating profits—otherwise it's anarchy.

Mr. Will Lawther, miners' president, who in his younger days was a revolutionary socialist and well understood the meaning of the word "anarchy", showed he still knows its meaning when he said:

"The release of Mosley is one of the Government's biggest blunders. It makes our job of encouraging men to work when some of their colleagues have been sent to prison more difficult than ever. It

is the most blatant encouragement of the forces of anarchy that has ever been given."

(*Daily Herald*, 22/11/43.)

It is of course hard to persuade miners that they must keep working in spite of the police persecution against them and their comrades, when they see the excuse given by the labour leaders—"carry on until we have brought the fascist leaders to trial"—made a mockery of by the consideration paid Sir Oswald Mosley. They will be given one more proof of the falsehood of the claims of those who became anti-fascists after September 1939. It will, points out Lawther, encourage the militants in the mines—i.e. encourage anarchy.

The opponents of freedom often misuse the word anarchy. But these few instances show they well enough know what it does mean—working-class revolt, militancy, and freedom. That is the sort of force President Roosevelt would not deal with in Italy, and Will Lawther is perturbed of encouraging in the mines. The believers in freedom will do well to affirm their belief in anarchy, for although it scares the respectable middle-class, it has a worthy tradition behind it.

## DIRECT ACTION SAVES ANOTHER H.G.

Sydney Barfrement, who works at Sherwood Colliery, Mansfield, Notts, was sentenced to 42 days imprisonment for disobeying an officer's order when on Home Guard duty. 300 miners came out on strike in protest against the sentence. The same evening the sentence was suspended.

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*Principles of Syndicalism VI*

TOM BROWN

**Workers' Control of Distribution**

IN THE PRESENT conditions of class struggle the Syndicalist distributive workers are organised on the same principles as the factory and other industrial workers. The basis and control of the organisation is in the meeting of the workers at their place of employment where their job committee is elected. Thus each large store would have a House Committee. In the case of smaller individual shops, as these are usually found in groups (as grocers, chemists, butchers, bakers, etc.) about cross-roads or minor thoroughfares, workers from each shop would meet to elect their group committee. Similarly the warehousemen in the wholesale trade would elect their warehouse committee.

As in the case of all other syndicates, the shop committees are federated to the local Federation of Syndicates, representing all Syndicalist workers in the locality. In the other direction, the Shop Committees are federated to the District Committee of Distributive Workers, and the District Committees to the National Council of Distributive Workers. The National Council is, like other syndicates, federated to the National Council of Labour, which brings together and co-ordinates the whole of the Syndicalist forces.

The work of the Distributive Syndicates is, of course, not only to wage a struggle for better working conditions and higher wages, but also to prepare for the taking over of distribution by the workers. To that end the Syndicalist shop and warehouse workers study their trade. They observe and discuss where such and such commodities are stored and how they could be distributed more justly and with greater efficiency. This task is urgent, for workers must be fed during the social General Strike and Revolution.

The Spanish Syndicalists acted in this way. The bakers of Barcelona, before the Revolution, knew the locality and amount of all stocks of flour, and the oven capacity of the city's bakeries. On the glorious 19th July, 1936, when the revolutionary workers of Barcelona went to the barricades, their baker comrades ensured them and their families bread. The Peasants' Syndicates co-operated with the Distributive Syndicates in the collection of food in the country and its distribution in the towns of Catalonia.

During the stay-in strike of the Italian engineering workers in 1920 the peasants' syndicates, the distributive and transport workers and the co-operatives

combined to supply food to the strikers who held the factories for four weeks.

In Britain the workers of the mining areas, particularly Durham, have shown how they can feed the workers by collecting food and running communal kitchens during strikes of three, four, six months or even longer. The workers can and must ensure their own food supplies in strike and revolution.

The Revolution accomplished, the Distributive Workers' Syndicate will, of course, establish liaison with the productive syndicates most closely related to it; Farm Workers, Food Preparation Workers, Wood Workers, Textile Workers, Clothing Workers, Leather Workers, Printers and such.

It will be understood that the Syndicalist method of distribution, like the Syndicalist method of production, has nothing in common with the principles of political control advocated by most Socialists and even by most politicians of all brands in modern times. Political control means control first of all by Cabinet Ministers who usually have no experience of the technique they claim to direct. A country squire is made Minister of Mines, a lawyer Minister of Aircraft Production, a political journalist is made First Lord of the Admiralty. In municipal affairs, parsons, butchers and publicans pretend to run the trams, supervise education and manage the drainage system. Government by amateurs! Instruction by the uninstructed!

Distribution like industry is a thing of technics and requires direction by persons of experience, those who have given time and thought to the theory and practice of their craft. Distribution means more than standing behind a counter, handing over a packet of cigarettes and counting threepence change. Every shop assistant should be an expert at his job, and Syndicalism will give him the incentive to develop the interest which will make him an expert. A bookshop assistant should know something of literature and printing, a tailor's assistant something of clothes, and a provision hand something of food, its care and attractive presentation. They should be able to make the best of the goods and advise the customer.

Of course distribution involves much more than shop-keeping. Each centre of population has its warehouses while behind them are the special warehouses of the railway centres and docks. All these need a knowledge of certain technics. Meat refri-



geration, banana ripening, ventilations of wood-ware and a thousand other problems require special knowledge and experience.

Examples of the disastrous effect of government interference in distribution are only too abundant. Resisting the temptation to choose too many of the hundreds of examples available, I pick one from the hat. Here are headlines from the *Daily Express*, 12/6/43:

### TOMATOES ROT WHILE SHOPS GO WITHOUT.

"In London yesterday shops complained that they had no tomatoes. In Manchester wholesalers complained that their tomatoes were rotting."

It is left to the reader to supply further examples from his daily reading and, better still, his observation.

But, lest it is thought that all this is due to the difficulties of war-time, let us take examples from the first few months of war, when there was no air raid, no fighting on land, no labour shortage, and plentiful stocks of food abounded.

The following is taken from a pamphlet "Chaos on the Home Front" published by the Co-operative Movement.

Scunthorpe Co-operative Society had a very successful creamery "we had a certain amount of good fresh butter in stock and on September 22, the Food Minister requisitioned it. The butter was kept there for a considerable time. Immediately they took it over they increased the price by ten shillings a cwt., or £10 a ton. We were allowed to draw our own butter out of our own cooling chamber and pay the Food Ministry the increased price of 10/- a cwt."

The society had some butter they needed but were not allowed to touch, they wrote a letter to the Ministry saying that the butter was going bad and needed turning. The reply told them to send the butter to London, from there it went to South Wales. Was it fresh? The customers were.

"You used to get good sized prunes for 6d. per lb. The Ministry requisitioned the whole lot and sold them back to the grocers at a price which means that the retailer cannot sell the big ones for less than 8½d., or the small ones."

