

REVOLUTION!

INCORPORATING SPAIN and the WORLD

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There is no greater condemnation of our civilisation than the fact that it results in means becoming ends, while the true end, which is man himself, has become a means—no doubt a more expensive one than a dog, but cheaper than a cow or a machine-gun.

—“The School for Dictators” (p.194) by Ignacio Silone.

LEADERS BETRAY THE WORKERS

THE Labour Movement has once again proved itself incapable of giving the workers a lead in the vital problems of the day. The Labour Party's opposition to Conscription has been reduced to a mere quibble over the rates of pay of the “militiamen.” A compromise has been made and instead of 1/- a day the militiaman will receive 1/6! Thus ends the activity of “His Majesty's Opposition”! The Trade Union Executive, by a huge majority defeated a proposal of strike action—and other action in the hands of the workers—in order to oppose the new conscription measures. The decision of the gentlemen (apparently the representatives of four million workers) is that they will protest(!) against the new measures, but apart from that will offer no resistance. In fact, they make it quite clear that they will support National Service and will give every assistance in the question of production in Industry in time of war.

According to many, the Communist Party alone is the defender of the working class. It is therefore interesting to quote from the “Communist Statement on Conscription” which appeared in the Daily Worker (24/5/39). It notes that the Trade Union Executives have failed once more, but in outlining its own policy, expresses its own opportunism and misguiding policy. It says that the Labour Movement must carry on its struggle to “defeat the Chamberlain Government” and that “our attitude to conscription must be related to this fundamental task.” For “under a Government which genuinely stood for peace and resistance to Fascism, the question of compulsory military training would take on a different complexion. The voluntary principle is no absolute democratic principle.”

“Under a Government which genuinely stands for a policy of the collective maintenance of peace, we have always made clear that the Communist Party will support whatever measures are necessary to organise all the forces of the people to fulfil the obligations of the Peace Front for the defence of peace against aggression.

“In fighting for the Peace Front of Britain, France, the United States and the Socialist Soviet Union, we fully recognise that the Peace Front requires to be made effective for peace by the overwhelming strength of the forces on its side, and that the British people must be prepared to make their military contribution.

“A Peace Front undoubtedly entails Britain building up its armed strength and training its people so that they can play their full part in the defence of peace.”

Clearly then, the Communist Party finds nothing amiss with compulsory military service so long as the man at the helm is not Chamberlain. Presumably, the French workers should support the army programme because there exists a Popular Front in France, and that once a Popular Front Government gets power in this country, then it will be the duty of all workers to fight and be killed in fighting against Fascism. The Communist Statement states that “The Labour and democratic movement should decisively reject the pacifist propaganda which proposes the futile path of individual resistance to conscription,” and that applies to the Chamberlain Government. What would happen to the unfortunate man who refused to fight for a Pollitt-Churchill-Lloyd George combination?

When the workers will realise that they cannot admit of a dictatorial leadership, the first steps towards world peace will be made.

CONSCRIPTION: THE NEXT STEP TO DICTATORSHIP

PRETENCE of individual liberty under so-called “democracy” dropping away as the war for democracy comes nearer, conscription has been foisted upon us.

Baldwin gave the original pledge not to introduce conscription in peace-time on April Fools' Day, 1936. Chamberlain evidently understood his wily predecessor's intentions, by repeating the promise four weeks before breaking it. His paltry excuse—that these were hardly times of peace—is unmasked by the fact that Sir Samuel Hoare found it still expedient to make a similar pledge (not to introduce censorship of the press in times of peace) only a few days later.

Whom do these promises deceive? The answer is: the Labour Movement. They confessed that they were sufficiently duped by the April Fools' Day promise to support voluntary service for all they were worth. They say that, despite the success of voluntary service, compulsory service is foisted on youths of 20-21 (at least, that's the age limit at the moment). Yet . . . they go on supporting voluntary service! With the honourable exception of a strong minority in the Amalgamated Engineering Union, who threaten strike action and withdrawal from National Service, the trade unions go on to help the still-voluntary part of the war-machine. The Labour Party, having seen conscription come, is prepared only to try to make it more reasonable, not to block all parliamentary business (which, truth to tell, is all the Labour Party could do) if it stays. The Communist Party supports A.R.P. schemes, in the belief that they can support one part of the war-machine without supporting another, and oppose Chamberlain's conscript army while supporting Stalin's. The heroes of the Popular Front propaganda, the Liberals, have either supported conscription from the beginning or have decided not to oppose it now that it is here.

The compulsion on employers to reinstate their men applies only to a few of the first batch. What of

those who have, on various pretexts, been dismissed—in the first batch—and those, who have lost their jobs (just before the Conscription Laws) or who have not had a job for some time? They will have no jobs to be safeguarded, no chances of getting a job between now and the period of being called up, and will be wasting their time in a conscript camp when they might be looking for work.

This last class will increase. Naturally, employers want neither to pay the fine for dismissing men of military age, nor to keep their jobs open. They will simply not employ men within the danger age of the limit imposed by the law. This will mean an increase in blind-alley jobs, and an increase in unemployment between, say 18 and 20. It will mean that no young worker will really begin his career until he is about 21 or 22.

The “Telegraph” type of Conservative, which has been largely instrumental in forcing conscription (together with France and Poland) say that six months will interfere with no man's career. But they think only of the university graduates whose career does not begin till they are about 21 or 22 or older. For those of the working-class five year's unemployment is the prospect, during which time they cannot be studying or be kept, but will simply have to lounge about doing nothing. The Government will be to blame if they turn to crime. “Oh, we support conscription,” say people who don't have to go, and can afford to be patriotic about it. “It keeps the young men off the streets.”!

And, when in the conscript camps, the “militiamen” will be subjected to every hardship. One Member of Parliament, Markham, sneered at the concern expressed by some others for the young men. “Anyone would think they were tender hot-house plants likely to shrivel up,” he declared. We wonder why some of these people do not go and reside in the open air throughout the rigours of winter, sleeping eight in a tent (the War Office spokes-

man declared: “The scale would be generous—eight men to a tent,” in the manner of the famous statement that the shilling a day “would be subject to no allowances”) and existing on a shilling a day, enough to buy a packet of cigarettes. It is claimed that “it will make men of them.” One wonders why Chamberlain himself has never been in the Army, or why those who have taken good care to keep out of it.

