

SOCIALIST APPEAL

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STOP VICTIMISATION IN THE R.A.F.

Airmen Angry—Demand Release of Militants

FOLLOWING ON THE SENTENCE ON L.A.C. CYMBALIST, REPORTS ARE COMING IN FROM BOMBAY OF A NUMBER OF FURTHER COURT MARTIALS BEING HELD IN CONNECTION WITH THE RECENT STRIKES OF R.A.F. MEN IN INDIA. L.A.C. ARTHUR ATTWOOD IS BEING COURT MARTIALLED ON A CHARGE OF "INCITEMENT TO MUTINY" AT THE R.A.F. STATION AT DRIGH ROAD, KARACHI. 20 OTHER MEN FROM THIS AND OTHER R.A.F. STATIONS ARE ALSO UNDER ARREST AND MAY FACE SIMILAR CHARGES.

EGYPT: New Imperialist Strategy

The announcement of the British Government's willingness to withdraw troops from Egypt comes at a time when Anglo-Egyptian relations had reached the point of an explosion. During the last three months, it has become abundantly clear that the Egyptian people are in no mood to tolerate the continued presence of British troops in their country.

Unfortunately, the announcement in itself, of the Labour Government's willingness to withdraw forces from Egypt is not sufficient to satisfy Egyptian national aspirations. Nor does it give an answer to the equally strong desires entertained by the Arab masses in Iraq, Palestine, Transjordan and other Arab countries. As it is, the announcement to withdraw the troops is hedged round with so many conditions and contingencies, that it could not but arouse the strongest suspicions in the minds of the Egyptian masses.

In the first place, the troops are not to be withdrawn immediately but in the course of years. In the meantime, the presence of British troops could be used as a pressure on the Egyptian Government to agree to a new treaty, favourable to British imperialism. Realising this, the Egyptians are already demanding that the troops be withdrawn in months and not years.

Morrison stated in the House of Commons that if a satisfactory treaty could not be concluded then British troops could once more enter Egypt under the provisions of the old Treaty. It is no wonder that Churchill replied with satisfaction "I am bound to admit that this relieves my anxiety to some extent."

The truth of the matter is that on this issue, the Labour leaders have been guided not by socialist principles but by mere expediency. They were afraid that under the existing conditions any attempt to maintain British troops in Egypt would result in a revolution, which would be very difficult to combat. Morrison openly said they would be faced with revolution and that they were forced "reluctantly" to adjust themselves. It is not only the Egyptians they are afraid of. They are well aware that the British soldiers in their present mood would not be too willing to shoot down Egyptians in the interest of British capitalism.

The Associated Press reported on May 12th, that while the British members of the treaty delegation were having tea in a park, British troops on leave in Cairo were shouting to them, "WE WANT TO GO HOME." Robert M. son made it quite clear that the policy of the Government is based not on considerations of democracy but only on the necessity of adjusting the old imperialist policy to the requirements of the new situation in Egypt and the Middle East.

Troops Transferred

The troops that are to be evacuated from Egypt are not to be brought home and allowed to return to civilian life. They are simply to be transferred to Palestine and other strategic areas near at hand. The Arab masses in these areas are just as eager for national independence as their brothers in Egypt. Seen in this light, the action of the Labour Government appears in its true colours.

British imperialism has not melted in thin air. The Labour leaders can pretend to the workers that they have adopted an anti-imperialist attitude in their weak speeches in the country. But as the speeches of Attlee and Morrison in Parliament show, this is not really so. British imperialism is holding on desperately to what it has got, and tries to maintain itself by concessions to the colonial capitalists.

The Middle East to-day is a seething cauldron of inter-imperialist rivalries and power-politics. It threatens to become the cockpit for a new world war. Both Russia and America are feverishly competing with Britain for power and privilege in this area.

The Labour Government has the opportunity of making a great contribution to world peace, and can set an example to the rest of the Powers by making a (Continued on page 4.)

At one stage it had appeared that Attwood's defence would be crippled by lack of money to pay the civilian lawyers. A minimum of £250 was needed. Immediately this became known there was a rapid response from airmen in India and over £300 was subscribed in 48 hours.

Foul Method Against Cymbalist

In the case of Cymbalist, there is widespread resentment and indignation among servicemen at home and abroad. We quote from a letter received from a comrade in India:

"At the meeting addressed by Cymbalist, I am told, an officer stamped and raged telling the men they were 'a lot of sh... for striking and being led by a dirty Jew.' I am told that a large number of the men have complained to their M.P.'s on the arrest."

The newspaper, S.E.A.C., Forces paper in the Far East, attempted to smear and discredit Cymbalist by blazoning in one of its issues that at one time he was a convicted thief.

To what disgusting lengths these labour baiting militarists go, in their haste to stamp out any organised attempts on the part of the rank and file to voice demands for better treatment and conditions.

The legal advisers for Cymbalist have been refused permission to appear on his behalf before the Air Council. Further, the reason given why his lawyers had been refused a copy of the proceedings of the court-martial was that there is only one copy in this country!

Political Victimization

From a recent edition of Reynolds News we quote:

"Statements from the men concerned declare that at one camp although definite pledges that there would be no victimisation were given by an Air Commodore and a Group Captain, investigations have been going on which appear to be directed at ascertaining men's political views rather than the part they played in the incidents.

It is said that the investigators started their work by asking the padre to provide a list of the names of all Communists. Secondly, all Trade Unionists were called to attend for interview.

BY JOHN SMITH

There was a long inquiry into the activities of the discussion group at the particular station and lists of speakers as far back as the mock General Election of last summer were examined.

A Challenge

This is a CHALLENGE to organised labour by the reactionary military caste. We CANNOT and MUST NOT allow this deliberate anti-labour victimisation of fellow-workers in the forces to continue!

It is a shameful fact that a Labour Government in power allows the potentates of reactionary capitalist militarism to vent their hatred and spleen against justified attempts of the rank and file to voice demands against intolerable conditions of service.

We must not remain silent! The workers in England have a class duty to their victimised fellow-comrades. A storm of protest against this capitalist-class frame-up of militants must be roused. A campaign, organised throughout the Labour movement here, in Labour Party, Co-op, and T.U. branches and all other working-class organisations, must be waged, demanding that these and other militants be set free!

But by itself, a campaign of this character is not sufficient. It is necessary to also understand the more fundamental implications of the victimisations. The capitalist class, operating through its reactionary, anti-labour military caste, are free to hound and penalise workers in uniform for voicing legitimate demands through democratic means. This gives the class to the capitalist class to strengthen itself in its attacks against the working-class in Britain.

We must demand that the Labour Government clears out the reactionary military caste. That officers be elected from the ranks. That full democratic rights be accorded to all in the Forces. That the present King's Regulations be swept away and replaced by a democratic code drawn up by elected rank and file committees of the Forces.

Further, we must demand that point 8 of the Revolutionary Communist programme be immediately put into practice:

"8. Abolish conscription; for the dissolution of the (Continued Col. 5.)

DEATH MARCH from Lodz in Poland ended in this tragic scene outside Berlin



In October, 150 German women and children set out from Lodz, hoping to find refuge in the British zone or Berlin. They had no supplies of food except what they could beg from the hostile Poles and Russians along the route that they traveled. All died on the road except this small band.



One 3-year-old boy survived the 270-mile journey, only to die in his mother's arms as she carried him down the railroad tracks into Berlin.



She lays his body on the tracks while another mother and child weep beside her. The survivors reached the British zone of Berlin but found it stripped almost bare of food by the horde of refugees which has poured in from the east.

RELEASE DR. MAY

R.C.P. RESOLUTION SENT TO HOME SECRETARY

The following resolution has been passed by the Political Bureau of the Revolutionary Communist Party and sent to the Home Secretary:

"The Revolutionary Communist Party considers that the benefits of scientific research should be made available to mankind as a whole and not retained as the secret and monopoly of any nation, group of nations, or group of private individuals. The process is being kept secret primarily because the capitalist powers are interested in developing atomic knowledge as a means of making war, which is inevitable if capitalism continues to exist.

In consequence the skill of the greatest scientists of our day is organised, not for the purpose of introducing scientific advances which could lighten the burden and labour for the working class and introduce a world of plenty, but to create weapons of destruction more horrible than were used on the populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The Revolutionary Communist Party therefore demands that all restrictions on international publication of scientific research be immediately removed and all scientists be free to produce atomic energy be carried out under the direct control and supervision of the scientists and workers engaged therein through their Trade Unions and Factory Committees.

The Revolutionary Communist Party demands that Dr. Alan Nunn May who gave information to representatives of Russia, for which he was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment, be immediately and unconditionally released and that the organised Labour movement be mobilised to bring about his release."

(Continued from Column 2)

standing army and its substitution by a workers' militia organised under control of workers' committees; for the establishment of military school by the Trade Unions at the expense of the State for the training of worker officers."

Only along these lines can the working-class in and out of uniform defend its interests against the vicious attacks and victimisations of a reactionary ruling military caste.