"But the outstanding example of official muddle was fish. On the outbreak of war the Ministry at once abandoned the East Coast ports and set up a fish distribution centre at Oxford, with a chain of branch centres. The scheme did not work, supplies failed to reach the places where they were wanted. Much fish went bad because of the length of time taken in unpacking it and repacking it."

Experience of lecturing on the subject has brought to my notice doubts which exist in the minds of a few persons. Doubts which I would not otherwise have believed possible, for most of these problems, questions of human and trade relationships, have already been solved, even under capitalism.

The most frequent of these runs like this, "But how will the wishes of the consumer be met? What organisation will the Syndicalists set up whereby the

consumer may express his preferences?" No organisation, I hope. Such a special organisation is about the least likely way of his wishes being effectively expressed. Better the way developed by the people themselves.

Goods, as now, will be produced in great variety, for workers like producing different kinds, and new models, of goods. Now if some goods are unpopular, they will be left on the shelves to be devoured by mice and moths or embalmed by spiders. Of other goods more popular the shops will be emptied. Surely it is obvious that the assistant will decrease his order of the unpopular line and increase his order of the popular. Every shopkeeper does that now and learns, often with uncanny accuracy, to anticipate his customers' need. Even the newspaper seller at the street corner must anticipate so many of *News*, so many of *Star* and so many of *Standard*; to balance himself between extra customers and left-over copies.

"But what if the productive syndicates refuse to meet the need of the consumers as relayed to them by the distributive workers?" cries our stubborn questioner, defending his last barricade. Well, it is something that just won't happen. Everyone who makes something wishes that thing to be useful and desirable. Man's work must have social meaning; must be useful, or he is unhappy in his work.

Some years ago it used to be said that one of the worst punishments of the military "glasshouse" was for a man to fill a wheelbarrow with lead shot, push it to the top of an incline and then tip the barrow allowing the shot to roll back. He then descended and refilled the barrow, repeating the rest of the process. It was said that this meaningless task, like so many other military tasks, nearly drove the victims to madness. The lack of social meaning was the sting of the punishment, which must have been invented by a student of Dante.

Another "problem" we have presented to us is that of someone wanting an article which is not in the shops and which is not made. But is this likely to happen? People are stimulated and guided in their choice of goods by what they see in the shops and catalogues. Is anyone likely to make a sketch of the peculiar footwear of the ancient Assyrians, take it to a shoe shop and say, "Have you a pair of shoes like this, size six, please?"

All these are small problems which we can safely leave to the day when they arise. It is for us now to determine the general outlines of the New Society and lay its foundations. It is possible that the further stages will be much easier and more satisfying than we, in the dull, grey age of capitalism, had dared to hope.

(The next article of this series will be on  
The Commune)



## ***A Red and Black Notebook***

# **Don't go down the Mine Dad!**

MR. BEVIN'S NEW SCHEME for supplying human raw material to the coal mines is little more likely to solve the problem than did his great failure, the appeal for volunteers. The government's degree of intellectual bankruptcy is indicated by their resort to the principles of gambling. A bitter random thought recalls that this same method is one also used for the shooting of hostages.

The fact that men, so far from volunteering for the mines, are trying hard to get out of them is due to the appalling working and living conditions of the miners. Men prefer the army to the coal pits, not because they are bursting patriotic, many have preferred prison, but because the mines are even worse than the army.

Yet, in spite of the naturally hard character of the work, there would be no lack of willing workers for the coalfield if conditions were reasonably decent. There are always plenty of husky workers if the conditions are good.

### **The Wage Isn't Much**

Wages are, naturally, the greatest problem. True, they are higher than they were a few years ago, but, at between three and four pounds, often less, they are very low for wartime and much below those of the last war. I was speaking to a Yorkshire miner a little while ago and, after showing me his pay slips for a six shift week, he outlined his budget, demonstrating that after paying rent, groceries, etc., he had left four shillings spending money. The only thing that puzzles me is, how he managed to squeeze out the four bob.

Few persons realise how many offtakes are deducted from the miner's pay before he receives a penny. Most workers have only two items, state insurance and income tax, but I have seen pay notes with twelve, fourteen, and even sixteen printed items of deduction. Customs vary in different coalfields, of course, but most have about fourteen items. I have even seen such details as—"Pick sharpening," "R.C. Priest", and others no less staggering.

Even before the miner's wage is reckoned in the counting house, deductions, verging on the fraudulent have been made. The miner is paid for the weight of coal he sends up the shaft, but only the large pieces of coal are reckoned. In any pit, any day, a few hundred tons of coal are taken by the coal owner without payment because he considers them below size. But he sells it just the same. Townspeople, particularly Londoners, would be surprised at the respectable size pieces, often larger than appears in their scuttles, which have been rejected.

### **Homes For Heroes**

Where the conscripts (who would be called Hitler's slaves in occupied Europe) are going to live has probably not troubled the Ministry of Labour or the Ministry of Fuel—yet. But it is going to trouble most of the conscripts quite a lot. Most of the miners' cottages are well below standard, many are just slums. True, some thousands of good houses have been built for miners during the ten years or so preceding the war, but the majority remain relics of the industrial revolution.

A bathroom, with running hot water, is a most obvious necessity for a man who returns from work with fine coal dust embedded in every sweating pore. Yet most miners have their daily bath in a tub or zinc bath before the kitchen fire. The kitchen is also the drawing room, dining room and often a bed room.

Coal dust and smoke may filter through every open window of the cottages. The ever growing waste heap may reach the cottage door, sulphurous fumes from burning slag heaps may poison the atmosphere night and day, but the mining folk remain the cleanest section of the population.

### **You Can't Work On Jam And Bread**

Perhaps the miner's greatest problem is how to get sufficient good food to replace the energy he expends at the coal face. It is not only a question of ration and the poor supply of non-rationed goods in the coalfield shops. It is also a problem of how to buy the goods available.

Miners are heavy eaters, not at the coal seam, but when they return home for their supper or dinner. Many persons doubted the accuracy of the dinner table scene in the film *How Green Was My Valley*. The mining family there portrayed certainly had a good, hefty feed, but it was not exaggerated. In more prosperous times miners fed as well on a week day as many other workers did on a Sunday.

How the brilliant minds in the Government aim to raise coal on potatoes and a few ounces of rations whacks me, Woolton pie (or is it Llewellyn pie?) is all very well for persons sitting in an office, or addressing an official luncheon, especially if they can stoke up later at an expensive restaurant. It needs more than that to replace the enormous loss of tissue and energy given out at the coal face. Miners were not hearty eaters, I use the past tense, because of gluttony. Their bodies craved the replacement entailed by their heavy work.

