

WAR COMMENTARY

For Anarchism

RALLY TO THE DEFENCE OF OUR
FOUR ARRESTED COMRADES! BY
DEFENDING THEM YOU WILL BE
DEFENDING YOUR FREEDOM OF
SPEECH AND EXPRESSION. SEE
THE APPEAL FROM THE FREEDOM
PRESS DEFENCE COMMITTEE ON
PAGE 4.

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Let Miners Solve their Problems!

HAVING worn out the seat of his pants in his participation in the Second Front, Harry Pollitt may be seen these days wildly swinging a pick in the King Street offices in an attempt to prove to all and sundry, his rightful claim to the title of champion of the miners, solver of the coal crisis. His latest achievement in coal-getting, takes the form of shooting down the already falling Mr. Robert Foot, the "independent" chairman of the Mining Association, whose "Plan for Coal" our hero Harry singles out for his own special broadside. Pollitt is backing a favourite when he attacks the Foot Plan which stood condemned in the eyes of the miners even before it was born; the stable wherein it was foaled being expected to inevitably produce a plan of this character. All pit-workers, without exception, throughout the country, have condemned the private ownership of the mines in no uncertain manner. No twists or turns by the Mining Association can swerve them from their resolve.

The time has come for the ending of the reign of profit in coal. Who then does Harry Pollitt hope to influence or impress in his valiant battle against the owners plan? Not the miners; their minds were made up on this issue, 25 years ago, when Harry was working, actually working, for his living. Not the organised working-class movement; the rank and file have always stood four-square with miners in this matter.

The London Dock Strike

The London dock strike which started at the end of last week has involved 7,000 dockers. At the moment of writing the strike seems to be coming to an end, the dockers having received the assurance that an enquiry would be held immediately into the administration of the National Dock Labour Corporation.

The stoppage which began at the Royal Albert Docks may seem to have been caused by a petty grievance and the reports in the Press try to make it appear so, but the reality is different.

The particular cause of the strike was the setting up of an office for the men to report at for work each day inside the dock gates. The call stand was always outside the gates. Now an attempt has been made to shift it on the "boss's ground".

This moving of the call stand has more than a symbolic importance. The dockers regard it as a threat against the employment of casual labour which was extensively used before the war. They regard it as a demonstration of power on the part of the National Dock Labour Corporation which is trying to introduce stricter discipline to cut down absenteeism. They don't see why they should report on the Corporation's ground where they are not even allowed to smoke while waiting.

The men are being told that the change is a revolutionary one which will act in their favour as it will end the bad old days of casual labour. The dockers are not so easily fooled. They don't wish, of course, to go back to the days of unemployment, when they had to fight for a few hours' work, but they realise that the abolition of casual labour would mean a reduction in wages by depriving them of their freedom to seek work where they wish.

The dockers have come out without any warning and in defiance of their union leaders. Almost immediately troops were used and on Monday it was reported that about 3,000 troops were at work. It must be obvious to anyone that the fact of being able to use troops strengthens the position of the Government and the bosses and weakens that of the strikers. It is therefore incredible that an official of the Amalgamated Stevedores' Union, Mr. Donovan should give his blessing to the use of scab labour.

Asked by a reporter about troops being called in, Mr. Donovan said: "Our attitude is that if this is necessary for the handling of vital goods we have no objection to it".

The dockers have, of course, many other causes for grievance. One of them is the great number of dockers who have been dismissed and suspended during the last few months. Absenteeism has been on the increase recently. Apart from general tiredness and lack of proper food it is due to the fact that men are often put on heavy work for several consecutive days in what are known as "continuity jobs", on which they work until the job is finished. When it ends they are often given other heavy jobs and if they refuse they may be suspended.

The dockers are in an angry mood. The more the war goes on the more controls and discipline are imposed upon them. And the man who orders them about is Ernest Bevin, who climbed to power on the backs of those dockers who he is now trying to hand over bound hand and foot to the bosses.

Perhaps it is the Castlereagh's and the newly-won converts of the Russia To-day Society, for whom the pamphlet is written. Or, on the other hand it may be Pollitt has also seen the writing on the wall and seeks to divert, and move to implement, a real revolutionary change, with the parrot-like cry of "Nationalisation". For that to Mr. H. Pollitt is "the only real solution". This Nationalisation, called for by the "Left-pollittians" is nothing new. In Russia, Harry's spiritual home, Nationalisation has been "the thing" for nearly 30 years. It would therefore be quite fair to draw some useful conclusions from the Russian picture and ask the pamphleteer a few pertinent questions on this score.

In an attempt to soft-soap the miner, Pollitt expresses the sentiment that under Nationalisation they may be capable of great things... "find that our British miners, with all their skill and genius for improvisation, were making suggestions for technical improvements and increased output no less revolutionary than those made by the Soviet miner, Stakhanov, whose name has given us a new word all over the world for the initiative of workers in increasing production in the interest of themselves and their peoples." Stakhanovism! Does Pollitt really think this has given us a new word? It has set a new low. On a par with, or even worse than, the Ford and Bedaux schemes, this method alleged to emanate from Stakhanov, is given a very old-fashioned Anglo-Saxon word in our coalfield. This "benefit", flowing directly from Nationalisation, brought about the depreciation of the Russian miners' standard of living, the reduction of the norms of work, and speed-up in production to the detriment of the health and lives of the workers. These "successes" were immediately extended to all other industries and incurred the wrath and opposition of large sections of the Russian workers. Didn't Harry hear of the pleas of his communist counterparts in France to stop the publication of the Stakhanovite records of phenomenal coal production as the figures were being received with ribald laughter by the French miners? Has Comrat Pollitt never heard of the condemnation by the Durham miners delegation to Russia, in "plain honest pit terms" of the employment of women in the Soviet coal

mines? Their outspoken comments on the deplorable conditions of the miners, both in the pit and in their hovels called homes? No! I wonder? All this, after Nationalisation had been enforced for nearly a generation. Under State Control the Russian miners have no real say in the management of the industry. All the managers or directors are appointed from above and these in turn choose the lesser officials, overseers, deputies, firemen, etc. Nationalisation would, in this country produce similar if not identical results.

If, may we suppose, Nationalisation of the mines becomes a legal fact, then in order to supply the increased needs of the home industries, there must be, intensification of coal production, when more than likely the occasion would arise for the imposition of such stunts as "Socialist competition" and Stakhanovism. No Harry, it won't wash, for as you say, "the miners know what benefits nationalisation will bring..." As did Lenin during the Russian Revolution, so does Pollitt and his henchmen now, utilising the sincere and genuine demands of the miners for the abolition of private ownership seek to saddle the workers with yet another evil.

