

WAR *For Anarchism* COMMENTARY

Vol. 5, No. 21.

SEPTEMBER 1944

TWOPENCE

The Betrayal of Poland

AT DAWN ON September 1st, 1939, the German Army invaded Poland. On September 3rd, 1939, in execution of a pledge to guarantee the frontiers of Poland, Britain declared war on Germany. On this fifth anniversary, after five years of hard work and hard living, with Allied victory in sight, it is proper to review the progress made towards Polish independence. It is but a poor excuse to say, as do some of our opponents, that the Polish issue was but a pretext for the war, which would have been fought in any case. However considered, the issue of Polish independence was a major issue of the war—the issue chosen by the British Government. The stand against war we took in 1939 was opposed by Lefts, Socialists and Labourites of the *Tribune* and *Reynolds* type; it is proper to judge

them too by the same issue.

So far from safeguarding the frontiers of Poland, the war has brought out an even more bitter and potent enemy of Poland and swung some of the 1939 friends of Poland in this country into spiteful hatred of their one-time champion. Stalin's Russia, like the Russia of the Tsars, and the unprincipled "Russia, right or wrong" clique in this country, are set upon the destruction of the independent Polish nation. No better test of their sincerity could be taken than this issue. Their arguments and sincerity are less convincing than those of a vendor of quack medicine.

Russian-Polish Relations

After the Russian Revolution of 1917 the countries conquered by the Tsars took the opportunity to break



away from the Russian State. Poland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Ukraine and Georgia broke the Russian bonds. Willy-nilly, the Bolshevik Government had to recognise most of the break aways. The Soviet Government issued a decree on August 29, 1918 concerning Poland. Here is article three of that decree:

"All agreements and acts concluded by the Governments of the late Russian Empire with the Governments of Prussia and of the Austro-Hungarian Empire relating to the partitions of Poland are forever annulled by the present Resolution, considering that they are contrary to the principle of free determination of peoples as well as to the juridical revolutionary conception of the Russian Nation which has recognised the Polish Nation's 'imperscriptible' right to decide its own fate and its own unification."

How hollow were the fine Bolshevik sentiments of concern for self-determination was shown a little later when the Red Army of Lenin invaded and conquered little Georgia which besides having a Social-Democratic Government also had many oil wells.

In 1920 came the Russian-Polish war, followed by the proposed "Curzon Line", rejected by both Russia and Poland. Peace was established between the two nations and on July 25, 1932 the U.S.S.R. and Poland signed a non-aggression pact, extended by the Protocol of May 5, 1934 in Moscow, and made binding until December 31, 1945. On February 14, 1934, the Russian Government gave a banquet in honour of Col. Beck in Moscow and Litvinov toasted the "further strengthening of the friendly relations" of the two countries. As recently as May 31, 1939, Molotov, at the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union, spoke of "certain general improvements" in the relations of Russia and Poland.

The pact and the expressions of good will continued into the summer of 1939, even while Hitler and Stalin were plotting a new partition of Poland. While Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations were going on in Moscow the secret Nazi-Bolshevik talks were completed and on August 23, 1939 the Soviet-German pact was signed, Molotov, Stalin and Ribbentrop shook hands and the shape of the second world war was revealed. On September 1, 1939 Hitler invaded Poland and while the Poles defended themselves with incredible courage and inadequate arms, Stalin invaded Poland from the rear. Besieged Warsaw held out until September 27 and a few other places a little longer. On September 29, 1939, Germany and Russia signed a treaty dividing Poland almost equally between them. Naked aggression by Hitler and naked aggression by his accomplice Stalin.

A Poor Excuse Better Than None

The 1939 partition of Poland was not in any way different from that of the 18th century, made by Prussia, Austria and Russia, and the apologies for it by the Bolsheviks and their echoers here are thin to transparency. "Poland must be conquered because it is the country of Col. Beck and Pilsudski," and others once toasted by Molotov, now dead.

"The Polish Government is Fascist," they shout, as the Tsar said it was un-Christian. The Polish Government in London is just that form of government supported by the Communists in the cases of Czechoslovakia, France, Britain and half of the world—that is what Communists call a National Front, a government supported by Conservatives, Liberals, Labour parties and trade unionists. The Poland of 1939 was not a free country it is true, but it was not nearly so dictatorial as Russia. Polish trade union membership numbered 950,000; Co-operative membership, 3,000,000, and Socialist voters 1,500,000. There were 65 Socialist M.P.s and Socialist town councils in several towns, chief of these being Lodz, second largest city of Poland. The Polish Socialist Party, the Jewish Socialist Labour Party (Bund) and a rapidly developing Syndicalist movement existed in Poland, whereas in Russia all parties (including the Bund) but the Communist were exterminated, the syndicates and trade unions crushed and State "trade unions", afterwards copied by the Nazis, created in their place. In Russia Co-operatives, as we understand the word, were long ago suppressed. Poland is not even accused of killing men for being Socialists, as the Russians executed the Jewish Socialist leaders, Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich.

"We are going to free Poland from the landlords!" say the Bolsheviks, classifying as landlords all farmers with more than 125 acres, suppressing the parties of the small peasants and murdering the leaders of the Labour movement.

The Pot And The Kettle

"The Polish frontiers contained many persons who were not Poles," continue the Stalinist spokesmen. True, but so did the Czechoslovaks, many who were not of that race, and so did the French. The Ukrainians of Poland should be free to choose, not shifted like cattle from Poland to Russia. So, too, should the Ukrainians under Russian rule, who are not Russians.

"We cannot recognise the Polish Government in London as the rightful government, for its members have not been in Poland since 1939," says the Soviet Government in excuse for its Quisling Polish outfit. Yet Dr. Benes has not been in Prague since 1939, but Moscow welcomed him to sign a Soviet-Czech pact.

Only one conclusion is possible from an examination of the Bolshevik case. Red imperialism is on the march. Stalin wants the empire of Tsar Nicholas.

A Tale Of Two Cities

While the Red Army was being driven back in 1941, Stalin was eager for the help of the Poles, eager to allow the recruitment of a Polish army from the 1,000,000 Poles he had dragged into prisoners' exile in Siberia and elsewhere, eager for the help of the underground in Poland. But when the Reichswehr's advance was stayed, Stalin was able to reveal his imperialist policy again. When the Polish Government asked the International Red Cross to hold an inquiry

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ANARCHIST COMMENTARY

UNREST IN AMERICAN EMPIRE

THE following extract, from the American *New Leader* of the 26th June, shows that unrest in the West Indies is not confined to the British islands, but seems to be developing into a widespread feeling of revolt against all imperialist rule in all the islands:

"With all newspaper editors in jail, the native people at St. Croix, Virgin Islands, U.S.A., are threatening a general uprising against a Hitler rule which denies freedom of speech and justice to the masses, according to a cablegram received by Ashley L. Totten, President of the American Virgin Islands Civic Association and recognized leader of the six affiliated units representing 10,000 or more native voters in New York.

Mr. Totten stated that 'unrest and dissatisfaction have been brewing for a long time due to the practice of Governor Charles Harwood and Administrator Harry Taylor of administering to the needs of the selfish few representing the upper class who oppress the masses.'

He charged that 'the trouble reached the boiling point on or about May 31 when Andrew Thompson, 60, a poor native described as quiet, unassuming and law-abiding, was shot and instantly killed by Harry Beatty, another native of the upper class said to be at the instigation of two white continentals.

"Indignation ran so high that the district attorney withdrew from the case and another had to be summoned from Puerto Rico, while guards searched all persons attending the hurriedly arranged trial,' Mr. Totten declared.

It is the general belief that some sinister arrangement was made by those who represent the upper class to speed up an early acquittal for the defendant who was given a trial without jury and acquitted five days later by Federal Judge Herman E. Moore, according to Mr. Totten.

The two newspapers expressed public opinion that such a procedure is contrary to American jurisdiction and typical of Nazi rule. Both editors, Canute Brodhurst of the *St. Croix Avis* and Paul E. Joseph of the *West End News* have been sent to jail.

The cablegram received by Totten calls for help from the mainland. The Virgin Islands organization operating as a single unit met yesterday to demand intervention by the Department of Justice and Interior."

WHAT, NO BEER?

THE great beer shortage in Scotland and many other parts of the country, and the alleged transportation of huge quantities of beer to Normandy, has proved an additional propaganda weapon to attract harvest volunteers. According to press reports 10,000 boys are needed in Kent next month to pick hops, fruit, and potatoes. Of the 100,000 people who normally go to Kent to pick the Hop crop, 70,000 come from London. But owing to the large scale evacuation due to flying-bombs it is anticipated that there will be a shortage of labour up to 20,000. The boys will live in army camps which will be controlled by army officers, the pay will be 32/- per week for boys of 15½ and 45/- for older ones. Boys of 15½ will pay 14/- for board, and older boys will pay £1. This is a terrible racket when it is considered that anything up to £15 a week can be earned on the farms at piece work rates and that rations cost less than 5/- a week.

In one paper a Ministry of Labour official is reported to have said that as the beer shortage grows there may be trouble amongst the troops and munition workers. This is probably true, and a symptom of the general war weariness. But what the people who go to pick hops should realise, is

that the mere picking of hops will in no way improve the quality of the beer or alleviate the beer shortage. In 1940 when the country faced a food shortage one would have thought that some of the acreage of land devoted to the growing of hops would have instead been used to grow more food. But under the pretext that beer shortage would have a diverse effect on the morale of the people, the hop garden acreage was actually extended in many parts of Hereford and Kent. People who have any knowledge of modern methods of beer production know well that only a small proportion of hops are passed over the vats to ensure a good taste. The majority of the hop crop is used in other industries for the production of dyes, etc.