Demand the immediate Release of Cymbalist and the other R.A.F. Militants!

MAY DAY DEMO.

R.C.P. CONTINGENT

BY NORA KING

On May 5th, 1946, the London comrades marched in the May Day demonstration organised by the London Trades Council.

At 1.30 p.m. we assembled outside our headquarters in Harrow Road, W. and marched in formation to join the North West contingent at the Prince of Wales. As we swung round the corner, our huge red standard (almost the largest in the contingent) announced in letters of white to the hundreds of workers already assembled, that this was the Revolutionary Communist Party, British Section of the Fourth International.

In answer to the slanderous accusations of "Fascists" and "Hitler's Agents" etc., so often flung at us by the leadership of the Communist Party as well as the Capitalist Press, came our banners bearing such slogans as "Socialist Unites States of Europe", "Free the Colonies", "Withdraw the Armies of Occupation", "Nationalisation Without Compensation", "Workers' Control of Production" and "To Smash Fascism, Smash Capitalism", and pictures of the great revolutionary leaders, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Connolly and MacLean.

There was a complete absence of any sign of hostility from the rank and file workers assembled, although the Stalinist stewards approached us as we took our place at the rear of the contingent, stating that we had no right to take part in the demonstration. When we made it clear to them that whatever happened, we were fully determined to march, they attempted to split us from the demonstration by putting a car in front of our contingent. When they saw, however, that we were ready to resist such an attempt with force, if necessary, they reluctantly resigned themselves to our presence. "Solidarity with the German Workers", "Socialist United

States of Europe", "Long Live World Revolution", "Long Live the Fourth International" were some of the huge slogans white-washed on the roads along the route taken by the demonstration. Each one was accompanied by the Party symbol; and not one worker in the demonstration could have missed them.

As the demonstration got underway, the comrades in our contingent added emphasis to their slogans, by singing revolutionary songs. The "Internationale" carried us through the gates of Hyde Park and many of the crowd lining the route joined in heartily as we moved towards the horse and cart, which, in accordance with all the traditions of May Day, was to serve as a platform for our meeting. The banners and slogans soon transformed the cart into a vital and attractive spot in the Park and workers soon gathered to hear our policy. We had a large and attentive audience.

Amongst the speakers were HAROLD ATKINSON, editor of Workers' International News, the theoretical organ of the Party; GRAY HEALY, well known member of the R.C.P.; a Greek comrade, ex-member of the Greek Communist Party; and of special interest to the Communist Party members present, Jock Bryce, ex-member of the Communist Party of Britain (for 16 years) and secretary of the Building Workers' Campaign Committee.

Each speaker dealt with different aspects of our policy and the meeting was only terminated by the intervention of the police, who were anxious to get home.

May Day was a great success for our London organisation. It imbued the comrades with added confidence and vigour for the future.

Mass Deportations Creates Basis for Reaction

The pictures above are a graphic illustration of the misery which the Allies have imposed upon the German people. They are an indictment of the policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which has supported the expulsion of millions of Germans who have lived in these territories for centuries.

This policy has no more to do with democracy and socialism than the uprooting and expulsion of populations by the Nazis.

It can only help reaction and fascist. It can only foster hatred and breed the desire for revenge on the part of these helpless and innocent victims of power politics. Thus the seeds for a new reactionary nationalism and a new war are being sown in Germany. And the responsibility is with the Allies.

This policy is criminal from the point of view of Socialism. The German workers would be only too willing to collaborate in restoring Europe

if it was coupled with the restoration and building of a Socialist Germany. The tremendous industrial potential and the science and skill of the German people could have been used for the benefit of all.

It is not only the Allied capitalists who were terrified at this prospect; it is the Stalinist bureaucracy as well. Only this can explain their inhuman and brutal expulsion measures in the East.

The way out of this nightmare lies in working class internationalism and solidarity. The workers of the world will find this only in the programme of the Fourth International.

Italian C.P. Attacks French C.P.

BY CARLO BIVANCHO

In preparation for the Constituent Assembly elections and plebiscite fixed for June 2nd, the Monarchist and neo-Fascist elements are preparing for an offensive against the Italian masses.

The first move of the new king has been to demand an amnesty for all political prisoners. If this is granted it will mean that all fascists at present in goal or awaiting investigation by the Epuration Commissions, will be released. They will form the spearhead of a new terrorist movement directed against the working class and its organisations.

This new threat of the reaction, which comes as the culmination of a series of increasingly provocative attacks on working class organisations, has acted as a spur to the militancy of the workers and peasants. There is a revival of the revolutionary fervour of '43 which toppled Mussolini from his perch and made things hot for the Nazis in Northern Italy.

The workers are ready to meet violence with violence and to resist to the uttermost any assaults on the positions which they have succeeded in reconquering with so much sacrifice.

Monarchy versus Republic

The issue of Monarchy versus Republic is an important one in the eyes of the workers and peasants of Italy. They have not forgotten that it was Victor Emmanuel who handed all power over Italy's destiny into the hands of Benito Mussolini. They know

that for two decades the House of Savoy served as a pillar of the Fascist regime. Today they see the throne as a rallying point for all the forces of reaction. By chalked slogans on the walls of every street in every town and village of Italy, through monster demonstrations, the workers and peasants have left no doubt that they mean to put an end to the obsolete monarchy.

Pressure from the masses has compelled all except the extreme right-wing parties, to write the Republic into their programmes. The Socialist and Communist parties, more subject than the rest to pressure from below, have long ago attacked the monarchy in their propaganda.

Signor de Gasperi, leader of the Christian Democrats (Catholics) and head of the Provisional Government, has now given his blessing to the Republic. This means that even the Vatican can (Continued on page 4.)

Letters

To the Editor

GERMANS STARVING

A Soldier in Germany.
4.4.46.

Dear Comrade,

I am in Hamburg and here is an account of what is going on under the British Control. The food is keeping the people on a starvation diet, it won't be long before the German people will look like the inmates of Belsen. I have already seen their faces alter to very pale and thin features. Already people are fainting from exhaustion owing to the lack of food. The hungry children crowd around our canteen begging us to give them cakes or something to

eat, some in tears. The people are giving everything they possess to obtain food, only yesterday I heard of a woman giving a 15 jewelled wrist watch for a tin of sardines. This is the ration they are getting for a week: Bread 2½ lbs., 3½ ozs. fat, 2 ozs. Butter, 3½ ozs. meat, 3 oz. cheese, flour cubic capacity to 1 pt. Potatoes are unobtainable and fish is sometimes seen once a month. The rest of the diet consists of one or two swedes; those who are lucky. I write this in support of your article in the last issue of the Socialist Appeal.

Yours faithfully,
F.M.

L.P. WORKER SUPPORTS R.C.P. POLICY ON U.S.S.R.

Swansea.
The Editorial Board 1.5.46.
"Socialist Appeal".

Dear Comrades,

Article 9 of the Revolutionary Communist Party Programme has converted me to support your party's policy. I have long "had my doubts", but the growth of chauvinism, militarism, and devotion to a National Hero cult in the Soviet Union have effectively served to alienate many like myself from present-day Russian policies. But the world is now so obviously drifting, or being driven, at break-neck speed, into two camps—the pro-Russian and the anti-Russian—that the only realistic thing for the anti-imperialist worker to do is to line up with the pro-Russian (pro in the sense of your Article 9)—which must mean supporting the Trotskyists, whatever reservations he may have held in the past, be-

cause Trotskyism is the only logical policy which promises "unconditional defence of the Soviet Union against all imperialist powers", while holding itself free to criticise Stalinist policies and development.

I am a member of the Labour Party, and shall continue to give that party loyal support, except in such matters as can be calculated directly or indirectly to uphold the cause of American-led Imperialism, which has so definitely marked Russia down as the enemy for World War No. 3.

Your Article 8 gives the correct line for all who take the anti-imperialist position. In short, I consider your policy deserves—indeed, in the critical circumstances of today—demands support throughout the whole Labour Movement.

Yours Fraternally,
John Jennings.

FORD STEWARDS RECOGNISED

What the Strike Gained

BY P. NORMAN

After their ten-day strike struggle, 12,000 determined Ford workers at Dagenham, Essex, have after a period of years of "Fordism", wrung from this arch-reactionary firm, the right to be represented by Shop Stewards of their respective Trade Unions.

This is the main gain of the demands put forward by the workers. Others included increased wages, the subject of the dispute which started in the cutter grinders shop, when higher paid workers from the Manchester plant were put alongside lower paid skilled men at Dagenham.

Never was the feeling so strong in Ford's as it was during the strike, which resulted in the plant becoming over 80% organised in approximately 14 unions.

At least five new A.E.U. Branches have been opened in that area. The struggle has done in a few days, what would have in the ordinary way taken years.

Outside Workers Show Solidarity

Outstanding acts of solidarity with the Ford workers were shown by Briggs Bodies workers who donated half a day's pay to the strike funds, and the move on the part of the London dockers in the Royal Group who decided at a special meeting not to handle any freight or cargo connected with Ford's.