As a matter of fact, the attitude of the women towards conscription proves the lies manifested in this statement. When one thinks of the screaming patriotism of women in 1914, and how young women rushed around giving out white feathers “speeding glum heroes up the road to death” in order to snatch their jobs, one is struck by the difference, at any rate so far as married women are concerned, in particular. The mothers of the first-born in 1918 are the mothers of the present conscripts, the first of the post-war cannon-fodder. It is they who more than anyone, more even than the conscripts themselves, realise the futility of it, and appreciate the unconscious irony in such instances as, for instance, the man who lost both legs in the War helping recruiting in South-West London, repeating, “The Army will make a man of you” (as, presumably, it did of him . . .). It is they who, in general, voice opposition to the scheme (if often qualified by “But what can we do?”) They know their sons will go as men and come back as machines, or drunkards, or cripples.

And now, what will be the position of the conscripts after being released from their six months' sentence? They will only be on probation, and will be forced to do a certain number of drills and waste a further amount of time in annual camps.

The Government rejected the Parliamentary Amendment saying that the “militia” should not be used in strikes.

One of the National Government M.P.s., Lieutenant-Colonel Heneage, put the case very simply: “There might be wartime conditions in which a trade dispute was brought on against the wishes of trade union leaders, and where the only troops available were those among whom there might be some militiamen.” We can also visualise such a situation.

Also, the conscripts can be called up and sent to fight overseas even in times of peace. Just as the Territorials were called up and sent to fight the Arab risings in Palestine, just as they have been called up for similar service in India, so the conscripts will find themselves forced to shoot down fellow-workers in the colonies even in times of peace. There is no peace under capitalism, only an “armed truce” or a united front of nations against their working-classes.

(continued on p. 3)

THE Bureau for the “Defence of the Colonial Peoples” was established in France at the end of November 1938 under the auspices of the S.I.A. (International Anti-Fascist Solidarity). It was intended at the same time to organise a large public meeting to demand an amnesty and democratic rights for the peoples of the French Empire.

The meeting was postponed for a long time because of the heavy responsibilities of the S.I.A. after the influx of Spanish refugees into France. It was finally fixed for the 28th April and aimed to coincide with the foundation of a joint centre against Imperialism which was to take place in Paris on the 29th April.

On the 22nd April the meeting was banned by the Prefecture of Police, and at the same time the Minister for the Interior suspended the journal of the S.I.A. on the pretext that it published many pages in a foreign language (Spanish). In reality this measure was largely taken because the journal published regular colonial articles denouncing the exceptional regime that French Imperialism is con-

REPRESSION IN FRANCE

ducting in the “Empire” and the judicial suppression that was being followed.

The Bureau for the Defence of the Colonial Peoples protested against the ban by a communication to the press. Later they endeavoured to interview the various Ministers but were only able to see the Minister for Colonies. At this meeting they were unable to get any satisfaction. On the evening of the meeting and subsequently the following resolution was issued:—

LONG LIVE LIBERTY.

Daladier and Sarraut, in applying the dictatorial methods of Hitler and Mussolini against whom they call us to defend liberty, has just prohibited the meeting organised by the Defence Bureau of Colonial Peoples of the S.I.A. (International Anti-Fascist Solidarity). This meeting was to take place in the hall of the Societes Savantes on Friday 28th April.

We protest energetically against such procedure which is in absolute

opposition to the liberty and democratic principles which the French Republic alleges exist. WHAT WAS THE OBJECT OF THE MEETING? WHAT SAID OUR POSTER TORN DOWN BY THE POLICE?

“French People! You are invited to defend the ‘Empire’ against Fascist covetousness!”

Do you know how this “sacred fraternity” is administered, in what manner France secures “order, prosperity and justice”?

Do you know that the immense majority of the 70 millions of human beings populating this Empire are not citizens but subjects?

Do you know that human rights, the most elementary liberties, including even the possibility of changing domicile, are refused to them?

Do you know that 90% of them, systematically maintained in ignorance are illiterate?

Do you know that they are submitted to a merciless repression, that thousands of them are in prison and

have been for months and years?

Do you want to help them to obtain amnesty? Then join us in the demand for the liberation of Fassi (of the Committee of Moroccan Action, deported to Gabon); of Messali, (of the Algerian Peoples Party) imprisoned in Algeria; of Bourguilla (of the Neo-Destour Party), imprisoned in Tunis for the last year.

DESPITE THIS PROHIBITION WE SHALL CONTINUE WITH OUR CAMPAIGN! All partisans of Liberty: Trade Unionists, Democrats, Workers WE ASK YOU TO PROTEST WITH US AGAINST THE SUPPRESSION OF ASSEMBLY RIGHTS!

We ask you to demand 1) Amnesty for the prisoners in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Indo China, Equatorial Africa and Madagascar; 2) Application of democratic liberties defined in the declaration of human citizen rights and for Trade Union liberty.

The time is urgent, repression advances in North Africa. THERE IS YET TIME!

ARTHUR BALLARD, Secretary, British Centre Against Imperialism.

The Pawns in Palestine

AFTER long deliberation the chess-players of Whitehall have made their move at last. The game that opened over twenty years ago in a brilliant and unorthodox manner, with a succession of moves by the White Knight (T. E. Lawrence) had threatened to become a stalemate. The oblique movement of the Bishop, so often a determining factor in this type of game, has proved of little value, owing to the fact that one half of the Church is immobilised and the other half moving on the wrong diagonals, the pawns being all Arabic or Jewish. The White King has now castled across the Atlantic, which may to some extent counteract possible losses resulting from the dangerous gambit contemplated next. The White Pawns (Jewish) are, if I am not mistaken, about to have their ranks thinned a little to clear the ground for the White Rooks and entice the opposing pawns into a pair of breeches...

The "new" policy as lined out in the White Paper of May 17th is neither pro-Arab nor pro-Jew. It is, as everybody should have expected, pro-British. Not pro-you-and-me, of course, but pro-those-people-you-read-about on the financial pages of The Times (though their names aren't often mentioned there) whom the directors of Rookem, Cheatem & Basham congratulate on the large dividends paid this year plus a share bonus. That is simple enough. What will prove much more puzzling to many will be the various shrieks, yells, howls and expostulations heard from many and divers quarters. These must be explained.