Speaking as a working miner the impression has been given to us by the advocates of Nationalisation, that it implies a more direct voice in the management of the industry. Nothing, of course could be further from the truth. The only way that the miners' demands can be effectively fulfilled is by their taking the management of the pits into their own hands, and by the establishment of independent pit committees

WILL GRIGG PROTEST? LIKE HELL

Conservative candidates from various parts of the country, including some from the Forces, attended a political course which opened yesterday at the Junior Carlton Club, London—the first candidates' course the Conservative Party has held since the war.

Daily Express, 23/2/45. Members of the Forces are persecuted for reading Anarchist literature but are allowed to attend political courses organised by the Tories.

GLASGOW CALLS ALL WORKERS to defence of the four London Anarchists

The following statement about the four arrested comrades has been produced in leaflet form by our Glasgow comrades and has been distributed by the thousand amongst Glasgow and Clydeside workers.

Here's to those who would read,
Here's to those who would write,
But there's not who are afraid,
The truth should be heard,
Than those whom the truth would indict.
Robert Burns.

WORKERS!

We call upon you to rally to the defence of our London comrades who are being charged with sedition. After the lessons of John McLean's case in the last war, when this great champion of the workers' cause who gave his all to educating the workers, was sentenced to four years' imprisonment on much the same charge, we call upon you, in your own interest, to take up the cause of the four comrades whose records in the class struggle we lay before you.

1. MARIE LOUISE BERNERI.

Marie Louise Berneri was born in Italy, but was forced to leave when her parents were hounded out of Italy by Mussolini because of their activity as Anarchists in the working-class struggle against Fascism. Her father, Professor Berneri carried on the struggle in France, and served several terms of imprisonment for his defence of the workers. In 1936, the Spanish workers sent out their call of revolt, and Berneri was not found wanting. He joined his Anarchist comrades in Spain and played a prominent part in the organisation of militias and fought himself on the front. He paid with his life for his militancy, being shot in 1937.

During the present war, Marie Louise Berneri's mother was arrested in France in 1940 and handed over to the Italian government. She was imprisoned in Germany and Italy, but is now free, and is carrying on the workers' struggle in Southern Italy.

After her father's death, Marie Louise Berneri came to England and acquired British nationality by marriage. She continued her activity with the Anarchists in producing the anti-fascist paper *Spain and the World*, helping Spanish refugees from the Civil War, and carrying on through the medium of *Freedom*

Press her opposition to Capitalism, Fascism and Nazism. As is well known, the Anarchists have opposed the war from a working class standpoint as an imperialist war, warning the workers against Fascism at home.

2. VERNON RICHARDS.

Her husband, Vernon Richards, is well known in the work of *Freedom Press*. At the age of 18 he joined Camillo Berneri in the production of an Anarchist paper in Italian. When the Spanish Revolution broke out in 1936, when he was 20, he founded *Spain and the World* and edited it throughout the war, explaining to the workers in this country the significance of the Spanish Anarchists' struggle. At the same time he helped support orphaned Spanish children, and later Spanish refugees who came to this country. Throughout his life he has fought against Franco, Hitler and Mussolini from the working class angle.

At the beginning of the war he registered as a conscientious objector but was put on the military register and offered a commission in the Royal Engineers which he refused, and continued in his job as a civil engineer.

He has never sought the limelight, but has been an untiring comrade in the cause of the oppressed.

3. JOHN HEWETSON.

John Hewetson is a young doctor, who before the war was active in the anti-war movement. In the struggle for peace he came to realize that War is the logic of Class Society, and unlike many, did not shrink from the recognition of this fact, but brought his activities into line with his knowledge. Joining the Anarchist movement in the first year of the war he continued to expose war and capitalism, being more convinced by what he saw in the casualty departments of hospitals of poverty—and war stricken London. Unlike many who shouted for war, Comrade Hewetson stayed in London throughout the blitz of 1940-41 and 1944. He was imprisoned in 1940 for selling a working class paper outside Hyde Park and refusing to pay the fine. Again in 1942 he served two months for refusing to accept a commission in the R.A.M.C., contending that the civilian working class were entitled to more medical attention than they were getting, and opposing the wholesale drafting of doctors into the Army. Comrade Hewetson is the author of a new pamphlet on "Italy after Mussolini", which would already have been in circulation but for the police raids on *Freedom Press*.

4. PHILIP SANSOM

Like Comrade Hewetson, Philip Sansom also worked in the anti-war movement, but

NEW INTERNATIONAL, TOOL OF RULING CLASS

THE United Nations have decided to invite leading representatives of the international trade union movement to attend the San Francisco Conference in an advisory and consultative capacity. At the World Trade Union Conference held recently in London it was unanimously demanded that Labour should have a seat at the Labour Conference and at all other conferences at which the future status and conditions of the workers will be involved. The leaders of the United Nations have now granted one of these

demands, and why should they refuse? Hasn't the World Trade Union Congress proved that the ruling class has nothing to fear from "organized labour"?

The Conference held in London can only be looked upon by workers all over the world as having completely betrayed the principles of internationalism and socialism on which international workers' organizations should be founded. But the Big Three and their satellites can only look on the Conference with satisfaction and they offer to the good boys of the Labour Movement a seat, at the end of the table, at their conference. If the workers will protest against the decisions reached at the San Francisco conference the Governments will be able to turn round and say: "Your leaders were consulted, what are you complaining about?"

The London Conference was a complete failure from the workers' point of view. Nothing else could have been expected from a meeting of delegates who, with a few minor exceptions, have a record of compromise with the capitalist class or of servitude to the State; of delegates who arrive in planes and ships put at their disposal by their governments; of delegates (Continued on p. 4, col. 1)

that control all phases of coal utilisation. These committees federated locally and nationally can assess the needs of the community through co-operation with other industrial federations. In a word, Workers Control. Administration by those who actually produce the commodity—not by amateurs!

I repeat, the Foot Plan is purely and simply reactionary in character, a futile attempt to stave off what is inevitable, both under the existing phases of the capitalist system and its future(?) developments, and in the face of the growing realization of the need for a revolutionary social change. On the other hand, Pollitt's alternative is counter-revolutionary by aiming at a conscious diversion of the coming revolutionary upsurge into channels that place the workers in yet a greater degree of political and economic bondage.

There is, of course, one sure method of testing the ardour of those professing a concern for our welfare and the need for more coal, and that is, to offer to share our honourable calling.

What about it Harry? There's plenty of room for you below.

TOM CARLISLE.

Stop Press!

Anarchists Appear in Court Soldier Witnesses called

The prosecution of the four anarchist comrades—referred to elsewhere in this issue—was opened at Marylebone to-day before magistrate Ivan E. Snell. The Public Prosecutor opened by stating the basis of the charges, quoting extensively from *War Commentary* and a circular letter which he alleged *Freedom Press* had sent out to various contacts in the Forces last October and November. He called Privates Taylor, Pontin and Macdonald and Sapper Colin Ward as witnesses who had received the literature—found when their kits were searched. Capt. Macaulay, Lt. Wortley and Capt. Davis stated that they conducted searches upon the instructions of a "higher authority".

