

230 BISHOPSGATE EC2A

WAR COMMENTARY

Vol. 1 No. 5 Twopence
MARCH 1940

Can There Be World Peace? *The Case Against "Federal Union"*

THERE is a growing opposition to the war, however much the war apologists assert to the contrary. Amongst the workers there have been no signs of enthusiasm from the outbreak, though it is equally true that there have been no apparent signs of opposition; it was a fatalistic acceptance of the situation, a condition of mind which sadly reflects the unconvincing propaganda efforts both of the ruling class and the working class organisations. Amongst the "idealists" of the war, there is a noticeable decrease in their original enthusiasm for the "noble and just cause" for which the allies are fighting. This is understandable, for so far no concrete statement as to the aims of the allies has been made by the Government. Every Saturday for the past months members of the cabinet have been making public statements apparently on the aims and the progress of the war. Like the well-trained politicians that they are, they have uttered fine meaningless phrases. For Mr. Stanley, the new War Minister, our "war aims are to win the war,"

which to most people (with the exception of the yes-men attending his meeting) is not enough. Mr. Chamberlain, in the closing speech of the series, referring to the Anglo-French Entente, said that "This intimate understanding is one which must not end with the termination of war, but must rather help us to work out the problems of the new Europe in an association in which we shall gladly welcome the collaboration of others who share our ideals."

The ideals are the freedom of small nations in Europe and the restoration of Poland and Czechoslovakia (no mention of Albania, another small nation under Fascist rule!) and the assurance that Germany will keep her word, which are similar to the proposals made after the last war. Mr. Chamberlain added that "In the re-establishment of confidence, Germany herself could do more than any other nations since she herself had done most to destroy it, and, when she was ready to give reliable proofs of her goodwill, she would not find others lacking in the will to help her

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to overcome the economic difficulties that would accompany the transition from war to peace."

After the last war, Germany was disarmed completely, was bankrupt and starving. There was above all much good-will. What was the Allies' contribution towards a lasting peace? France began work on the Maginot Line and this country started laying down the keels for the building of more warships. Only with the advent of Nazism did this country show any attempts to collaborate with Germany, and a perusal of the semi-official papers, the "Daily Telegraph" and the "Times" conclusively indicated official sympathy for the regime in Germany, and a possible ally in the event of a war with Russia. So much so that at the time of the Franco-Soviet pact, many learned authorities saw the future possibility of an Anglo-German military alliance to the exclusion of our present "gallant ally," France!



THAT there are considerable doubts as to the idealism of the Allies' "ideals" is clearly indicated by articles and books published in this country since the war, and the fears expressed by the die-hards in letters to the Press and in Parliament as to the effect of the growing opposition to the war both amongst workers and intellectuals.

Federal Union is one of the immediate results of the war. Two exponents of this proposed new social structure for Europe, Mr. Streit and Mr. W. B. Curry have written books on the subject. Mr. Curry's book* contains particularly interesting passages and many of the present social evils which are responsible for wars are discussed clearly and logically. But we find that Federal Union, in its draft constitution, proposes a state of things which differ only to a slight degree from present day conditions and cannot hope therefore to bring about lasting peace.

Relations with powers outside the Union, control of the standing army; the right to make war; to suppress insurrections; coin and issue money; regulate commerce among the member states and in foreign countries, all these functions are the "sole rights" of the Union. Now, the legislative power of the Union is vested in the Congress, which shall consist

of a House of Deputies and a Senate. The number of deputies is determined by the population of each member country of the Union. To become law a bill must pass the House and the Senate and be approved and signed by a majority of the Board, which consists of five citizens, whose powers are such that the Board shall be Commander-in-Chief of all the armed forces of the Union and will appoint all the State bureaucrats such as ambassadors, ministers and consuls.

In Mr. Curry's United States of Europe, law and order will be enforced by the police and the army, just as it is to-day, and justice will be meted out by not less than eleven High Court Justices who shall, once elected, retain their posts "for life." As to the colonies, Mr. Curry writes. "Non-self-governing dependencies would be placed under the control of an international commission representative of all the States members of the Federal Union. The constitutional position of the King in relation to the Dominions need not be affected; ties of affection and history would remain." Which is very convenient, because the fifteen nations proposed as the initial members of the Union own at present all the "non-self governing dependencies," so that under Federal Union they would just go on exploiting them. For however much Mr. Curry and his fellow Unionists condemn false patriotism and selfishness they still cling to tradition—or as Mr. Curry calls it, "history"—and make no suggestion that exploitation, whether at home or in the colonies, should cease, and that wealth as understood today should no longer be a means for acquiring power. In fact, as Mr. Curry admits himself, "to embrace Federal Union is to ask them [the citizens] to put into practice over a large area, principles to which they have been accustomed over a small area." No, Federal Union in 1940 is no different from the proposed League of Nations of the last war. It is apparently not yet obvious to the Federal Unionists that a United States of Europe or of the world requires fundamental social changes, so profound that the present structure of society must be abandoned completely. Some 80 years ago, Michael Bakunin proposed a "United States of Europe." Amongst the conditions essential for the realisation of this Bakunin drew up a declaration of principles.* Article 5 states that "all the members of the League will have to necessarily reconstruct

* "The Case for Federal Union," by W. B. Curry. Penguin Series, 6d.

their respective countries, in order to replace the old constitution founded, from above, on violence and on the principle of authority, by a new organisation having no other aim than the interests, the needs and the development of the natural attraction of populations towards one another; no other principle than the free federation of individuals in the communes, the communes in the provinces, the provinces in the nations and finally these nations in the United States of Europe to begin with, and later of the entire world.

Article 6: Consequently, absolute abandonment of all that is called historic rights of States; all questions relating to natural, political, strategic or commercial frontiers, will have to be considered henceforth as belonging to ancient history and rejected in no uncertain manner by the members of the League.

Article 10: Precisely because the League stands for peace and because of its conviction that peace will only be won and founded on the completest solidarity of the peoples for the ideals of justice and liberty, must it proclaim its sympathies for all national risings against all oppressions, whether at home or abroad, so long as these insurrections are carried out in the name of our principles and in the interests, both political and economic, of the popular masses and not with the ambitious intent of forming a powerful State.

Article 11: The League will carry on a struggle to the death against all that which is called glory, grandeur and power of States. In place of all the wicked idols to which millions of human beings have been sacrificed we shall substitute the achievements of human intelligence in the field of science and universal prosperity based on work, justice and Liberty."