It will be remembered that when the National Government introduced the India Act a few years ago and graciously accorded to India a free marionette show called the New Constitution, there was opposition from many persons who certainly had very little in common. There were, to begin with, a few who actually opposed the new constitution because it was a shameful farce intended to conceal the bloody

and brutal realities of the thing we call fascism when it remains at home or the Benefits of Civilisation when we export it. Next there was the natural objection of the Labour Party because, when MacDonald strolled into the enemy lines, he took with him all the Blue Prints for a Perfect World, this Indian Constitution being one of them. So although they obviously couldn't vote against their own Utopia they said some catty pieces about Mr. MacDonald and his new friends and insinuated that the Blue Prints were much more thumb-marked than when they had them.

But the really effective opposition came from a group of fine old crusty Tories with barnacles growing on their bottoms from ruling the seas for so many centuries without a pause. Herr Churchill was loudest among these. Lady ("Save Spain, Save Democracy") Atholl was another. In fact a considerable group of persons well known today for their love of liberty and horror of fascism opposed the Indian Constitution, not because it was a racket but because they were horrified that even the appearance of democracy in India might prove the thin end of the wedge.

Turn back to Palestine. Positions have slightly changed: essentials remain. Palestine, The Gateway of the East, must be held—but how? By creating "a little loyal Jewish Ulster" was the old policy. The Zionists naturally stick to that. Labour, in our changing world the champion of the Old Imperialism (especially since Mr. Umbrella found his Canossa at Munich) thinks the same way. But the "Men on the Spot" think differently. They know the whole Arab world is up against them, determined to drive

them into the sea. Adolf and Benito have their agents at work and—Oh, Boy—what a chance they've got. "The Democracy of Great Britain is your enemy—we are the enemies of the Democracy. The British socialists support imperialism and oppose your independence—we are the enemies of socialism. The Jews are the agents of this imperialism, the loyal friends of the foreign oppressors—we are the enemies of the Jews."

So the Man on the Spot feels cold feet. What if war comes? Can they hold out with the aid of their Zionist allies against a vast Arab uprising, backed by the fascist powers? Probably not. Worse news comes from India. The Muslim League are threatening. This is a serious matter, and you had better know why.

India has been held by the same strategy as Palestine. Favour a few and make them your tools. In Ireland we had Ulster, in Palestine the Jews: in India we try to keep in with the Moslems. Not very successfully, for the Moslem masses are mostly nationalist and not easily deflected from their hatred of the Raj to join in some petty feud with the Hindus. But the Moslem land-owners and upper strata have been given privileges and carefully nursed. The Muslim League is their organisation, and very loyal on the whole to the hand that feeds it. For the Muslim League to turn against us is rather like a mutiny in the Marines.

Here's a jam, then. The same policy that holds Palestine holds India; but the Moslems, who are in Palestine the majority, are in India the favoured minority. That the Moslem world is united and that Moslems in one part of the world

can feel intensely and act fanatically when they believe Moslem interests elsewhere to be threatened has been demonstrated dramatically—after the last war, in the Khilafit Movement, which shook the whole of India. To keep the goodwill of a Jewish Ulster in Palestine means losing the last remains of our Islamic Ulster in India. And what is the use of holding the Gateway to the East if the East itself is lost in the process?

Hence it comes about that the principal support for a change of policy in Palestine comes from ex-administrators of India. Let us consider the horse first, they say, and

That is what the White Paper means. Promises to the Arabs, as vague as those we gave them in the War. For the Jews, a temporary continuation of the colonisation policy with a threat that if things go badly we may at the end of it throw them overboard—hence the fury of the Zionist organisations. And for the Powers-that-Be a temporary respite, a waiting period during which they hope to keep both parties in Palestine guessing and on their best behaviour, angling for the rich haul that a British Providence may yet bestow upon good Arabs or good Jews.

Will they be good little Arabs and Jews and hang up their stockings for Father Christmas? Will they open their mouths and shut their eyes to see what Dame Britannia will give them?

Events to date indicate that our benevolent government has bungled

By REGINALD REYNOLDS

make our plans for the stable door in the light of these considerations. We must grant the Arabs enough to quieten the Moslem Old Guard in India (nothing, they know, will silence the Moslem masses but food and freedom, but that is too much to ask...) Let us give the Arab potentates and the feudal lords enough to make them our allies against this fellow Mussolini. As to the Jews, since we may still have to fall back on them, let immigration continue for a time: after all, within a few years everything may have changed, and who knows but we may find it better then to fall back on our old policy, break our promises to the Arabs (not for the first time!) and—if we have meanwhile defeated Germany and Italy—continue the colonisation of Palestine without fear of the consequences?

it again. The Arabs, who still want independence and self-government, seem strangely unimpressed by twelve pages of sweet nothings as a substitute. The Zionists, who are still bitterly opposed to democratic institutions which would destroy their privileged status as a minority have still no assurance that the British dictatorship will continue until the Jews have a majority—indeed, if Britain happens to keep the one specific pledge in the White Paper their minority status will be made permanent as a permanent excuse, if necessary, for the continuation of the "Mandate." I remember a landlord once telling me that it was "a hard life living on property." I reckon there are some at Whitehall who feel the same way about Empire. There is nothing more shocking to a real sahib than the ingratitude of the downtrodden.

Impressions of Italy

(From a Correspondent)

Italy is a beautiful country, God's country, but there can be no mistake about His identity. Mussolini is manifest in every tree and flower. His Word is imprinted on every bridge and barrack, "Obey, Believe, Fight." Where on the mountain top, He cannot tack up His photo, He uses neon lights. You walk into the Sistine Chapel fearful that even there, God will have a lantern jaw and Adam a black shirt.

Like God, the ways of Il Duce are inscrutable; particularly his foreign policy. It is impossible to travel in Italy without being aware of the intense uneasiness over the Rome-Berlin axis. Never was foreign policy less calculated to stir enthusiasm.