DANISH STRIKE

ONCE again the workers in Denmark are on strike as a spontaneous expression of protest against the execution of the Gestapo of 11 young Danes (quoted by Danish Press Service, Stockholm, 16th August, 1944). The strike began in the great shipyards of Burmeister & Wain and soon spread to other industries, but once again the Danish Liberation Council took advantage of the situation and issued leaflets calling on the workers to limit their struggle to a 24 hour general strike which would include the closing of shops, theatres and cinemas. As a result of the strike, armed clashes which took place all over Denmark were deplored by the Danish Liberation Council and orders were given for them to cease. However, despite these appeals, there seems to be considerable unrest and the Germans or the Danish Liberation Council seem incapable of controlling the situation.

Philadelphia Strike

Digest of a correspondent's account published in the Italian Anarchist weekly L'Adunata, New Jersey (12/8/44).

THE CAUSE OF the strike, which has had such wide repercussions in this city and throughout the United States, was race hatred. The question of coloured labour has been debated for the past two years in the Philadelphia Transportation Company, which covers all the transport services in the city and its suburbs, and employs about 11,000 workers of which number 750 are coloured. The latter were exclusively engaged on work which the white workers felt it was below their dignity to tackle.

The big problem was whether to admit coloured workers or not to jobs which had previously been reserved for white workers only, such as driving buses and trams. The majority of the white workers were solid in their opposition to this innovation, on racial grounds of course.

To reach a solution the P.T.C. had recourse to the Tribunals and the War Labour Board which were unanimous in maintaining that the coloured workers had the same rights as the white workers and should be allowed to take the jobs in question.

In fact, about three weeks before the strike took place, the P.T.C. issued a circular in which it stated that as soon as the question of extra staff came up the colour bar would not affect the issue.

Along with the 4 a.m. shift on August 1st came 8 negro tram driver trainees. All the drivers who witnessed this scene refused to start work. At 8 a.m. all the transport services were paralyzed.

The P.T.C. workers belong to three different Unions: the Transport Workers Union (C.I.O.), Amalgamated Street Car Workers (A. F. of L.) and the Employees Union (Company Union).

It is painful to see how united these workers are against fellow toilers who differ from them only in the colour of their skins. If they were as solid against Capitalism, which

is the enemy of all wage earners, perhaps there would no longer exist to-day the exploiters and the exploited. Not even the presence of the army sent here by the federal government succeeded in making the strikers budge. Appeals from the officials of the C.I.O. had no effect. One group of strikers declared: "We will not give in. Let them draft us into the army if they like. At least we shall be fighting alongside other whites". The Negroes on the other hand say: "Since we can die on the front line alongside the whites why then can't we also drive trams and buses alongside them?"

There have been a number of incidents during the strike. The Police state that 350 shop fronts have been smashed and several arrests made. A number of white and coloured workers were injured in incidents. Three thousand regular and seven thousand auxiliary police were posted in the most affected districts.

From what I have seen and heard, the majority of the population sympathise with the strikers—so widespread is that warped and primitive prejudice of race superiority.

Two years ago the workers of the Philadelphia Transport Company threatened to strike if the Company did not agree to an increase in wages. A compromise was reached and nothing more was said about striking. But one can be sure that if the strike had taken place the workers would not have been as united as they are to-day nor would the townspeople have shown such sympathy and support. But this time it's not a question of wages. It's a question of race hatred and no compromise is possible.

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into the murder of 10,000 Polish officers' graves at Katyn, the Soviet Government broke off relations and has hindered rather than helped the Polish opposition to the Nazis. Contrast Paris and Warsaw during this month.

The Communist Party here eulogises the fight of the French guerrillas. Indeed anyone reading nothing but the *Daily Worker* would think that the guerillas were all Communists, in spite of de Gaulle's contempt of the French Communist leaders as deserters. When the Allied armies neared Paris the French irregulars rose in revolt and the *Daily Worker* rejoiced in it. As the Russian Army neared Warsaw, the Polish underground in that city also rose, for the Russians claimed to be actually in the Warsaw Praga. For three years the Moscow radio called, "Warsaw arise to arms! One million inhabitants means a million soldiers." Warsaw arose and the Poles took the suburb of Praga; the Germans withdrew to the Eastern bank of the Vistula. The British Press reported the imminent entry of the Red Army:

"Thus the first of the martyred cities of Europe to suffer the horrors of German air bombardment and National Socialist rule is also the first to see deliverance at hand."

Times, 1/8/44.

The Red Army stayed its advance, its guns were silent, and the Germans returned to Praga. The Poles quickly ran out of ammunition which the Red Air Force would not drop to them, though a force of British R.A.F. bombers flew the 1,750 mile round trip from Italy to drop some arms, losing twenty machines in doing so, according to British Press reports. The Red Army looked on while the Polish Underground fighters were beaten to their knees. How do the Communists regard guerrillas in Poland?

"It appears that he (General Sosnkowski) arranged for certain gang leaders under his control to 'start something' in Warsaw."

Daily Worker, 11/8/44.

And the shameless Lefts of the *Reynolds* type who supported the war for Polish independence, now support Stalinist betrayal of Poland. We are justified in rejecting their "leadership". It avails nothing to be embroiled in the bloody tangle of imperialist war. Revolution freed the Poles from the Russian yoke. Only another revolution, Russian and European, can free them again, from the horrors of National Socialist rule and the tyranny of Bolshevism—the greatest slave empire the world has ever known.

HAVE YOU?

In the next issue we shall publish the first list of contributions to our **SOLIDARITY TICKETS** drive on behalf of the Freedom Press Fund 1000-by-the-end-of-1944. There are still several hundred books of tickets still not accounted for and we would ask those comrades and readers who still hold books to settle for them at once and save us the expense of sending out reminders.

BENGAL HUNGER MARCH, 1943

WHO THAT HAS seen the hunger marchers of Calcutta can ever forget them? They came—a ragged, disorderly, emaciated torrent of humanity thrown up by Bengal in her agony. They came in a rush of sick, hungry, naked and tortured men, women and children from everywhere. They spilled across the streets of Calcutta, they swept along the pavements, they crept slowly but irresistibly into the localities reserved for the privileged. Even the haunts of the alien rulers of this ancient land could not escape the invasion. For almost two hundred years foreign rule had sapped the strength of the people, destroyed their industries, undermined their self-respect: now the impoverished, pauperised and dehumanised masses broke like a wave over the seeming splendour and prosperity of a city which the British boast is the second city of the Empire. Imperialism was faced with its own handiwork. Hunger marchers confronted those who had made them hungry and had made them march.

Bengal will never forget those who hunger marched in 1943. Some of them saved themselves but together and collectively they perhaps saved Bengal. They died in thousands and tens of thousands. The streets of Calcutta were literally littered with human debris. The situation at last disturbed the authorities—not perhaps so much because the situation was serious—but because it told the story of neglect, inefficiency and callousness of the imperialist administration to the common man in Great Britain and America. So long as the starvation had been confined to the rural areas it was possible to speak of over-dramatisation. Now that men, women and children were dying like fleas on the very doorsteps of the city, the facts of starvation could no longer be denied or concealed.

Honest public men and women of Great Britain admitted their responsibilities. But even in the face of glaring facts, the true bred imperialists would not recognise the truth. Even at this late stage there were found men like Amery or Watson who sought to evade blame and transfer responsibility to the shoulders of their Indian instruments. We heard from them about provincial autonomy and the responsibilities and powers of Indian ministers but it did not prevent or even delay the arrest of Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders. The plain fact is that the British authorities always can do and have done whatever has suited them and they have brought forward the plea of legal, constitutional or other difficulties only when they wanted an excuse for not doing what was their patent duty.

In the case of the Bengal famine, however, the British authorities were guilty not only of the crime of omission but of commission as well. A bare survey of the factors and steps leading up to the calamity of July to October, 1943 leaves no room for doubt in the matter. If we are to under-

stand the real causes of the present plight of Bengal, we must go beyond immediate events and take note of long as well as short-term policies that have reduced to beggary the peasantry of one of the richest areas of the world. Among the long term causes, the most notable are the destruction of Bengal's industry and commerce and the imposition of a system of land tenure which is as complicated as it is uneconomic and burdensome. Together, these factors have impoverished the peasant and weakened his independence with consequences disastrous to the fertility of the land and a sound rural economy. Year after year the pressure on land has been increasing while the land has grown less and less able to support a growing population. The result was a constant and steady lowering in the standard of life and an increasing burden of rural indebtedness. But the process of slow and gradual death did not attract the attention it deserved precisely because it was slow and gradual. The first clash of abnormal conditions created by the impact of the war on the Indian frontier smashed the unsteady basis and brought about a crisis which revealed the fundamental weakness of the economy which had so long obtained.

Here we come to a consideration of the short term factors that precipitated the crisis. But it must be borne in mind that the short-term factors proved disastrous only because the long term forces had already undermined the basis of Indian rural economy. Given a sound and healthy system, the impact of a sudden force may strain it but does not easily break it. England, which before the war produced barely 10 per cent. of her food within her own borders and had to import the balance across the most dangerous routes of the world in the face of deadly aerial and submarine attack, survived and in fact improved her position. Bengal produces over 90 per cent. of her food within her own borders and can import food from other provinces of India without any opposition or hindrance from the enemy and yet she was not allowed to tackle the crisis created by the Japanese menace on her frontiers. Already she has lost 10 per cent. of her total population and is threatened with loss of another 20 per cent. before the advent of next spring.