THESSE basic principles are as essential today as they were when Bakunin drafted them, if war is to be relegated to the history books. The Federal Unionists may be sincere in their desire for peace. But so long as certain sections of society continue to wield power—in the form of wealth and the power to exploit; Law and Authority in the form of the police and army—then there will be no lasting peace. And when Mr. Curry states that Federal Union does not guarantee that "poverty, disease, unemployment and ignorance will be

abolished," he makes a confession which reveals the weakness of the system of which he is an advocate. In hoping to abolish war before getting at the root of the system which creates these "evils" Federal Union puts the cart before the horse. We must destroy the forces responsible for war. The Anarchist proposals, as embodied in Bakunin's statement of principles, are the bases for a realisation of this universal desire for peace.



A PEACE negotiated by Chamberlain, Daladier and Roosevelt, with a few small nations thrown in for effect, will result in an agreement for the privileged few of these respective countries. But there are in the world, hundreds of millions of men and women who have certain aims in common. Whether under so-called democracy or under Nazism; whether under Fascism or Stalinism, the workers in all countries have one thing in common: their freedom. Today in all countries it is they who are sacrificed on the battle-field; it is they who must suffer the privations of life both in time of war and peace. Now it is time they voiced their opinion, the opinion of hundreds of millions throughout the world. Let the workers of this country unite with the Indian workers in their heroic efforts to free themselves from British domination and exploitation. And at the same time show by example that they have common cause with the exploited workers in Germany, France, etc. To achieve their ends, however, they must reorganise. The Labour Party has long ceased to represent the workers and the Trade Union bosses, entrenched in their lucrative jobs, will not assist in activity which threatens their positions.

The war will go on, and when this war ends the world will prepare for the next war to end wars, so long as the workers, men and women, fail to shoulder, each of them, his individual responsibility in the work of reconstruction.

But to be effective it must needs be reconstruction on **NEW FOUNDATIONS**.

* Owing to limited space we can reproduce only the most important Articles. The complete statement of principles, 13 Articles in all are contained in Michael Bakunin's OEUVRÉS, Vol. I, Editions Stock, Paris.

Worse Than War

MR. VERRIER ELWIN is not a politician, an agitator or an anarchist. He is an anthropologist who combines brilliant research work among the aboriginals of Central India with the running of schools, clinics, a leper home and other humanitarian activities. In a recent circular letter, dated January 4th, 1940, he wrote as follows to his friends in England:

"Here we live permanently under war conditions. There is a black-out in the village every night. Every evening, far more deadly than the Messerschmidt, comes a flight of mosquitoes with a load of parasites that kill three million annually. We always have a rationing system, for the villagers never have enough to eat. For four months in the year the rains set up a great blockade of mud between these villages and the outside world. The Goud is just as downtrodden and oppressed as the Pole or the German Jew. Many years ago his kingdoms and great estates were taken from him by conquest or deceit. The Baigas, lords of the jungle, have been robbed of their ancestral home, deprived of their human rights, taxed and suppressed and regimented into decay by the very people who now profess to stand up for the integrity of small nations. . . .

"An old woman put it very well. 'This,' she said, 'is how God equalises things. Our sons and daughters die young, of hunger or disease or the attacks of wild beasts. The sons and daughters of the English grow old in comfort and happiness. But God sends madness upon them, and they destroy each other, and so in the end their great knowledge and their religion is useless and we are all the same'."

* * *

LAST year the Government Committee on Colonial Nutrition presented its report. Lest any summary of mine with regard to its findings should seem unfair, I will quote the summary given by the *Daily Express* of July 26th, 1939. It was headed *THIS IS YOUR EMPIRE*, and the five points which the *Express* selected from the report were that the inhabitants of Britain's Colonial Empire were:

"Suffering from semi-starvation.

"Not paid enough to buy sufficient food.

"Many have never tasted cow's milk, butter or eggs.

"Babies are brought up on rice-water and tea. There is widespread disease and poverty."

In a fuller summary the *Daily Express* stated that the Committee had revealed "that the great majority of the 55,000,000 in Britain's Colonial Empire are suffering from semi-starvation." This figure of 55,000,000 excludes, of course, the inhabitants of India—about 350,000,000—of whom the same tale can be told, as shown by Mr. Elwin's statement and hosts of available reports and statistics. The Whitley Report (on Indian Labour Conditions) is an example, and as damning a document as can be found anywhere.

* * *

BUT to return to that "Daily Express" summary. Here are extracts which the *Express* selected from the Government Report itself, and if they are unfair or taken from their context it is not my doing. Of Basutoland we read:

"The physique and health of the Basuto is not what it used to be."

Of Sierra Leone the Report states that:

"In the seventeenth century the natives were healthy. Now there are outbreaks due to vitamin deficiency manifested by glazed tongues, sore mouths and affected eyes, with lids gummed down by discharge."

Note that conditions are admitted to have deteriorated under British rule. It is admitted in several places that Africans and other colonials are "not paid enough to buy sufficient food," in the words of the *Express*. The Committee, says the *Express* "accuse some firms working in the colonies of adopting towards their employees an attitude 200 years behind the times."

* * *

AND what is the solution?

In the same section of the Report which tells us that "the physique and health of Basuto is not what it used to be" we are informed that the problem "will become very serious unless something can be done to stimulate the natives into changing their ideas of food."

Well, what do you make of that? Conditions are getting worse and it's all on account of the ignorance of the Basuto who eats the wrong things. Apparently he used to know what to eat, or the deterioration would be inexplicable. But he has grown progressively more ignorant (under our beneficent rule) till

now out of sheer stupidity he is starving. Not a very probable theory. And yet the very people who have told us that these colonials are under-paid (they didn't publish, alas, the profits of their employees!) harp continually on this theme of "native ignorance" and urge (*Daily Express* summary):

"A Goebbels-like propaganda by newspapers, leaflets, lectures, broadcasts, to give the natives the most elementary points about good feeding."

If that succeeds the peoples of Sierra Leone should, in a few years time, know as much about eating as they did in the prosperous days of the seventeenth century, and another landmark of imperial progress will have been established. Provided that someone gives them the money to buy all the vitamins they've heard about.

* * *

THE "Daily Express" leader on all this was headed: "SHAME." Said this patriotic paper: "The glorious garden of the Empire is overgrown with weeds and thistles, nettles and fungus, mildew and mould." The previous month the *Evening Standard* (8/6/39) had commented in an editorial upon the fact that Parliament allotted one day in the year to the Colonies, averaging fifteen minutes per annum to each colony. And yet, said the *Standard* "yesterday there were never more than a hundred in the House." A visitor from the colonies was mentioned who found that "the affairs of his country had not been discussed in the Commons for six years." This is called "Trusteeship. . . ." One's mind travels back to a previous occasion when a Conservative M.P. replied in the House to the accusation that his party showed little interest in the Empire of which they were so proud. He was Mr. Macquisten and I quote from the *Manchester Guardian* of July 13th 1934.

"When *shareholders*," he said (though not I imagine in italics), "fail to turn up at a meeting it indicates approval of the policy being pursued."