I spoke with Italians in the trains, in the cafes, in the hotels, in their homes; Italians who wore their fascist buttons and reiterated the stock phrases I heard up and down the country. "We are a poor people; we need colonies. In 1919 we lived in a state of anarchy; now we have order. Before Mussolini, Italy was despised; now she is recognised as a world power." But whenever the subject turned to the axis, they changed their tune. Germans were never popular in Italy, but now that Germany is on the Italian frontier, they are dangerous.

To my question, "Do you think it is possible that Mussolini may join the London-Paris axis?" there were two reactions, and both were hostile to Germany. 1. "Yes, it is possible if France makes an appropriate gesture. It is the fault of the French that Mussolini turned to Hitler. They had no right to apply sanctions." 2. "No, it is too late. Germany is on our frontier and perhaps it is better to have her for a friend than for an enemy. Besides, Rome is swarming with Germans who are already in control of our civil and military forces."

A few of my experiences may make this more vivid. In a Turin cafe, a young Italian ordered cafe espresso. Then with a sudden burst of indignation, "Another cafe espresso until Hitler says I can't have any more." In my hotel in Milan, a friend of the proprietor

speaking quite openly in the lobby, "I am always happier when Hitler is in Berlin because once he begins to march, I am never sure where he'll be going." At Fiesole, a fascist acquaintance, pointing to the Florentine panorama before us, "A beautiful view, but I should find it lovelier if there were fewer Germans around." It was Easter time and droves of German tourists on Kraft durch Freude excursions were enjoying a brief Italian holiday. The natives properly called it an "invasion" and added, "These people look at us as though they own the country already."

At Rome, I visited an Italian family who thought of themselves as anti-fascist. Yet when they explained their position, it was not anti-fascist, but anti-axis. They had been former supporters of the regime, applauding the Abyssinian adventure as an economic necessity for a country poor in minerals and in cultivable land. Like most Italians I met, they identified fascism with national glory, and were willing to make the sacrifices of liberty and representative governments in that cause. Now, however, that Mussolini was in eclipse, having lost his dominion in the Danube, his restrictions were less acceptable. "If we lose the war we lose it. But if we win the war, we lose it to Hitler."

Perhaps the most revealing is the sharp differentiation Italians make between fascism and nazism. In their view the two "philosophies" overlap only in laying claim to the same territory.

That does not mean that the Duce is no longer master in Italy or that the population is not still "Mussolinian." But I think there can be no doubt that his popularity has declined since those thrilling days when sanctions united the population behind the sacred cause of empire.

I was also impressed by the essential reasonableness of the average Italian on the question of Tunisia. What they seem to want is a

gesture. And while they believe current horror stories about how badly Italians are treated in French territory, they are neither anti-French nor eager for a Tunis adventure. It is true that among the university boys, there are some who are eager for a blow up so that they may use their rifles in earnest and not merely on Saturday afternoon parades. But the population in general has had enough. As a young girl, working at the desk in my hotel in Venice, put it, "We huddle up at the radio every day. First Abyssinia, and what good did that do us? Then Spain; we lost more men there than in Africa. I suppose it's important to keep the communists out of Spain, but it costs so much. And now, mobilisation. The proprietor has been called up; the porter has been called up; and the waiter is expecting to be called. We'll have to close the hotel. It's terrible."

It is not merely the strain of war, of mobilisation, of daily uncertainty. The cost of empire is reflected in rising prices and relentless taxation. In a small village near Parma in the fertile valley of the Po, blessed with one of Mussolini's bonifacas, I was told that 800 adults in a population of 7,000 inhabitants were unemployed. Taxes are so heavy that a peasant who might formerly have employed agricultural labour can no longer afford to do so. Each day during my stay at the farm-house, poor neighbours came to the door for local charity.

Fascism has not given Italy the blessing of full employment, and the only enthusiastic comments about Germany that I heard were from two peasants who returned in the village for the Easter holiday. They were Italian labourers working Germany and enjoying a higher standard of living than Fascism could avail them.

On the other hand, capitalists, while they call the system Bolshevik, because they are subject to price and wage regulations and in-

creasing state control, have a relatively free capital market and unlike their German brothers, enjoy unlimited dividends.

Everyone complains of the taxes. A worker in Naples makes an average of 13 Lira a day with which to support a wife and six to ten children. It is true that he may send one of his children to the fine summer homes for workers' children, and he may go to the movies and the opera at a specially reduced "Dopo Lavoro" price. But with 13 Lira officially valued at 26 francs and with a real purchasing power of about 20 francs, these joys are rather for the "gallery" than for home consumption.

A teacher in a village school earns 490 Lira a month; in a Milan lycee, he begins with 700 Lira a month. A highly skilled worker in the north may achieve as much as 800 Lira a month. But the average worker and peasant cannot eat meat. He lives on grain-bread, polenta, spaghetti and citrus fruit.

Cultural life under fascism survives but does not flourish. The

University of Rome has beautiful stream-lined buildings and a flowering campus. The library contains innumerable subversive books. To wit: Marx, Lenin, Engels, Trotsky, Joseph Freeman's "The Soviet Worker," H.A.L. Fisher's "History of Europe," Pigou's "Capitalism v. Socialism," the works of Croce, Ruppin's "History of the Jews." But the extra-curricular energies of the students are absorbed in political demonstrations, parades, and target practice, while degrees are awarded with an eye to political merit. Students are taught that Mussolini is always right; those who doubt it are given little exercise in critical thinking. There are coteries who have heated discussions about modern art and modern literature, but the big names are still the pre-fascist giants: Croce, d'Annunzio, Pirandello. Even the most cultured Italians have never heard of Silone.

Now that American films no longer come to Italy, the cinema relies on the home product which is incredibly poor. I was told by a Milanese professor that if the cinema continues to be so uninviting, one might hope for a resurgence in the theatre. But the sincerity necessary for a really vital literature is lacking today. Opportunism and expediency are the passwords of the fascist system.

A PAMPHLET FOR ALL WORKERS:

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CHURCHILL FORGETS

ANARCHISTS have always pointed out that reformists who begin by supporting mildly reactionary politicians against more open reactionaries end by supporting the most bitter enemies of the workers. It is the inevitable course of parliamentarism. The Communist Party which began by shouting "Vote for MacDonald," passing through support of the Labour Party to support of the Liberals, now demands a government inclusive of (and that would really mean led by) the worst Conservative politicians and counter-revolutionaries, the bitter, unforgiving class enemies of the workers.