The long term factors are entirely the creation of the British authorities. The short term factors are equally their handiwork. The story begins before the fall of Burma or even the advent of Japan into the war. With the outbreak of hostilities in Europe, India without consultation or consent was flung into the war. Indian manpower and resources had to be exploited for victory and since the Indian people never looked at the war as their war, this could be achieved only through the incentive of higher prices, higher profits and higher wages. An inflationary process was set up and slowly India was drained of material and men. With the transport of Indian troops to other theatres of war, the need



for larger exports of food-stuffs grew. The amount sent to all the countries of the Near and the Middle East also ate into the reserves of food stocks within India. The entry of Japan into the war accelerated the drain upon Indian foodgrains. Military demands continued as before and were enhanced. It became necessary to build up stocks within India herself for military needs. The amount previously sent to other areas from Burma was now replenished from India's meagre reserves. In addition large industrial concerns entered the field for reasons of both profit and security. The situation was one which required the most careful treatment. A survey of stocks and requirements was essential, plans for proper utilisation and enlargement of available resources seemed the merest commonsense, but hardly anything was done even at the time of the fall of Burma.

It was Bengal's misfortune that it had at the time a Governor who was utterly unfit for the high office to which the accident of birth and colour had called him. He lost his head and acted as if the Japanese had already invaded the land. Beside himself with panic, he instituted in May, 1942 the so-called 'denial policy' without reference to his ministerial advisers and persisted in continuing it against their opposition. He ordered that all surplus stocks should be purchased from the main rice growing districts bordering on the sea and immediately removed to safer areas further north and west. Simultaneously, he ordered the seizure of boats and other vehicles in these denial areas. The results were disastrous. The purchase of large stocks by Government disturbed the market, though this was not immediately felt as Government had fixed a ceiling price. The removal of such large Government stocks added still further to the congestion of war time traffic and further hampered the normal flow of trade. On top of this came the cyclone which swept through Midnapore and 24 Parganas in October 1942 and destroyed a large proportion of the harvest in some of the most fertile tracts of the province. This not only led to a deficit but aggravated the difficulties of communication by compelling re-transport of the rice which had been removed to the northern and western districts. To crown the tale of misery, the hasty and unwarranted step taken by the Governor in destroying or removing boats and other vehicles from these rice growing areas of the south led to a reduction in cultivation and the loss of large potential harvests.

The denial policy thus restricted output and enhanced the difficulties of transport besides creating an atmosphere of uncertainty, panic and distrust. The war had been on for over three years. The economic life of the country was strained almost beyond the point of endurance. Large stocks of foodgrains had been constantly flowing out of the country to feed the armies brought into being in the Middle East and North Africa. Stocks were also being exported to Ceylon, Travancore and other parts of India. Whatever reserves there had been in the province were exhausted or near-exhausted. Exports from Burma—never a very large amount but nevertheless important for psychological reasons—had stopped. Purchase and storage by Government and private firms for the needs of the military and industrial labour was accelerated and led to the creation of nervousness in the minds of the general public as well. In this background, the precipitate action of the Bengal Governor in launching the denial policy was fraught with consequences which can easily be imagined and yet seemed beyond his comprehension.

In December 1942, the crisis could no longer be postponed. All the factors mentioned above had been working steadily throughout summer and autumn and the hope of a bumper crop—which at one time seemed likely in 1942—was destroyed by the October cyclone. In December, a month when prices invariably rule low, there was a perceptible increase in price. Mr. Fazlul Huq, then Premier of Bengal, had warned the Governor as early as August that famine was inevitable unless proper steps were taken in time. But the warning went unheeded. All non-official agencies had pressed

that the land under jute should be curtailed for foodgrains. Under the pressure of the Central Government, even this necessary step was not taken. In the meanwhile exports abroad continued without consideration of the needs of the people of the land.

Such mismanagement and bungling could not continue long. In February 1943, price of rice increased by over a hundred per cent. The Provincial Government was pressed to declare Bengal a deficit area. Pressure was put to release, if not the whole, a portion of the considerable reserves built up for military and industrial labour. The only result of the agitation was that the Bengal Governor entered into an unseemly intrigue with the Muslim League and the European bloc to get rid of a ministry which refused to serve as a willing instrument in his hands. The circumstances in which Mr. Fazlul Huq's ministry went out of office and a League ministry with the support of the European bloc was installed into office are too well known to bear repetition.

The progress of events since then are fairly well known. In spite of acute shortage of food and knowledge of such shortage, the League ministry immediately on assumption of office declared that there was sufficient food in the country and the distress of the people was due only to the action of a few hoarders and capitalists who had hidden stocks. There could be no greater disservice to Bengal in that peculiar juncture than such a declaration. It gave an opportunity to die-hard imperialists like Amery to disclaim responsibility and put the blame for the crisis on Indians themselves. It created dissensions among the people, distracted their attention from the real problem and made a joint and co-operative endeavour for sharing the suffering and overcoming the crisis impossible. It also absolved the Government from the responsibility of providing relief. Worst of all, it prevented the inflow of food from other provinces or outside India at a time when such imports alone could have saved millions of lives. A food census and anti-hoarding drive was made early in June. Its results were not published, but its visible effect on the market was to rocket prices up to unprecedented levels. In July 1943, rice sold at prices seven hundred per cent or more higher than prices which obtained in July 1942. In blatant contradiction to facts, the League ministers still went on echoing their imperialist masters' voice in insisting that there was no shortage. It was only in September that they at last made the tardy admission that there was acute shortage and relief from outside was essential and imperative. The hunger marchers had pricked their bubble and by dying on the very doorsteps of these ministers proved that not only was there shortage, but shortage of such a kind as endangered the very life and existence of the province. What the non-official representatives of the people had been saying for six months or more without avail, was broadcast to the four corners of the world by the hunger marchers. By their death the hunger marchers thus forced the authorities to take the first belated step towards the relief of Bengal's famished millions.

(The above article by Humayun Kabir appeared in "Log 1943" an Indian review of the events of the year 1943. We have reprinted it slightly abridged for reasons of space.—Ed.)

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I.L.P. & ANARCHISM

THE FOLLY AND FUTILITY of parliamentary action have now been demonstrated beyond dispute, except to a few atavistic socialist and labour bodies who still stick to the forms and methods of the days of Gladstone and Disraeli. Some have been able to break a little with their past and recognise that the fight must be fought on the industrial plane as well as on the political plane. They, seeing clearly the tendencies and trends of the time, coolly appropriate the slogans of the revolutionaries.

Fenner Brockway asked in the *New Leader* why should they not use the term 'Libertarian Communism'. Apart from the illogical position of authoritarian Socialists advocating 'Libertarian Communism', it smells strongly of political intrigue and dishonesty. If they are in favour of worker's control of the means of production (i.e. Syndicalism), they cannot be in favour of State ownership. One is a complete antithesis of the other, for if the state owns the means of life, it owns the lives of the workers, no matter what idealistic language is used. This attitude of mind would be excusable in a Stalinist, who can see nothing else but the methods of Russia. Brockway was in Spain and saw Anarcho-syndicalism function under the most adverse conditions, and has given the C.N.T. the credit due to them. He must therefore know that all conscious class action must be in opposition to the State. The historic function of the State is the protection of the property system (not necessarily private property), and an increasing number of workers are aware of the fact that the State is a greater exploiter than even capitalism. Bitter experience has taught them that political parties always betray, and they are now learning that only by direct industrial action can they gain any measure of emancipation.

The suicide of the Second International, the liquidation of the Third and the failure of the Fourth to be born at all, have left the field open to the only real International, the I.W.M.A. This they will not recognise because it closes the door on all political careerists and adventurers. So artificial insemination must be tried and another International brought into existence, to provide a stage from which they can pose and perform, calling for revolutionary action to set up a fantastic utopia, 'The Workers' State'. They are now realising as Trotsky did before them, that it is only by exploiting the theories and slogans which the Anarchists have popularised that they can hope to have any success in the coming social revolution. As F. A. Ridley states in their internal paper, *Between Ourselves*, "We must borrow and adapt to our own use the slogans of the Anarchists. Against the dictum 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat' we must put 'The Liberty of the Individual', against 'The Nationalisation of the Means of Production' we must use 'Workers' Control of the Means of Production'."

Evidently the moth-eaten argument the I.L.P. used to employ, that some form of organised authority in the form of State Socialism was a necessary preliminary state, a transitional stage towards Anarchism, has been abandoned. It would seem that they now realise that the Anarchist methods are the most practical and form therefore the only possible way towards achieving the real emancipation of the workers. The belated tribute to truth is only another proof of the bankruptcy of the political socialist position, if more proof were needed. They realise as clearly as we do that the modern tendency of the State is to control all the forces of production, leaving the management in the hands of the industrialists, the state taking the giant share of the profits in the shape of taxes. This tendency has been accelerated during the war, and will have to be continued after the war if capitalism is to survive. The logical evolution of the State is towards totalitarianism. It will not matter what name and

label the political party assumes when forming a government—they must and can only function on these lines. To think otherwise is to ignore the trends and tendencies of recent history.

For this and other reasons the government has made the trade union movement part of the administrative machinery of their system, in that subtle and typically British method of leaving the organisations intact and apparently stable. The bureaucrats of the Trade Unions get government positions and titles. Because of this the capitalists can place on the statute books laws such as R.A. which the master class does not even attempt to put into law but which can be done rapidly and easily by a labour leader, backed by nearly all the party. And they are right, for their objective and ideal is State-ownership, and every extension of the State is a denial and a frustration of human rights.

Their method of gaining petty reforms is just a process of manicuring the tiger of capitalism, clipping the claws that will grow again, a method which can only be used when trade is good—a time which may never come again, for the world's markets are contracting and not expanding. Therefore the prospect of improving the condition of the workers by piecemeal reforms is an ever-diminishing one. The only hope of the workers is to organise for the complete overthrow and expropriation of the possessing class and to produce on a basis of production for USE and not PROFIT.

This can only be accomplished by direct industrial action. No political paper can help—they can only hinder by side-tracking into legal *cul de sacs*. "He who would be free, himself must strike the blow."