### **It's Hell Down Below**

Machinery has done nothing to lighten the labour of the pitman. Coal cutting machines and conveyors have speeded up the tempo of work. Besides, they fill the air with dust and noise. Once work at the coal face was rather quiet. Men often sang at work, joining in chorus after chorus, or the lone "hewer" entertained himself with the melodies so beloved of mining folk. Now it is all banging, clattering and nerve shattering screeches.

And to all to his other troubles, the miner is set upon by Government officials, trade union bureaucrats, magistrates, journalists and Communist narks, who all cry "We demand more coal!"

**SYNDICALIST.**

### **MEETINGS IN THE ANARCHIST FEDERATION HALL**

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

Sunday, 7 p.m.

DECEMBER 19th

Eddie Fenwick

The War and the Ruling Class

DECEMBER 26th

Frank Leech

Practical Syndicalism

JANUARY 2nd

Eddie Shaw

New Methods, New Forces, New Alignments

### **A SOCIAL EVENING**

amongst comrades and friends will be held in the above hall on

Friday 14th December, at 8 p.m.



## A NATION'S GRATITUDE?

Private John Hunter, 39, of the R.A.M.C., who stated at an Aldershot court martial that he made eleven Atlantic crossings while serving in the Canadian Merchant Navy, and was torpedoed once, has been sentenced to two years' detention for desertion.

He had been away from the Army since a few months before the war, and told the court that he wanted to get the matter cleared up so that he could get married.

*Star*, 22/11/43.

The country is very grateful to the men of the Merchant Navy—it owes them a debt it can never repay—the State will do everything for them . . . Believe it if you like! Here is a concrete instance of a man who has served through the war in the M.N., and yet his record does not save him from a heavy sentence for *pre-war* desertion from the Army, which has not even harmed the war-effort!

## CAPITALIST—ON HIMSELF

"Hit me in the stomach—as hard as you like," said a stocky little man with a line-creased face. He just wanted to prove that at 65 he was as fit as most men. A specialist who examined him said his heart "might be a bullock's." "You should see me stripped," says Lord Nuffield with pride.

Well known is his munificent consideration for employees, but he never has had and never will have anything to do with housing them, because, he told Donegall, he is "horrificed" and "dead against" interference with their private life and leisure.

Cried he: "If I thought that any of my employees hated me I should have retired long ago."

*News Review*, 2/12/43.

It is a pity Lord Nuffield never thought of talking in disguise to some Oxford people he might have learnt a few more things about himself.

## LYNCHERS PROSECUTED

For the second time in forty years, the federal civil rights statute has been invoked against lynchers. The case involves a former sheriff, three former deputy sheriffs and nine others of Vigo County, Ind., indicted recently for the lynching of a Negro near Paris, Ill., last October. Vigo County is just across the Illinois state line.

The thirteen are held in \$2,000 bail each by a federal grand jury in East St. Louis, Ill., and face maximum penalties of two years imprisonment of \$5,000 fine or both.

The victim of the lynching was James Edward Person, 33, World War II veteran who had received an honourable discharge. He was accused by the mob of frightening women at farmhouses. An F.B.I. investigation, which led to the indictment, revealed that Person had been walking across the fields and asking for food at various farmhouses.

*The Call*, 1/10/43.

## CHILD DEATH RATE

The Government was asked yesterday what it was going to do about the "disgraceful" fact that the child death-rate in Glasgow is higher than it is in Tokio.

Mr. Kirkwood (Soc., Dunbarton Burghs), who raised the question, also asked the Secretary for Scotland what immediate plans he had for the rehousing and rehabilitation of workers in the Glasgow area.

*Daily Mirror*, 1/12/43.

## NEW BLOOD

Mr. Henry Hopkins retired as chairman of the Ainsty (West Riding) Bench because he said he was too old. He is 82.

Mr. W. H. Shaw was unanimously elected in his place by the magistrates yesterday. He is 85.

*Daily Express*, 30/11/43.

We daren't think how old the magistrate who will replace Mr. Shaw when he resigns, will be.

# Through

## CONSOLATION?

The Christian Pacifist loathes and hates the stories of bombing and devastation, by whomsoever it is done. But, though he sympathises with the bereaved in their affliction, he knows or ought to know that it doesn't really matter very much whether a person lives in this world or in the next. The "killed" are still the object of God's unconquerable love and care.

*Rev. W. Mauleverer in "Peace now—at what Price?"*

## STALINISTS ACTIVE IN MEXICO

### From Victor Serge

MEXICO—One might have hoped that the formal dissolution of the Comintern and the arrival in Mexico of Soviet Ambassador Oumansky would have put an end, for a short time at least, to Communist aggressions against anti-totalitarian Socialist refugees. But this hope would have proven in vain . . .

The publication *El Popular* recently printed an article which set forth in no uncertain terms threats to murder me. The President of the "Society of Friends of the U.S.S.R.," Jose Mancisidor, attacked us in the periodical *Todo*, denouncing once more my friends, Julian Gorkin and Marceau Pivert, and me, as well as Leon Blum, as the heads of Goebbel's fifth column!

Finally, last Sunday, August 1st, during a private gathering of Catalan Socialists which took place at the Orfeo Catalan—that is the club of the Catalan Republicans—a band of Spanish Communists interrupted the meeting and attacked those present. The publicist, Jordi Arquer, author of a book on the Catalan problem, who had just entered, was gravely wounded in the head; Professor Enrique Gironella, editor of *Mundo*, who had sustained a fractured skull at the time of the Communist attack on the Erlich and Alter meeting of April 1st, received wounds in the arms and legs; Dr. Tusso, former director of the hospital at Barcelona and former Deputy-Mayor of Barcelona, known for his courageous social activity, was wounded.

Their dirty work done, the Communists took flight before police could be called. These attacks bring to mind the exploits of the Italian fascists against the *Maisons du Peuple* at the time of Mussolini's march to power.

*The Call*, 27/8/43.



## GOVERNMENT'S WASTE

"If we make the same kind of mess next year, when we shall be undoubtedly confronted with a starving Europe to whom the supply of herrings may make all the difference between life and death, we shall never be forgiven."

Mr. Boothby (Cons., Aberdeen) said this in the Commons yesterday during a debate in which it was stated that fifty per cent. of a catch of fish in the Clyde area was thrown back into the sea.

*Daily Mirror*, 4/12/43.

# the Press

## MODERN AMAZONS

But the "Waves"—American equivalent of the Wrens—have the smartest uniform around. It's downright glamorous. Mainboucher, leading Paris designer, created the hat with the dashing white top. The uniform is marine green with scarlet pipings. And nail-polish and lipstick are worn to match the scarlet trimmings.

*Evening Standard*, 26/11/43.