The New Agreement

While it can be said that the new agreement is a step forward so far as trade unionism is concerned, what must be noticed by the workers of Ford's and elsewhere is the bureaucratic actions on the part of Scott and Deakin, along with other T.U. officials, in the signing of this agreement without first reporting back to the rank and file.

The agreement supersedes the cumbersome one of April 1942, which was headed by the same Scott and Co. as a great advance forward, (the recent strike belied these contentions) and puts into operation one, which apart from the recognition of Shop Stewards, has a number of very insidious clauses which are only to the benefit of the Ford Motor Co.

CLAUSE 1 states that:—
The Trade Unions and the Company agree on the need:

- (a) To achieve efficient production by all reasonable means; and
- (b) For the introduction of labour saving machines and methods.

This in reality is putting the T.U. stamp to the methods of Bedeaux and "Fordism" which the workers are at this very moment revolting against.

Already the management have speeded up the belt conveyors, and cut tea and washing breaks as a part of a concerted attack they will launch under this clause.

CLAUSE 3, dealing with the Shop Stewards, states that only 75 can be elected for 12,000 workers and that each one must have served two years continuously with Ford's; and that the Shop Stewards must be 25 years old. Also that all complaints to Shop Stewards must be made in the workers' own time (tea breaks, etc.). Yet in every factory it is universally the custom and practice to consult the Shop Stewards directly the foreman has heard the complaint, in the firm's time.

Such is the contemptuous manner in which Deakin and Co. have let this pass without consulting those whom they claim to represent.

CLAUSE 4—The wages policy in this clause is a further sell-out because the Trade Union officials failed to use the militancy of the workers to obtain overtime payment which has never been paid at Ford's, and is still not provided for in the new agreement.

CLAUSE 8 provides for the procedure for a "failure to agree" from the Joint Negotiating Committee. Here again the Scotts and the Deakins sign their names to Arbitration Tribunals, which if the war time procedure had taught us nothing else, it has shown the

workers clearly that such tribunals act only on behalf of the employers. They will continue to do so despite the fact that there is a Labour Government in power.

It was naturally not hard for the bureaucrats to put their name to Clause 9 which states that "there will be no stoppage of work till the matter has been fully dealt with under the terms of the Agreement." Having separated themselves from the real struggles of the workers, they will do anything for a solution rather than lead a struggle against the employers with the only effective weapon they have—the strike.

Aftermath and the Lessons

It is directly in the interest of the Ford workers, if they are to maintain their wages and conditions, to campaign against these pernicious clauses, which have been signed behind their backs. By attending their trade union branches and moving resolutions they can demand that the clauses outlined above must be withdrawn from the agreement.

The strike alone, a marvellous show of spirit and militancy on the part of the Ford workers. Only by an extension of such action in the future linked with the Manchester plant, can new gains be made. The stoppage has proved that even the "great" Ford management can be brought to their knees by a solid, determined body of workers. This is the answer to the boot-licking policy and role of the Trade Union and C.P. officials.

For 100% Trade Unionism. Build strong rank and file committees!

Demand through your trade union branch that the Labour Government nationalise the big industries including Ford's, without compensation, and under the control of the working class.

HELP THE FUND SET YOUR TARGET

Comrades,
The Fighting Fund must raise at least £120 a month. We appeal to the Party Branches, to every comrade, and to every sympathiser to help us reach this goal.

During the month of April, including the overlapping from the March Fund £101 was raised. This is not bad, but we can and must do better if we are to maintain the regular appearance of our press.

It is not proposed to allocate targets for the Branches, as we aim to try and maintain a regular monthly fund, rather than a series of special spurts. **OUR TARGET IS £120 A MONTH.** We appeal to everyone to set their own targets. To give the maximum and to seize every

opportunity of making or collecting a few shillings or even a few pence, for the Fighting Fund, is the moral obligation of every comrade and friend.

A word to the servicemen now being demobbed. All those who are being demobbed will receive gratuities. We make a special appeal to these comrades to start their return to "civvy street" by giving a donation from their gratuity to the "Fighting Fund".

Comrade reader! Make collecting for the Fighting Fund a daily habit. Utilise your collecting cards to the full. Give your donations to the "Socialist Appeal" sellers, or post to:

Harold Atkinson,
256, Harrow Road,
London, W.2.

From a Singapore Worker

We print below an article giving an account of the formation and the valiant struggles of the Singapore General Labour Union written for the "Socialist Appeal" by one of the Chinese members of that Union.

General Report of the Singapore General Labour Union of all Nationalities.

When the war came to an end and peace was restored, the people of the world turned to the task of building and developing that Democracy for which they had fought so long. But here in Malaya, as in the numerous other Colonial countries, the heavy hand of Imperialism has not been stayed by the Charter of the U.N.O. The struggle for even the most elementary human rights continues unabated.

We, the Singapore General Labour Union of all Nationalities (mainly Chinese, Malays and Indians) became established under such circumstances and in the true spirit of democracy. The organization consists of 14 departments such as rubber, communication, transportation, technicians, electricity, seamen, hawkers, attendance, shopkeepers, salesmen, shipping, municipal, harbour board, food provision, and pineapple, etc., in all consisting of 108 branches. Among which 45% are Chinese workers, 40% Indian and 15% Malaysians.

On October 25th, 1945, the Singapore General Labour Union was founded: at a time when 8,000 dock workers went on strike as a protest against the shipment of munitions to Indonesia.

During the past few months, the control of trade by the British Military Administration has caused increased unemployment and those employed earn only 50-80 cents (\$1 = two shillings and fourpence sterling) per day to help them in their struggle against high prices and meagre rations. At the beginning of December, the Municipal, Nightsoil-service, Fire-service, Public Work Department, Tele-Com. Dept. Gas Department, Hospital workers, Electricity and Engineering, Provision, Bakery, Brewery and Slaughter-house (32,000 labourers) forwarded to the authorities their proposals for a general increase in wages. These were ignored and the situation culminated in a General Strike.

The strikers, 16,000 strong marched to the Padang in the centre of the city on the 27th to hold a meeting requesting an early and favourable settlement. On reaching their destination, 2,000 fully armed police conducted a lathi-charge against the strikers, seriously injuring seven, inflicting light injury on 31, and arresting 11—of whom 3 Indian workers were sentenced to 3 months rigorous imprisonment. The strike was successfully concluded by negotiations conducted by the Singapore General Labour Union together with representatives of the Malay Communist Party and the Chinese community leader: Mr. Tan Kah Kee. Work was recommenced on December 31st, when the authorities promised to implement wage increases before the 15th January, 1946.

However, the improvements were not forthcoming. Discontent spread throughout Malaya, and two weeks after the expiry of the agreement a second General Strike was called in an effort to obtain concrete results and in protest against the misrule of the British Military Administration and the four years prison sentence passed on Mr. Soong Kwong, General Secretary of the Selangor Anti-Jap Union. On that day approximately 170,000 workers struck in Singapore. The police were

ordered to fire on the strikers. In Singapore a 17-year-old member of the Youth New Democratic League was beaten to death in front of the Beach Road Police Station and in Selator an Indian worker was shot in the leg and wounded so seriously that it had to be cut off.

On February 14th, the premises of the Singapore General Labour Union, the Singapore City, Committee of the Malayan Communist Party, the Youth New Democratic League and the Ex-Servicemen of the Malayan People's Anti-Jap Army Union were raided by the police. Subsequently, members of the S.G.L.U. were arrested: Messrs. Tan Chin Choon, Han Ah Choon, Seah Thian, Wong Boon See and Mei Siew.

The following day the police opened fire at a Public Assembly in Bras Basah Road, two persons were killed; many youths in the assembly were arrested; also the representative of the Malayan Communist Party in Singapore, Mr. Lin Ah Liang, who remains imprisoned.

Later, on March 7th the Chairman of the S.G.L.U. and General Secretary of the Pan-Malayan Labour Union: Mr. Lu Cheng, was kidnapped by plain-clothes officers (Chinese) at 6 p.m. while on his way home. Mr. Lu Cheng, together with the Treasurer of the S.G.L.U. and eight other leading Trade Unionists have been deported to China.

Since the re-occupation by the British we have suffered a suppression of the fundamental human rights all too reminiscent of the Fascist occupation. In fact the authorities are employing former Japanese collaborators and tools of the notorious Kaito to suppress political activities and arrest those who valiantly fought against them. The Military has now been replaced by Civil Administration, but simultaneous transfer of a number of the former does not inspire confidence.

Are such methods adopted by the British Government in accordance with the United Nations Charter? Are the fruits of three and a half years' struggle and hardship to be ruthlessly re-imposition of the old Colonial system? These are the questions we have been asking ourselves and now ask you. We are convinced that you will be in full sympathy with us and will not hesitate to render us your full assistance. We have done the utmost to secure the release of our Trade Union leaders and all political prisoners, but in vain. Hopefully, we place our case before you.