Quite. It is the *mot juste*. The *shareholders* are no doubt completely satisfied.

* * *

WHILE the shareholders are satisfied, their *serfs*, curiously enough, do not appear to feel the same way; and unlike the 500 M.P.'s who absented themselves from the last colo-

nial debate, they are actually interested in their own conditions.

But who cares what they think—unless they strike or riot or hold up trade and earn a Royal Commission and maybe a few small reforms for their trouble? The West Indies are about the most "advanced" of our colonial possessions from the constitutional standpoint. They are romping towards democracy, with legislatures in which they can decide almost anything they like—provided that the British Governor agrees to it and that it doesn't affect some vital matter of finance or strategy excluded from their range. . . . For sixpence you can buy from H. M. Stationers *British Colonies, Protectorates, etc. (Local Legislature)* and read therein of the progress of democracy in these parts. The electorates, based upon property or income, vary between 1.9 per cent of the population at Montserrat and 18.8 per cent in the Bahamas. Rather like England before 1832, with a foreign despotism to crown the edifice.

* * *

WELL, these same West Indies—our better colonies, almost our model colonies, gave us some trouble before the war. You may remember that the situation was complicated by the un-British behaviour of the Governor of Trinidad (Sir Marchison Fletcher), who strongly criticised the oil magnates and planters. He got the sack, and a wave of strikes and riots was followed by the usual Commission sent out to discuss why starving men revolted.

The Trinidad Commission included Sir Arthur Pugh, a former T.U.C. President. It reported that men earned from 2/6 to 2/9 a day on the plantations and 4/- a day in the oil-fields, in a country of high prices. Uriah Butler, the strike leader they called "a fanatical Negro who made speeches of an inflammatory character." They recommended (yes, *Sir Arthur* and all!) flogging for a man caught twice robbing an orchard, censured a police inspector for hesitating to shoot at innocent persons and the Governor, who had said that "an industry has no right to pay dividends at all unless it pays a fair wage to labour." Which of course, was almost as "inflammatory" as the speeches of Uriah Butler, whose sincerity the Governor had dared to assert.

Jamaica blew up about the same time. One commission seemed hardly sufficient to deal

with the situation, and a second was sent out to find where these West Indies were and what they were doing. And that brings us to the latest developments.

* * *

THE Report of the West India Royal Commission has been for some time in the hands of the Government. It has not been published and is not going to be published. But we learn that its *recommendations* (as distinct from its statement of *facts*) are accepted by the Government "in principle."

Commenting on the suppression of the Report, the *Evening Standard* (21/2/40) presumes that "those responsible . . . are hesitant in making known facts which might be used by German propagandists." In the House the Government evades questions on the subject. Mr. Sorenson, says the *Manchester Guardian* of the same date, "asked Mr. MacDonald if he were aware that he had twice evaded a perfectly plain question." And an Hon. Member asked, "Is it as bad as that?"

Well, all that the Government scheme for the West Indies—and its whole new plan for the colonies as outlined in its latest White Paper on the subject—all they amount to is a host of new officials and some new loans.

There is not a word in the Government *Statement of Policy on Colonial Development and Welfare* of February 20th, that deals with the freedom of the colonial peoples or even with mitigating their exploitation. They are concerned, they say with "the interests of the inhabitants of the colonies (in which term are included for the purpose of this statement protectorates and mandated territories)." My italics again: old men in Geneva please note.

And what are they going to do? I'll tell you. In addition to all the new officials on the backs of the colonials they are going to lend them—the whole 55,000,000 of them—up to £5,000,000 a year! *Not give, but lend. That will be about one-and-tenpence each per annum.* Our maximum loans till now were £1,000,000 a year, or *fourpence-halfpenny apiece for each colonial.* The figures are given in the *Manchester Guardian* for February 21st, from which I also learn that in the past ten years we have handed out £12,000,000 to meet deficits in colonial budgets. And that might seem almost generous until one reflects that most of that money goes to pay our own officials and that a little over a million a year is

not a bad outlay on an empire bringing in over fifty times that amount in one way and another.

But that offer of £5,000,000 a year in loans is really rich. How much a *day* was it they said we were spending on this war? *Six to seven millions?* And we're going to blow nearly a a day's expenditure on loans to 55,000,000 starving people? *Bang goes sax-pence!* R.R.

Anarchists Face Tribunal

TWO young Anarchists recently appeared before Judge Hargreaves at the South-West London Tribunal of C.O.s. They were Godfrey R. Nunn of Adare Walk, S.W.16 and Ralph P. Mills of 8 Ribblesdale Road, Streatham.

In his statement Comrade Nunn stated:

"I am an Anarchist and have worked with Anarchists for the past two years. I credit you gentlemen with intelligence enough to know that an Anarchist is not one who attempts to impose his views onto others with bombs . . . You will appreciate that I do not recognise your authority to decide what I shall do, and as a matter of fact should your decision differ from my desire, it will be found that my apparent regard for your authority is apparent only. If I am asked to give oaths of allegiance to any course of action with which I disagree I might do so under very considerable duress, but I can assure you that I would try as soon as possible to make those who used force on me regret that they had done so, by making my views known to all I come into contact with and persuading them to rebel against authority."

Comrade Mills in his statement referred to his activity in the Anarchist movement during the past three years and in particular his activity against war, through his trade union branch, by pamphlets and by the spoken word:

"In 1938 I forwarded a resolution to the Annual Conference of my union advocating a general strike against war. It is said that this is a war for freedom. Freedom to me means the right to do what I wish, so long as this does not harm the equal rights of others. I deny the State the right to infringe my freedom by conscripting me to take part in a war to which I am opposed, and therefore refuse to become a uniformed assassin at the orders of the State."

After putting a great number of questions, relevant and irrelevant, the Tribunal were unanimously satisfied that in both cases there was "a genuine conscientious objection to both combatant and non-combatant military service."

* * *

Meanwhile the first case of a conscientious objector being arrested for refusal to comply with the provision of the National Service (Armed Forces) Act has been reported. Approximately another 100 objectors who were refused exemption are awaiting arrest for the same reasons.

Is It Democracy ?

By Tom Brown

We are told that we must die for democracy! What is this thing which always calls men to die, but never to live. For generations we have been told we live in a democracy "the freest in the world." Newspapers and politicians, Conservative, Liberal, Labour and Communist have sang the chorus, *our* capitalist class is democratic, we must defend democracy against some foreign foe, this democracy our forefathers, etc. Hypnotising themselves with their parrot cries the politicals see no need to ask Is it Democracy?

HEIRS OF THE CHARTER

We have been told our forefathers the Chartists fought for their Charter and winning it established the right and opportunity of the workers to gain political power or enforce their wills on any public matter from then until now.