The Prosecutor read the following passage—"We oppose all means of maintaining class-divided society, parliament and the legal system, the Church and the Army." He then said—"Anybody is entitled to hold such opinions if they wish to hold them. It is not part of this case to attack such opinions—they may be the answer to all our problems." His case was that these opinions were "disseminated with advice to members of the Forces to retain their weapons to enforce such opinions upon the rest of society."

Later in the proceedings Gerald Rutledge, defending, asked Private Macdonald "Did Inspector Whitehead give you to understand that it was for the freedom of the Press that we were fighting?" to which the answer was "Yes".

None of the four defending comrades was called to give evidence, and at one o'clock the case was adjourned until Friday 16th March. Inspector Whitehead objected to bail being allowed to Philip Sansom, but the magistrate granted bail upon surety of £1,000 being forthcoming. Two comrades stated that they were prepared to take this responsibility, but when they refused to take the oath, bail was refused, although the comrades were prepared to "affirm". Comrade Sansom is therefore still in custody.

Many comrades were present in court and we received a considerable number of messages of solidarity before the hearing. We wish to thank all comrades who have expressed their support.

Are you doing your bit for the Press Fund?

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SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS
large or small for the defence of the
4 ANARCHIST COMRADES
To the Treasurer:
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JOHN OLDAY—His Trial

WAR COMMENTARY
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New International, Tool of Ruling Class

Continued from p. 1
 gates who go and pay homage to the King; who, were it not that Churchill was otherwise engaged, would have been addressed by that pillar of reaction who crushed working class movements whenever he got a chance and boasted of his friendship with Fascist leaders.

It is not surprising that the declarations of the Big Three and of the World Trade Union Conference were, on some important points, almost identical in terms. The spirit which animated them was the same, it was in a spirit of nationalism, of vengeance and reprisal that both meetings took place.

The Big Three declared that "they recognise it as just that Germany be obliged to make compensation for the damage in kind to the greatest extent possible" and Sir Walter Citrine echoed: "the Germans must make reparations to the extent of all that was humanly possible in services, goods and money, even though it involves the continuance of Allied control over the entire German economy for many years and perhaps for generations."

The German people have to repent and atone, said Sir Walter Citrine and who will help them to repent? The ruling class in this country who helped Hitler to power while the German people were trying to fight against him!

This moralising, this superior attitude towards the German people is sickening. The desire of revenge as expressed by a Russian woman delegate who made a passionate plea, after visiting bomb damaged areas, that the Germans should be made to pay for the ruin they have caused, is completely revolting. To hear those Trade Union leaders one would think that only people in Allied countries have suffered in this war. Don't they read everyday in the newspapers how German towns are bombed and destroyed? Have not the German people suffered when Hamburg, Leipzig, Berlin, Cologne and many industrial districts were bombed? Have not German workers died in hundreds of thousands on the battlefields? The German people have certainly suffered more than the American people and their "punishment" did not start with the war but began as soon as Hitler took power.

After advocating "economic" control over Germany, Citrine nevertheless talked of the establishment of a free trade union movement in Germany. This is completely contradictory with his demand for Allied occupation of Germany; in an occupied country the Trade Unions can only be the instruments of the Allies' forces of occupation. It is obvious that they could not impose decent wages and conditions of work or any freedom of speech in the shadow of Allied tanks and Tommy guns.

The Russian Government will get the greatest share of reparations and will employ a vast German labour force. This is not very encouraging. We know how the Russian Government has treated its slave labour battalions, composed of people who were merely guilty of refusing to accept Stalin's dictatorship. They were forced to do unhealthy and heavy work, they were starved and frozen to death, they died in hundreds of thousands in vast labour camps. There was no trade union organisation for them, the G.P.U. was the only authority they could deal with. If this was the treatment meted out to Russians we can only view with great alarm any plan made by the Soviet Government to use a German labour force for reparations. Nothing will prevent them being used as cheap slaves.

British trade unionists may hesitate to advocate a widespread use of German labour as they realise that it will mean unemployment and lower wages for British workers, but the position of Russia is different. Russia is so undeveloped that she does not fear unemployment and the standard of living of the Russian workers is so low that it is doubtful if it will be influenced by the use of foreign labour. Russia, as it has been agreed at the Big Three Conference, will have a great say in the question of reparations and, through the mass votes she commands, she will also have a great say (if not the greatest) at any future trade union conference. The fate of the German workers lies at present largely in the hands of the Russian Government and it is important that the workers in this country and elsewhere should have no illusions about the treatment which will be meted out to the German people unless they show their solidarity.

The interests of the German workers and that of workers all over the world are identical. To the policy of reprisals put forward by reactionary politicians and trade union leaders the workers of the world must oppose international solidarity. **WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE** must rally the working class all over the world for the final struggle against capitalism and war.

As announced in the last issue of *War Commentary* our comrade John Olday is at present serving a sentence of 12 months in prison, having been found guilty on a charge of "finding by stealing". The history of the case is well worth recording and though it cannot be told with the detail and accuracy that the victim himself could record, we will attempt to deal as adequately with the case as our information allows.

On November 17th John Olday was in the Camden Town area with a typewriter in his possession. He was stopped by a plain clothes man who wanted to know what he had in the parcel. A second plain clothes man was on the scene in a flash followed almost immediately by a police car with three more plain clothes men. The usual questions asked, and Identity Card produced. Had John Olday been in the Army? No he hadn't. This did not satisfy one of the officers who pointed out the number on the Identity Card to one of his colleagues. Other questions were asked, and our comrade realised that the best thing was not to answer any more questions. He was then taken to a police station where more questions were fired at him and when he still refused to answer he was passed on to a higher officer who also met with failure.

Remanded in Custody for 8 Days

The following morning our comrade appeared in court where he refused to give any information about himself and was remanded in custody for 8 days. At his next appearance in court the owner of the Identity Card in our comrade's possession, appeared in court as a witness, where he stated that the Identity Card belonged to him and that he had lost it. The new charge then was that our comrade was guilty of stealing by finding. The charge of stealing the typewriter was dropped as the police had ascertained that the machine had been loaned to John Olday. Our comrade still refused to reveal his identity.

Next on the scene was the Probation Officer, who asked our comrade to tell him all about himself because if he did he would either be bound over or get a very light sentence! Our comrade very politely told him to go to hell and he left! In the meantime the five plain clothes men had another go, but without success.