* Kempeitai — Japanese Gestapo.

Communist Party Internationalism

The C.P. held a meeting in the Bullring, Birmingham on May 1st. The speaker declared that they sent greetings to the French, Belgian, Dutch, Greek, Scandinavian and Balkan workers.

A voice from the audience: "What about the German workers?"

Speaker: "... and the Russian workers in the Russian occupied zone."

WILL LAWTHER THE CHAUVINIST

BY FRANK ROWE

If any one thing can be said to unite the Trade Union Bureaucracy with the Boss Class it is their common hatred and fear of the class struggle and of internationalism.

This fact is demonstrated beyond doubt by the poisonous speech made against international working-class solidarity by WILL LAWTHER in a recent lecture delivered to assembled Trade Union Delegates at the Co-operative Hall, Ilford.

In his attempt to place the responsibility for the crime of the Second World slaughter on the backs of the German workers, he remarked:

"They must fully understand that they cannot expect to get off scot free."

LAWTHER completely glosses over the fact that the world slaughter was fought, not for the benefit of either the German or the British workers, but solely in the interests of the retention and conquest of markets, and the sources of raw materials, in the interests of the capitalist class.

In a further effort to destroy the international unity of the workers, LAWTHER continued:

"As a British Staff Officer said—the more sentimental you become the more they (German workers) will laugh at you!"

From this we can see that Lawther takes his class logic not from the archives of Marxism, but rather from the representatives of the boss class, whose interests are diametrically opposed to those of the British and German working-class.

In his endeavour to justify the completely degenerate and bankrupt capitalist system, Lawther places the onus of the world food shortage—once again—on the German workers:

"The people who are talking about giving up their rations should remember that the miners in England could do with some extra."

He pretends to forget the restrictive measures, such as the burning of grain and the dumping of fish, which was carried out by the capitalist class in the pre-war years. He also forgets that in America to-day there are thousands of tons of grain, which is not being sent to Europe because the farmers want higher prices. Capitalist society requires blood money before it is prepared to assist in relieving starvation.

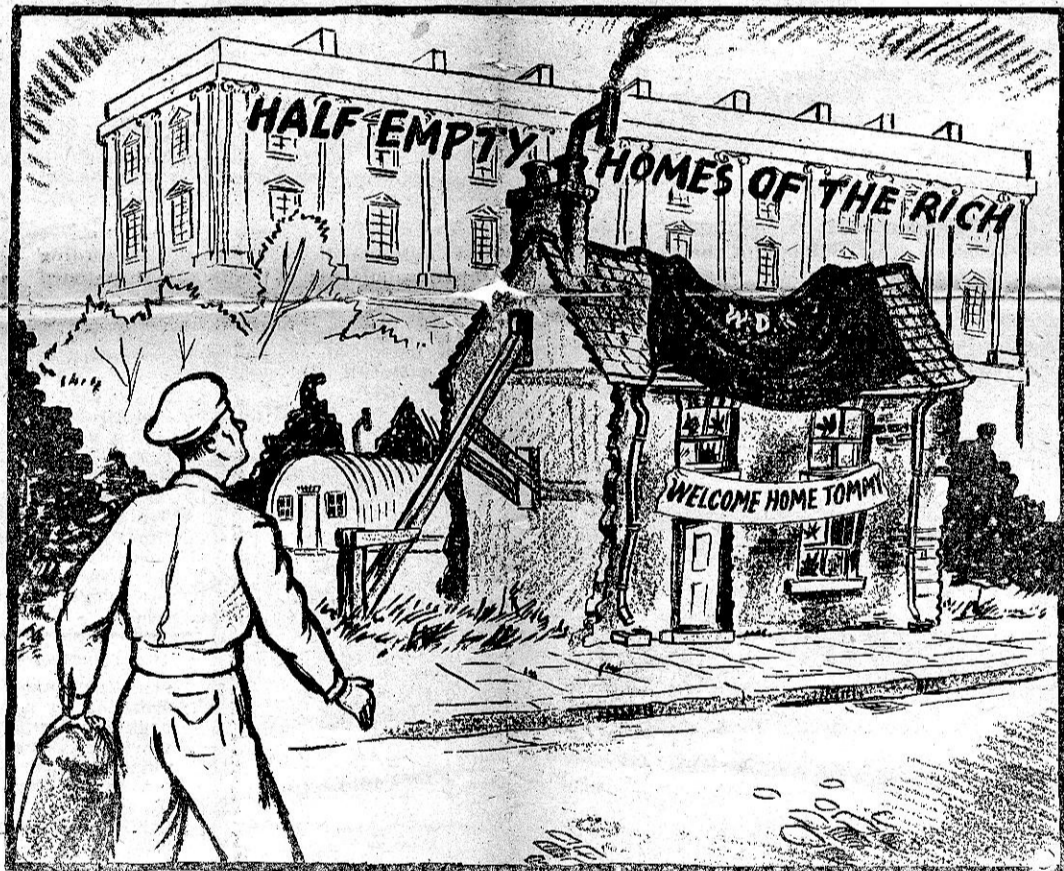
The most ironical was his remark in relation to the German Trade Union Movement:

"The German Trade Union Movement has a great love for centralization. They fail to appreciate that the real basis of the Union is the Branch Meeting."

Apparently, Lawther wishes the workers to forget that, during the course of the war, the bureaucracy of the Mineworkers Union consistently refused to support the legitimate struggles of the miners; fought against the democratic Lodge decisions, and flouted the wishes of the rank and file.

This speech clearly indicates the complete betrayal of the Labour and Trade Union bureaucracy, together with the Stalinists. It shows that, in the place of internationalism, which unites all workers irrespective of race, Lawther and the Trade Union bureaucracy attempt to raise the standard of "national unity" between boss and worker.

Workers! Reject racial antagonism; support the slogan of Karl Marx—"Workers of all lands unite"—This includes the German working class.



TAKE OVER THE MANSIONS!

LAGONDA STRIKE FOR A CLOSED SHOP

BY DAVE WEST (Thames Valley)

When on April 25th, 1,200 workers at Lagonda Motors, Staines, came out on strike, a tradition of many years class collaboration established by a long series of Stalinist Shop Stewards during the war years, was broken.

Lagonda Motors became one of the main Stalinist strongholds in the Thames Valley area. Today the situation has changed. One by one the Stalinists have been replaced by militants and only a small minority of C.P. stewards remain in office.

The cause of the dispute at Lagonda was the attempt of the management to break 100% tradition of the Tool Room, which has always been a closed shop, by the introduction of a non-trade unionist.

After the management had refused the workers' demand that the non-unionist should be taken out of the tool room until he had joined the Union, the tool room struck and explained their position to a mass meeting of the workers who at once downed tools in support. Of the 1,200 workers in the factory less than 30 remained in.

The Strike Committee formulated demands which included the point that no further work of Broom and Wade, High Wycombe (also on strike on a similar issue) be handled, and that negotiations be opened to make the factory a closed shop.

The Strike Committee suffered from inexperience, but although they missed opportunities of making the most of the issues involved, there can be no doubt of

their sincerity and tribute must be paid to their work during the five days of the strike.

A mass meeting of practically every man and woman on strike which was followed by a march through Staines High Street, brought the struggle home to many hundreds of housewives and to the workers of Staines Lino, the other big factory in the area.

Speakers were sent to neighbouring factories to give publicity to the issue at Lagonda and arrangements were in hand for broadening the publicity.

However, by Monday, April 29th, the Trade Union officials were on the job. The District Secretaries and Organisers of the A.E.U. and the T. & G.W.U. arrived to get the workers back on the job. The Strike Committee were no match for these smooth tongued bureaucrats, who proposed that the workers should go back in order that negotiations could commence.

The Strike Committee, to their credit fought for eight hours against these infamous proposals, but at length, worn out, consented to advise the workers to go back.

At a mass meeting held on April 30th, the District officials addressed the strike meeting. Of course, they praised the magnificent solidarity of the workers, and at the same

time pleaded with them to accept the resolution to return to work. The issue of the Labour Government and the need for production for the export drive being given great stress.

Of all days, the bureaucrats sent the strikers back to work on May 1st! They had not even the decency to respect May Day.

However, it would be untrue to say that the Lagonda workers gained nothing as a result of the struggle. The man who had been the initial cause of the dispute joined the union by the time the factory returned to work. The Broom and Wade dispute had in the meantime been settled. In addition to this 60 hitherto unorganised workers took out trade union cards.

The strike has moreover, provided many valuable lessons. The strength of a well-knit shop organisation and the value of mass action has been proved. It has also demonstrated the necessity for a consistent struggle on the part of all members in the branches and the workshops to remove from office all bureaucratic officials and replace them with militants prepared to fight the bosses.

It is to be hoped that by the time the next issue arises at Lagonda Motors, the workers and their Shop Stewards will have learned these lessons.



TAKE OVER THE MANSIONS!