It is not true the Chartists won these rights. The Charter was defeated. This Charter made six demands: -

1. One man, one vote.
2. The secret ballot.
3. A new Parliament should be elected every year.
4. Members should be paid.
5. A man need not own property in order to be a parliamentary candidate.
6. All electoral constituencies must be equal.

The Chartists declared anything less than these six points meant the retaining of political power in the hands of the landlord and capitalist class.

Only two of these demands 2 and 4 were established, No. 4, the payment of Members being sure of lifelong success.

The 1st demand, One man, One vote is surely the basis of any form of democracy, but the legislators made it read One working man, one vote, property owners were given personal votes and one vote for each piece of property owned.

It was protested that the granting of No. 3, Annual General Elections, would cause confusion, but the rulers have annual elections when their needs demand them. There were two elections in 1910 and during 1922, 23-24 three elections were held in less than two years, but if it pleases them three, four or five

years may elapse without elections. In one case eight years passed without a general election. There was none between 1910 and 1918. Even in December 1918 the election was rushed through because it was a glorious opportunity for the Conservative Party.

The fourth demand, that relating to property qualifications has never been fully met. Before becoming a candidate one must deposit £150 with the returning officer. This sum of money is lost unless the candidate receives one-eighth of the votes polled.

Only one organisation, the Labour Party, has been able to overcome this on a large scale, but even the Labour Party is relying more and more on wealthy candidates. The old working-class members of the Party, men who have given twenty or thirty years hard work canvassing, collecting and speaking, who have suffered the fatigue and victimisation are being passed over for wealthy candidates who a little while ago were in the Conservative and Liberal Parties or the Army. For the £150 is not the only difficulty, the electoral system is such that upwards of £1,000 must be spent at each election and thousands between.

The sixth demand, equal constituencies, was openly flouted. Parliamentary constituencies are very unequal, but they are unequal in such a manner as to bring advantage to the Conservative Party. In rural or "residential" areas where a conservative is sure to be returned, very few electors are represented by a member, while in working class industrial areas three or four times that number may be represented by only one member. So it is possible for the Labour and Conservative Parties to have an equal aggregate vote but for the Tories to have twice the representation of their opponents. At the present time the Conservatives have a much greater representation in the House than would be allowed by a system of proportional representation.*

NO ADMISSION,

EXCEPT BY PERMISSION

Yet Parliament is only one of the weapons of the state. It is not the government, it sim-

* In the General Election of 1924 the Conservative Party polled a minority of 850,000 votes, but in the House, secured a majority of 215 seats. Conservatives 415, all others 200!

ply helps, with the House of Lords, to make the laws, usually on the initiative of the government.

The House of Lords is not democratically elected and though the monarch may be changed, it is not by the will of the people. In the abdication of Edward VIII, even Parliament was only consulted after the event, the people never.

The heads of the Civil Service with their enormous power and the leadership of the Navy, Army and Air Force are kept as class preserves. The electors have no control over them. It is often said that the Minister of War controls the generals, but the recent experience of Hore-Belisha scarcely proves that.

Nor have the electors any control over the judiciary. The judges are appointed from above, while magistrates are appointed by the Lord Chancellor on the advice of the Lord Lieutenants of the counties (usually the local Dukes). Of course the mayors and a few Labour Councillors or trade union officials are thrown in to make it *look* democratic, but the great majority of the J.P.'s are trusty defenders of property.

Even the most enthusiastic defender of British "democracy" would hesitate to claim the election, nor the Prime Minister or the members of his cabinet elected or controlled by the people. It is even becoming the custom to select for ministerial rank, men who are not even Members of Parliament.

Indeed the influence and power of Parliament are rapidly decreasing. Many of the recent acts have taken decision from the House and given almost unlimited power to ministers. The M. P.'s themselves do not take Parliament very seriously, an attendance of 10 per cent. is quite good.

HOME RULE FOR MANCHESTER

There can be no democracy without civic self-determination, the right of the citizens of a town to decide the affairs peculiar to that town, but State centralisation takes away more and more of the initiative and control from local bodies. They are hedged round by ministerial orders and restrictions; they must obtain from London permission to destroy slums, lay drains and run trams. The local councils are forbidden to pay "high" wages but are forced into spending large sums of money on A.R.P. and other war measures of the central government. Their slight control of the police

is disappearing (in London it just doesn't exist) and the power they once had to lessen the misery of the unemployed is now but a memory. Local Councils are but unpaid civil servants obeying the orders of the Ministry.

If any of the reformists who dreamed of "Municipal Socialism" existing within capitalism, still believe that local control still exists let them recall the case of the Chester-le-St. Board of Guardians. In 1926, because this Durham Labour Board continued giving relief to able-bodied men they were suspended and their work taken over by these salaried dictators appointed by the Minister. They immediately set about teaching the Durham workers a lesson they would remember for generations. Although the miners dispute of 1926 was the excuse the attack was carried on for several years, was fiercest in 1927 and was directed against all unemployed, miners or others. Relief was refused to all unemployed men (in this distressed area many thousands) married or single, 8/- for a wife and 2/- for each child, was paid in the form of a food voucher. No money, even for gas or rent was paid. Unable to pay rent, they were evicted, in many cases from government property. Many of the evicted had fought in the war of 1914-18, now their starveling sons will be conscripted to fight for freedom and to crush dictatorship. It hasn't been necessary for the Government to give many lessons like Chester-le-St.

"But after all," say the neo-communist and the petit-bourgeois "left," the latest pests of the Labour movement, "after all, parliamentary democracy gives the worker certain rights, as free speech, right to organise and the right to strike. Isn't it worth preserving for that?"

But the rights of free speech, of organisation and of strike were not given to the workers by Parliament or the Government. They were won by the workers in class struggles against these institutions and by looking to Parliament instead of their own strength the workers must lose these rights. It was Parliament which passed the Anti-Trade Union Law of 1927. Workers rights do not exist because of bourgeois democracy, but in spite of it.

So fellow-workers when you are asked to die in the shadow of a distant oil well or on the fringe of some coveted field, remember it's not for democracy.

Confound their Politics

II.

THERE is a story about a German baron who was hunting in India. He was bitten by a snake, and his doctor (always in attendance) promptly filled up a syringe with strychnine—I think it was strychnine—and injected it as an antidote. The baron at first showed signs of recovery, but presently showed acute symptoms of strychnine poisoning. With admirable presence of mind the doctor then filled up his syringe with snake venom and injected a second time. Once more temporary recovery was followed by dangerous symptoms, so the doctor filled up with strychnine again and—

Well, this story can go on for a long time. Actually it went on until the supply of snake venom ran out. The baron, being by that time in a state of acute agony, drew his revolver and shot the doctor. After which he recovered.