Third and Fourth Court Appearances

At his next appearance in court the magistrate asked our comrade whether he would plead guilty or not guilty, to which John Olday answered that he would neither plead guilty or not guilty since he did not recognise the court and would take no part in its proceedings. The magistrate then pointed out that he would send Olday to the Old Bailey where the punishment would be much higher. "That's what you call justice"—answered the prisoner. "It is immaterial to me what court sentences me to what punishment. I recognise neither one nor the other." Such views were too much for the magistrate who remanded the case for a medical report! He was then returned to Brixton. His interview with the prison pathologist amused our comrade. But it appears from the report given in court when the case was again heard a week later that our comrade was quite sane since he is now a guest in H.M. prison and not at Broadmoor! The court on this third occasion was again unable to induce our comrade to reveal his identity and he was committed for trial at the Central Criminal Court.

By this time the C.I.D. Special Branch had taken up the case, and John Olday was identified

by an officer who had interviewed him at the beginning of the war.

At the Old Bailey

The trial would have certainly received wide publicity but for the fact that in the adjoining Court No. 1 the Cleft Chin Murder trial was taking place at the same time. Obviously the newspapers were more interested in a real murder than they were in our comrade's case, with the result that the case received no attention at all. The case proceeded without the co-operation of our comrade whose attitude was one of boredom with the whole business! So much so that his inward contempt with the whole procedure was interpreted by the judge as something quite different. He was under the impression that the prisoner was spell-bound by the court and the proceedings and attempted to assist our comrade in his defence! But the situation was becoming most embarrassing for John Olday who could not longer remain silent. He then burst out on the court with the following statement: "I am an Anarchist. As such I do not recognize authority, Law nor the Court of Justice. That is why I neither plead guilty or not guilty. And that is why I offer no defence. By defending myself I would be

recognizing you against my own intentions". This statement caused a stir in the court. The judge wanted to have that repeated since he had not properly understood. Our comrade then developed his argument: "It all boils down to the simple fact that I ignore and defy you. You claim the right and power to judge and punish. But with all your power you cannot make me acknowledge that you have the right to do so. The sentence you pass is immaterial to me". An Anarchist? That was more than his lordship could stand. What did these Anarchists do? Blow one another up?

His Record

Then followed the police officer who had identified Comrade Olday, and he proceeded to read out his record: No previous convictions; illegitimate child of Scottish farmer and German mother; came to this country in 1937 after escaping from Germany for Anti-Nazi underground work; had carried out acts of sabotage on German military installations. Deserted from British Army. Attached himself to the Anarchists. Author of *Kingdom of Rags*. Cartoonist, a collection of his drawings *The Life we Live the Death we Die* published by Freedom Press. . . . The judge then asked whether the

Anarchists paid him. The Police officer did not know. The judge was surprised: "What! you mean to say that the police do not know what this Anarchist society does under its very nose?" The Police Officer was sorry but pointed out that this record had been prepared by the Special Branch. The Judge then demanded that enquiries should be made.

In summing up the judge pointed out that our comrade seemed to pride himself in ignoring the law. Obviously this was no laughing matter, etc. . . . **TWELVE MONTHS** was the solution.

Twelve months for stealing a piece of blue paper six inches by five? Or is it twelve months because John Olday is an Anarchist and because he poured scorn on the Law and the law-mongers?

And will twelve months in prison make John Olday less of an Anarchist than he was before he went in? If you are not so sure on the subject read the biographical sketch on this page and get out your copy of *The March to Death* and look through those drawings again and you will have the answer.

We salute John Olday, a fighter for the rights and the Freedom of the oppressed everywhere.
LIBERTARIAN.

—His Revolutionary Record

JOHN OLDAY was born in England of a Scottish father and a German mother. He spent his early childhood in America and was then taken by his mother to Germany. Soon after, the war of 1914 broke out and John Olday was surrounded by hostility in the school and outside it in his British nationality. This probably set him thinking at an early age of the evils of nationalism.

The war came to an end and John Olday experienced like many million Germans the miseries of starvation, lack of clothes and coal. He was living with his grandmother in Hamburg which soon became the centre of violent struggles between the police and the workers, barricades were set up, shops were looted, demonstrations were dispersed by armed police. John Olday was still a child but the sufferings he had gone through made him responsive to the struggles which were going on around him. At the age of thirteen he received his first lesson in socialism from a man shooting in the streets. John had asked him why he was shooting and when the firing died down the man answered:

"Listen, I've been thinking—I will try to explain why I am standing here fighting. Those people over there (he pointed in the direction of the railway station) say they are fighting for the Fatherland. I have also fought for the Fatherland. Four years! Fatherland means everybody here in Germany, understand?"

I nodded affirmatively. "Very good!" he continued. "Everybody means—the rich and the poor—isn't that right?"

"Yes, right," I said.

"Good! Who has the power in the Fatherland, the rich or the poor?"

"The rich."

"Who have exposed their lives out there? Who have been starved and frozen? The rich or the poor?"

"The poor."

"And who are the people who have become poorer, who have gained nothing but lost everything?"

"The poor."

"Look! Those people over there say they are fighting for the Fatherland! But

who rules the Fatherland? The rich! Therefore those on the other side are fighting for the rich! Now, I am fighting for myself and for all those who are having a filthy time, like you and me! Have you grasped that?"

(*Kingdom of Rags*).

John Olday soon joined the Labour Youth Movement and played an active part in meetings, debates, and by writing revolutionary poetry. During the day he worked as an apprentice in a goldsmith shop and whenever he had a spare moment he drew furiously. He was passionately interested in drawing and followed evening courses with great success but the revolutionary struggle absorbed all his thoughts and energies. Red Hamburg was seething with revolt, the youth was particularly active and our comrade was not to be left behind. His activities led him to prison many times; the Weimar Republic shut its eyes to the activities of reactionary and nationalist groups but acted ruthlessly against left wing organisations and revolutionary militants.

During all these years he continued to draw and paint, he contributed to revolutionary papers, he held exhibitions of "revolutionary art" and, to earn a living, he sold sketches to newspapers and magazines and became fairly well known. He contributed to a dozen papers simultaneously and was a picture page editor of a weekly illustrated paper. But with the advent of Nazism he lost practically all his work.

As soon as Hitler took power John Olday participated in the underground work against the régime. His cartoons were reproduced as handbills and posters and spread all over Hamburg. A number of his anti-Nazi drawings were camouflaged under the cover of an exact replica of a postage stamps book to facilitate their circulation. He himself went round the streets sticking up posters and putting handbills in people's pockets. Here is a short description of the work he and his comrades did:

"Our handbills were pasted on the walls of the sheds, on the wagons, on the walls of the lavatories and eating houses in the harbour district, and on the seats of the launches and steamers everywhere where the workers came in their hundreds as they were going or com-

ing from the factories and the dock yards. The posters did not remain up for long as they were promptly scratched or washed off by the Nazi stalwarts. The Nazis however could not prevent the workers from seeing that there were people hard at work in the dark, people whose resistance had not been broken. This thought stiffened the backs of those who hated the Nazi régime and gave them courage. And the Nazis could not prevent people from talking about what they saw printed on the leaflets. Furthermore, to a certain extent the advice given in the leaflets was followed, notwithstanding the fact that the penalty for sabotage was death."