At meetings, in the "Daily Worker" and in 250,000 handbills, the C.P. through its secretary Harry

Pollitt calls "Let Attlee, Sinclair and Churchill get together without another minute's delay and express their readiness to form a new Government of the People." We must defend our country" cries the disciple of Marx and Lenin.

Churchill has been for a long while the especial darling of the Communist Party. Before he becomes the C.P. nominated Prime Minister let us consider his long record of attacks on liberty and labour, that we may know the blows to be delivered on our backs.

We are at once faced by an embarrassment of riches. It is like reading the life of some celebrated pirate. To what blood-stained page shall we turn?

We might consider the arming of the South Wales police against the miners and the shooting of the Featherstone strikers. We might choose his Dardanelles gamble, an adventure without any military value, one bound to fail, which, while leaving Mr. Churchill safe, cost 40,000 lives. Was it incompetence or ambition gone mad? We might pick out his attacks on the workers in the General Strike of 1926 or prefer a short account of his part in organising the Black and Tan terror in Ireland, a terror worse than that of Hitler's Storm Troops. Or shall we be tempted to a remembrance of his slanderous attacks on the Spanish people during their heroic fight against Fascism? Let us put aside these tempting offers, the most sanguinary pages of the Churchill story are those which tell of his attacks on the Russian Revolution.

In the early days of the Russian Revolution, while Germany was still at war with the Western Allies and Russia, the French and British "democratic" governments sent armed forces to overthrow the Russian Revolution, so the Russians faced British as well as German forces. The government made war without declaring war and continued to do so years after the war officially "ceased." It was exactly similar to the "non-intervention" of the Fascist powers in Spain.

Of all the organisers of intervention in Russia from 1918 to 1922 Churchill stands out as the greatest and most bitter counter-revolutionary. On July 27th, 1930, he wrote an article for the "Evening News" entitled "The Poison Peril from the East" in which he advocated an alliance of France, Britain and Germany against Russia. Now he calls for an alliance of France, Britain and Russia against Germany and dines at the Russian Embassy, sipping his soup with fear of the "poison from the east."

Of course they did not make war against Russia, they just "non-intervened." Says Mr. Churchill "Were they (the Allies) at war with Soviet Russia? Certainly not; but they shot Soviet Russians at sight. They stood as invaders on Russian soil. They armed the enemies of the Soviet Government. They blockaded its ports, and sunk its battleships. But war-shocking! Interference — shame! It was, they repeated, a matter of indifference to them how Russians settled their own internal affairs" (*The World Crisis: The Aftermath*, by Winston S. Churchill, p. 235).

During the greater period of intervention Churchill was Secretary of State for War. Not only were British troops sacrificed in Russia, but he also presented arms and supplies to the Czarist generals who were fighting against the revolution. From statements made by Churchill in the House of Commons those supplies must have cost the British taxpayers over £100,000,000. Just one item: "British ships with stores continued to arrive at Vladivostok up till October 1919, and during that year the total amount supplied or carried in British vessels to the Siberian armies amounted to nearly a hundred thousand tons of arms, ammunition, equipment and clothing" (*The World Crisis* W. Churchill p. 247).

The leading Czarist generals were Koltchak and his lieutenant Denikin, but Koltchak had another lieutenant, the British Secretary of State for War General Golvin a Czarist officer reports an interview with that official on May 1st, 1919: "He (Churchill) declared 'I am myself carrying out Admiral Koltchak's orders'" (*Daily News, Daily Herald and Manchester Guardian*, July 3rd, 1920).

Four hundred pages of information like this may be found in W. P. Coates book "Armed Intervention in Russia" published by Victor Gollancz Ltd., but that was before Mr. Gollancz became the prophet of the Left Book Club.

Now while Jewish workers are being urged into war against Germans under the leadership of Churchill let them remember how Koltchak and Denikin and the other

generals supplies with British arms, used them not only against Russian revolutionaries, workers and peasants but against the Jewish people in the greatest pogroms of history. Those of Denikin were particularly horrifying.

"Three million Jews of the Ukraine were handed over helpless and hopeless to murder and dishonour... The massacres of the Jews in the Ukraine can find, for thoroughness and extent, no parallel except in the massacres of the Armenians." "Wholesale slaugh-

ter and violation, drownings and burnings and burials alive, became not merely commonplace, but the order of the day. There were pogroms that lasted a week; in several towns for a month—the dread total will be very near half-a-million human beings." "There were no less than 150 pogroms carried out by the Denikin army." (*A Decade of Woe and Hope*, 1923 by Dr. J. H. Hertz, Chief Rabbi in Britain).

Now that Churchill becomes the nominee of that other celebrated counter-revolutionary Joseph Stalin he would leave behind his attacks on once revolutionary Russia. Mr. Churchill forgets, LET US REMEMBER!

Tom Brown.

Will the Labour Leaders Dare?

THE Labour Party's approaching Whitsun Conference marks an occasion of more than usual political significance. For to-day the whole issue of our Civil Liberties, the whole issue of Fascism or Freedom, hangs precariously in the balance. Not in the Balance of Power between conflicting Imperialist interests, but in the balance between the conflicting forces of the workers and the ruling class.

What is to be the function of the Labour Party at this crisis in the struggle for our freedom?

Everyone knows that within the Labour Party there are sincere anti-Fascists and enemies of tyranny, whether it comes from at home or abroad, and most of the rank and file of the Party must have realised that the Chamberlain Government has no intention of using National Service and Conscription against Nazi aggression: that it hopes to use them as a means of threatening the rights of Labour and challenging the independence of the working-class.

Nevertheless there are grim indications that certain official elements are hoping to effect a black betrayal.

A campaign to secure full pay for conscripts has already been inaugurated. Its purpose is to confuse the issue.

The Labour Party leaders know that conscription would so disorganise the economic life of this country that the Government would be forced to introduce such measures for controlling capitalism as represent the basis of a British Fascist State. They know that any reform-

(continued from p. 1)

The conscientious objector to military service will fare worse, unless he takes the alternative non-military service.