In my previous article I was discussing political calculations. I said that we must examine first the value of political good intentions, next the value of calculations based upon intentions alleged to be good and thirdly the *authority* of those who claimed the best intentions together with infallible calculations. In my story the doctor's intentions are assumed to be good and his calculations are made with truly deadly logic from data far more complete than any politician ever has in his possession, since there were no personal coefficients and other unknown factors to worry about. And society in the hands of the politicians is considerably more imperilled than was the German baron in the hands of his physician. The best politician operating on the social organism is like a well-meaning and intelligent

mechanic trying to cut out your appendix with a rusty bread-saw.

Most of us wouldn't attempt to do anything so frightful. The characteristic of the politician is that he believes he *can* and insists on having a try. He is always full of elaborate calculations, based upon the old half-truth that history repeats itself; and the more involved his calculations, the more gratuitous his assumptions—why, the more cock-sure he is of his

By

Reg. Reynolds

own nostrum and the more determined to hold your nose and make you swallow it. Last month I took as an example the infallible calculation by which we can prove that everything which makes the Nazis cads and swine can be done by ourselves without loss of moral stature. But the Communists have the same line of reasoning and can justify anything you like. For example, here are two perfect Stalinist syllogisms:

1. *Aggression is a bad thing.*
The German invasion of Poland is aggression.
2. *A check to the German invasion of Poland is a good thing.*
The Russian invasion of Poland is a check to the German invasion of Poland.

THEREFORE THE GERMAN INVASION OF POLAND IS A BAD THING.

THEREFORE THE RUSSIAN INVASION OF POLAND IS A GOOD THING.

Now, those two syllogisms are absolutely

water-tight. Aristotle and all the Schoolmen couldn't find anything wrong with them and neither can you. And yet there is something phoney about them, as you can see by examining a third and equally valid syllogism, thus:

The Russian invasion of Poland is a good thing.

The Russian invasion of Poland is aggression.

THEREFORE SOME AGGRESSION IS A GOOD THING.

From which you will observe that we now have a conclusion in contradiction to our original first premise.

Just in case you haven't spotted where the error creeps in it is in the first premise of the second syllogism: "A check to the German invasion of Poland is a good thing." The reasoning is perfect—all that's wrong is that an assumption has slipped into the argument which we have no right to assume. We've taken it for granted that because one form of aggression is objectionable any "check" to it is desirable, thereby letting in the possibility of some other form of aggression as the "check." But this is typical of political reasoning, even when those who argue are honest or want to be. And on such little slips as that millions of lives can be staked. Listen to any group of patriots, Marxists, Fascists, Trotskyists, Stalinists or what-you-will discussing politics and you will hear dozens of little slips like that. No two of them out of a dozen will agree, as like as not, and the more "intellectual" they are the less agreement. But the one thing they all have in common is such a colossal arrogant conceit in their own wisdom that they are each and all prepared individually to offer mankind as a burnt offering to their own particular pet prejudices.

Or take Finland. Finland wasn't being invaded by Hitler and wasn't invading anybody else, so the logic that did for the Poles wouldn't work in the Baltic. But that's no problem for men of mettle. If Finland wasn't invading Russia, she was just going to. Unlikely as it might seem, the Western Powers (which for twenty years had ignored this glorious opportunity) were about to choose the auspicious moment when they were at war with Germany to use Finland for an attack on Russia. Indeed, there was, if you remember (see *War Commentary*, No. 2) a little natural confusion in Communist circles as to whether it was Britain and France or Italy or Germany or the United States which had hatched this plot, or all of them together, or Sweden, as Claud Cockburn darkly hinted in *The Week*. But there it was, with the anxiety of the British and French governments over the fate of Finland to prove it—not to mention the righteous indignation of Mussolini, defender of the rights and liberties of small nations. Well, you could take your choice. On the one hand the sight of Il Duce in the arms of Geneva, like the portentous reconciliation of Herod and Pontius Pilate, will provide you with as good a proof of Finland's guilt as any Communist would want or ever expect to see. On the other hand are the facts which must be forgotten to make this argument work without squeaking badly.

For example, Italy's territorial ambitions in the Balkans, which would have conflicted with those of Russia even if the Romanovs were still sitting in Petrograd. And the Franco-British foreign policy, directed against any extension of German influence in the Baltic and (by implication) against the extending influence of a German ally. Note that any fear of Russian "socialism" had so eva-

porated that imperialist France trusted for years to an alliance with "socialist" Russia against her capitalist enemy, Germany. Note that responsible British capitalist politicians such as Churchill and Duff Cooper and all the Liberals wanted Britain to do the same. Note that up till the invasion of Finland all Government references to Russia were carefully toned down. The enemy was capitalist Germany; for "socialist" Russia we had only fair words or the most circumspect criticisms in a minor key. Was not Arthur Greenwood asked at that time to moderate his language on the subject—asked by a *Tory Government*? Not till Russia took steps that made her dangerous from a territorial standpoint did the tone change. Then the Russians became "Reds" again, because the old fear of "Bolshevism" could still frighten the old ladies and make them buy Defence Loans; and the fouler the deeds of Moscow the more it paid to attribute them to "socialism" or "communism," thereby discrediting still further two honourable names already besmirched enough by the politicians who wear them.

But I digress—though there's no reason why I shouldn't. The point is that you may regard the interest of European capitalism in the Finnish war either as the *cause* of that war, the evidence of the plot which Stalin nipped in the bud; or you may regard it as the *effect* of that war, bringing out new rivalries. You may see in it the basic rivalry of capitalism and Russia's "socialism" (though God knows why, in that case, the capitalist world doesn't unite in face of the common foe and why it is even now more important to fight our capitalist rivals than to join against Red Revolution). Or you may see only new imperialist rivalries with Russia as one of the imperialist states. My

point is that the first point of view is quite tenable if you make a few convenient assumptions. And, once these are made, *infallible calculations* point like the finger of Cato: *Delenda est Helsinki!* The wicked Finns are going to attack us. Anyway they *might* be going to. Therefore we must attack them. The perfect, classical justification of every act of aggression that has ever taken place. "*C'est le lapin qui a commencé.*" Or if he didn't he was just going to.

Here, then, is the *reductio ad absurdum* of political calculations; for if humanity can be sacrificed on such grounds as these no tyrant will ever want an excuse. The doctor in my story gave strychnine as an antidote to snake venom. But the politicians go one better—they give you strychnine as an antidote to the theoretical venom of a hypothetical snake. And who are you to say that *there are no snakes except the politicians themselves and their kind?*

(To be continued)

War Commentary

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II.

Each week we are favoured with a speech from a leading minister of the Government. On Feb. 17th, Sir Samuel Hoare, speaking at Nottingham dished out the weekly ration of war stimuli. Among other things he informed his listeners that the job of the Government was to sustain the buying power of the weekly pay envelope. . . . In our last article we dealt with the rise in prices and showed that not only has the buying power not been sustained but there has been a big drop with further reductions promised in the future. Proof of this is already shown in various speeches being made by leading exponents of the war. Sir Samuel Hoare tells us that "The taxpayer, rich or poor, has always paid up splendidly. The taxpayers will not shrink from further sacrifices when the time comes for them."