## NAVAL BRIGS

Though naval "brigs" are far harsher than the Army's notorious "glasshouses," no public outcry has arisen against them. But last April such a violent storm of protest rattled against the "glasshouse" windows that Premier Churchill ordered a thorough probing into this unsavoury situation.

Last week, when the Committee issued its report, it expressed "astonishment" at this strange fact, gave details of unsuspected hardships in naval prisons.

They had learned that the naval offender is shut up in a separate cell and barred from all communication with the other men. He gets no blankets, except in exceptionally rigorous weather, lies on bare boards until he has earned 112 "good conduct" marks. By being a model prisoner he can do this in 14 days, and then gets his blankets.

No letters from home reach him until he has earned his marks, when he is allowed to receive and write one. "Compassionate grounds" may send the ration up a bit.

Snapped the Committee: "Even in military prisons an hour's communication a day is permitted; men are given bedding from the start; they receive as many letters as they like and write one a week."

*News Review*, 2/12/43.

## METAPHORS

Controversy still rages about what one newspaper to-day calls "the Patton slap that echoed round the world."

General Patton's wife and daughter are now reconciled to the possibility that the Senate may refuse to endorse his promotion.

"He's made a mistake, and it can't be undone," said Mrs. Patton. "I just hope they won't kick him to death while he's down."

*Daily Herald*, 26/11/43.

How blessed is the use of metaphors! No-one touched General Patton. He was reprimanded by words because he did, physically, kick a shell-shocked soldier when he was down.

## WHO CARES?

Mrs. Gandhi has rallied from two heart attacks during the week, says Reuter from Bombay.

At her request the Government of India has agreed to all her sons and grandchildren seeing her in detention camp.

*Evening Standard*, 4/12/43.

If Mosley had died in prison the susceptible conscience of Mr. Morrison would have greatly hurt him but Mrs. Gandhi can die and nobody in the Government will worry over it. What is worse the people of this country who are so anxious to prove their anti-fascism by putting Mosley back in jail have not signed a single petition to get Mrs. Gandhi out!

## LABOUR IMPERIALIST

Britain must strengthen her ties with the Empire if she is to survive as a great nation in the post-war world. That pronouncement by Mr. Shinwell, Labour M.P. for Seaham, was cheered yesterday by an astonished House of Commons.

He stood forth as an Imperialist—on Labour lines—with the idea of making the Empire a Political and economic bloc which could face the Soviet Union and America.

How could independence be achieved he asked. Aware that Tories (who kept cheering him) saw his drift, he remarked: "I am not speaking as a first-class Imperialist."

"But in my view the strength of Great Britain in the future *vis-à-vis* Soviet Russia and the United States lies in an even better economic understanding with the countries of the British Commonwealth."

*The Daily Mail*, 1/12/43.

This "rebel" of the Labour benches once said he was not in Parliament to whisper sweet nothings in the ears of those responsible for the parlous condition of the people of this country. But Labour M.P.s seldom finish up otherwise than in the arms of the Conservatives.

## IT WILL BE REMEMBERED!

"You saw that outside," retorted Mr. Morrison. "The Communist daily paper and the Parliamentary machine got up these deputations to the House of Commons."

Mr. GALLACHER: That is not true.

Mr. MORRISON: I am surprised at you saying that, because you are an old hand at propaganda.

"They marched up here," he continued, "and they were on the verge of trouble with the police. Then Mr. Gallacher said: 'Let there be no trouble with the police. Follow me to Caxton Hall.' That was very good of him—quite in the style of a Weimar Republic Social Democrat. (Laughter.) It was like the old tag about the Duke of York. The *Daily Worker* marched them up. He marched them down again. The *Daily Worker* marched them to the House of Commons. He marched them to Caxton Hall. If ever he is in danger under 18B I promise that shall be taken into consideration." (Laughter.)

*Manchester Guardian*, 2/12/43.

## PEOPLE PERISH, "NATION" LIVES!

Hitler has sent a Christmas message to his troops in Norway, according to reports reaching Norwegian circles in London, says Reuter.

"Germany must exist even if we must perish," he said. "Germany must live on even if fate destroys the individual."

*Star*, 30/11/43.



# From the Banks

## BLOOD AND GUTS

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL G. S. PATTON, commanding the U.S. Seventh Army, is, if one believes the publicity given to him, an outstanding example of a soldier, "a great fighter", a man who has "earned the respect and admiration of his men under battle conditions", a man who "never asks them to do what he cannot do", and who "spends more time being a doughboy than a general", who "encourages a spirit of camaraderie unequalled between officers and men", etc., etc. We are also told that he can outshoot all his sharpshooters (he established a world record in target firing) and that he challenged Rommel to single combat with fists or firearms.

Patton calls himself "Destiny's child", the troops call him "Old Blood and Guts" and some other names. His Commander-in-Chief and the other Mediterranean Front officers call him, affectionately, "Georgie".

General Patton obviously does not think much of the official war propaganda slogans. According to him "soldiers fight primarily for two reasons: hero worship for a commanding officer and desire for glory." This statement is of course a contradiction of the line of London and Washington which assumes that the soldiers of democracy are fighting for freedom against a hero-worshipping and glory-desiring nation. But Patton cares little about the white-collar men whose hard job is to hand out the necessary dope. Take for instance his story explaining and stressing the need for discipline:

"Aeons ago, a small band of men, fighters, arose and beat everyone into submission. Then the timid men who had been beaten down arose and worried the fighters. The fighters had to figure out a way to get over this and they hired soldiers—among them deserters from the opposing army. The hired soldiers ran away when it came to a battle, so the fighters hit on an idea. They hired as many mercenaries as they could and then beat their brains out. Then what were left of the mercenaries obeyed the fighters, and all learned the art of discipline."

Patton strongly believes in beating the brains out of men in order to knock discipline into them. During an inspection of a hospital he came upon a crying soldier, admitted as a nerve case after a long spell under bombardment in the front line. He accused the soldier of cowardice and said he did not want any cowards in his army, and ordered the man back to the front. "In the last war we used to shoot people like you." Shouting so that the whole hospital could hear, he used expressions like "yellow belly", then struck the man, walked away, returned and hit the soldier again. What a hero! Would he be out of place among the Prussian militarists?

For three months this incident has been kept a secret from the public. Dispatches of American war correspondents were stopped by the censors. Only after Drew Pearson had disclosed the facts in an American broadcast and investigating correspondents had made a report to General Eisenhower was Patton summoned to headquarters and admonished for striking an American soldier, a shell-shock case in bed in hospital. Eisenhower has "taken the hide off Georgie" and given him the opportunity of apologising in front of the paraded troops for his "conduct unbecoming to an American officer".