How the political objector, the revolutionary socialist or anarchist will fare is quite another matter. It seems most unlikely that he will receive just treatment. The tribunals are invariably composed of enemies of the working-class, who are most unlikely to miss the chance of giving vent to their prejudices.

What is the most important conclusion from any study of the Conscription law? It undoubtedly is that concerning the exclusion of Northern Ireland from the law. Chamberlain said that he could rely upon the loyalty of Ulster to produce as many men as conscription would bring. The Labour members claimed that this proved that conscription was unnecessary, Gallacher, the Communist, putting the obvious patriotic standpoint that "this was a reflection on the loyalty of England, Scotland and Wales."

Why fool about with the question? The fact is that Chamberlain did not impose conscription on Ulster because he did not dare. Was he afraid of DeValera? Did he take the Dublin statement that "this would be considered an act of aggression" seriously? No. He knew that Eire was dependent on Britain, that De Valera was only making a show of resistance and realised that he must "follow his master."

The painful truth is that Chamberlain feared the I.R.A. and that he did not fear the workers at home.

We believe the fight should be on class lines, not on national lines and that there should be no war of "Ireland" against "England" but of

workers against the bosses. Had the workers shown the degree of militancy against the bosses that the "Irish" have shown against the "English," England, Scotland and Wales would also be conscript-free, and very nearly boss-free.

How are the workers to fight the bosses? It can only be done by an organised working-class, fighting in one class organisation of industrial unions, against the State and the capitalists. The bosses can be defeated on their own ground of industry. The need of the workers is for solidarity against the bosses who exploit them and the politicians who betray them.

Recognising that politics is a game which the ruling-class uses to its own advantage, we are anarcho-syndicalists: that is, we stand for direct action against all the schemes of the capitalist class, through revolutionary industrial unions built by workers' committees at the point of production.

Here then is our message to the conscripts: "You must choose yourself for your own particular case whether you will decide on the soul-destroying task of defying the authorities and preferring jail to the conscript army, or will go into the army and spread the message of revolutionary solidarity there, equally difficult. Unless you can find your own way of evading service, the only alternative Democracy offers is: Conscript or Convict. But, whatever you choose, the only way out is the general unity and strike of labour as a whole: and the way to resist conscription, or to revenge oneself on the Government for being forced into it, is to take up the anarchist method of struggle by means of industrial direct action!"

ALBERT MELTZER.

Anarchists Assert the Right to be Heard

ON Sunday 30th April, the Glasgow Group, of the Anarchist Communist Federation, on arriving at their usual Sunday night meeting place, at Brunswick Street, found another loud-speaker van a short distance away. Shortly after officials of the Borough Labour Party arrived, including Neil MacLean, M.P., Alexander Sloan, M.P. and the secretary, A. W. Brady. They also had advertised a meeting against conscription. On seeing this, we approached them with a view to arranging the loud-speakers so that the meetings would not clash. This was not accepted by the L.P. They instead pressed us to forego our meeting. This we would not do. (We had already given up one meeting at the same place, last January, for the same party). Brady stated that he had a permit from the magistrates to hold the meeting. He had left it in his office. The lie was obvious. (Even if he had applied for a permit, we would still have demanded the right of Free-speech).

After twenty minutes of haggling, the L.P. decided to go ahead with their meeting, their loud-speakers facing our stance.

They were so full of their authority and importance they could not see themselves making a mutual agreement with an infinitesimal Anarchist Group, especially in front of the 6,000 who were gathered there.

Their decision left us with no alternative, but to carry on our meeting. The result has been published in the sensational bourgeois press. Different versions were published, the nearest to the accurate being that of the *Daily Express* (Scottish Edition) of the 1st May:

SOCIALISTS BEATEN

BY ANARCHISTS AT WORDS

ANARCHISTS beat the socialists in a battle of words in Glasgow last week.

When the Anarchist Communist Federation officials arrived for their usual Sunday night open-air meeting in Brunswick St., they discovered a rival Socialist conscription demonstration on their pitch.

Mr. Frank Leech, the Anarchist Communist speaker, cried, "This is our site. I tried to come to a compromise with the other side, but this was rejected."

Mr. Alexander Sloan, Socialist victor in

South Ayrshire, was speaking on the other platform.

For twenty minutes Sloan and Leech tried to drown each other's voices.

A Socialist flute band stopped at the Anarchist rostrum, tried to suppress Leech's oratory.

Leech retorted by putting on a record—"The Internationale"—on his loud-speaker gramophone.

Leech and Sloan resumed the verbal contest... Then, silence on the Socialist platform.

The Socialists had decided to "throw in the towel."

They asked their followers to adjourn to North Hanover St., where the meeting would be continued.

The dictatorial methods of the L.P. in riding roughshod over all who do not agree with their control, failed. The small group of Anarchists have as much right to speak as they have. We have no desire to prevent anyone from being heard, but, we are certainly not going to allow our meetings to be broken up if we can stop it.

The bigoted members of the deactionary L.P.—P.F.—C.P., congregations accuse us of disrupting Unity. On this occasion they were the disrupters of Unity. Not that we want the same Unity as they propose: National Unity. We favour instead a Unity of Workers for Social Revolution, for Free Socialism, for Anarchism. A Socialism which alone can stop Conscription and War.

The opposition to Conscription put forward by the L.P.—P.F.—C.P. is a Sham opposition. Apart from mere political protest, they support the forerunners of conscription: A.R.P.—Voluntary Service,—Collective Security,—Peace Pacts, and will be in favour of conscription if a P.F. or L.P. Government is returned, or if Chamberlain signs a Peace Pact (War Pact) with Stalin.

The duty of Anarchists and Revolutionary Socialists is to encourage workers to put a genuine opposition to conscription and war, along the lines of Industrial Direct Action. This is obviously the only way to-day.

F.L.

THE BASIS OF HUMAN SOLIDARITY

THIS month we have received no less than £100 for our Refugee Fund. But this amount does not represent a satisfactory response to Herbert Read's appeal (as well as our own) which appeared in the last issue. The large sum of £70 is part of the balance of the money received by our contemporary "l'Adunata dei Refrattari" of Newark for its orphans colony in Spain. After the fall of Barcelona the colony was broken up and as no further work of this kind could be contemplated our comrades of "l'Adunata" decided to send the balance on hand to organizations working for Spanish relief. The money was sent to us with the instructions to use it in the best way we think fit. Accordingly we have decided to use this money to help our comrades in S. France. We are doing this in spite of the fact that we have many Spanish comrades here in London who depend on us. Up to date we have spent more than £75 in solidarity for our Spanish comrades in London. And who knows how many weeks will pass by before they will receive their permits for Mexico?