MAT KAVANAGH.

FREEDOM BOOKSHOP 132 Cheltenham Road, Bristol

Freedom Press publications advertised elsewhere in this issue also in stock. The following books are still available:

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EDUCATION THROUGH ART	Herbert Read 25/-
THE CULTURE OF CITIES	Lewis Mumford 15/-
THE LIFE WE LIVE—THE DEATH WE DIE	
(Drawings—Hand Printed)	John Olday 5/-
THE REAL RULERS OF SCOTLAND	Thomas Burns 6d.
STEPMOTHER BRITAIN	Oliver Brown 6d.
ESPANA (Photographs and Drawings)	3/6
19th JULY, 1936	
(Photographs of the Spanish Revolution)	5/-
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- For books between 3/- and 8/- send 5d. postage.
- For books between 8/- and 15/- send 7d. postage.

SANITARY CONDITIONS— DISGRACEFUL

A report of a water and sewerage survey carried out in England and Wales by the National Federation of Women's Institutes, expresses the general view that village sanitary conditions are disgraceful, and describes the lack of water as a "national shame."

Sanitation at Cerne Abbas, Dorset, says the report, has "not much improved since Tudor days," while evacuees to Lyminge, East Kent, have made up their minds to "rush back to the towns" when the war is over because the sanitary conditions make life a burden.

Some institutes stated that contaminated wells were still in daily use, and in twenty-one counties over 50 per cent. of the village schools investigated had earth or bucket lavatories. At Great Rissington (Gloucestershire) is a "sanitary inconvenience called a vault, which has not been emptied since the school was built forty years ago. Eighty yards below it is a pump supplying fourteen houses with water in times of drought."

Manchester Guardian, 26/8/44.

THOSE QUEER MINERS

I am writing with experience gained in recent work with a large group of collieries in the Nottinghamshire coalfield where I specialised on the welfare and labour management side. This has convinced me that the future of the mining industry depends almost entirely on the betterment of relations between the management and the men.

When any dispute arises, or if one has to meet the men in a Trade Union meeting, one finds an unmistakable hostility in both camps. The men are firmly convinced that their interests and the mineowners' are diametrically opposed. The same is true to a greater or lesser degree of management.

This tendency to remember wrongs is far more persistent in mining than in any other industry because miners are largely a race apart. They live in their mining villages almost entirely segregated from the rest of the community. This is especially the case in South Wales where the mining villages are situated in the narrow valleys. Miners concentrate on their grievances because they meet only their own kind. Thus there is preserved a racial memory of past wrongs which is handed down from one generation to another.

Ch. Lidbury in The Observer, 27/8/44.

Fancy miners thinking that the mineowners' interests are diametrically opposed to theirs! Obviously, if they had had a chance to see how the mineowners live, if they had drunk whisky and smoked cigars together in their clubs and restaurants these outdated prejudices would disappear.

OUR GALLANT WEAPONS

The use of flame-throwers as close support infantry weapons is the result of four years' hard experimental work by the backroom boys of the Petroleum Warfare Department of the Ministry of Fuel and Power.

I saw three types of these deadly weapons demonstrated at an experimental station in Southern Command, and there can be no doubt of their effectiveness as a weapon both of destruction and demoralisation.

Every division of the British and Canadian armies in France have made good use of these flame-throwers, and the demand for them increases daily. It is an example of the way in which our scientists have taken a German invention and improved on it with deadly effect.

Daily Worker, 26/8/44.

Mr. Herbert Morrison would not, of course, call this a "cowardly weapon" as he described the flying bomb.

BOSSSES' FRIENDS

"Our problem . . . is to develop peace-time markets, under our capitalist system, equal to the war market in volume and effectiveness . . . If this foreign market is properly organised, the goods we sell to them will make them wealthy and prosperous, so that they will soon be able to pay, with handsome profits for American capitalists."

Earl Browder (leader of the American C.P.)
in the New York *Daily Worker*, 18/6/44.

Through

WHAT VICTORY MEANS

One could only wish that the leaders of Nazi Germany could have been on the road from Trun to Chambois to-day to see what has happened to the pride of the armies in the West. It was a scene of carnage, of sheer obliteration, that one can only hope to forget in the joy of coming victory. This was the stretch of the Dives Valley in which already disorganised formations had been almost shepherded through the Falaise gap and fell under the holocaust of fire from our waiting guns and rocket-firing Typhoons. Nearly every yard of ground must have been pinpointed by batteries of all calibre. Coming down from Trun there is hardly a yard of road, along which sporadic fighting was still going on yesterday, that does not tell its grim tale.

The ditches are lined with destroyed enemy vehicles of every description, the green verges are an almost unbroken blue-grey of scattered German uniforms and equipment, and up on the banks or on the fringes of cornfields the dead lay as they fell in a blind attempt to get away. For four days the rain of death poured down, and with the road blocked with blazing tanks and trucks little can have escaped it. Nothing can describe the horror of the sight in the village of St. Lambert-sur-Dives, an enemy graveyard over which his troops were struggling yesterday in an effort to break through the cordon hedging them off from the seeming escape lanes to the Seine.

Manchester Guardian, 24/8/44.

PORTRAIT OF A CARDINAL

By those who met him when he was Nuncio in Paris, Cardinal Luigi Maglione, who has just died as Secretary of State at the Vatican, is remembered as a genial man of much more ability than his rather short and unimposing figure suggested.

The Cardinal came of a humble Neapolitan family of nine. His abilities were discovered by Pope Benedict XV., and he won his diplomatic laurels in that hotbed of political intrigue, the Switzerland of the last war. The Vatican has produced many astute diplomats; Maglione was one of the quickest to see the full implications of any diplomatic move.

Evening Standard, 22/8/44.

Diplomacy, a flair for intrigues, seem to be the qualities which best fit a "christian" leader.

DESTRUCTION BY P-PLANES

Lord Halifax, the British Ambassador, stated to-day on his return to Washington that on the average 700 houses an hour were being damaged by Hitler's pilotless "planes." Paying tribute to the courage of Londoners, he said that the bombs did not have the slightest effect on the people's determination to wage the war.

Manchester Guardian, 15/8/44.

EPIDEMICS IN BENGAL

Forty million people are suffering from epidemics in the rural areas of Bengal, over 20,000,000 of them from malaria, the president of the Bengal Provincial Trade Union Congress said to-day. He attributed this terrible condition to the lack of medical facilities.—Reuter.

Manchester Guardian, 24/8/44.

the Press

AMERICAN CAPITALISTS ARE OPTIMISTS

Business continues to keep a steady check on the war situation for the reason that it might end sooner than at present expected, and it wishes to avoid being caught unprepared for the event. With this idea in mind the well known Securities and Exchange Commission has recently completed an analysis of current assets and liabilities of corporations in the United States. The report of the Commission is very interesting. It shows that American industry as a whole should have no financial worries about reconversion to peace-time production and can undertake substantial expansion without recourse to outside sources of cash. The analysis covers all American corporations, except banks and insurance companies. The figures showed that the net working capital of American corporations increased from \$24,600,000,000 in 1939 to \$41,600,000,000 in 1944.

The analysis shows that at the end of 1943 American corporations were in "as favourable a financial position as they had ever been in their history;" that their net working capital, which was at an unprecedented level, was in extremely liquid form, with cash accounting for a very substantial proportion of the total.

It is said that American industry, is in as strong a position as it has been in its history, is financially able to reconvert to peace-time production and to provide for a considerable expansion, without the need of resorting to additional financing.

The Chamber of Commerce Journal, August 1944.

IN PRAISE OF SADISM

Hundreds of British troops are watching the extermination of Hitler's panzer units on high ridges east and south-east of Falaise.

Those with field-glasses have their eyes glued to the scene as black mushrooms of smoke rise where a shell or shower of shells have crashed on German columns fleeing to the north-east.

They all talk about "the killing pound."

Senior staff and tommies alike can't help being excited by the roar of our cannon.

And this killing—a young English captain said it was "just plain mass slaughter"—is appropriately enough taking place in a coffin-shaped piece of terrain bounded by Beaumais, Fresne la Merc, and Coulonces (south-west of Trun).

British troops were moved away so that hundreds of guns—a thousand took part in one barrage—could pour an unending and intense volley into the trapped herd of Germans.

It has almost a race meeting atmosphere. The tommies standing around, watching the guns kill man and beast and material.

A little Cockney said: "It's a shame the poor horses have to suffer. These b—— are getting what they asked for now."

Reynolds News, 20/8/44.

WHAT THE POPE MISSED

"The world will admire London," says the Pope in a message brought back to England by Dr. Bernard Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster, after visits to Italy and Malta.

The Pope's letter says: "You also have had to pass through black days in this most terrible of all wars, and those days are still with you."

"We exhort you to bear your trials with Christian resignation and fortitude, and also with Christian sentiments of forgiveness, charity, and mercy, so that God may reward in you what the world will admire in you—an example of magnanimity inspired by the spirit of Christ's gospel, and thus the present severe trials will bring forth for you and your fellow-sufferers fruits of expiation and amendment, of spiritual elevation, and of eternal life."

Sunday Dispatch, 27/8/44.

In view of the advantages bombing brings to its victims ("fruits of expiation and amendment, of spiritual elevation and of eternal life") it is difficult to understand why the Pope asked with such insistence that Rome should be spared to be bombed by Allied planes.

BETTER BOMBS

A new and devastating bomb has been added to the armament of our bombers by the research workers of the Ministry of Aircraft Production. About 21 inches in length, with a diameter of 5.5 inches, the bomb weighs 30 lb. Its main filling consists of a solution of methane in petrol under pressure, and its descent is controlled by a parachute which reduces its terminal velocity. When the bomb is functioning it emits from its tail a jet of flame about 15 feet long and two feet wide.