If the value of the weekly wage packet is to be maintained, is it only so that further direct taxation can be levied on the working class? An analysis of the actions and speeches of the leading members of the ruling class show a mixture of confusion and contradictions.

On the question of wages, it is clear that they intend that the workers shall pay for the war. A leading Banker writing in the *Times* on Jan. 5th, stated that the Trade Unions should refrain from demanding increases in wages, while Simon and Chamberlain have

made it clear that they also hold this view. An attempt may be made to fix wages by the Government instead of the present method of negotiation between the T.U. and the Employers. So far the Trade Union leadership have not been disposed to accept these "feelers" which have been thrown out.

We are told that prices have been more or less fixed and that there will be no substantial increases in the near future. In fact the Government are spending one million pounds a week to keep prices "steady." We are told that prices would have risen much more if this action had not been taken. £50 million a year is the amount which it is estimated the Food Control will lose on selling bread, flour, meat and milk at the present prices. The reason for increase in prices was, it is said, the increase in world prices, cost of transport, depreciation of sterling, etc., through war conditions. Yet to the average worker it all seems strange. He cannot understand, for example, why if £50 millions is spent to stop a further rise in the index of 12 points, £46 millions will be raised by revenue from tea and sugar duties alone.

He is also told that the expenditure of £50 millions during one year, is to save: -

"the poorest of the poor the *full weight of the burden* which otherwise would fall upon them."
...*But the ruling class seem to be so ignorant of the conditions of the workers that they fail to realise that the poorest of the poor and all sections of the working class are already suffering through depreciation of the pay envelopes.* If, however, they know this, then the whole business is a racket to confuse the minds of the people. The average worker doesn't know what all the talk about £50 subsidies means, he doesn't know what all the talk about inflation, depreciation of sterling, etc, means.

All he knows is that his *Sunday Joint* is dearer. And he wants to know why? Housewives want to know why one carrot cost 8d. In Portsmouth the other week end, one parsnip was sold for 1/1½d. and a savoy for 10½d. An "Evening News" reporter tried to find out who got the profit. Retailers said the wholesalers were charging more and the wholesalers said they had to pay more at Covent Garden. An attempt was made to ring the producers but lines were still being repaired.

The workers can't afford meat because it's too dear, so even if it is rationed at present

prices the worker won't be able to buy because he hasn't the money. Sir L. Hill, writing in the "Times," tells us that meat is good, but it's not nearly as good as the vegetable matter that goes to its creation. . .

" . . . In the conversion of vegetables into flesh a large part of the energy is used up by the animal and the people who eat the flesh have to pay for this."

In the words of the New Statesman, "Flesh not only is grass, but largely wasted grass." **The logical conclusion seems to be to eat grass!**

If the "poorest of the poor" are not to bear the full brunt of the war how comes that millions of people, vide "Evening Standard" are not buying their 4 oz. of butter, because the price is to high. Shops in working class areas have cut down their orders considerably. Yet the retailers say they are not making the profit!

The wholesalers say it is not they!

The Importers say they are not making money!

Then who is making the profit?

And on top of this the workers are told to "Save to Defend," what irony!

85 per cent of the value of total imports of foodstuffs are being bought and sold by Ministry of Food. The other 15 per cent are subject to some degree of control.

Who are these controllers?

Its business advisor is Lord Percy—Chairman of Ford Motor Co. Ltd. and H. Ford and Sons Ltd, and director of the International Petroleum Board Ltd. and Slough Estates Ltd. Fifteen controllers have been appointed covering almost all the main foodstuffs.

These are only some examples. Except in one case, the controller is directly concerned with the industry he controls. And he is often a member of the most important firm in that industry. *Which is no accident.*

H. E. Davies, Controller of Butter:
London Manager of New Zealand Dairy Sales Division.

Sir Hubert Carr, Controller of Tea:
Late Managing Director of Balance Lawrie & Co. (controlled by Lawrie (Alex) and Co. Ltd.)
Managing agents to Tea Estates Cos.

Sir Francis Boys, Controller of meat and livestock:
Vice-Chairman Livestock Commission; Member Bacon Development Board; Director and Vice-Chairman New Zealand Refrigerating Co. Ltd., 1923-33.

Mr. J. P. Boddinar, Controller of Bacon and Ham:
Chairman of Bacon Marketing Board; Member of Bacon Department Board; Deputy Chairman various bacon companies.

John Cadbury, Controller of Cocoa:

Managing Director of Cadbury Bros. Ltd.; Director of Bank of England; Chairman of Daily News Ltd.

It was noticeable that the Government have never been anxious to divulge the particulars of the business interests of the controllers and when an M.P. asked some time ago for the business interests and names of the controllers he was told not to cast reflections on these gentlemen. There have been many complaints about the composition of the Food control. People have said that certain industries are not represented. It is said that an impartial supervision is needed, that trade secrets and manipulation of contracts can take place to suit a particular firm, etc.

We are not primarily concerned with the difficulties of Big Business. What we are concerned with is how can such a body act in the interests of the great mass of the people? How can the numerous controllers and bureaucratic organisations set up by the Government be concerned with the lives and well-being of the people when it is concerned with its own vested interests and when it is completely out of touch with the lives of the people.

It is for this reason that the recent publication of Mass Observation* is of great importance. We have mentioned above some of the bewilderment of the working class and it is in this book that one will see how the confusion and contradictory behaviour of our present leadership re-acted on the people of Britain during the first four months of the war. It is worth quoting two verbatim conversations recorded in the book to bear out our statements made above. In the chapter on the 'Home front' a Liverpool housewife said: -

"Eggs up again. Everything is going up. Thought the Government was going to stop it. More profiteering than last time."

They reproduce a poster issued by one of the multiple stores.

Help us to help the Food Ministry
to give you a fair helping!

Grin and Share it!

M.O. gives an example of how it was shared

(Continued on page 14, col. 1)

The Labour Party and the

TODAY, the greatest danger confronting Great Britain in the future development and direction of affairs is the continued support given to the Labour Party. Let there be no mistake about the real character and composition of this Party. The Labour Party, backed by the trade unions, which largely supply it with its financial sinews, is little better than a resuscitated Liberal Party, with many of its chief trumpeters advertising the ancient political wares of that Party with the Labour label attached. The fact that it has taken in and misled millions of the Electorate who look to it to obtain at least a little fairer distribution of goods at the expense of the rich man's hoard is sufficient and convincing proof of the political backwardness of our people. To be stupid enough, for instance, to return the egregious Greenwood to represent the interests of the hungry and disinherited is a clear enough indication of the low level of political intelligence of the workers. The real trouble is, of course, the almost complete absence of political mindedness among the millions who need it most and which places them at the mercy of any and every kind of political charlatan that comes along. This isn't confined to British workers but has a world-wide application. Films, football, cricket, circuses, these are not the ingredients that will rescue the many workers from their present economic servitude to a parasitic war making few. Knowledge and understanding alone will do that.