Many of John Olday's comrades were arrested, sent to concentration camps or shot. He himself was in constant danger and had to take extraordinary precautions to carry on his underground work. Partly to cover his illegal activities, partly because of the use it could be to the group his comrades urged him to accept the job as a cartoonist which was offered to him by a Hamburg paper. John Olday, after much hesitation, took the job but when asked to produce some drawings which would have been a declaration of faith for the Nazi régime he flatly refused. This would have meant his arrest, but thanks to his British nationality he managed to escape to France. From there and later from London he carried on his anti-Nazi activities.

When the war started he joined the British Army. The imperialist nature of the war became increasingly obvious to him, he felt his place was in the class struggle not in the struggle against his fellow workers. He had proved he was willing to fight Hitler, he was still willing to do so but he did not want to take part in a bloodbath which only serves the interests of the ruling class.

John Olday's record is one of untiring struggle against oppression and injustice. He was put in jail by the social-democratic government of the Weimar Republic; he had to escape from Nazi Germany; now he lies in the prison of "democratic" Britain. To the true fighter for freedom all governments are alike, all prevent by force and violence any attempt at the liberation of the working class.
NEEMAR.

PEACE ON EARTH

MANY people have recently advocated exterminating the German and Japanese people in order to end war for all time. They contend that the German and Japanese people cannot be expected to take their place in a peaceful world.

War propagandists have pictured the German and Japanese people as little better than beasts, in order to build up hatred against them and in order to secure the maximum support of the war.

To say that the peoples of any nation are inherently more warlike than people of other nations is to repeat the "Hitler doctrine," of racial or national supremacy. Let's examine a little history and see what nations have participated in the greatest number of wars.

A study of major wars, from 1800 to the present time, discloses that Great Britain participated in 19 wars; France in 17; Russia in 17; Germany in 11; Japan in 9; Spain in 8 and the United States in 7.

Two of Britain's wars were against India in 1817 and Burma in 1824. I mention these wars particularly because we are to-day asked to restore to Britain and to protect for her at the loss of American lives, India and Burma, which Britain enslaved, by force of arms, many years ago. It is also significant in studying the history of wars that Japan was on the side of the allies in the first world war, as was Italy.

If we were to decide who the war-like people of the world are, on the basis of the greatest number of wars participated in then England, France and Russia would be adjudged the War-like peoples, because they participated in the greatest number of wars.

Those who advocate the extermination of the German and Japanese people fail to realize that the German people and the Japanese people were the first victims of German Fascism and Japanese Fascism. Concentration camps in Germany were filled with trade unionists and leaders of minority parties, who dared to oppose Hitler.

The Japanese war lords and militarists made the Japanese trade union movement impotent and tremendously reduced the living standards of the Japanese people. Japan's wars have not had the fanatical support of the working-class of Japan, as claimed by American propagandists. There have been over 1000 strikes each year, in Japan, since the beginning of the war with China. The leadership of Japan's 750 unions, numbering a membership of approximately 350,000 workers, have long been jailed because of their opposition to war.

The people of Japan and Germany were not asked for their permission to wage war. They were compelled to fight or die. We must differentiate between the German and Japanese ruling classes and the working classes in estab-

lishing blame and punishment for this war. The workers of the world have no grievances or differences against each other. Wars are caused by the ruling and owning class of all nations, who in an effort to enlarge their fortunes are willing to spill the blood of the workers in a useless slaughter.

War cannot be eliminated, from society, by exterminating any race or nationality. It can only be ended, for all time, by destroying the causes of war, which is the profit system.

ENGLAND'S WARS

- 1805 England declares war on Spain.
- 1811 War begins between United States and England.
- 1815 British fight France.
- 1817 British wars in India.
- 1824 British battle for Burma.
- 1829 England wars on Russia.
- 1839 Britain wars on China.
- 1850 British blockade Greece.
- 1854 England wars against Russia.
- 1856 British war on China.
- 1856 British war on Persia.
- 1868 Britain invades Abyssinia.
- 1879 British war on Zulul.
- 1880 British and Boers battle.
- 1882 Britain wars on Egypt.
- 1899 Britain wars on Boers.
- 1900 Boxer War in China. (England one of Allied Nations.)
- 1939 England declares war on Germany.

FRANCE'S WARS

- 1802 French aggressions in Holland.
- 1806 Napoleon enters Berlin.
- 1805 France fights Austria.
- 1807 Napoleon defeats Russia.
- 1808 Napoleon defeats Spain.
- 1810 France annexes Holland.
- 1812 Napoleon declares war on Russia.
- 1814 France invaded from all sides, Napoleon to Elba.
- 1815 Napoleon is defeated by British and Germans at Waterloo.
- 1823 French army enters Spain.
- 1830 Revolution in France.
- 1838 French bombard Mexican ports.
- 1854 France and England war against Russia.
- 1870 Franco-German War.
- 1881 France wars on Tunis.
- 1914-18 France participated in World War No. 1 as one of Allied nations.
- 1939 France declares war on Germany.

GERMANY'S WARS

- 1806 Napoleon enters Berlin.
- 1813 German and British defeat Napoleon at Waterloo.
- 1831 Prussia aids Russia against Poland.
- 1850 Prussia and Austria war.

- 1864 Germans defeat Danes.
- 1866 War between several German states.
- 1870 Franco-German war.
- 1914-18 World War No. 1, Germany one of Central powers.
- 1939 Germany takes Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland. France and England declare war on Germany.
- 1940 Germany seizes Denmark and defeats Norway, Holland, Belgium and France.
- 1914 Germany at war with United States.

RUSSIAN WARS

- 1807 Napoleon defeats Russia.
- 1812 Napoleon declares war on Russia.
- 1825 Russia wars on Turkey.
- 1826 Russia invades Persia.
- 1828 Russia overruns Rumania.
- 1829 Russia invaded by England and Austria.

Socialists in Office

AFTER all these years of Socialist electioneering, it was somewhat of a shock to read the following advertisement in *Forward* 27/1/45: "We have pleasure in making the following announcement to the workers of Glasgow: For the first time in Glasgow's history there will be Socialist candidates—in Woodside Ward—at the forthcoming Municipal Election."

The particular brand of Socialist referred to is, of course, the S.P.G.B., the Labour Party having controlled Glasgow Council for many years and the I.L.P. having a number of councillors also.

It has often been wondered as to how the S.P.G.B. proposed that the workers should achieve their emancipation, which they said was "inevitable", since on the one hand they say that it can only come about by a majority of S.P.G.B. Members of Parliament sitting in the Commons, and yet in forty years the S.P.G.B. has not even put up a candidate, far less returned a Member.