We have learned of many cases of private soldiers court-martialled and condemned to long terms of detention for using insulting and insubordinate language towards their little Hitlers. We wonder what would happen to a doughboy who dared to call General Patton or any other general the name he deserves and to strike back! We have a suspicion that an apology in front of the troops wouldn't be sufficient!

## GENERAL SUGGESTS SLAVE PARADISE

Major-General Fuller, in an article "Machine Whispers" (*Evening Standard*, 19/11/43) gives a good account of the dilemma in which the poor ruling class finds itself facing the danger of peace. It ought to be of interest to workers in uniform to find a representative of the military caste confirming bluntly that the workers are nothing but economically bound, property-less, wage-slaves and that their political freedom is just an appearance of independence. Fuller points out that since the Industrial Revolution, the machine has put an ever increasing number of workers out of work, creating a third class, the unemployed and that the goods produced would not be consumed for lack of purchasing power of the masses and so war became the result of over-production in an economic system governed by under-consumption. He spares us the stale phraseology of "war for freedom", etc., and confirms our conception that war is caused by competition and waged for profit and the temporary overcoming of unemployment and over-production.

Fuller predicts that the crisis after this war will be more violent than the crisis after the last war. He has to admit that our ruling-class can think of no other solutions than (1) the dole system, (2) subsidising of non-production and destruction of thing produced, and (3) consumption.

He makes an advance declaration of bankruptcy on behalf of capitalist society by stating that "none of the three palliatives can effect a cure. In turn they lead to war in one form or another. The first to class war, the second to war against reason, for in a world eager to consume it is madness to destroy what is wanted or to subsidise non-production, the third to foreign war."

Major-General Fuller, knowing of no other means, personally suggests: (1) Return to the barbaric form of war as practised in the early hunting communities, to clear the enemy's industrial hunting grounds of their inhabitants, to liquidate them. That would provide room for some 40,000,000 of the victor's unemployed and solve the problem for at least a generation.

His second solution is that the victors should agree to reduce the hours of work of their own wage slaves, control prices and salaries of all consumers, impose this policy on their ex-enemies with certain qualifications regarding the hours of work required for reconstruction. Then the workers would be given leisure to enjoy their earnings. Both victors and vanquished would live joyous lives and there would be no economic cause left to fight about!

Obviously the ruling-class must be scared stiff of the coming world revolution when their writers already fall into this sort of unbalanced coma and pass from the philosophy of primitive murder to delirious utopian day-dreams.

## "THE CAPTAINS AND THE KINGS DEPART"

Crown Prince Umberto of Italy, a general and a major, had an escape when German planes dived from low clouds and swept along the road spitting cannon shells among the vehicles on the ground. The Prince and his companions had no opportunity of getting out of their car and taking shelter in the fields, but had to sit the whole attack through. "The general and the major told us of the incident with something like indignation in their voices—it was the first time anything like that had happened to them." (*Evening Standard War Reporter*).

This certainly calls for indignation! The Crown Prince is not one of those Ethiopian tribesmen to be riddled with machine gun bullets, burned to death by flame throwers or gassed. It may not matter when the common people have to face the same thing, for it's a people's war, but you can't expect it of nobility.



# Allied Military Government

By Colin Ward

"The presence of a soldier in a state that is new to freedom is a danger, however disinterested he may appear."—SIMON BOLIVAR.

"There is nothing on earth so stupid as a gallant officer."  
—THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

Let us examine the first organisation set up by the Allies in "Liberated" Europe. It is called AMGOT and who is at its head? Baron Rennell of Rodd. And who is he? Lord Rennell is a Managing Director of the international banking firm of Morgan, Grenfell & Co., another of whose directors is J. Pierpoint Morgan.

A director of Courtaulds, the artificial silk combine.

A former member of the Stock Exchange.

A former manager of the Bank of International Settlements.

"A former friend of Volpi, big business backers of Italian Fascism". . . *New Statesman*, 24th July, 1943.

"An English banker who has expressed his admiration for Mussolini". . . *L'Adunata dei Refrattari*, 25th September, 1943.

Lord Rennell's Chief Deputy is the American Brig.-Gen. Frank L. McSherry, professional soldier for 26 years.

Lord Rennell's assistants are—

Lt.-Col. C. R. S. Harris, directors of six companies.

former editor of the anti-socialist *Nineteenth Century*.

former Tory candidate.

and

Group-Capt. C. E. Benson,

director of eleven companies including Lloyds Bank, Robert Benson's Bank, Montague Burton, and Marks & Spencer.

The Finance Section of Amgot is in the hands of Col. A. P. Graffney Smith of the Cashier's Department of the Bank of England, dealing with exchange control—and he can certainly deal with it:

"The lira has been fixed at 400 to the £ compared with 75 to the £ before the war". "In Tunis too, the lira was fixed at an unfavourable rate for the native population—at 480 to the £"—*War Commentary*, August, 1943.

How like the Nazi method in the territory they plunder!

We can only find out who else is concerned with this organisation from incidental comment in the press and thus we learn from the *Evening Citizen* of 11th November, 1943, that one of the Amgot officers in charge at Isernia on the road to Rome is Keith Erskine, son of Sir James Erskine, Tory ex-M.P. Sir James says that his son, who stumped his father's constituency making Conservative speeches at the age of 13, "has his eyes on Parliament, after the war".

So much for Amgot personnel. But what is its administration like? Have the Italian people been helped to rid themselves of their Fascist legacy? As Winston Churchill announced "no political action by the inhabitants can be countenanced". He added that it was "the earnest hope of His Majesty's government that when thus delivered from the Fascist régime, the people of Sicily

will of their own accord turn towards Liberal and democratic ideas". Thus, in Churchill's view a liberal and democratic régime is compatible with no political activity by its people. Fascism must indeed be in accordance with liberalism and democracy.

Perhaps that is the reason why Amgot hasn't stamped out Fascism in its territory. A citizen of Ferla wrote to Amgot denouncing the mayor who was co-operating with the Allies yet continued to run the town in the same old "corrupt Fascist tradition", and a British soldier, writing at first hand in the *Observer* for 24 Oct., 1943, told how two officers of OVRA—the Fascist Gestapo—were arrested one day only to walk out of prison 24 hours later as qualified Amgot officials in the very town "which they had bossed for the Fascists".

Then the name Amgot was shortened to AMG. This was for two reasons. Firstly it was discovered that "Amgot" is Turkish for "a heap of Dung" and the Allied governments didn't see that many a true word is spoken in jest; and secondly in order to fob off enlightened British and Allied opinion which was apprehensive about the reactionary nature of Amgot and of proposals, mentioned in the *New Statesman* of 21 August, 1943, that Amgot and other allied organisations "should in effect take over the government of these countries for an indefinite period, controlling for instance, such important instruments of administration as the whole broadcasting and propaganda system".