(Continued from page 13)

by quoting the remarks of Worktown housewives (artisan class).

1) "I've done very well this week. A shop manager asked me to register and he let me have three pounds of butter this week: you see, this shop is in a poor neighbourhood, and since many of his customers do not use butter, he can let me have their share."

2) "Four ounces of butter a week won't suit. There's a woman across the road from us, she never uses butter, we'll get her coupons off her and then we'll manage."

To the conclusions of the book we must of course differ. We repudiate the suggestion that people must be trained to make big sacrifices (for the carrying on of the war). But we do agree that the book shows the urgent need for social change. The "war has greatly increased the number of points of tension, as the evidence in this book has shown." It is at these weak spots that our blows will have the most telling effect. This book shows the present discontent and confusion existing amongst the working-class and this should serve as an inspiration to us in our struggle against the war.

A. TERRY.

* "War Begins at Home" (Chatto and Windus, 9/6d.)

The capitalist press, always cute and shrewd in blinding their many readers to any situation prejudicing the money interests, long ago saw clearly the value of throwing dirt and discredit upon the Socialist movement by fixing the Socialist label upon the ridiculous capers and fumbling futilities of the Labour Party. To describe as Socialist the activities of the Labour Party which were hardly distinguished from the Conservative Party was clever and worked well. To the millions of workers who understand politics as much as they understand the phases of the moon or the origin of species it meant that so far as they and their interests were con-

Workers

cerned bitter experience proved that there was hardly a fraction of difference between the three parties—Conservative, Liberal, and the Labour Party believed to be Socialist. This manoeuvre is made clear from an editorial in the "Daily Express" of Oct. 1st, 1936:

The "Daily Express" is not the enemy of the Socialist Party though Mr. Bevin and others profess to think so. The "Daily Express" it is true, opposes Socialism, but that is a very different thing. If Mr. Bevin, or Mr. Morrison, or Sir Walter Citrine came to power here the "Daily Express" would not tremble at those men nor fear their policies.

The many millions who have during the last few years turned away from the electoral support of the older capitalist parties, Conservative and Liberal, have done so in the vast majority of cases not because they have arrived at a clearer understanding of their class position in the Social and Economic sphere but was simply the despairing action of hungry and desperate men trying a rising party carrying a new name. The few Socialists who belong to the Labour Party have always sought to justify their membership of such a party by claiming to be borers from within. Well might these borers look aghast today at the little they have achieved during the last forty years when they behold the Labour Party, with louder and more strident voice even than the Tories, proclaiming, as they did in 1914-18, their deep concern and support for British power interests and proudly goose-stepping behind the Government in the prosecution of the war against a rival imperialism.

The Labour Party having no clear conception of things, national and international, without any guiding principles, calling an advocacy of pills and plasters a policy, and a confused hotch-potch of palliatives a programme, was bound with such an outlook to give support to a Government clash with any challenger in the same field of capitalist interests. That the property called the British Empire was as much the concern of the Labour Party as any other Party was clearly shown by Morrison in 1936 when at a meeting at Bethnal Green he replied to hecklers over Colonies that he considered it funny that Englishmen should want to hand over part of the British Empire. Such rich humor! Lord Gort, being a soldier and not at all versed in the slippery practices of the politicians, has told us that "the Empire was won by the Sword, has been pre-

(continued on page 16)

Books

Power Politics and the "Left"

Review by F. A. Ridley

"Apostles Of Revolution," by Max Nomad. Secker & Warburg, 467 pp., 15/-.

THIS is a most remarkable book; it is a long time since I have read a book that interested me so much. Throughout, the author sustains an original viewpoint, an original philosophy of revolution, and does so with a flair, a vivacity, an unflinching and encyclopaedic erudition, that makes the book at once a joy and an education to read. The enormous erudition with which the author summarizes the labour and revolutionary movements of the last century has, to my knowledge, only been equalled once: by Nomad's own earlier volume, "Rebels and Renegades" (1932).

In form, the book is a series of seven essays dealing, respectively, with Buanqui, Bakunin, Nechayev, John Most, Marx, Makhno and Stalin. In fact, it may be styled as a summary of the revolutionary history of the last century; written to illustrate the author's own original and highly iconoclastic philosophy.

This last may be styled as a comprehensive and richly documented indictment of "power-politics" as the final goal of all revolutionary movements. For Nomad, as for his American predecessor, Jefferson, "power is poison," and he would emphatically endorse the celebrated adendum of Lord Acton, "absolute power is absolute poison." Nomad indicts the revolutionary movements of our age as little more than would-be new ruling classes, substituting the rule of the "socialist" bureaucrats for the erst-while landlords and capitalists. In his essay on Stalin, the longest in the book, he triumphantly points to that Russian paradise of bureaucrats and "communist nobles," "to point the moral and adorn the tale." Never, as he does not

fail to emphasize, since the Jesuit regime was in its hey-day in South America (Paraguay), has the world witnessed such a monstrous servility to the all-powerful State which is now visible in Stalin's Russia; in that State, which, according to the strict letter of Marxist theory—upon which it is supposed to be based—ought already to be far advanced upon the road that leads to its final "withering away."

"Apostles of Revolution," then, is written to illustrate a thesis; the thesis that, to put it shortly, Socialism itself may become the vehicle of a new class-oppression, that of the "white-collar" workers "translated" by the victory of the revolutionary act itself into a new ruling class. It is a point of view for which there is much to be said and it badly wanted saying, particularly now in these dog-days of omniscient (mis)leaders. Anarchists will find much to please them in these sprightly and forthright pages, but they should be warned that, according to our author, Libertarian doctrine and the itch for power can exist concurrently in the same breast: indeed, the doctrine of Bolshevism is here traced back to Bakunin, and to the Nihilist, Nechayev, here presented as a super-Jesuit, more machiavellian than Machiavelli. (Incidentally, Nomad definitely ascribes the famous "Revolutionary Catechism" to Bakunin, and not, as is more usual, to Nechayev).

I must add that Nomad seems to me to overstate his case in general, and that this leads him into statements which can hardly be justified. In general, Nomad is somewhat cattish in his reference to Karl Marx. Though his allusions to the foibles of the Prophet are pointed and amusing. e.g. Does Mr. Gollancz know that "the founder of scientific socialism" called Lassalle "a dirty Jewish nigger."