At last they propose putting up candidates but not for Parliament, be it noted, but for municipal elections. Surely these diarch Marxists know perfectly well that even if power could be got through Parliament—even if there were no such thing as the possibilities of the dissolution of Parliament (as has occurred throughout the majority of the world)—it is patently impossible to do anything with modern municipal politics save (perhaps—and a very big perhaps) to achieve some reforms under capitalism, and yet the S.P.G.B. has always proclaimed that it opposed reforms.

Supposing—as is very unlikely—the S.P.G.B. are ever successful and get some councillors. In

- 1831 Russia fights Poland.
 - 1849 Danish-Russian war.
 - 1854 France and England war on Russia.
 - 1877 Russia wars on Turks.
 - 1885 Russia wars on Afghanistan.
 - 1904 Russian-Japanese war.
 - 1914-18 World War No. 1. Russia one of Allied nations.
 - 1917 Russian Revolution.
 - 1939 Russia takes part of Poland.
 - 1940 Russia takes part of Finland.
 - 1941 Russia fights Germany.
- JAPAN'S WARS**
- 1867 Civil war in Japan.
 - 1877 Civil war in Japan.
 - 1884 Japan wars on Korea.
 - 1894 Japan wars on China.
 - 1904 Japan-Russian war.
 - 1914-18 Japan one of Allied nations in World War No. 1.
 - 1931 Japan takes Manchukuo.
 - 1937 Japan fights China.
 - 1914 Japan declares war on the United States and is an ally of Germany.

(continued on p. 4)

FREEDOM PRESS LECTURES

SUNDAY MEETINGS

Commencing at 6.45 p.m.
 to be held at the
HOLBORN HALL
 (Second floor, Room 4)
 Greys Inn Road, London
 (Buses 38, 19; Trolley 555, 581, 613, 621,
 Tube: Holborn, Chancery Lane)
 F. A. Ridley
 11th MARCH
 Rise and Decline of the British Empire

Conscription—Key to Total State

THE workers are faced with a post-war situation in which the destinies of millions are going to be decided. At all peace conferences, the decisions affecting the world are left to a few shady politicians, and there is no means of influencing their decisions except by the creation of a totally different set of circumstances. For many European peoples the situation presents itself so acutely that they simply have to wait until after these so-called peace conferences to know under what nationality they will wake up on the day following. The alteration of the map, the re-distribution of colonial acquisitions, natural wealth and working populations, the decisions which will make the arguments for the next might behind the big powers, the backstairs intrigue on behalf of the minor powers, and above all by what they think will be in the best interests of their respective ruling-classes. If anyone ever had any illusions that this peace conference would be any different from any past peace conference, it is time for them to admit their great mistake.

While the issues between the nations are put forward to be decided by the conference of the international statesmen, the home issues are decided by the respective conclaves of national statesmen. We are told the Government's plans for post-war reconstruction. It inevitably entails sacrifices by the people. No Government plan would fail to entail that. One section of the politicians points out we shall have to abolish industrial controls, but stands in favour of conscription of manpower nevertheless, the other side points out that we have to retain industrial conscription all round. In reality the issues between the parties are such as—such as a certain amount of shadow-boxing is necessary if there is going to be an Election. There cannot be much quarrel about promises regarding reconstruction—if party A promises 100,000 houses for a district, party B will promise 200,000, and party C 300,000. Party D, having no chance of getting in whatever will promise a million, and stand as the most revolutionary party as a result. Although no houses may be built the three unsuccessful parties will at least be able to point the finger of scorn at the promise-breaker. That sums up the party programmes as regards reconstruction. There is not much else but promises to quarrel about, so they pick instead on the points on which they have really little to quarrel about—whether or not we shall have controls after the war, each side being quite convinced that what control there is shall be exercised by them and not by their opponents.

The Conservatives in reality will keep all the essential of control. They will certainly free industrial managements from the "burdens" of taxation and Government enterprise; but they will not relax control of manpower and have re-affirmed many times their belief in peace-time conscription. If by any chance they soft-pedal on this during the Election it will be by no means a change of heart nor need anyone be surprised at a Tory Government introducing militarism since its leaders and M.P.s when they serve in the Forces always keep on the right side of the King's commission.

Why there is a myth about Labour Party Governments being progressive after the composition of the last two and the Coalition record, is a mystery, and the third Labour Gov-

PLUS CA CHANGE . . .

General de Gaulle's speech to the Consultative Assembly on France's home policy has come as a disappointment to French public opinion. There has been much advance publicity for the speech; and the French public was led to believe that de Gaulle would use the opportunity to outline more concretely his Government's home policy.

In fact, he did not go beyond generalities stated on several previous occasions. General de Gaulle's keynote was "May France's power become our great national ambition"; and he drew a picture of a greatly increased industrial and agricultural potential of post-war France, but he said almost nothing about immediate economic measures.

He laid much stress on the need for a new population policy designed to "call to life 12 million fine babies in the next ten years".

It is increasingly obvious that General de Gaulle does not intend to carry out any fundamental change in the political and economic structure of France. His policy does not differ from that of the conservative leaders who have previously ruled the country.

SIDELINES ON WAR

It was a great disappointment to the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg that she was not able to spend her birthday a month ago among her own people. She is still staying in this country, just outside London.

The Prince Consort is in Luxembourg, however, and it will be he who will decide when the military situation is such that his wife can return to her country in safety. *Star, 23/2/45.*

A.T.S. girls sent overseas will read this with interest.

HENRY KAISER: This master shipbuilder, nicknamed Sir Laucholton because of all the freighters he has turned out, has also broken some dollar records.

Two of his companies, which began with £20,000 capital, have made net profits of £54,000,000.

JOE E. LEWIS: This top-ranking nightclub comedian, in Florida's Miami, has found a way to keep up the profits despite the curfew.

One hour before closing time he says in the middle of routine, "I've got a report that the Russians are nine miles nearer Berlin. Let's drink to the Russians"—and everyone orders a drink.

Fifteen minutes later he produces similar news about the Yanks, and for a "binder" he suggests a drink to the British. *Daily Express, 23/2/45.*

SCHOOL FOR NAZIS

I have been visiting a school building on the outskirts of London where 200 British and American officers are being trained as gauleiters for Germany. They are the people who will send in to create order out of chaos when Germany collapses.

Practical demonstrations are given on the way to take over a newly conquered German town. The instructors take the part of German civilians and the students are invited to issue orders to them.

Katzen, I was told, was not particularly encouraged. The students are taught to treat the Germans as inhabitants of a conquered country. *Evening News, 24/2/45.*

The administration of Germany does not show much signs of change. And who said our ruling-classes couldn't produce Nazis?

has the same trouble as the Nazi-Quisling Government had, in enforcing conscription on a people who are prepared to join issue on the subject. Since conscription is compulsory, it may have been enforced many times, in many countries, but no-one wants it, but those who do the ruling.