But the European dunghheap by any other name would smell as foul, and no-one was re-assured. The Soviet Magazine *War and the Working Classes* said that there was no freedom of speech in Sicily, that high Fascists were on the Allied pay list and that Amgot was "not undertaking the necessary measures for the actual destruction of Fascism", "... the Administration itself is of a military government based on principles which have nothing in common with the principles of democracy".

Despite all criticism AMG continued. The American *Christian Science Monitor* for 3 September, 1943, quotes the OFFICIAL handout of British Information Services:

"AMG in Sicily is doing two things: it is providing the Allies with a testing ground for their administrative organisation, which will enable them to adjust the training of future AMG officers, and, more important—in setting up a régime which stands for justice and respects personal liberty—it is placing at the very door of Fortress Europe, a living example of the war aims of the United Nations".

Take notice, unhappy Continent! Massacred and torn from your homes by the Axis, bombed and blockaded by the Allies, here is a living example of our war aims:

We employ your old oppressors.

We refuse you freedom of speech.

We prohibit all political activity.

We reduce the rate of exchange,

but we respect the sacred rights of property and open up a bank on the second day of our administration.

At last, on the 10th November, Gen. Eisenhower announced that in Allied-controlled Italy, A.M.G. would be replaced by the Allied Control Commission. It should be noted that this does *not* mean the end of Amgot. As Eisenhower said in his communique—



"Amgot still goes forward to organise the territory as the Germans are cleared".

Who is in control of the A.C.C.? The *Daily Express* puts it bluntly: "American General to run Italy". The general is Maj. Gen. H. A. Joyce, aged 64, who joined the Army in 1898. Not a newcomer to imperialist war he served in the Spanish American War in 1898, in suppressing the Philippine Insurrection of 1900-01 and in operations against the Ute Indians in Montana in 1906. How can this man who has been a soldier since Victoria's reign, envisage any organisation not run on the principle "obey or be punished"? Remember what Simon Bolivar and the Duke of Wellington said. They were both generals—they ought to know! The officers' mess has always been the stronghold of extreme re-action and this man's background must be similar to that of such administrators as Marshal Pétain, Admiral Darlan, Colonel Beck, Marshal Mannerheim, Admiral Horthy, Marshal Antonescu, General Franco, General Ramirez and a host of other disinterested rulers—not to mention that "officer and gentleman" Marshal Badoglio.

## An old Comrade dies

### Sam Mainwaring

ALL OLD COMRADES who knew the Mainwarings will regret the passing away of Sam, who died this week after an operation. Sam was the nephew of the famous Sam Mainwaring, and was reared by him, in every sense of the word. To be brought up in such an environment, it would be impossible to be anything else than a revolutionist and an anarchist. The elder Mainwaring was a pioneer of Anarchism in England and Wales, a friend of Kropotkin and especially of William Morris. He started in collaboration with Tarrida del Marmol the *Social General Strike* an English paper advocating industrial direct action. The watch-word was "Watch your Leaders", indicating their attitude towards the corrupt trade union bureaucracy of that day.

The younger Sam emigrated to South Africa whilst quite young and was active in the newly born labour movement there. So much so, in fact, that he soon found it wise to move on, so he emigrated to South America. But ever active he was compelled once more to move on, this time to the United States, where he worked on the Western Seafront in the early and active days of the I.W.W.

At that time the Mexicans were in revolt, and the 'Wobs' were using San Francisco as a jumping off point. The brothers Magon were issuing their paper *Regeneracion* from there, and Sam Mainwaring was in the midst of all their activities.

He eventually returned to his native Wales, there to work as a miner. His life was an object lesson to that numerous body of comrades who are

(Continued on page 16)

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# FASCISM IN BRITAIN

## *The Menace at Home*

SOME POLITICIANS HAVE regarded with pleasure the storm of public indignation over the release of Mosley, for although they approved of that release, they say that this outcry shows the strength of anti-fascist feeling in Britain. Quite clearly the urging of the Stalinists alone has not caused the general demand for the re-interning of Mosley, but they are exploiting a popular demand. We are not so sure, however, that many of those now willing to attack Mosley were amongst those who resisted the fascist thugs during the years before the war. Nor do we believe that much of the clamour is really due to the fact that Mosley was the leader of the British Fascists, for so many people are urging that Mosley "be brought to trial". For what? He cannot be tried for treason, since he never had the opportunity to commit it—Hitler's invasion did not take place to take him from internment to Westminster—in company with not a few other politicians who have gained high places. Most of those—especially amongst the Conservatives—clamouring that he should be tried for treason know very well that such a trial would acquit him, and thereby rehabilitate him for political life. Other Conservatives say that the right of individual liberty is concerned, yet these are the very people who have always denounced individual rights and liberties; who have always urged trials of revolutionary workers for sedition, and who force wholesale the arrest of Indian Democrats. Quite clearly their intention is to liberate Mosley because he is one of their own kind, not out of any belief in the principle of individual justice.

Mosley is certainly guilty of relations with the Nazi leaders before the war, but there is nothing in the Law which makes this illegal. Nor is the law likely to be so amended, since it would thereby include the majority of the Right Wing in this country—from Winston Churchill downwards. While the Conservative leaders, the Cliveden set, and the aristocratic circles were amicably mixing with the Nazi leaders, the German workers were being tortured and shot. Lord Londonderry, Lord Redesdale, Lord Rothermere; Mr. Lennox-Boyd; the editor of the *Universe*; the Mayfair friends of von Ribbentrop; and a galaxy of others would, if it were made a crime to have fostered fascism abroad, be equally guilty with the Mosleys and Ramsays. Hence it is natural, that under the pretext of being concerned with individual liberty, they should be anxious to facilitate the release of someone who is guilty of only the same thing that they were, although in a more active way.

There have been many who have always been anxious to make Mosley look bigger than he is—the Communist Party always exaggerated his importance in order to exploit the feeling against him for their own purposes. But Sir Oswald has always been very much the playboy in whatever party he has found himself—Conservative, Labour, the "New" Party, and the B.U.F. When he rode through the East End in his armoured car the pseudo-anti-fascists looked on it as an act of a warrior—in reality it was that he was far too cowardly to appear without a bodyguard. We see in his release the act of a man looking out only for himself. He has engaged expensive solicitors and doctors to look after his legal and medical interests; he furnished himself with a high-class flat in Holloway Prison; and now his chance of release comes, he takes it with both hands. Not for one moment has he thought of the mugs he has misled—the dupes of fascism who for all he cares can languish on in detention. We object to these petty Napoleons not only on principle but also on personal grounds: they have not an atom of solidarity for

the people whom they have persuaded to follow them. In victory and in defeat they are forgotten—they are only needed to build up careers, and when no longer useful to that purpose then, in the words of the old French song, "Farewell, baskets, the grapes are gathered!"