Was Marx a Nazi ever? Still a great man is entitled to be taken at his best). Nor do I think that Bolshevism in its early "heroic" period was merely the Russian nationalism into which it has since degenerated. On this point Nomad could consult with advantage Dr. Borkenau's recent book on "The Communist International." (It is, by the way, distinctly curious that the book does not contain any study, or detailed reference to Lenin, probably the most important modern revolutionary, and, certainly, the greatest modern master of "power-politics").

The above errors and omissions are, however, merely spots on the sun. This is definitely a **MUST** book for revolutionaries: it will delight, stimulate, and instruct them; it will, above all, make them think fast and furiously over the fundamentals of their creed. For the great question that runs through this book like a golden thread is the most important question of our times: how to reconcile the means, revolution, and the end, human emancipation. It is the supreme service of Max Nomad that he has propounded this basic problem of our age. And, apart from its brilliant style and profound learning, this fact alone constitutes "Apostles Of Revolution" as one of the most seminal and significant books of recent years. It should be in every public library which socialists frequent. I unreservedly recommend it.

N.B. In "Fact" Raymond Postgate, son-in-law of George Lansbury and brother-in-law of G. D. H. Cole, describes "Apostles Of Revolution" as "the most reactionary book I have read for 20 years." From which, considering Postgate and his antecedents, I can only conclude that Nomad has got under the skin of at least one would-be bureaucrat! But, then, a man who, like Postgate, can actually write a book called: "How To Make A Revolution," is capable of anything!

Editorial Note: We would make it quite clear to readers that the views expressed in this review do not necessarily represent those of the Editors.

(Continued from p. 14)

served through generations by the Sword, and in the last resort can only be safeguarded by the Sword." This is plain blunt speech and we see again this Sword drawn to retain our dominating world position.

No greater injury has been done to any attempted adjustment of affairs during the last few years, however people. To be stupid enough, for instance, to return feeble, than the constantly reiterated lie that we, Britain, are a "peace loving" power, with the Labour Party as usual joining, and often leading, the general chorus. The volume of gross misrepresentation persistently pursued and the calculated concealment of the truth it would be difficult to assess. Distortion of facts is, of course, resorted to in all countries to inflame and hound on the people into the shambles for aims and objects other than those presented to them. In our own country, it would be impossible to estimate the amount of mental and moral damage done by our insistence by every patriotic orator and writer from the Labour Party up (or down) the scale to the Primrose League, that we, Britain, are a "peace loving" power. The only solitary grain of truth in this is that having acquired all that we want or can comfortably carry we are now, like the Irishman in the song, as quiet as can be. In other words, having seized territories and resources comprising one quarter of the habitable globe by the usual accepted methods of force and violence we are now ready to retire to compose sermons on the good life. It was because we were not so busily engaged in our old occupation of expansion and annexation that we put in circulation the monstrous myth, of our being a "peace loving" power. Were it not that our own people take so little real interest in affairs but are content to leave their control and direction in the hands of a few pushful and designing people impelled by uncontrollable ambition to dominate and acquire they would not be taken in so easily by this dangerous and gross distortion of real facts. Is it by being peace loving we have acquired so much? That outside Europe the familiar notice board should be so frequent: No Road. Trespassers will be Prosecuted. By order of Great Britain! Peace loving! To wage forty wars during sixty years as our record plainly shows between 1850 and 1914. Is that the mark of a peace loving State or is it more properly the unassailable evidence of an insatiable lust for possessions? This, in the jargon of the patriot and imperialist, Constitutes Britain's Glory, the British Empire, "our" Great Inheritance. Our capacity for being peace loving has brought forcibly under our rule and dominance between 400 and 500 millions of non-English people in all parts of the earth. It was Mark Twain, I think, who detected how Great Britain came to be mentioned in the bible: Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.

Over this aspect of affairs a discreet silence reigns but British history, we can be sure, in Berlin and Rome, is given a much wider publicity and the mischievous and misleading propaganda here at home spreading the fiction of our peace loving propensities is being countered abroad by plain and simple statements of historical facts. This preference for fact by the benighted foreigner has had its effect here and some little time ago Halifax was elected to deal with it as effectively as such a damaging record would allow by saying that the peculiar virtue of British Empire building was that we always left behind us a trail of Education, freedom and democracy. Such romantic balderdash is an indication of Cabinet Ministers easy going contempt of public

knowledge of affairs. What are the facts? Rabindranath Tagore informs the world that "India is the only country outside barbarism that has a bare eight or ten per cent of literacy" while George Pardmore in "Africa and World Peace" tells us that in all the territories of the British Empire in Africa with the exception of the Gold Coast and Southern Nigeria the land has been officially declared Crownland with the right of disposal vested in the local Government," also that "African workers have no vote, are denied the right of assembly, freedom of speech and press and even free movement, Trade unionism is illegal; they are subjected to pass-laws, color bar acts, forced labour and other repressive regulations, while (in 1937) over 2,500 youths are interned in Concentration Camps in India without right of trial." In Kenya full time employment of children of 10 years is legal. Repression in Ireland only a few years ago shocked the world. These are just a few samples of what "Education, freedom and democracy" really means in the British Empire. Far better for Halifax to have remained silent than to utter what is so palpably false. But the object is clear enough. It is to justify our own shocking misdeeds; but the further damage to our name abroad must be incalculable.

THE GREAT IMPOSTURE

The Labour and Tory politicians have sadly miscalculated this time. The past cannot be evaded. For at least fifteen years after the disaster of the last war to end war we had an opportunity such as never before presented itself in history for establishing a peaceful world order had the will been there. Germany lay stripped, prostrate and helpless. We did not use the opportunity. Instead we pursued our old policy of domination in the interests of British imperialism and making the world unsafe for nearly everything else.

Our revered hypocritical chatter of a brave new world and all the hum-bugging froth and foam of 25 years ago will hardly serve us a second time. This clever swindling make-believe worked remarkably well once. Even our own simple people, despite the frantic efforts of the Labour Party, are not taken in, while political circles abroad laugh outright at this pious second edition of the Great Imposture.

The war declared by us six months ago, is for the continued British domination of world affairs. The Labour Party spokesmen, whether it be through sheer ignorance or the potency of the imperialist spirit, have contributed in no small measure to the present state of affairs and the Party stands today as a serious stumbling block in the path of British workers advance and the establishment of a Socialist order of peace and progress between peoples.

The continued existence of the Labour Party is a working class blunder and offence. V. WILSON.

—MEETING—

The War: Now and After.
UNIVERSITY LABOUR CLUB
(second floor)
15, Percy Street, W.1.
Monday, March 11th at 8 p.m.
TOM BROWN speaks.
Admission Free

Published by Freedom Press Distributors, 9 Newbury Street, London, E.C.1, and printed by The Narod Press (T.U.), 129/131 Cavell St., London, E.1.