The new bomb has proved its worth in a number of R.A.F. Bomber Command attacks on German industrial areas. On the night of April 24 Munich was attacked by a force of fewer than 250 Lancasters mainly carrying the new incendiary.

The new bombs were also used in the three attacks on Stuttgart on the nights of July 24, 25, and 28. In spite of the protection which its wide streets give against the effects of bombing, and particularly against the spread of fire, great destruction was done, with devastation extending over hundreds of acres. Many buildings had been burnt completely to the ground, with all the walls collapsed. The number affected was much greater than in areas attacked by the older types of incendiary, which usually leaves the walls standing.

Manchester Guardian, 24/8/44.

THE REALIST

The man down the road was placidly watching his house burn down to the ground. I came running up and asked him if he had called the fire department.

"Why should I?" he said. "I set the fire myself. My cellar is full of rats, so I am roasting them." He added in explanation: "I am a realist."

It would have been more economical, I pointed out, to have used traps.

"I see that you remain a starry-eyed idealist," he said sadly. "You sound as if you are in favour of the rats."

I protested that I was in favour of his house.

"I am at war with the rats," he told me sternly. "Burning my house will destroy them. Are you trying to divert me from winning the war against the rats?"

"Wouldn't the rats return to the foundation?"

The man down the road sighed. "You don't understand realism. I will erect a new house over this foundation. If the rats return, I will burn down the house again. That's the way realism works, as distinguished from idealism, which would go in for socialistic methods like traps."

The Call (U.S.A.) 9/7/44.

BRITAIN and BRAZIL

IN TWO RECENT articles by Arthur Pincus, reprinted by *War Commentary* from *Politics*, the drive of the American ruling class to obtain economic control of the South American republics was shown by a mass of formidable information. The impression one might easily gain from these articles, if their conclusions were not modified by other information, is that the United States will be the one important commercial power in South America, and that British and other foreign imperialist capitalism will be thrust out for good.

Recent events, however, such as the violently anti-American movement which has gained control in the Argentine, tend to show that the hegemony of Wall Street and the White House is not yet so firmly based as its supporters might wish, and that a good deal more bribes in cash and kind may have to be poured in before a really effective fifth column is gained to assure American domination throughout South America.

It has been the custom recently, particularly in the "Left-wing" press, to blame the actions of the Argentine ruling class on to their sympathies with the Axis. But, while the individuals who have seized control in Buenos Aires are undoubtedly Fascist in tendency, this does not mean that they are sufficiently unrealistic to put their shirts on Hitler at this late day. There is plenty of evidence that they are closely connected with Franco. But Franco, again, has sat on the fence throughout the war, playing always to his own advantage, and he is by no means likely to commit suicide for the sake of the Nazis if he can gain patronage from a more successful power, e.g. Britain. The British ruling class, in their turn, have no objection to Fascist governments which they can work with and even use in their political manoeuvres. The years of courting Franco and Salazar are evidence of this.

On the other hand, the British capitalists are naturally concerned with their loss of influence in South America, where Britain was once the great exploiting commercial power. The political and economic manoeuvres of the American government, which aim at creating a Washington-dominated Pan-American confederation, would mean, if they succeeded, the virtual end of any substantial British economic stake in South America. Considering that British capitalists hold, or held before the war, investments totalling in the neighbourhood of £1,000,000,000 in Latin America, it will be seen that the City is not ready to accept any such situation without a struggle. As any direct imperialist interference is clearly impossible, the next best thing is to undermine the Washington attempts to unify South America under a totalitarian Monroe Doctrine. For this purpose, it is obviously in the temporary interests of the British ruling class to encourage the nationalist movements which are making themselves apparent in various South American countries, particularly Brazil and the Argentine. This would explain the complacency with which the Foreign Office regarded the recent totalitarian and nationalist manifestations in the Argentine, and the reluctance with which they followed the lead of Washington in making a token gesture of protest.

British politicians have made quite clear that the British government does not consider the interests it represents as having been finally thrust out of South America. Hugh Dalton, in the House of Commons on the 27th July last, stated: "We do not intend to disinterest ourselves in Latin America, and nobody has suggested that we should". And Harcourt Johnstone, head of the Department of Overseas Trade, has told British industrialists that Great Britain does not intend to withdraw in any way from trading in Latin America.

Through the British Council and various other semi-cultural and commercial organisations a widespread attempt is being made to regain influence among the South Americans. The most important of the unofficial organisations is the British and Latin-American Chamber of Commerce Inc., at the head of whose advisory council is Lord McGowan, of Imperial Chemical Industries. On a slightly less openly commercial level is the Latin-American Society of Great Britain. With this organisation is closely linked Latin-American Trade Ltd., a publicity organisation who publish a monthly paper called *Latin-American World*, which is devoted to carrying on propaganda for increased trade relationships between Britain and the South American republics.

The most recent number is devoted to Brazil. Technically it is a pre-war standard publication of 100 pages, with art paper for the advertisements of armoured cars and English railway engines. Obviously the government finds it worth while to allot plenty of paper for a publication of this kind, which, at 1/-, is evidently sold on a loss basis, if one considers the high present day cost of printing.

The contents tell us little about how the Brazilians live except for one reference to the poverty-stricken slums that surround Rio and another passage in which the violent class distinction between very rich and very poor is mentioned. On the other hand, there are several articles boosting the shabby and derivative bourgeois culture of Brazil, and one article, entitled "Vargas—the Man", which gives the usual flattering portrait of a dictator who happens to have shifted his bottom on to the right side of the fence. President Vargas, we are told, is a "beneficent dictator who has always put his country's welfare before his own ambitions". He is, like most dictators in the eyes of legend, "essentially a man of simple tastes", and "what we call in England a home-loving man". He once won a cup for golf, and "one of his chief joys is hearing jokes about himself". "However serious a moment for his country, H.E. President Vargas always appears in public smiling and confident—an inspiration to his people". Reading all this would lead us to believe that we had met at last the dictator who is a really nice friendly man—if we hadn't heard just the same things in the past about Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini and all the tinpot tyrants whom the ruling class wanted to sell to us from time to time to serve its own interests. Naturally, nothing is said of the intrigues which Vargas used to gain power, of his acceptance of aid from the Nazis until it suited him to turn over to the other side, of his cruel suppression of any kind of insurrectionary or working class movement, and of his use of all the traditional Fascist paraphernalia of coloured shirts, youth movements, concentration camps and torture chambers.

But the most substantial section of the magazine is devoted to the discussion of the possibilities of British trade with Brazil after the war. In the past the trading connections with Brazil were considerable. When Brazil declared its independence of Portugal in 1822, the politically astute British ministry of the time was quick to recognise the new government long before any other of the European powers, and as a result of this it managed to gain a favourable trading position with the new régime. Throughout the nineteenth century British manufacturers provided the greater part of Brazil's imports of foreign goods. Moreover, millions of British money were invested in public utilities, plantations and mines. The leading railways, coastal steamer services and the steamers on the Amazon, as well as the number of engineering and electrical undertakings, were financed by British capital and run under British direction. Even in 1940 more than a half of the Brazilian government's foreign debt had originated in loans from Britain.

After the great war, however, and particularly during the depression of the 1930's, there was a rapid and enormous drop in British exports to Brazil, considered both absolutely and in relation to the exports of America and Germany. The following lists show this decline quite clearly:

1915.	1. Britain.	£16,436,000
	2. Germany.	£11,737,000
	3. U.S.A.	£10,553,000
1925.	1. U.S.A.	£20,762,000
	2. Britain.	£18,770,000
	3. Germany.	£11,774,000
1939.	1. U.S.A.	£10,613,000
	2. Germany	£6,160,000
	3. Britain.	£2,951,000

The British government and British industrialists clearly intend to make a great effort to rectify this state of affairs and make some quite substantial increase in the amount of British exports to Brazil. If one can judge from the pages of the *Latin American World*, their attitude is fairly realistic, for they realise that in many of the old imported products, such as textiles, Brazil has become largely self-sufficient, and is unlikely to provide a considerable market. But they think, on the other hand, that the nationalist building up of Brazil will make great demands for equipment, tools, rolling stock, instruments, and technical devices with which the local industries cannot deal adequately. They are prepared to accept with equanimity the taking over of railways and boats by the Brazilian government, provided they can get contracts for building ships and locomotives. Radio equipment, medical goods, dyes and whisky are listed as other goods which Brazil will import in large quantities. In return, the British industrialists hope to gain a corner in Brazil's mineral production, which includes such important minerals as manganese, tungsten, platinum, antimony, etc.

In addition, it is hoped that there will be some field for regaining some of the financial power in the form of loans, investments, etc., which has dwindled during this war.

The policy the ruling class of this country are pursuing in South America is ultimately suicidal. For the sake of profits in the immediate post war years, they are willing to share in the building up of countries like Brazil and the Argentine into strong nationalist and industrial-agricultural powers, which will ultimately turn completely in the direction of self-sufficiency and offer a steadily diminishing market for outside capitalism. Yet it is difficult to see what else they could do. If they try to keep these countries in a semi-colonial conditions, they will inevitably fall into the power of the United States and become closed to other imperialists. So that all the British can do is to try to detach them from the Americans by encouraging them to become nationalistic, and reap the inevitably declining rewards of such a policy.

However, whatever may be the merits of their plans, the British do not mean to let their opportunities slip, as is shown by the foundation during the last two years of two new contact organisations, the Anglo-Brazilian Society and the Brazilian Chamber of Commerce and Economic Affairs in Great Britain. Together with the British Council and the older contact organisations which operate more generally over Latin America, these bodies will no doubt form quite a formidable opposition to the American propagandists in their struggle to get rich at the expense of the Brazilian peasant and miner, whose condition to-day is becoming steadily more servile under the fascistic régime of the good-humoured golf player, President Vargas.