We need money urgently. Will comrades do all in their power to help us carry on our work of human solidarity. We appeal to all groups to do their utmost to raise funds by socials and other activities.

Your contributions should be sent to:

Spain and the World Refugee Fund, 21 Frith Street, London, W.1.

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- No. 418. London: A. Simpson 5/-.
- 419. London: Ilse 1/-, N. 1/—2/-.
- 420. New Eagle: per F. Venturini £2/9/6.
- 421. Bronx: per Monitto 8/9.
- 422. Newark: l'Adunata £70/6/3.
- 423. Los Angeles: Kropotkin Lit. Soc. (per Dr. J. Holtz) £6/1/4.
- 424. Southend: M. Kavanagh 9/-.
- 425. Detroit: International Youth Club per Virginia Fernandez £8/19/0.
- 426. Umtali: Scribante 10/-.
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- 428. London: L. Segal (per E. Man) 5/-.
- 429. London: E. Man 2/-.
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The Transition Stage

THE IMPORTANT ROLE PLAYED BY THE Anarchist - Communists in the Russian Revolution, and the still greater efforts made in social reconstruction by the C.N.T.-F.A.I. in Spain has brought a great number of "Near-Anarchists" to reconsider their position. For years we have heard almost without ending, the argument, "Yes, Anarchism is our ideal, but there must be a transitional stage, in order to prepare humanity for a free society." We maintain that socialism is that "transitional stage."

This proposition is put forward without any regard for evidence. Nothing in history or in the theory of social evolution confirms it. If, and it is generally accepted as such to-day, there must be factors working for and against, and therefore counter-revolution plays its part as much as revolution does. Evolution is not a smooth, even progress, but an un-remitting, continuous struggle. If this is so, then we contend that the present system is this transitional stage. The theory that humanity must go through a stage of governmental tutelage and coercion, in order to fit them to be free, is contrary to all reason. Freedom must be the training-ground for free men. Our friends admit that the classless society is their objective, and quote Engels to show that the abolition of private property will lead to the withering of the State, acknowledging thereby that the State exists for the protection and the preservation of private property. Where, in history, is there any grounds for their belief, that in Russia a system of government exists built by Marxists, and every year of its existence the government grows stronger. The wage-system is recognised in their new constitution, the income tax is graduated, just as in any bourgeois country. All free expression of thought is suppressed; only the voice of the State is heard. It is worse than childish to think that such are the conditions that will breed free men. The facts of recent events show that all extensions of State activities have been at the expense of socialism and socialist ideas, so much is this so, that in all capitalist countries huge combines are brought under the patronage and support of the State, their dividends guaranteed by the State, and are then hailed as steps towards socialism. The workers in these concerns are bound hand and foot, individual action is impossible; trade union life is fettered by trade boards; agreements are drawn up by the trade union bureaucracy. Such "steps" are in no way different from the syndicates of the Fascist state. Then we are asked to believe that such an intolerable system of wage-slavery, is the preparatory school for a society of Free Communism.

Do these critics forget, or are they so politically colour-blinded by their marxist prejudices, to see the obvious fact that the principle of communism is inherent in society; that it is the active factor of social evolution; the spirit of mutual aid; this motive power that has inspired every effort towards social progress and economic improvement. The "State," i.e. Government, which they ask us to live under and adopt, has always been anti-social in all its activities. Even according to their own showing, the State has no other function, except that of protecting property. If, then, that is its function, it becomes an anachronism in a propertyless society. The social functions that have been thrust upon it, by mistaken progressives such as sanitation, education, etc., have never been efficiently administered except when there have been outside organisations who by ceaseless agitation, have kept them working and up-to-date. Contrast Russian, with the sabotaged efforts in Spain, and you have the answer as to whether a period of penal servitude under State tyranny is a necessary training for liberty. In Russia, obsessed by economic superstitions, they destroyed the primitive communism of the peasant, in order to build State capitalism. In Spain they utilised the social habits of the peasant, guided and directed it into more productive and scientific methods, with the result that whole communities were not only able to live a propertyless, money-less life but were able to feed the fighting forces. In that short but wonderful suggestive period, the Spanish worker showed to the world that the methods of Anarcho-Syndicalism are eminently practical, answering by fact this oft-repeated statement, that Anarchism is a village economy. The management of Barcelona's transport, electricity, in fact the whole social administration by the workers of the C.N.T., has proved for all time that the creative abilities of man expand and develop when given freedom, and conversely decline and die during periods of governmental restriction. Those who advance the "transitional" argument must think that all mankind have reached the same, or a similar stage of development, and that in all parts of the world social evolution will proceed along the same lines, confident in the belief that their particular form of government is the highest form yet reached by man. Any other form, because it is different, must be inferior. Anarchism, Complete Freedom, leaves to each community the right to live and develop upon whichever lines they think fit. Anarchism is the liberty of the individual; Communism is the recognition of the like liberty of all.

M. KAVANAGH

Criticism and "Politics"

OUR last issue brought us congratulations from comrades and sympathisers in many countries. Articles have been reproduced in French and Italian papers. Naturally, we have also been subjected to criticism — violent criticism in some cases—with regard to certain material such as the Article on the International Brigades. We were expecting criticism of this article, because to many people fed by the Communist Press all matters connected with the Party must not be criticised. Criticism of the International Brigades is a crime, and those who dare to tell the truth, however unpleasant it may be, are informed that they are "playing into the hands of the Fascists." In our opinion the results are just the contrary. So long as the Truth is kept from the workers for political reasons, so long will Socialism remain an ideal with no real possibilities. The "Left" parties today are as guilty as the Capitalist Press of distorting the truth to serve their own ends. Almost alone, the Anarchist Press is prepared to present the true facts on all matters of vital importance to the International. The reason is simple to understand. We do not crave for pow-

er. We are not seeking comfortable jobs in London's best Social Club in Westminster. We do not seek to create a mass movement in order to create a bureaucracy which will live at the expense of the workers. We want the Emancipation of the Workers of the World, and we believe this possible by the efforts of the workers only. Revolt! is the modest effort of our group. But during the last four months its publication has not been regular, and its propaganda value has suffered as a result. We have appealed on more than one occasion for funds to continue our work and publish Revolt! regularly every fortnight. We confess that the response has been far from heartening. Many sympathisers outside our movement have responded, but many comrades who promised us their support, have failed us. Many comrades have failed to renew their subscriptions others have promised to sell the in spite of our reminders whilst others have promised to sell the paper at meetings and have been conspicuous by their absence. Meanwhile Time Marches On! and those few liberties which the "democracies" concede their class enemies are being taken away from us.