SOCIALIST APPEAL

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Power Politics in Paris

The future map of Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East is being drawn in Paris by the big four powers. The Conference started in the same atmosphere as all the others—high hopes and unity between the Allies; but it develops along the now familiar lines—disunity and disagreement on every point.

POWER POLITICS

Behind the pious hypocritical appeals for peace, can be discerned the naked power politics which dominates the participants.

Anglo-American imperialism is united against the Soviet Union. Britain struggles to maintain her control of the Mediterranean and of Italy; America wishes to gain trade access to the Balkans. The Stalinist bureaucracy wants above all, Trieste as a gateway to the Mediterranean and to guard her stranglehold on the Balkans.

STALINISM ALIENATES MASSES

Instead of countering the imperialists with a revolutionary internationalist policy, Molotov apes imperialism. Disregarding the wishes of the Italian majority in Trieste, demanding enormous reparations from Italy, the Stalinist policy serves only to alienate the Italian masses from the Soviet Union and drive them towards the imperialist powers.

ARMS RACE PROCEEDS

All seek, of course, for the highest "moral" considerations, a different solution of the future of the Italian colonies. Coincidental, of course, is the fact that the proposals of Britain coincide with her strategic interests; and the proposals of France suit her interests in dominating the Arabs in Morocco. And backing up the negotiators is the greatest armaments race in the history of mankind. The antagonisms engendered by World War II are even more menacing for the peoples than after the first world imperialist war.

If war between Anglo-American imperialism and the Soviet Union is not imminent, it is only because of the fear of the reactions of the masses. The troops of the imperialist armies are crying all over the world "We want to go home."

NEW WAR — OR SOCIALISM

The pattern of the world being moulded by the victors is even crazier than the pattern of Versailles. Marxists will never tire of repeating: the boundaries which divide the peoples into artificial national states is an outmoded system which can and will only lead to economic and military struggles. Break the artificial barriers which separate nation from nation! Build a new world based on the Socialist United States in which there will be plenty for all. Only on the basis of plenty organised on a communist basis, can there be freedom and security for mankind.

Resurgence

All over the world tremendous May Day demonstrations were held. Hundreds of thousands demonstrated in Paris, Rome, Prague and the other capitals of the world.

In Berlin and Tokio, former citadels of fascist and militarist reaction, three hundred and fifty thousand demonstrated in the former, and half a million in the latter.

The amazing resilience and powers of recovery of the working class movement was shown in the demonstrations of the German workers throughout the main cities of Germany. After 13 years of Hitler terror, after the destruction and collapse resulting from the war and the brutal Allied domination of Germany; despite starvation and want, the Socialist aspirations of the German workers are not dimmed. This was the answer of the German masses to their traducers and slanderers—the capitalists and their Stalinist and Labour lackeys—who preached that they were "Huns" with a lust for Nazi brutality and would require to be "re-educated" by the Allies.

There was one blot on the international celebrations of May Day. That was that the Labour Government neither proclaimed it a holiday, nor attempted to organise demonstrations on May 1st. The British workers were not called out on May 1st, but on the following Sunday, May 5th. In London, because of a petty dispute with the Stalinists, the Labour leaders refused to participate in the demonstration at all.

This sabotaging of the great traditions of the international working class movement is not an isolated episode. It is symbolic of the abandonment of the real socialist aspirations of the workers.

The masses are girding themselves for the overthrow of capitalism. The May Day demonstrations are a portent of the future. In the coming months and years these workers will find their way to the programme and policy of the Fourth International, the only international organisation which carries on the traditions of May Day.

Famine—Why?

Capitalist Greed for Profit

BY BILL HUNTER

The prospect of starvation has become a stark reality for millions. Already in certain areas of Europe and Asia the population is forced to eat grass in an effort to sustain life. In India it is estimated that the toll of deaths during the next twelve months will be between 5 and 15 millions far higher than the deaths from starvation during the terrible famine of 1943. In Germany, French experts estimate that by 1949, 3 to 4 millions of the population will be wiped out by starvation.

With the black market rampant in every country where there is scarcity, the sacrifices will be borne by the poor, the oppressed classes, by the workers and peasants.

That the world calamity is inevitable, is a fallacy fostered by those who know that the measures against famine must infringe on the profits of the landowners and capitalists, and strike at the very roots of imperialist society.

The ravages of imperialist war, the harnessing of the world's manpower to destruction, the direction of chemicals away from the production of fertilisers to the production of explosives, of steel away from implements of agriculture to weapons of war; all have stamped their inevitable mark on world agriculture. But today vast stocks

of food are being hoarded in a sellers market. Thus, their fear, that enhanced demand means enhanced prices, prevents the capitalist governments from taking the first step in drawing up a plan to meet the catastrophe—a free discussion of needs and requirements.

Further, there can be no estimate of stocks available in a world where capitalist and landlord will profiteer, speculate, and hide their stocks in order to force up profits out of the urgent demands of the starving people. Even within its own boundaries, American imperialism finds difficulty in assessing stocks. Arthur Webb, writing in the *Daily Herald*, March 11th, from Kansas reveals that:

"Most of the wheat from last year's harvest is still on

learn from the *Sunday Times* of March 10th, that:

"To obtain greater profits many countries have reduced their wheat acreage during the last few years. The acreage which grain exporting countries (United States, Canada, Australia, Argentine) are planning to cultivate is less than their 1935 acreage by the equivalent of the whole of Canada's present acreage."

It is evident that the planting of larger areas, which, according to John Llynd, British Minister in Germany and Austria, was urgently necessary to prevent acute shortage next year, is not determined by the needs of the hungry people, but by the relative profit of livestock or grain production, and the flow of

Not Nazi Germany—But British India!



Indian Famine 1942.—This picture shows the condition to which millions of Indian workers and peasants were reduced in the last famine in which millions died of hunger. According to the "Daily Mail", 100,000,000, one quarter of the entire population of India are threatened with starvation. These are the profits of British rule.

of food are kept from the starving by the financial, military, commercial and oppressive needs of the great powers.

On September 18th, Truman states that the problem of feeding Europe was "mainly financial." On October 26th, in the Food Debate, Bevin drew the conclusion that the problem was a "political" one, and gave the graphic illustration of "politics" intervening to prevent the supply of heavy oil and fuel to the Argentine, where maize was being used as fuel; "politics" preventing the utilisation of Argentine maize to feed American livestock, thus freeing grain which American livestock is consuming, for Europe.

Thus, the imperialist spokesmen and apologists themselves are forced to lay the blame for the famine, not on the world shortage of food, but primarily on their imperialist antagonisms and the breakdown of their monetary systems.

The meaning of Truman's statement is shown when we consider the reasons for the cuts which bring the German workers in the British zone down to Belsen level. These cuts are the result, not of a shortage of supplies, but flow from the declaration of the American ruling class that they "are not going to finance the occupation of Germany by the Allies", and the unwillingness of the British Government to utilise dollar reserves to make up grain deficits.

Today, the distribution of the world's foodstuffs to the world's population is determined, not in accordance with their needs, but plausibly, on a world market under the rule of the dollar and with the great powers utilising food as a weapon to serve their capitalist interests. The *Economist* of November 3rd, 1945, stated this when it declared:

"All the delays and shortages flow from this—the failure to allocate military transport and civilian reserves of food and textiles to relief, the failure to supply cargo ships irrespective of the return in dollars."

Appeals To United Nations Fruitless

A multi-coloured united front of Tories, Liberals, Labourites, Pacifists and L.L.P. leaders are today appealing to the United Nations to plan the distribution of the world's food. These requests are utopian, futile and impotent. The "United Nations" are incapable of preparing the beginnings of a plan, incapable of taking the first steps of co-operation necessary to solve the world famine.

In attempting the first necessary step—the assessing of the world's needs and stocks of food—they are brought up sharply against the antagonisms among themselves. When approached for secrecy on the state of Britain's food stocks, Sir Ben Smith stated on February 5th, that he had to be careful in giving

the farms. It was kept back because farmers expected the ceiling price to come off, but largely because they didn't want to return their sales in last year's income tax assessments, as this year the rates are considerably lower and excess profits are not taxed. SO MILLIONS OF BUSHELS OF WHEAT HAVE BEEN HIDDEN FROM VIEW.

Not only are the "United" Nations incapable of meeting the immediate famine by transferring the surpluses from the granaries and warehouses to the starving of Europe, Asia and Africa, but the capitalist mode of production and the international rivalries of the Allies cut across any real measures of increasing agricultural production. These rivalries are hastening the catastrophe of the future. By their oppression of the colonial peoples, by their armies of occupation, by the forced transfer of populations, by the intolerable burdens imposed upon the defeated nations, the imperialists paralyse European economy and prevent the utilisation of vital manpower in agriculture.

Profits First

While European grain and sugar beet suffer from shortage of labour, farm implements, coal, fertilisers and transport, the Allies wrangle over the steel production of Germany which is stagnating at 100,000 tons a month, smash her potash industry, uproot the population, maintain the army of occupation, and divide the country into zones with no uniform prices, currency, wages or transport.