GEORGE WOODCOCK

AMERICAN REFINEMENT

From the American press we learn that among souvenirs which U.S. Servicemen have sent back from the South Pacific there have been Japanese soldiers' skulls. One case is reported of how the wife of a soldier is allowing her children to play with the skull of a Japanese soldier.

Congressman Francis Walter representative of Pennsylvania presented Franklin D. Roosevelt with a letter-opener made from the forearm of a Japanese soldier, and apologised for so small a part of the Jap's anatomy.

Imagine the headlines in the British and American press if a Japanese member of the Diet were to present the bone in the form of an ornament, of an American soldier to the Emperor? Imagine the outcry if pictures appeared in the German press of a German girl looking affectionately at the skull of a British soldier which her boy friend had sent her as a souvenir? Yet this is taking place on the Allied side.

Socialist Appeal, August 1944.

SHAMEFUL METHODS

PARIS DEALS WITH WOMEN SNIPERS

Four women caught firing on crowds in the streets of Paris had their heads shaved immediately, and two of them were undressed completely and forced to walk to the nearest prison, says a B.U.P. message.

They were among several women caught during the war that is still flaming among the Paris rooftops, where a few desperate Germans and groups of Darnand's Militia are still active.

Daily Worker, 29/8/44.

PRESS FUND

JULY 1944

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
High Wycombe: J.P.R.	1	0		Glasgow: McM.	1	0	
Old Colwyn: L.N.		9		Deptford: B.E.W.	2	6	
London: J.B.	2	6		Whitehaven: G.H.Mc.C.	4	0	
London: S.L.	10	0		Wymondham: J.H.J.	2	0	
Nesscliffe: Pte. D.	7	6		Enfield: F.S.	10	0	0
Sidcup: B.S.P.	1	0		London: R.J.B.	4	6	
Edinburgh: A.S.	1	0	0	Bristol: W.K.G.	10	0	
Gateshead: W.T.	2	6		Accrington: C.R.	2	0	
Gateshead: E.McK.	2	6		Glasgow: A.H.	4	0	
Gateshead: J.C.S.	2	6		Burwell: E.B.	4	0	
York: H.A.A.	5	0		Ruabon: Cpl. D.			
London: F.C.D.	2	0		Glasgow: J.C.	4	0	
London: V.C.B.	1	0		Ambala, India:			
N. Jersey: comrades				G.R.N.	40	0	0
and groups per				Earnley: G.B.A.	3	4	
"I'Adunata"	32	10	0	London: V.R.	5	0	0
London: T.A.McC.	9	0		Cardiff: B.R.	1	0	
Felixtowe: W.K.S.	10	0					
Los Angeles: comrades				Total for April	£102	8	4
per J.S.	2	10	0				
Ilford: C.W.		7	0	Prev. ack.	£242	5	7
London: S.J.W.T.	5	0	0	TOTAL TO DATE	£344	13	11
Ware: G.S. & E.B.	1	0	0				

THE FOUR FREEDOMS

SOME OF MY friends in, around and under the Government tell me that I do not take this war seriously enough. Others tell me I take it too seriously. In an effort to clear up things, I have formulated a slightly revised edition of the Four Freedoms. Of course, my edition does not alter the philosophical purity of the original concept: it only shifts the emphasis to a new type of freedom: the freedom from order. It is my hope that the following suggestions will be as constructive as the bombings with which the Allied air forces are now preparing the peoples of Europe for a new era of everlasting peace.

The changes I propose are very slight. By simply shifting a few prepositions—harmless, modest little words—we get the most valuable results. Specifically:

Freedom of Speech should become *Freedom from Speech*
Freedom of Worship should become *Freedom from Worship*
Freedom from Want should become *Freedom of Want*
Freedom from Fear should become *Freedom of Fear*

Let me explain.

I. FREEDOM FROM SPEECH



THIS includes all speeches, from the lascivious allurements of advertising, which bring man, via the long detour of his sexual instincts, to satisfy his thirst with liquids that taste like sleeping feet, to speeches of Churchill, Roosevelt, Wallace and others. It also goes without saying that Hitler's and Mussolini's speeches are also on the list, under the heading of "political

advertising".

Many will object to the inclusion of the inspiring speeches by our war leaders, but they are even more dangerous than the others. Take for example Churchill's speech in which he said: "*This is not a war of dynasties, chieftains or kings, it is a war of causes and ideals.*" Or the Wallace Common-Man speech, or Roosevelt's appeals to "revolt in Italy. Many Italians who received copies of those speeches dropped from Allied airplanes, and kept them in their pockets at the risk of their lives, are now exhibiting them at Allied Headquarters and saying: "Here are your promises, why don't you keep them?" This is what happens when communications are slow and badly organized. Those poor devils have not yet been freed from the spell of the above speeches, which was not meant to last that long and to create such strong illusions of good faith. Had they also received a copy of Churchill's last speech in which he says "This is *no time* for ideological preferences," or of Roosevelt's declaration of July 1943 that he would not stand for anarchy and disorder, no such misunderstandings would have arisen. It is useless to reproach the O.W.I. for failing to send copies of those later "corrections" to Italy; the people in Nazi-occupied Italy would have refused to give up their illusions. The only answer therefore is: **FREEDOM FROM SPEECH.**

II. FREEDOM FROM WORSHIP



THIS includes not only the worship of Kings, Fuehrers and Dukes, but also the True Faith, which must be discovered in a state of complete freedom. The Italians remembered how long it took to persuade the Pope that the sun stood still and the earth danced around it. Only a few centuries ago this view was regarded as highly libellous and communistic,

and the local F.B.I. made things very hot for those who insisted on thus slandering the Astronomic Supremacy of our Planet. They recall for example that Galileo's discovery of the pendulum was also regarded as "untimely", to say the least, and when he began blabbing about confidential goings on in the heavens, he was made to sign a declaration promising to mind his business and stop staying out late at night to look at the Pope's sky. The Italians remember these and other things, and so do the Spaniards. But to-day it is the great Protestant powers that place them again under the rule of the priests, in accordance with their ignorant belief that the Italians "belong" to the Church. Public schools are once more placed under Catholic authority, and thus the progress of a whole century of struggle for independence is annulled in the very name of Liberty. The answer therefore is: **FREEDOM FROM WORSHIP.**

III. FREEDOM OF WANT



LET me illustrate this kind of freedom. Once, on a hot day in August, I offered one lira to a Neapolitan beggar who was sleeping in the sunshine. I wanted him to carry my suitcases. "No." "Two lira." "No. I've had my lunch." "But you will want your dinner." At this, he sprang to his feet, not to carry my suitcases as I thought for a second, but to shout: "Mind your own business! My hunger belongs to me!" This proud kind of want should be protected by the Third Freedom against the slanderous attacks of those barbarians who can never relax and who therefore claim that moneymaking is a nobler activity than sleeping in the sunshine.

Other forms of want should also remain free: the hunger for independence which in many people accompanies the hunger for food. Some time ago, Badoglio told the Allies that if they would only place him in charge of the distribution of food, he could use it to crush all political opposition, because hunger was greater than anger in the Italian people. Up to now, I am glad to say, Amgot has refused to follow this reactionary advice. It has scrupulously observed the Third Freedom, as here amended. The Italian people have been allowed to keep their hunger—600 calories a day as against the hospital standard of 2200 (see *N.Y. Times*, March 19, p. 14). Excellent! But Allied propagandists seem to be ignorant of this enlightened policy of their generals. They keep urging the Italians to work like Trojans and fight like lions in the great cause of democracy—on a diet of 600 calories a day. Badoglio would feed the people so as to control their thoughts. Amgot starves them and leaves them their thoughts. But at once to starve them and control their thoughts, in fact to expect idealistic enthusiasm from them—this is something only an American advertising man could dream up.

It is useless now to reproach the Allies for behaving badly. They have a right to be cynical, dishonest, stupid, anything they may choose to be; but if their presence does not bring about the expected liberation, and only adds to the sufferings of the Italian people, the Italian people have a right to retain their hunger, without having to see these ominous liberators in their midst all the time. The answer therefore is: **FREEDOM OF WANT.**

IV. FREEDOM OF FEAR



THIS should include not only the freedom to fear Mussolini and Hitler, who by now can no longer impress the European peoples, but also to fear the Allies themselves and their invertebrate faith in democracy. Why not be afraid of the new Governor of Sicily, a former policeman of the combined Ovra and Gestapo organizations, now a civil servant of the liberators? Yet anyone who expresses such healthy fears is called a defeatist. And why not fear the United Nations, fear that the peace may be even worse than the war, after one has seen that even the sugary nonsense of the Atlantic Charter proves too great an impediment to the dishonest plans of Mr. Churchill? But such fears are not licensed under the present rationing system. It is useless now to teach the great Defenders of Democracy that fear should be withdrawn from corpses and extended to a few more living people, but if the people choose not to smile at their orgy of innocence, and to be afraid of everybody, of the dark nationalist beasts like Senator Reynolds, Lind-

bergh and Gerald Smith, and also of the only existing alternatives to these frightening forces, well let them be free to tremble in every limb of their body, for they are always the first to get hurt, either on the giving or the receiving end of the constructive bombing; they are obliged to believe, to smile, to be enthusiastic; the big boys are exempt from ideologies unless the Nazis are too damn close to England; the big boys can afford to liberate the people from their King, or the King from his angry victims, if they so choose to do; and before the big boys get hurt it takes a hell of a long time. Badoglio doesn't have to eat out of a garbage-can, and still, he is less innocent than the Neapolitan people who are eating out of garbage cans. Pétain, King George, King Victor Emanuel, King Peter, Franco, Salazar, Mannerheim, and a few others, just change from a discredited German currency to the good old American greenbacks, that's all. Why should we not be free to fear the governments of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin which leave to such architects the building of considerable areas of the World of the Four Freedoms?