What is conscription but dictatorship?—or rather dictatorship is only concerned with the spheres of life that concern ourselves. It is the workers, the conscripts, the youth, who are wanted for the military-industrial machine in peace-time. It really makes very little difference if a Conservative Government decides not to conscript the industrialists—in fact it makes matters even worse. We do not want an end to controls as they affect abstractions or as they affect vested interests—we want an end to controls as they affect ourselves.

While any politician has the power over life and death, while any politician has the right to decide where one should work, whether one should fight, how one should dress, where one should live, if one should live, there is no freedom. While politicians can decide the future of the world, while they can decide the future of the individual, there is no freedom. Freedom does not come, however, as the result of being decided by a meeting of statesmen or the passing of a law. Freedom and the responsibility for freedom arise out of the struggle against tyranny. We must be prepared not to trust politicians to free us from the so-called war-time restrictions, in reality the continuation of the peace-time trends to the Total State, but instead to struggle against politicians, employers and the State. We can build the organisation for a free society in the form of councils of action in every place of work and assembly, federated together in an industrial union aiming at the transference of the direction of industry from either employers or bureaucrats into the hands of the men on the job. By individual and mass resistance to any form of management, any form of bureaucracy, any form of the Total State, the Government can be prevented from proceeding with the totalitarian measures that it will enforce as any Government coming to power now will enforce. By propagating the idea of such assemblies of workers taking over the industry they in effect control but do not manage, the idea that man can run without government, we shall be building the new society of freedom, which can only come when we have unitedly the courage to achieve it. *M.*

WAR COMMENTARY

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The Touchstone

Why is industrial and military conscription such an important issue? It is because such measures are the touchstone of the new order. No parties are going to quarrel about the promises they make. All will promise the New Jerusalem. Nor in present circumstances is it very intelligent to expect any politician with any brains getting up and saying he wants to establish a personal dictatorship. It is not impossible, but not practical politics for an Election which follows the defeat of Hitler. But, although politicians will promise a magnificent New Order whose trimmings grow more tawdry as it draws near, and will disclaim most indignantly any suggestions that they want personal power, none of them will disclaim the need for industrial and military conscription unless they have a very faint chance of power indeed. Not because they are afraid they will break their promise—more particularly because they realise it will be hard enough to force on the people without the additional trouble of having a broken promise thrown up at them. The people most emphatically do not want conscription. The Australians were given a referendum on the subject and they voted against it. Many Canadian soldiers are doing the same thing with their feet. The Allied-Quisling Government in Italy

MONTY'S MEN ARE DEFROG!

Allied troops, advancing through the rich fertile German countryside in Field-Marshal Montgomery's offensive, are living off the fat of the land.

There is a chicken or a goose in every pot—or a steak or pork. The German farmers lived well.

The Germans were pushed back so fiercely that they had no time to take cattle or tinned goods with them.

Huge stores of looted liquor have been discovered and it doesn't go to waste.

Houses, too, are prosperously furnished.—*Reynolds News, 18/2/45.*

When the Germans were living on "the fat of the land" of the countries they overran, they were bitterly denounced by the Allies.

MASS HUNGER STRIKE IN GREECE

More than 3,000 people in the Khasnani concentration camp near Athens, Tass News Agency reported to-day from the Greek capital, are on a hunger strike now going into its sixth day in protest against the alleged violation of the agreement between the Government and EAM, says A.P.

Most of the internees, Tass said, are EAM members, including 350 guerrillas taken prisoner during the recent civil war. *Star, 23/2/45.*

Through the Press

THE FRENCH CALLED THEM "MAQUIS"

When civilians in the Quebec townships of Drummondville clashed with Provost Corps men and Canadian Mounted Police in search of deserters and draft dodgers, the situation was considered to be so serious that a quarter Army training centre was ordered to stand by, says Reuter.

Although it was reported that 100 people were injured and military vehicles damaged in the melee, the assistance of the troops was not necessary, and the latest reports say that complete quiet reigns.

The trouble started when about 1,000 civilians gathered outside Drummondville Police headquarters with the apparent intention of rescuing ten arrested men, who were due to be taken to Montreal.

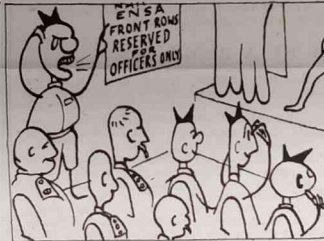
The police lined up outside the building and the crowd began throwing rocks, ice, boards and pieces of iron fence at them. The police managed to get eight of the arrested men away, but not before 11 of their vehicles had been damaged.

Twenty-five civilians were arrested in connection with the disturbance. The first, the "Mounties" in Montreal, in one of the series of raids now being carried out, questioned 400 men and detained 20 for investigation of their military status. *Star, 26/2/45.*

UNTO THEM THAT THATH

Gloria Vanderbilt, America's "poor little rich girl", woke up to-day owner of another £1,250,000. She became of age to-day and thus enters into a Trust Fund of that amount left by her father.

She didn't even have to get up at 5.30 a.m. like those who imagine you become a capitalist by working hard.



MUTINIES IN GERMAN ARMY

Apart from a rather increased general readiness to surrender which is indicated by many reports from the Western Front, there have been, during February, at least local mutinies: one in the besieged city of Marienburg, where part of the garrison tried to enforce a surrender by turning against their higher officers, and one on February 24, in Copenhagen, where an Austrian contingent on transit from Norway to the Eastern Front refused to board ships and was overwhelmed only after four hours' fighting. *The Observer, 4/3/45.*

GRANDI IS NOT A WAR CRIMINAL—SAYS EDEN. HERE IS HIS FASCIST RECORD

When the Fascist movement got going, in 1920-21, and its black-shirted squads were armed with cudgels and pistols by the Italian General Staff for the purpose of shooting down or breaking up the heads of Communists, Socialists, and the members of the flourishing Italian Co-operative Societies, Dino Grandi became Fascist Boss of the province of Emilia, with headquarters at Bologna.

Grandi was the organiser of the largest expeditions of Black Shirts to beat up the countryside, to shoot opponents, burn their houses and to behave like thorough-going ruffians.

Grandi, in fact, preached and practised the doctrine of violence. In a diary of the year 1922 he wrote:

"How can one reconcile the theory of violence with liberal principles? And, above all, how can one practise violence and preach respect for all opinions? The answer is one: Who believes that he possesses it must defend it with his life. And whoever does not believe that he possesses the truth in himself, absolute and unique, cannot be a fascist, that is to say, be contemptuous of the law. I am so sure of dwelling in the truth that I cannot understand how it is possible not to be a Fascist."