Comrades! Do you feel your responsibility with regard to Revolt! or are you indifferent to what happens to it?

Revolt! is in a critical position. Its continued publication depends on your decision to support it in every way possible.

Apathy is rampant in the Labour Movement. Let it not be said also of the Anarchists.

The Editors.

Send your contributions, subscriptions, etc. to:

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—25/3/10

On Direct Action

THE focal point of the political struggle lies, then, not in the political parties, but in the economic fighting organisations of the workers. It was the recognition of this which impelled the Anarcho-Syndicalists to cen-

tre all their activity on the socialist education of the masses and on the utilisation of their economic and social power. Their method is that of direct action both in the economic and the political struggles of the time. That is the only method which has been able to achieve anything at all in every decisive moment in history. The bourgeoisie, in its struggles against absolutism, has also made abundant use of this method, and by refusal to pay taxes, by boycott and revolution, has defiantly asserted its position as the dominant class in society. So much the worse if its representatives of today have forgotten the story of their fathers, and how bloody murder at the "unlawful methods" of the workers fighting for liberation. As if the law ever permitted a subject class to shake off its yoke.

By direct action the Anarcho-Syndicalists mean every method of immediate warfare by the workers against their economic and political oppressors. Among these the outstanding are: the strike, in all its gradations from

the simple wage-struggle to the general strike; the boycott; sabotage in all its countless forms; anti-militarist propaganda; and in peculiarly critical cases, such, for example, as that in Spain today, armed resistance of the people for the protection of life and liberty.

Among these fighting techniques the strike, that is, organised refusal to work, is the most used. It plays in the industrial age the same role for the workers as did their frequent uprisings for the peasants in the feudal era. In its simplest forms it is for the workers an indispensable means of raising their standards of living or defending their attained advantages against the concerted measures of the employers. But the strike is for the workers not only a means for the defence of immediate economic interests, it is also a continuous schooling for their powers of resistance, showing them every day that every least right has to be won by unceasing struggle.

RUDOLF ROCKER

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A LESSON FROM GERMANY

CONSPICUOUS amongst the more extensively popularised aspects of Marxist philosophy are the continuous references to the inherent contradictions which a capitalist order of society automatically involves. Inevitably the ruling class must be divided against itself, and so on.

In a limited sense these statements are true: capitalism is divided; but this division of its economic interests is accompanied by an intensification of ruling class unity which cannot be described exclusively in Marxist terms.

In this connection it is significant to note a social characteristic that has been developing within Nazi Germany for some considerable time; this is the tendency for those responsible for Germany's economic management to be less reactionary than the controllers of the Nazi State.

According to Marxist interpretation this can be explained by the assertion that Fascism is the political expression of the most reactionary aspects of capitalism; that the economic requirements of the capitalist minority are more

intensively anti-social than the similar requirements of capitalism as a whole.

Certainly there is no need to quarrel with this contention. The concentration of capitalist control can be seen here in Britain as well as in Germany. Except that the former have need for a political demagogue there is noticeable similarity between the economic functions of Krupp and Thyssen, Chamberlain and Baldwin.

But this analysis is not enough. As a means of interpreting events it ignores the determining power of the State. For the State is more than a development from economic influences; it is a force within itself, a power.

To ignore this is to arrive, by implication, at the concept of an inevitable narrowing and concentration of the forces of reaction; to suggest that by an historical process, sooner or later, they must disappear. There is an admirable philosophy of history, but the working-class has been ignored! Theory becomes aesthetics in de-

tachment from reality and progressive culture reclines contentedly beneath the shadows thrown by the philosophy of the inevitable.

Academic achievements will get the workers nowhere. Capitalism has passed its days of freedom. Force returns to bolster it up through its phase of self-inspired restriction and reversion to the slave-state. Economic analysis has proved insufficient to explain developments to-day.

With each new crisis the class struggle moves further away from the field of economic influence. Each approaching Munich will announce a step of the ruling class towards the politics of strategy. And Munich will guide them in peace and in war.

These are the circumstances which demand of the workers a new determination in the fight against their enemies, a new realisation that it is the power of labour that must be decisive in the victory.

The internal difficulties of the Nazi State can be solved only by

the use of force. That should be self-evident. Our hopes must reside in the grim realisation that the present regime was a strategic development from the conditions of chaos and corruption that preceded it; that the workers must soon reach the point where their conditions will become intolerable; for it is then that they will strike for freedom.

Meanwhile the reactionary opportunists of democracies will recognise increasing dangers. The ruling class will become more jealous of our liberties. Already we are challenged with conscription. Chamberlain will try to strike again.

Unless the workers organise for class resistance, Britain too may become a State modelled on the lines of Nazi Germany, for the same contradictions of capitalism, the same strategic manoeuvring, the same intensification of ruling class unity continues to develop here.

The economic contradictions inherent in capitalism perform but

a trivial service for the British workers, for superimposed upon them, counteracting and controlling them, is the harsh reality of the ruling class's opportunist solidarity. It is this that determines the course of reaction; it is this that is the basis of the reversion to tyranny, of the political reflex of Fascism.

We are no longer in the period of an unrestricted capitalism where economic factors were of relative importance. To-day the inherent contradictions fade away into an academic meaning; their factual significance is that they are productive of an entity. The strains of division are overpowered. Result, a Fascist State is born.

R. V. STURGES.

A RED CROSS HERE indicates that your subscription is now due for renewal. A remittance will greatly oblige.