We must, therefore, demand: FREEDOM OF FEAR FOR EVERYBODY ON EARTH.

NICCOLO TUCCI.

(Reproduced from *Politics*, New York)

Borghi asks for Deportation

REGULAR READERS of *War Commentary* will remember reading of the arrest of Armando Borghi by the American authorities. Our comrade is the ex-secretary of the powerful Italian Unione Sindicale, and for years, inspired by revolutionary and Anarchist teachings fought against the rising power of Mussolini's fascists. We reproduce below a letter our comrade has addressed to Attorney-General Francis Biddle which reveals the fighting spirit of our comrade, which years of exile and imprisonment and disappointments have not succeeded in stifling.

Attorney-General Francis Biddle
Department of Justice
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:—

My name is Armando Borghi. As you may well know, I am a candidate for deportation. My story is quite old. Here it is, briefly:

I was reported to the authorities in May, 1927, by the fascist consul at Boston. I was sentenced to be deported. I pleaded for an extension, explaining that my deportation to Italy under Mussolini's régime would be equivalent to my being delivered over to the fascist Special Court. I was granted several extensions. Later I had to go into hiding for some ten years, after the notorious attack, fascist-style, made upon me at a perfectly legal meeting held at Cooper Union in April, 1930. Finally I was arrested in November, 1941, and, after a 4-month detention, was released on \$5000 bail (later reduced to \$1000). These are the facts.

On the basis of repeated declarations made by your Government, and the governments of the United Nations, to the effect that you are fighting fascism to destroy it, I, who have fought fascism since its inception, belonging to the movement which produced Lucetti and Schirru, have a thousand reasons for asking you to cancel my verdict of deportation. I might support this request by pointing out that free men who know me well in Italy for my anti-fascist militancy from the very beginning, might judge severely a government which calls itself an enemy of fascism but refuses dignified hospitality to fascism's bitterest enemies. But I waive this, because twenty years ago I did not deny belonging to the anarchist school of thought, which fights for all those liberties that fascism is out to destroy. And in these twenty years I have not changed my convictions. I waive all this

because I know your laws bearing on anarchism, which treat the teachings of Kropotkin, of Reclus, of Malatesta, with the same barbarism and hatred as fascism and nazism treat the Masons and the Jews.

After all, even if I were not a deportee, I would request permission to go to Italy as soon as possible. Hence I request, for more reasons than one, to be permitted to go there, and that is why I am now writing you in the capacity of a deportee. Whatever the conditions in Italy may now be, I see no longer any reason for my avoiding deportation at all costs. I now request, I invoke the immediate execution of the verdict of deportation. I have duties awaiting me in Italy, duties similar to the duties of those who are fighting in the underground against the fascist monster.

Respectfully yours,

Armando Borghi.

(Continued from p. 16)

hated against the guards, though of course the men tolerate otherwise intolerable insults in order to avoid reprisals such as bread and water punishments and loss of remission—even so there are brave men who fight just the same, a number are usually on hunger strike . . . I forgot to mention that they make us bath in the water bowls in the wash-house. These bowls come up to our waists. We all stand around naked on a cold wet concrete floor, trying to push in somewhere, and we bathe by lifting our legs into the bowl one at a time. They can't kick you in the teeth these days so they indulge in pleasantries like these. Another trick is to wake us up in the middle of the night, every night, and make us dress under the pretext that it is part of A.R.P. against rockets, etc., but the whole place is kept locked up, and if the place was hit it would be too late to do anything . . . I am greatly encouraged to receive the letters that you sent, the pressure is terrific of course. I try to act like a man without running my head into a wall. I have not clashed with them, but if I do I will go the whole hog and that means real punishment . . ."

When reading these extracts from my husband's letters I would urge you to remember that these prisoners are guilty of no heinous crime or grave offences.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) SHELIA WILLIAMS.

News from the Scottish Coalfield

IT IS NOW PUBLIC that the miners convicted in the Ca' Canny trial by Sheriff Dobie at Hamilton Sheriff Court (reported in the Mid-August issue of *War Commentary*) have now appealed to a higher court. Much indignation has been expressed against the verdict so that even the miners' leaders have been forced to depart from their usual compromising line and are having to make a show. We are not deceived of course. There is no danger for the miners' leaders, and they and the defending solicitor, Robertson, are making as much capital as possible out of a simple case.

It will be very interesting to follow the case. No matter which way the verdict goes, we have a good idea who is winning.

MORE TROUBLE AT SHOTTS

The miners at Kingsmill Colliery had a one-day strike against working conditions. This pit is also in Shotts and is owned by the Coltness Co., Ltd.

The miners at Fortissat Colliery, Shotts, after a two-day strike, again resumed their strike in sympathy with the brushers who refused to go down the pit on Friday, 4th August. This strike is due to the management claiming that one man broke an individual contract.

It is reported in the press that the man's wages were reduced when he did not fulfil his contract. The press report goes on to say that the brushers had a contract with the management to "brush" and keep their roads 6 feet high. This man's road, they say, was only 3 feet 9 inches high. The press report should be suspect. Anyone with mining experience knows how difficult it is to keep a road or passage which is deficient, a particular width and height. It would be of interest to hear the viewpoint of the men, 200 of them, before we accept any such reports as the press have put out.

CONSPIRACY WITHOUT CHARGES

Many miners from the Lanarkshire district have been punished by the conspiracy of Managements and National Service Officers. This conspiracy directs its attacks from district to district so that it appears to the public that the miners choose separate and different periods to be wicked and annoy the starving coal-owners.

The attack just now is being directed at the mining district of Shotts as can be seen from many reports in the press. Here is one victim. The press account is headed "Miner on Disobedience Charge". For disobeying a fireman's order he was fined £2. He conducted his own case and was tried the day before the Ca' Canny trial concluded. The way he managed his case should serve as an example to the Shotts miners. He is Allen McLean, of 8 Quarrelhead Avenue, Shotts.

SHOTTS MINERS ON E.W.O. CHARGE

A CHARGE OF impeding the work of scheduled undertaking in contravening of the Essential Work (Coalmining Industry) Order, 1943 and the Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, was made against 18 miners employed at Northfield Colliery, Shotts, at Hamilton Sheriff Court, Wednesday, 9th August.

An agent appeared and tendered a plea of not guilty on behalf of the accused, and the trial was fixed for October 24th.

Accused were charged that between March 25th and June 10th, 1944, while acting as strippers and drawers and working in pairs in the main coal seam, they wilfully failed to perform the daily tasks allotted to them, which they were able to do.

The charge also alleged that accused caused brushers and oncostmen to be diverted from their proper and usual work to stripping and drawing cut coal which ought to have been performed by them respectively, and that their daily

output was less than they were able to have achieved, thus causing a deficiency of 1148 tons 9 cwt. over the period stated.

Twelve of the men charged are from Shotts, three are from Cleland and one each from Motherwell, Wishaw and Harthill respectively.

It is of interest to note how these charges are worded in contrast to the terms of the charges made against the Shotts miners in the Ca' Canny Trial. It will be seen that the words used are very different although the charges are very much alike. There is a reason for this change, of course. The prosecution in the other ca' canny trial had difficulty in substantiating the charges made and implied in the terms used. From the prosecution's viewpoint they have benefitted from the other case and more care has been taken in the choice of words. In other words the net has been drawn tighter.

We hope no "outside influence" or "Hidden Hand" will be found in this case either. We know who are regarded as "outside influences" and let us say we have the greatest respect for the miners who do not need help or advice from people outside to get their "rights".

From experience everyone knows that persecution will not stop our struggle and we suggest that this silly charge be dropped. Perhaps a little pressure would help.

SOLIDARITY

Solidarity among the Shotts miners is further evidenced by the fact that a voluntary levy was paid by more than 2,000 men to cover the legal costs, fines and loss of wages incurred by the miners involved in the Ca' Canny Trial.

Surely this is an answer to the people who say that the miners are behind the Trades Union Leadership and that they are pledged to the "war effort". No matter what about the miner he knows that the strike weapon is his only way of attacking and defending and so he sympathises and backs up his fellow miners in the struggle.

STRIKES

The *Sunday Post* (Scottish) reports five separate stoppages in Ayrshire. Cause of stoppages not very clear. The hush-hush policy is being practised in these strike reports. Thankerton Mine has partly resumed, Enterkin Colliery still idle by last report, but Glenburn and Lofts and Mossblown have returned.

It is evident that a deliberate effort is being made to not only misrepresent the strikes but to censor strike news and prevent any link-up of strike movement.

Cardowan Colliery, Stepps, will be remembered as the pit which took a leading part in the sympathetic strike that threatened to paralyse the mining industry. It gave the authorities and miners' leaders the fright of their lives and W. Pearson, Sir Paddy Dollan and the Comrats have had a severe dose of the dread disease "Anarchist-phobia" ever since. In spite of them, however, the miners there remain fairly staunch and keep a wary eye on the doings of the management.

Evidence of this is the fact that the pit went on strike because a young worker had been told to get up the "bloody" pit. He had refused to do work which someone else had also refused to do before him.

Many of the miners went back to work when the pit officials and branch officials stated that there would be no negotiations until everyone went back to work. Others stuck it out until, it is reported, the young man was reinstated. Solidarity won even when practised by a minority.

J. CARRACHER

ANTI-LABOUR LAWS DEFENCE

WE REJOICE AT the release of the class-war prisoners Roy Tearse, Heaton Lee and Jock Haston and look forward to the quashing of the sentence upon Ann Keen, all of whom were wrongly convicted under the Trades Disputes Act of 1927. We take this opportunity of making clear our attitude towards the Anti-Labour Laws Victims Defence Committee and the anti-labour laws generally.