Now Grandi, who was the first Italian Ambassador to wear the Fascist Black Shirt outside his Embassy, would faint appear as a white blackbird or, at worst, a magpie. The *Daily Telegraph* wrote of his black-shirted appearance in London, on November 1, 1932: "This is symbolic of his passionate devotion to the Fascist creed and discipline"—a devotion which did not prevent him from becoming a darling of the same London "Society" which flocked to Ribben-

GREEK SEAMEN'S CHARGES FAIL

It is pleasant to be able to record that the Greek Government failed to bring home charges of conspiracy and mutiny against four Greek seamen and two officers last week. The case was heard before the Greek Maritime Court in London, the defence being undertaken by the Stalinist lawyer, D. N. Pritt.

The men were charged with forming a ship's committee, and the whole case appears to have been aimed at making any form of combination illegal. But it failed.

GREEK DEATH SENTENCES REVOKED

In a recent issue we recorded certain death sentences passed on E.A.M. supporters in Athens for "having acted against the State". Such sentences showed that the promise of full amnesty for the recent fighting was as usual merely an empty promise on the part of the government, a treacherous ruse to bamboozle and pacify the popular resistance. We ventured to predict, however, that the sentences would probably not be carried out, as this would constitute too open a provocation on the part of the government, and might set a match once more to open resistance. This prediction seems likely to be correct, for it was announced on February

Capitalist International at Work

At the British Embassy in Madrid there was given recently a reception to honour the representatives of British insurance who are now visiting Spain. The report says that the goodwill and friendship existing between British and Spanish insurance interests were strongly emphasised. In the same issue of the paper (*Reynolds, March 4th*) there is a report of a speech by Mrs. Charlotte Riley, who has spent two and a half years in Occupied France, and who says that the Germans who are holding out in St. Nazaire are supplied by U-boats which load up in the Spanish port of San Sebastian.

So that at the same time as British Business is dining and wining in Madrid, the Franco régime is supplying the German garrisons on the west coast of France. We should not really be surprised at such things, because was it not the "goodwill and friendship" which had something to do with the Non-Intervention Pact, and the German and Italian aid for Franco. Any attempt at achieving international solidarity by the workers is met by every kind of opposition and frustration. And now it is the Spanish workers who are kept in poverty and misery resulting from the civil war, while the same is true for the British and German workers—they are the ones who endure all the privations. But the capitalist international carries on with banquets and wishes of goodwill.

9th that none of the sentences would be carried out till after the Government-E.A.M. peace conference. It is expected that retrospective law will then be promulgated to implement the amnesty.

Of course, the sentences therefore place bargaining power in the hands of the Government, for unless E.A.M. come to a satisfactory agreement with them, they can threaten to withhold such legislation, and thus throw the armed men's lives into the balance. This manoeuvre shows how legal procedures can be used to advance government policies.

GREECE A BRITISH COLONY

The political issues involved in the intervention in Greece, and the personalities involved—Churchill, Papandrou, Plastiras and so on—has tended to obscure the fundamental operative factors in producing the Greek situation. These, of course lie in the fact that Greece has for years been a financial dependency of the British Empire.

The American magazine *Politics* explains the effect of this dependency on the debt.

"The City holds the greatest part of the Greek National Debt. The original loans which date back to the 19th century have actually been paid back several times over but the interest rate of about 8 per cent keeps Greece chained to the City. It has been stipulated by London that one third of the Greek budget had to be set aside for the service of these loans. Thus even during the depression year 1930-31, 3,160,000,000 drachmas out of a total budget of 9,970,000,000 went to pay interest on the debt. Moreover, this debt had always to be serviced in gold, at a time when Britain paid her own debts in depreciated pounds. Some months ago the British Foreign Office presented a memorandum to the Greek Government in exile, demanding that it continue to safeguard the rights and securities at present enjoyed by Greek external loans and to protect the interests of the bondholders."

"In 1932, the Greek Republican Government reduced the service on the debt. The City was in an uproar. This temerity was to be punished. Thus in 1935 King George was brought back to Greece with the aid of the British. Interest payments were resumed . . ."

"The City realises that for the moment Greece is blind white. Britain is ever ready to supply some temporary aid to put the country on its feet again. But after a while Greece is expected to resume payments: 8 per cent. plus King George—no wonder that the British are not exactly popular in Athens. *Politics* adds that nearly all the Greek Public Utility Companies are in British hands—there again making it a catastrophe for the City if they were nationalized in accordance with the demands of the Greek Resistance Movement. All of which helps to illuminate the Greek scene.



BUREAUCRACY—BY A BUREAUCRAT

Captain Charles Waterhouse, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade said in Glasgow last night: "The people of Britain are having a dose of State Socialism and not greatly enjoying it. We are controlled in what we eat, in what we wear, and in where and how we work." *Daily Express, 24/2/45.*

Captain Waterhouse is not doing so badly out of it, though. . . Fishmongers do seem to cry "stinking fish" sometimes in spite of the proverb.



am not thinking only of the grim picture, to which my own eyes can testify, of appalling misery, hunger and cold.

These in themselves are enough to have twisted the smile of liberation into a mocking grimace. But I would be doing the French people an injustice were I to give the impression that the only suffering they feel to-day is the pang of an empty stomach.

The empty stomach and the fireless hearth are only the symptoms of the general malaise that is withering the soul of France.

Not everybody in Paris or France goes hungry. In Paris I have seen people eating better, living better, spending with more abandon than any people can do in England or in any other part of Europe, with the possible exception of liberated Brussels. They are, for the most part, people who did well under the Germans and who are doing equally well, if not better, under the Allies.

My first impression of the French capital was that the stories of distress were just one big legend—or just a joke based on a legend.

Revelation came on asking the prices of goods so temptingly displayed. The meaning of inflation was conveyed to me by superbly coiffured Parisiennes who ignored my French and told me in the most seductive English that the particular article I had in mind and which I had mentally reckoned in terms of shillings would, in fact, cost me the equivalent of several pounds.

How, then, can the French people afford such luxuries? The answer is that the great majority of them cannot afford such luxuries. They are as effectively deprived of them by fantastically swollen prices as we are by Mr. Dalton's embargo on their production.

Why are they produced at all when people are going without necessities? Why is transport wasted on bringing them to Paris when the authorities will tell you that Paris hospitals and Paris children have to go without milk and butter for lack of means of bringing these essential foods from country areas where there is a glut of both?

Why are road-worthy lorries and trucks used to bring loads of champagne and cognac (at £4 a bottle) to the restaurants and hotels when food lies rotting on French country roadsides in trucks which are fit only for the scrap-dealer's dump?

The black market remains in control of the food situation in Paris and, to a lesser extent, in most of the French towns.

Only the most drastic measures, such as the requisitioning of transport, coupled with price control and an increased food ration, could cut out this cancer that is eating the very vitals of French economic life.

The Consultative Assembly has declared itself in favour of the requisitioning of all transport. But the Government every day says less and less attention to the voice of this Provisional Parliament of Free France.

The truth is that the Government is in the grip of the private owners of transport and is blackmailed by them. *Reynolds News, 4/3/45.*