We must not mistake the symptoms shown in the Mosley crisis. First, we have seen that while "deserters", conscientious objectors and workers convicted under industrial legislation, though all anti-fascists, remain in jail, it is possible for the leader of British Fascism to go free. According to legal technicalities, the former are guilty of an offence whereas the man who schemed to establish a dictatorship is guilty of no offence. That is the Law. It does not encourage us to believe in Law. The struggle against fascism cannot be waged by means devised by the capitalist class that produces fascism.

Second, we have been told that this is an "ideological war", a war of democracy against fascism. We are supposed to be helping anti-fascist masses abroad, and defending democracy at home. Yet we bomb the anti-fascist masses abroad and negotiate with fascist leaders such as Badoglio, Darlan, Salazar. If this were an anti-fascist war, Mosley would be in the category of an enemy, and an "enemy alien" who had fought Hitler at home would be a friend. Such is very far from the case.

Third, we have seen how the Conservative Party and its cohorts have rallied to the defence of Sir Oswald Mosley. We have seen the Communist Party quite prepared to publicise fascism to its utmost limit, to present the weakening millionaire fuhrer as a formidable power, just in order to gain support itself as a vigilant opposing body. We have seen the Labour Party split up into highly varying bodies, quarrelling about the entire issue, just like the Social Democrats in the German Weimar Republic. And we have seen that the much-boosted "hero" of the near-fascist press has very shrewdly taken good care to look after himself alone, and not to waste his time worrying about the mugs who followed him.

It is very necessary for the workers to be on the alert for signs of a renovated fascist movement in Britain, for these signs show it possible. But do not let us fall into the old, old delusion that the menace of fascism lies in the name. The name fascism will probably never be used again in this country, for it is too discredited ever to gain adherence. But the fascist-minded still exist. They have not genuinely changed their minds since September 1939: they merely recognise that Hitler is a competitor of the British Empire, and only a tiny minority still hold on to hopes of "appeasement" with him. The dangerous fascists are in high circles. They urge the policy of Mosley with an up-to-date veneer. (Indeed, Mosley himself adopted a pro-war attitude while demanding a negotiated peace with Hitler). They urge collaboration with fascist leaders in Europe out of military necessity. Strange that military necessity always makes them choose the same allies that inclination would also have had them choose! And they urge a future of professional militarism abroad, involving conscription at home—with no controls for the capitalist class. Against the fascist aims of the Conservatives, the Labour Party and the like demand—more fascism! State control of life—the line of the Nazi Party.

It may be that the Mosley gang are going to be revived after the war. More likely the capitalist class will choose some other way towards totalitarianism, with more "glamour value" than the now despised Mosley can give. Against all kinds of fascists we must be prepared.

A. M.



# MANIFESTO

## of the

# Anarchist Federation on War

THE WORKERS ALL over the world are to-day plunged in the second imperialist blood-bath of the century. Of the many political tendencies which opposed the war at the start, the Anarchist Federation to-day stands almost alone in its apposition to the war, and to the real—as distinct from the pretended—reasons for which it is being fought.

It has remained consistent with its principles; adhering unswervingly to the path of working class struggle, it has supported none of the belligerent imperialisms. German and Italian Fascism have had their apologists; British and French Imperialism have had their apologists; Russian Totalitarianism has its apologists. All these are manifestations of class rule. Their policies are the policies of their ruling class, fighting as always for the maintenance of their privilege and power over the workers. The Anarchists have refused to take the side of any of them.

WAR is always the outcome of the cut-throat competition for the world markets. Wars have always been fought between rival ruling groups for power over markets, over raw materials, or for the power to exploit human labour. These and these alone are the issues at stake. These are the issues which concern the ruling groups—governments and owners of capital. The workers have no stake in such matters. All wars to-day are imperialist wars. They are always fought to extend or consolidate the power positions occupied by the ruling classes both in their perennial competition with each other and in their continual struggle for domination over the workers whom they exploit.

Anarchism opposes war as the outcome of these clashing interests between rival imperialisms. Since Empires exist only to serve the interests of the ruling classes, wars undertaken for their extension or defence have nothing in common with the interests of the workers. The rivalries between the national sections of the ruling class weaken them in the class struggle, and the workers should utilize the opportunity thereby offered to them to prosecute the class struggle more vigorously than ever.

Nationalist sentiment, patriotism, aroused by war is the most effective means employed by the ruling groups to deceive the workers and conceal the underlying class struggle under slogans of "National Unity". But while class divisions and the wage system still exist there can be no national unity, no community of interests between those who own and therefore rule, and those who only have their labour power to sell, and so are exploited. The bourgeoisie revealed its corruption in France, "our invincible ally", when her rulers Pétain and Weygand and others—all of them previously eulogized to the skies by Britain's leaders—preferred to hand over the French workers to Hitler rather than risk the loss of their power and the destruction of their property.

Social Democracy is once more the recruiting sergeant for the bosses; the trade unions are tied to the treacherous policy and corrupt interests of their leaders. The devotees of Leninism and its offspring Stalinism

have shown themselves more loyal to the ruling class of bureaucrats in Russia and their nationalistic aims, than to the interests of the workers of the world. Under the slogan of "Democracy *versus* Fascism", they drive the workers on to spill their blood for the nationalistic aims of their exploiters.

We expose and reject with contempt this facile and treacherous slogan. *Laissez-faire* capitalism—in which private individuals own and control the land, factories and mines, and use the state power to protect their privilege—develops under the pressure of its own contradictions into Fascism—in which the One-Party state owns and controls the land, factories and mines and uses the state power to maintain its authority. Both exploit the workers to the limit of their capacity. **FASCISM IS THE NATURAL CHILD OF BOURGEOIS "DEMOCRACY".**

Under "Democracy", the ruling class has everywhere shown itself ready to compromise with Fascism rather than make concessions which would weaken its own class positions in favour of the workers. There is no question of principle involved for them—unlike the workers, who have shown themselves willing to sacrifice their lives for justice and freedom. In Spain, the bourgeois democratic bloc, aided by the Stalinists, strangled the social revolution of the workers and peasants, under cover of their hollow slogan "Democracy *versus* Fascism—the war first and the revolution afterwards". They thereby drained the life-blood from the only effective resistance Fascism has ever encountered (the German-Soviet war included). Capitalism, or any other form of authoritarian, *i.e.*, class,—rule, cannot fight effectively against the further development of centralized class rule that Fascism represents.