The Trades Disputes Act of 1927 in its principle part reads:—

- 1—(I) It is hereby declared—
 - (a) that any strike is illegal if it—
 - (i) has any object other than or in addition to the furtherance of a trade dispute within the trade or industry in which the strikers are engaged; and
 - (II) is a strike designed or calculated to coerce the Government either directly or by inflicting hardship upon the community.

Other parts prohibit the affiliation of civil servants to the T.U.C. and Labour Party, curtail picketing, make more difficult the collection of the political levy, protect trade union members who blackleg and prevent trade union membership being a condition of municipal employment. It will be seen that the first part makes illegal almost any strike that is likely to succeed. Any strike may be said to cause hardship to the community, at any rate according to the employing class definition of the community. The Government intervenes in all strikes, especially coal strikes, for in such cases the coalowners urgently need its help, so any such strike becomes an attempt to coerce the Government, as the coal lock-out of 1926.

The Act was passed after the General Strike and immediately after the miners had, by starvation, been driven back to a longer working day and lower wages.

The Trades Union Congress and Labour Party at once called enormous demonstrations which chanted a "Covenant" pledging themselves never to rest until the Act was repealed. Strike action was rejected. Trade unionists must wait until the next general election.

The Labour Leaders' Charter

From the beginning the labour leaders were insincere in their alleged opposition to the Act. They hadled the General Strike only in order to break it. They secretly welcomed any law which would deliver them from this Syndicalist bogey, but they found a more everyday use for the Act. Their other headache was the unofficial strike which always threatened to spread by sympathetic action. In such actions it was common to find trade union organisers appearing and telling a tale which ran something like this, "Lads, we at head office sympathise with you. Your cause is just—but under the Trades Disputes Act your strike is illegal, unconstitutional and unofficial. The union cannot pay you strike benefit, and if you don't return the Government will confiscate the union's funds." Usually they managed to stick in a few things which were not in the Act.

At the General Election of 1929 the Labour Party became the largest party of M.P.s and took over the reins of office from Baldwin. During its two years of office the Labour Party made no attempt to repeal the Act. Later when the Labour Party entered the War Cabinet no attempt was made to bargain for the removal of what they had termed "the Anti-Trade Union Act."

Last year Sir Walter Citrine as secretary of the T.U.C. made a great fuss of threatening to fight certain clauses of the 1927 Act. In *War Commentary* we foretold that he would abandon his fight and likened him to the grand old Duke of York who marched his men to the top of the hill and marched them down again. Since then nothing has been heard of Sir Walter's gallant fight.

The plain truth is—the labour leaders want the Trades Disputes Act and the Labour Ministers' action in prosecuting the four Trotskyists is a sign of that. With the politics of the Trotskyist Communists, we Anarchists have nothing in common. We know that under any Communist rule—Stalinist or Trotskyist—we should be shot or imprisoned for life. But we are not concerned with the politics of the persons charged. We regard this case as one of working class principle and as such we have taken part in the work of and sustained the Anti-Labour Laws Victims Defence Committee. That new attacks on the workers are preparing is indicated by trade union boss Bevin's new anti-labour law 1A(a) which gathers in the loose ends of the 1927 Act and increases the penalty from two to five years.

Stalinists Support The Anti-T.U. Act

After the passing of 1A(a) the Communist Party was silent for twenty days—trying to figure out how to support it without seeming to. A semi-detached Communist like Jack Tanner of the A.E.U. at the General-Council of the T.U.C. had to say he would not vote for and he would not vote against 1A(a)—the Party line wasn't out.

Then the Communist leaders had a brain wave. They would oppose 1A(a) not because they were against it, but because the Government already had full power to suppress under the Trades Disputes Act, 18B (imprisonment without trial) and 2D (suppression of the Press). The C.P. and the *Daily Worker* encouraged the Government to use these powers against the "agitators".

Ourselves And The Defence Committee

Whilst we have supported the Defence Committee, which is concerned with other cases than that of the four Trotskyists, we have felt uneasy at certain tendencies within the committee. First there was the tendency to rely too much upon Members of Parliament. Later there was an even more questionable trend towards relying entirely upon legal action in the courts, "even taking the case to the House of Lords."

Now, we are in favour of elementary legal representation in the courts. If we can find a way of dodging in and out of their laws, let us do so. We should not put all our eggs in the lawyers' basket. We can find loop-holes in their laws maybe, but they will soon plug them with new laws. Lawyers won't win the class struggle for us.

The real fight must come from the industrial workers. The task of a Defence Committee must be to arouse them to direct action. A clever lawyer is no substitute for strike action. When the industrial workers are aroused they will sweep away the 1927 Act, 1A(a) and the rest of the anti-labour laws and with them will go the labour cabinet ministers and the modern types of Bunyan's Mr. Facing-both-ways—the Stalinist politicians.

TOM BROWN

IN THE GLASSHOUSE

DEAR EDITOR,

I should be pleased if you would give this enclosed letter publicity by printing it in your press. This same letter has been sent to 16 Labour Members of Parliament and also to a number of Socialist papers. Apart from this letter from my husband, I have received three other letters from soldiers who have come out of detention after their sentences have expired (they smuggled letters out from my husband to me). These soldiers confirm my husband's statement. One soldier writes that, "The food is not fit for pigs, and one blade has to do you 12 days, and you have to bath in a hand-basin, everything to break the morale of the men. There is not one man in 12 hundred but their breath's are rotten, it is terrible!"

However, I read an article in *Reynolds News*, by Tom Driberg, printed Sunday, 20th August, 1944, where he states that he unexpectedly called and went through Darland Detention Camp, and states to the effect that everything was in perfect order, conditions and food, good, etc. I might point out that I sent a number of letters protesting about the outrageous treatment our soldiers are receiving in this very Camp, and I dispatched the enclosed draft to the War Office on the 10th August, 1944, threatening to make it publicly known and informing them the action I intended to take re distribution of draft to Labour M.P.'s, etc. Therefore my opinion is that these improved conditions (if true) are only temporary and confined to this one Camp, also that the War Office was expecting visits from M.P.'s and was well prepared for the event. However, I must add that due to my complaints to the War Office, my husband is receiving punishment. He has been isolated from the other soldiers and is now in solitary confinement. Hoping you will print these letters,

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

SHEILA WILLIAMS.

DEAR SIR,

I am writing to you in order to bring to your notice some idea of the actual conditions under which British soldiers detained in detention camps are forced to exist. I hope that after reading this letter you will be moved to give this matter as great a degree of publicity as you can and that you will exert whatever influence you possess in an endeavour to ameliorate the unhappy lot of the prisoners.

My husband, Driver J. Williams, Service No. 14529500, applied for compassionate leave at the time of the birth of my second child. He was granted leave for 7 days, but as this was inadequate we appealed for an extension of a further three weeks as I expected to be in hospital for two weeks

at least and there was nobody to take care of the first child. This request was refused and on the 4th June the police called to arrest my husband. Since he had the two year child on his hands and nobody to whom he could entrust her, he left the house and so avoided arrest. When at length the time came for me to leave the hospital he visited me to make arrangements for my return home and was arrested.

After a court-martial lasting three days, during which my husband conducted his own defence, he was finally sentenced to four months detention, a sentence which I learned later was to be served in Darland detention camp, Gillingham, Kent. This, you will doubtless recall, was the camp at which the unfortunate Private Clayton died in rather questionable circumstances. I have since received a letter from my husband describing the conditions in which the prisoners are forced to exist and which merit the widest exposure. Permit me to quote from this letter:—

"... Since Clayton's death these people have soft pedalled a lot as far as open brutality is concerned. Though the place is still run by a gang who bully and drive the men like slaves. While as I say open brutality is no longer practiced, nevertheless they practice tricks which have the same aim, which is to humiliate, crush and degrade the men. For instance, the dinners never vary. They consist of potatoes (not washed or peeled) lumped with cooked rice and inedible cabbage—all slapped on a plate, and a bowl of so-called "soup". This dinner never varies; there is never a sweet, unless the rice which is lumped with the potatoes is supposed to be the "sweet". In the morning they dish out a plate of unsweetened porridge, a lump of bread and butter and same undrinkable "cocoa" which has neither milk or sugar in it. Then at dinner time the dinner I have described, and at tea-time a lump of bread 4 ozs. and butter with unsweetened tea. This diet—hopeless, monotonous swill, has been devised by these scoundrels in order to smash the men's morale. You can imagine hungry men all the time drilling and rushing about, having to live on this heart-breaking swill. As I say, it never alters day in and day out. Another instance of the devilish tricks they perpetrate upon the men is that one razor blade has to last one man twelve days, this with cold water shaving. If the men break the blades trying to sharpen them they lose two days remission which means they come out two days later than they would have done.

Once again, on a Sunday the men do not do the normal drill, etc. They are brought out for exercise and this is turned into torture by the guards. In the morning the men spend two hours continuous marching, never stopping, up and down the huge square. In the afternoon they are marching continually round this huge place for another two hours. In effect the "exercise" is turned into a gruelling punishment. Further we have one wash day and bath day every week. On this day we get one piece of ersatz soap $2\frac{1}{2}'' \times 2'' \times \frac{1}{3}''$ thick. With this you are to wash one shirt, one pair of pants, one pair of socks, denim trousers and a towel. Incidentally to wash these articles two men share one bucketful of hot water—no more. That is, ten articles are washed in a bucketful of water. Then having washed your clothes with this piece of soap, you have to bath in a bowlful of water and this is supposed to last you all the week and yet they will not allow the men to have proper washing soap sent in from outside..."

"... I would like to bring to the notice of Members of Parliament details of some of the savage sentences imposed upon youths of twenty—one year and two year sentences for one and two days' absences... the air is often tense with

(continued on page 1)

WAR COMMENTARY

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