While politicians prate about the measures that are being taken to stave off the coming disaster, we

dollars and profit on the world market.

Struggle Against Imperialism

Any attempts to aid the famine stricken without a struggle against imperialism and the oppressive peace of the Allies can only touch the surface of the problem. The workers of Britain have a class duty to their fellow workers in the starving countries. The organised Labour movement must demand that the Labour Government provides supplies and facilities for the workers' organisations here to aid the suffering toilers in the famine stricken countries. To provide the supplies it is not necessary to cut the rations of the British workers.

A Labour Government really anxious to aid the suffering peoples would call on the workers' organisations of America, Canada and the other food exporting countries to wage a joint campaign against the landlords and capitalists to release the stocks of food now in the elevators and the warehouses, and to utilise America's vast transport reserves—including the Liberty ships which now go over to Europe empty to bring back American soldiers.

Such a government, by struggling against imperialism, by withdrawing the troops, granting independence to India and the colonies; by fighting against the imperialist peace of plunder, could lay the basis for a permanent solution of the food problem. Only by struggling for such a policy can the British workers fulfil their duty to their fellow workers and advance towards a solution of their own problems.

Opposition in Dutch Communist Party

HOLLAND

AMSTERDAM, April.—An organised opposition, which showed considerable strength at the last national congress of the party and has since grown, is challenging the Stalinist leadership within the ranks of the Dutch Communist Party itself. The fact alone that the Stalinists have had to tolerate this opposition is testimony to its strength and deep roots. Such a phenomenon has not been known inside the Comintern in more than a decade and a half. Very likely it foreshadows similar developments in other countries.

One of the main issues dividing the opposition from the Stalinist leadership is the question of Indonesia. The opposition takes a firm stand along the lines of traditional communist anti-imperial policy. Recently this issue

has led to a public clash around the figure of Tan Malakka, the Indonesian Communist leader arrested by the Sjahrar government and denounced by the Stalinists as a Trotskyist. The Dutch Opposition has addressed the following telegram to the Indonesian government:

The Opposition in the Communist Party of the Netherlands (Waarheid) protests vigorously against the arrest of Tan Malakka Yoesoef and other Indonesian revolutionaries. We demand their immediate liberation. The Opposition in the C.P.N. contrary to the official leadership, supports the point of view of absolute independence for Indonesia. For the Dutch Opposition, (Signed) Maurice Ferarez."

FRENCH TURN

The defeat of the proposed Constitution in the referendum in France shows the changes in class relationships which have taken place since the collapse of Nazi domination. At that stage the big majority of the population, not only the workers but the bulk of the peasants and the middle class in the towns, were prepared to support the most drastic measures against the big trusts and combines. They wished to destroy the rule of Big Business over the nation because its character had been exposed in its collaboration with the Nazi conquerors.

The tremendous swing to the Left was shown in the victory of the Socialists and Communists at the first time the C.P. became the strongest party in France, with a majority of the workers supporting it. The two parties together obtained a majority of the seats in Parliament, as well as the votes at the polls.

Had the Stalinists and Socialists really desired, to prepare the basis for a new society, not only in France but in all Europe, they had the power to do so. They could have mobilised the masses by organising the seizure of the factories, banks, mines and big industries generally to take measures in the interests of the workers and middle classes against a handful of monopoly capitalists who control France. The power of the working class could have been established firmly and without possibility of any challenge by reaction. But instead of sharply differentiating themselves from the capitalist parties the Stalinists and Socialists made a compromise with the M.R.P.

The Stalinists and Socialists merely tinkered with the problems facing the workers. Together with the M.R.P. they nationalised one or two industries with generous compensation for the capitalists. The capitalists continued to profiteer and live well amidst the general misery of the mass of the population. The black market profiteers and swindlers continued to flourish because there was no control on the part of the working class.

The Constitution Issue

The main task of the Constituent Assembly was supposed to be the provision of a constitution to

be submitted for approval to a referendum. The provisions were those of a capitalist parliamentary republic, elaborated jointly by the three parties in the government. But the Constitution finally agreed on between the Communists and Socialists provided for a single Chamber. At the last moment the M.R.P. changed their stand and decided to oppose the Constitution because it did not have a reactionary senate, and the powers of the President were curtailed and strictly limited. They wished for additional safeguards in the event of revolutionary upsurge on the part of the masses.

Thus, the policy of the Stalinists and Socialists played into the hands of the capitalist class. The referendum, so far as the capitalists were concerned, was a game of heads we win and tails the workers lose. The victory of the referendum would have left the Constitution with sufficient safeguards for the ruling class. Defeat could prepare the way for an even more reactionary constitution. The Socialists and Stalinists, by not putting forward the constitution of a workers democracy, but an out-and-out capitalist one, led the masses into an impasse.

Test Of Class Forces

The capitalists used the referendum as a means of mobilising the forces of reaction and to test out the class relationship of forces. Every means of demagoguery was brought into play for the purpose of insuring reactionary victory. The very crimes of the Socialists and Stalinists in capitulating to the representatives of Big Business, were used by them in order to discredit the idea of socialism and communism. The bogey of a dictatorship was raised for the purpose of panicking and scaring the middle class voters.

The result of the referendum was a narrow vote against the Constitution. Ten million voted against nine million for. The issue was decided by the 5% of the backward elements who had not voted at the general election but who were stamped into voting against the Constitution. The capitalist class interpreted this as a defeat for the workers. They were jubilant and the stock exchange reflected the election results.

(Continued on page 4.)

PALESTINE STRIKE

Arabs and Jews Unite

BY T. CLIFF

Our Middle East Correspondent.

The biggest strikes in the history of Palestine far surpassing any other which have taken place, broke out last month. 32,000 workers came out, of which 26,000 were Arabs and 6,000 Jews.

On the 9th April 500 Arab and Jewish workers in the Post and Telegraph Services in Tel Aviv and Jaffa came out on strike. On the 10th the strike spread to the Post and Telegraph Services in all other parts of the country, encompassing altogether 2,000 workers and employees. On the 15th Government employees of the 2nd Division—the lower paid employees constituting 20,000 strong, which is more than 90% of all Civil Servants, came out on strike. On the same day the railway workers of the whole country and the workers of Haifa and Jaffa ports joined the strike.

The strike awakened response in many other places and workers of three big factories came out on strike with tens of thousands of workers and employees standing solidly behind the strikers, waiting to join them if they should be called upon to do so.

To understand what gave the impetus to this wave of strikes one must know the conditions and the low standard of living forced upon the workers and government employees through the low wages in face of a constantly rising cost of living. According to the Government index, the cost of living rose to 255 in comparison with 100 before the war; but the cost of living allowances of the workers and employees did not rise anywhere near this figure.

To give an indication of the cost of living, butter is 6/- a lb., a cake 30/-, a suit £45, shoes £5. The postal employees get from £6 to £16 per month!

2/7d. a Day

The daily workers in the Post and Telegraph Services receive about 2s. 7d. a day. The employees receive a basic salary of £3 a month and the maximum of £15 after 14 years of service. The maximum wages for a postman is £9. The basic wages in the railways is 3/- a day; in the ports 2/6; and in the Public Works Dept. 2/6. A family of 5 or 6 have to live on £3 to £4 a month.

The most important demands of the Railway Workers were an increase of the basic minimum wage of 6s. 5d. a day and a proportional increase for all other grades; annual holiday with pay, cost of living allowances on the whole basic wage; 8 hours a day and payment for overtime. The demand of the 2nd Division Civil Servants was similar to those of the Post and Telegraph Employees but somewhat greater.

Arab And Jewish Workers Unite

The Government attempted to break the strike by recruiting

strike-breakers, but despite promises of high payment no scabs could be found. The Government also tried to divide the ranks of Arab and Jewish workers, but again without any success whatever. Large demonstrations were held throughout the period of the strike and it was most encouraging to see immense processions of strikers making their way through the Arab and Jewish quarters carrying slogans in Arabic and Hebrew calling on the population for support of their just demands.

The Revolutionary Communist League, Palestine Section of the Fourth International issued a leaflet in support of the strikers.

Fearing that the strikes and demonstrations would spread to the neighbouring countries and receive more and more an anti-imperialist character, British imperialism had to give way and grant the workers and employees some concessions. It is not yet clear what the actual results of the strike will be, as many points have not yet been confirmed by the Colonial Office in London. The outcome of some of the demands is, however, known. The minimum salaries in the 2nd Division in Post and Telegraph was increased from £6 to £8, a change was made in grading to give work advancement; a cost of living allowance of 80% of the official index was agreed upon for the first £10 of basic pay, and 40% of the £5 above that. The Railway Workers also received a rise in the minimum basic pay from 3/- to 4/- a day and a corresponding rise in other grades. Two weeks paid holiday, overtime pay.

High Commissioner Demands 'No Strike' Pledge

Three days after the resumption of work, the High Commissioner declared that he "cannot consider the matter further until he is given adequate safeguards by the Association that the 2nd Division Civil Service will in future use the machinery which exists within the government for the adjustment of grievances." In other words, until they pledge not to strike in future. But the government will not find it so easy to break its promises.