Thus the fight against Fascism is indissolubly linked with the struggle against capitalism in all its forms. Unless the workers realize this now they will find that while they fight and sacrifice to destroy fascism, their rulers and their class allies in Russia, will be principally engaged in consolidating their own class positions in the rear, and incidentally sabotaging the workers' fight. Social revolution alone can free the workers' hands—by overthrowing bourgeois "democratic" capitalism—to crush fascism and brutal exploitation for ever.

The fight against fascism is the fight against war, is the fight against the class system which breeds wars. Workers must refuse to subordinate the class war to the national unity that benefits only the oppressors of the working class. But to limit the class struggle to mere wage issues, to half measures, is to court defeat. Fascism can be beaten only if the working class owns and controls the land and the instruments of production.

As the imperialist war drags on it is time for the scattered forces of the world revolution to redouble their efforts for the task of preparing to meet social collapse with the revolutionary message to the workers: No compromise with forces of reformism or reaction. Organisation for the social revolution **ANARCHISM.**





## CAPITALIST-MINDED WORKERS

DEAR FRIENDS,

You asked that the likes of me should write to you. My praise is in the shape of the enclosed 5/- P.O., my criticism as under.

The best of systems induce men to give of their best, whilst poor systems discourage them from doing so. But even the best systems are perverted if operated by irresponsible people, whereas even bad systems are improved by being operated by socially responsible beings. Believing this it seems evident that the revolution we are after will have to start with the people and through them to the state. The propaganda issued by you should therefore stress the revolution which must take place in the individual. The continual libelling of the capitalist class and the depicting them as those of great wealth who oppress the workers is only part of the truth. The huge majority of the workers are of the capitalist class (though not successful members) in so far as they believe it is proper to make a profit wherever it can be made. *War Commentary* should contain articles of a personal nature, admonishing people from acting in a manner which is likely to cause harm to others.

Bellshill, Lanarks.

P.S.

## THE 'POWER' PROBLEM

DEAR COMRADES,

... I think the standard of *War Commentary* is high, and that it is remarkable value compared with other periodicals produced by small groups...

I feel myself that the vital issue on which many people are not clear is the problem of power, not merely the issue of whether 'power' should be in the hands of capitalists or workers, but whether or no the exercise of power over other human beings necessarily corrupts those who wield it. Can human society express such phenomena as benevolent autocrats? If not, does the solution lie in splitting up highly centralized administrations into local federations such as pacifists suggest, along with agricultural communities? It seems that the problem of economic power underlies that of political power, but that equally before changes in economic structure can take place, political power based on force must be

A large majority of the readers who answered our recent appeal for criticism of and suggestions as to how to improve "War Commentary", were in favour of a LETTERS TO THE EDITORS page. Here it is, and we hope our readers will make a success of it. We need hardly say that the Editorial Board do not necessarily endorse the views expressed in the letters. As our space is limited, we ask readers to keep their letters short and to the point.

For the benefit of those readers who have not yet answered our questionnaire we will repeat it. We asked readers to write to tell us what they think of "War Commentary"; to let us have any suggestions or constructive criticism to improve the paper; to tell us which features in "War Commentary" are their favourites (e.g., Editorials, Cartoons, Through the Press, Red and Black Notebook, Anarchist Commentary).

undermined and destroyed. In such times of flux the tendency is for some group of power seeking individuals to cash in on the chaos to set up a fresh authoritarian rule, backed by at any rate a vocal minority of the industrial population. Control of industrial production is the key to the control of the whole country by the show of threat of force, and those parties who are predominantly agricultural or middle class are dragged in the wake of the dominating party representing industrial power.

I fail to see how Anarcho-Syndicalism can succeed even theoretically in running huge mass production factories on other than authoritarian lines, with present human material. Too many of the workers in industry are permeated with feudal and servile attitudes, and have no capacity for responsibility. They do not want to lose their chains—their world is comprised in a narrow limited—essentially ultra conservative—outlook. If all that can be hoped for is a change of masters—what hopes of freedom other than for a privileged minority.

Yours sincerely,

Cheltenham, Glos.

R.C.

## ITALIAN P.O.W. READ SILONE

DEAR COMRADES,

... You may be interested to hear that the *Corriere del Sabato*—a weekly 6-page paper with a 'private' circulation among Italian prisoners of war—has recently taken a serious turn and (in the words of a correspondent) stopped being a "paper for boys". Symptomatic of this has been their recent publication of anti-fascist articles from diverse points of view, including extracts from Ignazio Silone's letter to the New Republic (reproduced in *War Commentary*, March 1943) was published this week. These articles are provoking some thoughtful correspondence to which a full page is devoted, and the trend of which it may prove interesting to follow. Fraternally,  
Prestegne, Rads. L.H.

## RUSSIAN MILLIONAIRES

The statements in *War Commentary* are causing some excitement here. Everyone was confident that the Soviet Union was a land of milk and honey, and although not exactly Utopia, as near to it as their capitalist enemies would allow them to go.

The comment on Reg. Bishop's pamphlet on Russian millionaires, does make even the most ardent admirer of Russia sit up and take notice.  
Gateshead. G.W.T.

## OPINIONS

I would like to again express my appreciation of the fine standard maintained by *War Commentary*. The articles on Syndicalism by Tom Brown are very interesting and I would like to see more on that aspect of Anarchist theory. I also find "Red and Black Notebook" and "Pages of Revolutionary History" very good indeed.

Mansfield, Notts.

J.L.

It does seem to me that the articles are couched in very violent language, and while warmly approving the fervour of your contributors, little is gained by such writing. The aim, it seems to me, should be calm reasoned logic, missing out all Leftist slang which people have long tired of...

Epping, Essex.

N.H.I.

... Congratulations to the Editorial staff of *War Commentary* on the "four years" of anti-capitalist and anti-militarist propaganda just completed...  
Greenock, Scotland. S.M.



## Day of Prayer

# O LORD SAVE US FROM THE DANGER...



## OF WAR

## OF PEACE

(continued from p. 12)

continually asking "What can we do to help?" For years Sam was one of our best literature sellers; he was at every public and lodge meeting. Always ready and willing to take the part of the bottom-dog, he was continually at war with the petty tyrants of the trade unions and the Labour Exchange. His bad health and his age decreased his activities in later years, but nothing pleased him more than to hear of increased propaganda, and to know of the young people who were taking up the study of anarchism. He looked forward to the not far distant day, when the corrupt decadent trade unions, with their flag-waving, imperialist leaders would be swept into oblivion, making way for a militant class-conscious organization, aimed, not at amending, but at ending the wages system.

We bid you good bye, not with tears in our eyes, but with a strong resolve in our hearts to lift the banner that is fallen from your hand, and to carry it on with the same class loyalty and courage. We salute those who, like you, fought almost in the Night, without any hope of seeing the Day and the

Dawn. You were of those that built the bridge by which the proletarian army will march to the emancipation of humanity.

MAT KAVANAGH.

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