The strike gave the lie to the fable which imperialism, Zionism and the reactionary Arab leadership try to bolster up that unity of the Arab and Jewish masses is impossible to achieve. It proved that while there are not a dozen Arabs who support Zionism, there are tens of thousands of Arab workers who are ready to stand shoulder to shoulder with their Jewish class fellows for the defence of their common class interests.

Not Nazi Germany — But British India !



Indian Famine 1942.—This picture shows the condition to which millions of Indian workers and peasants were reduced in the last famine in which millions died of hunger. According to the "Daily Mail", 100,000,000, one quarter of the entire population of India are threatened with starvation. These are the benefits of British rule.

DEPRESSED AREAS AGAIN

BY AJIT ROY

The fear of unemployment is once again raising its ugly head. In many parts of the country, it is no longer a threat but the stark reality. According to the figures issued in March the total number of the unemployed to-day amounts to 370,000—an increase of 120,000 over the previous quarter.

The most sinister aspect about these figures however, is not the amount but their distribution. They are concentrated in a few areas, viz., South Wales, Scotland, Durham and the North-West coast. The old depressed areas are coming back once again. In South Wales, according to a Labour M.P., "cold shivers are running down the spine of the people". In this area, including Monmouthshire, there are at present 70,000 unemployed, the majority of whom are from mining, munitions, building and engineering trades. In Scotland, during the last nine months the total of unemployed workers has jumped up from 25,000 to 70,000.

The Government claims that the real problem that faces the country is not shortage of work but shortage of men.

"There are queues of men in some districts looking for jobs but there are queues of employers in other districts looking for men," says Mr. Isaacs.

But if they are really so certain that the present unemployment is only a temporary thing, and will soon be wiped off, then they have even less excuse for not raising the existing scales of unemployment benefits. It is a disgrace and a national scandal that at a time when the coal-owners are being compensated to the extent of over a hundred million pounds for an industry then have ruined and destroyed, that the unemployed man and his family should be made to live on an allowance which is barely enough to keep body and soul together.

In the House of Commons, one of the Labour M.P.s produced a letter from one of his unemployed constituents which gives us a vivid idea of the sense of injustice and frustration which prevails in the ranks of the unemployed worker to-day. We quote the following:

From An Unemployed Worker

"If our Government leaders and Members of Parliament who for some reason call themselves Socialists could enjoy the benefit and happy position of being unemployed and try to balance a family budget on an income of £2 10s. with which to feed, clothe and provide shelter for a man, his wife and two children, they would be washing and working for a bloody revolution and not waiting comfortably for a gradual social change. Whilst waiting, they could deny themselves the luxury of a 'jug' or a half-pint of beer. . . . They

would have the opportunity of seeing themselves developing into bitter personalities and torturing themselves about the things the family needs—the absolute necessities of life—knowing that such needs cannot be satisfied because Society decrees otherwise."

It is surprising that men and women living under these conditions are contrasting their miserable allowances with the £1,000 salaries which the M.P.s want for themselves? If the Government cannot provide work for the unemployed, temporarily or otherwise, then they must provide for a decent standard of life for all these victims of capitalist society. Work or Full Maintenance—that must be our slogan, and the whole Labour movement must fight for its accomplishment.

Even if it were true, as the Government claims, that there is a scarcity of labour on a national scale, it is hardly a consolation for the unemployed worker in South Wales or Scotland who finds it impossible to move out of his home. The workers in these areas are looking for something better from the Labour Government than stories of jobs in London and the Southern Counties.

Under the rule of the Tories, industries were transferred from one area into another to suit the interests of the capitalists, leaving behind them a trail of misery and suffering in the form of the Depressed Areas. It should be the job of a Government that really stood for the interests of the workers to see that production serves the interests of the people, and not otherwise.

So far as the Labour Government is concerned there have been no end of promises and assurances on this score. They have stated time and again that under no circumstances would they permit the resurrection of the Depressed Areas. What is lacking is not promises but a policy.

Take the case of South Wales. Here, the Government has a scheme for 122 new factories. But of these only 28 are actually in hand. If and when they are completed, they will provide work for only 7,700 out of the total unemployed of 70,000. It is the same thing in the other areas.

Much has been said of the delay, red-tape and inefficiency of the Departmental Bureaucracy. But the real reason why so much has been done in words and so little in practice lies deeper. It is the fact that 90% of the Government's planning for bringing new work in the once Depressed Areas depends on the good-will and co-operation of Big Business and City Finance.

Big Business will co-operate only to the extent that co-operation brings in extra profits. Some private concerns are indeed showing a new interest just now in the derelict areas. But this is not from any sense of patriotism, but because they see in the abundance of female labour in these areas the possibilities of super-exploitation.

In South Wales, the majority of the newly transferred industries have little room for men, skilled or otherwise.

In Durham, to quote from the speech of Mr. Levers in the House of Commons: "The factories that have been so far put up are employing young women and girls. There is not an example of government factory sponsored directly or indirectly which is employing a man. The fathers are saying, 'Have we gone back to the unhappy days of the daughters keeping the fashions?'"

It is becoming obvious to the workers in these areas that it is worse than useless to try to inculcate a spirit of patriotism and national responsibility in the calculations of the capitalist class. The Labour Government must abandon its policy of cajolery and persuasion and be prepared to take drastic action against the indifference and sabotage of Big Business.

What is needed is a national plan for the organisation and distribution of industry in the interest of the working class, irrespective of profit. Such a plan does not exist today. Nor is it feasible so long as industry is owned and controlled by the capitalists. It is not enough for the Government to create a few islands of nationalised enterprise in the sea of monopoly capitalism. All Big Industry must be brought under national ownership without compensation, and operated under the control of the workers. Only on this basis can there be a plan for full employment and security for the workers. If we are to avert a new economic disaster far worse than the depression of the thirties, then the whole Labour movement must immediately begin to exert all its strength to force the Labour leaders to implement this policy.

SUPPORT WEYMAN STRIKERS

STAINES —

During the dispute at Lagonda Motors, reported elsewhere in this issue, the workers at Weyman's Vehicle Body Builders, Addlestone, gave their support to their fellow Trade Unionists on strike. Now Weyman's workers are themselves engaged in a stay-in-strike.

The issues at Weyman's are: Dissatisfaction with the existing bonus rates. The workers demand that their representatives should have a voice in the fixing of bonus rate, and the right to inspect the firm's books.

Coupled with these points, demand a 100% T.U. shop.

All support for the Weyman strikers!

under 16 were killed in the production of coal, and more than 60,000 injured and rendered idle. . . .

In 1920 there were 1,200,030 men in the mining industry. Today there are only 632,000 effectively employed. Of this number more than 100,000 are over 55 years of age!

If the Labour Government wanted to increase production it could do so, if it broke from the capitalist and conducted a genuine Socialist policy. If it abolished the payment of compensation to the coal-owners it could use the money to increase the wages of the miners, to introduce modern machinery and thus increase the productivity of labour. If the Labour Government called upon the miners to exercise their class initiative and take control of the pits in the hands of pit committees, and operated the nationalised industry under workers' management and not that of the capitalists or their agents, the miners would safeguard their conditions and take the first steps to remove the real obstacles—the capitalist organisation of industry.

To determine that nationalisation will act in the interests of the working class the miners must insist that there is no compensation to the coal-owners; they must fight against the present bureaucratic and classically state-capitalist coal board and its replacement by a system of Workers' management. Broadening the struggle from their own industry to industry as a whole, they can act, as they have done in the past, as the militant spearhead of the working class.

Only such a programme will solve the coal crisis, and at the same time better the conditions of the miners and the working class as a whole.

WHY THE HUNGER STRIKES IN IRELAND?

BY ELSIE ARMSTRONG

BELFAST—

IN CRUMLIN ROAD PRISON, BELFAST, DAVID FLEMING, A MEMBER OF THE REPUBLICAN ARMY, HAS BEEN ON HUNGER STRIKE FOR OVER 50 DAYS IN PROTEST AGAINST THE BRUTALITY OF THE PRISON WARDERS. HE IS REPORTED TO BE "SINKING FAST".

In Dublin 400 Turf workers struck work and demonstrated before the President for the release of Sean McCaughey, the 23-year-old Adjutant General of the I.R.A., imprisoned for "unlawfully impersonating and assaulting" Stephen Hayes, one time Chief of the I.R.A., who was condemned by the I.R.A. as an agent provocateur. But Sean McCaughey died after 23 days hunger strike.

The case of David Fleming is a glaring exposure of the conditions under which political prisoners live in Crumlin Road Jail. We reproduce below a leaflet issued in the Northern Star Special Supplement:

THE CASE OF DAVID FLEMING

"In the autumn of 1942, David Fleming came up from Killarney to Belfast; a tall splendid young man in the prime of health and strength. The very model and prototype of the Irish volunteer, he was a dynamo of activity and he radiated courage and good humour to all who were privileged to know him.

In September 1942, he was arrested after a fierce gun battle on the Crumlin Road, in company with John Graham of Newcastle. A month later he was sentenced to 12 years penal servitude, with Graham and Hugh McAteer, on a charge of 'Treason-Felony', the 'crime' of David and John Mitchell.

After the escape of Steel and McAteer in 1943, Fleming was adjudged of political prisoners in 'A' Wing and about this time he was singled out for provocative treatment by warders Boyd and Kennedy. His first attempt to secure political treatment was made in the summer of that year and a prolonged and bitter fight ensued. He was beaten after this strike was broken and was subjected to continual personal searching and stripping, sometimes twice a day. Warders Foster and Jackson found fault with Fleming daily, and did all they could to make prison life intolerable for the man of his high spirit. Chief Warden Thompson was very prominent in all attempts to break and humiliate Fleming.

In 1944 Fleming received a very severe beating which injured his health permanently. Mr. H. Diamond, M.P., read a statement in the Stormont about this incident which is starkly illuminating:

'Warder Foster ordered me to face the wall. When I refused, Jackson said 'I'll soften you.' Foster then hit me with his fist and Thompson with his keys. Then Foster kicked me. I was put on report and brought to see the Doctor. On my way to see him I was pushed downstairs by Warden Noble. Outside the doctor's room I was hit by Warders Moore and Boyd with batons. When standing in the line with my back to Boyd, he kicked me in the leg. After I saw the doctor, Noble, Boyd and Moore beat me with their fists and boots, from AI

to my cell in A3. That afternoon I was brought to the Governor's Office. I was walking between Moore and Neeson. I looked behind me and at that Neeson grabbed me by the hair and pulled me backwards. He dug his knee into my back so hard that water came from me. I fell. Moore then hit me while I was on the ground. Neeson pulled me up to my feet by my hair. I got three days bread and water and I also lost three months privileges.'

After this beating Fleming changed physically and mentally. Always practical and sensible in his approach to all questions, he became almost irresponsible, forgetful and careless about his appearance. He suffered a complete nervous breakdown and became moody and irritable. After the beating he was transferred to the prison hospital. About his stay there he is not clear. He realises he is ill but beyond several incidents, the rest is obscure.

From this time onward Fleming suffered more and more from the sadism of the prison officials. Eventually conditions became so intolerable that he was forced to the last terrible weapon in the armoury of the political prisoner—Hunger Strike.

The forcible feeding started on the 23rd day of the strike. In spite of this Fleming continued to fight on and has now refused to take any food or water voluntarily. The latest reports from the prison are that his condition is very serious, he is sinking fast. He is not expected to live another week—his forcible feeding has been abandoned—it is now too dangerous.

Few men have suffered so much. Few men could have endured the horror of this man's life for the past few weeks.

IS THE GOVERNMENT TO LET HIM DIE? WE PLACE THE RESPONSIBILITY EARLY AND SQUARELY ON THE NORTHERN GOVERNMENT. LET THERE BE NO MISTAKE AS TO THE MORAL ISSUES INVOLVED. IF DAVID FLEMING DIES, HE WILL HAVE BEEN MURDERED."

Complete break with Britain's imperialist past, by the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of troops from the whole of the Middle East, and the granting of complete independence to all the Arab masses. Along these lines the workers in Britain could lay the basis for a new association with the Arab countries, based upon friendship and trust between the toiling masses of these countries, and their mutual co-operation in the building of an independent Socialist Federation of the Arab workers and peasants, in alliance with a Socialist Britain.

Italian C.P Attacks French C.P.

(Continued from page 1.)

no longer openly give its powerful support to the House of Savoy.

If honestly conducted, the plebiscite on June 2nd will spell doom for the Italian Royal House. Umberto will follow his father into exile, unless—the reactionaries try to retain by armed force what they cannot hope to hold through the ballot box. In such an event civil war is inevitable.

The strength of the working-class parties however, makes it highly unlikely that the Monarchists will take the risk of a resort to arms. Reaction will have to bide its time.

S.P. and C.P. — Same Programme

Meanwhile, the various parties are preparing for the elections. There are no clear-cut issues which divide the major parties, and the masses are finding it difficult to distinguish between the programmes of the Communist and Socialist Parties and the Christian Democrats. To add to their confusion, Togliatti, leader of the Communist Party, in a speech in Rome on May 5th, assures them that there are no differences.

"With the Christian Democrats," he said, "we have a common programme; that programme which was approved together with the Socialists at the Naples Congress of the General Confederation of Labour. We have declared that as we have a common programme we should work together . . . up to now they have said 'no' to this proposition."

Indeed, according to Togliatti, the only thing which distinguishes his party from the other two is that the Stalinists are for "unity" whilst the others are not.

Trieste

Nothing is stranger in this election than the efforts of the Stalinists to cover up their past. Formerly they supported the Monarchy. For more than a year they have hedged on the issue of Trieste. To openly support Stalin's foreign policy, which requires that Trieste goes to Yugoslavia, would have antagonised tens of thousands of potential communist voters. This was a question, said Togliatti, which had to be settled through peaceful negotiations between Italy and Yugoslavia. Today the Stalinists are succumbing to chauvinist sentiment and are challenging the will with the slogan "Long Live Italian Trieste in the Italian Republic." This is nothing but an opportunist vote-catching manoeuvre.

Togliatti Attacks French C.P. — Covers Stalin

Desperate for votes, Togliatti does not even hesitate to attack the Communist Parties of France and Yugoslavia. In the same Rome speech already quoted, he states:

"Nothing will prevent me from declaring that I am not in agreement with those com-

munists in other countries who . . . commit the error of not making any distinction between fascism and the Italian people."

There is not a word of criticism however to be found in Togliatti's speeches against his master in the Kremlin, who is behind Yugoslavia's demand for Trieste and who wants to impose on the Italian people a reparation claim for £75,000,000. (Italy "has paid reparations in full", says Togliatti elsewhere in the speech, through the blood and sacrifices of her partisans and strikers). On the contrary, he lauds Soviet foreign policy for its great contribution to "peace and democracy."

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French Turn

(Continued from page 3.)

in a rise in the prices of stocks and shares.

However, it is significant to note that in spite of all the failures and shortcomings of the Stalinists and Socialists, in spite of the fact that the masses did not have an inspiring socialist lead, the number of votes for "Yes" was only a few hundred thousand less than the votes received by the Socialists and Communists in the General Election.

According to the press, sections of the socialist voters, some of the white collared and middle class element voted "No."

The overwhelming majority of the workers continued to vote for the workers' parties. It is still possible that the Stalinists will gain votes in the General Election at the expense of the Socialists, while the Socialists may recover many of the votes that they have lost. But the workers' parties, because of their policy, cannot hope to win the bulk of the middle class vote. France is split into two camps, which, despite the perfidious leadership of the Socialists and Stalinists, are irreconcilable. The capitulation to monopoly capital has merely whetted the appetite of the reactionaries, who are preparing for an offensive against the working class.

Civil War Coming

General De Gaulle remains as a reserve weapon of the capitalist

class. However, there will be many fluctuations in the class struggles that lie ahead, with alternating waves of reaction and radicalisation. As the Manchester Guardian expressed it in an editorial:

"Without a vigorous reorganisation of a social and economic life, France is in danger of becoming a second Spain."

The fact is, because the Stalinists and Socialists did not shatter forever the hold of the combines and trusts of the 200 families who rule France, because they have been unable to recover and gain support amongst sections of the despairing middle class, civil war is virtually inevitable. The present position cannot continue indefinitely, though as in Spain the climax will be delayed. The ruling class will move in the direction of establishing a military police or Bonapartist dictatorship as the only means of stabilising their rule. The choice before France in the next period will be between the rule of the working class or the naked dictatorship of finance-capital.

Unless the French workers are mobilised for a determined struggle against capitalism, the reaction will gather its forces for an onslaught on the working class. The French section of the Fourth International, the International Communist Party fights for the only policy which offers a communist solution. They are demanding that the Socialist and Communist Parties break with the capitalists and struggle for power on a revolutionary programme. They are fighting in the defence of the workers standards, and to take action against the employers and reaction. Our French Party points to the road of Lenin: the establishment of a Soviet Socialist France and the complete overthrow of the power of the capitalist class.

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SHINWELL ATTACKS MINERS

BY J. DEANE

The most disgusting and reactionary attack upon the miners has come not from some die-hard Tory, but from a 'Socialist' Minister of Fuel, E. Shinwell! With the full support of the Cabinet, Shinwell has threatened the miners, and in particular the Bevin boys, who were forced into the pits against their will, with ruthless action.

Pits where unofficial strikes take place are to be closed and the miners forced to work in other areas. No miner is allowed to leave the industry. Bevin boys are to be forced into the army. Such are Shinwell's threats to increase production! Already sections of the miners' unions have protested against this most disgraceful attack upon the men who sweat their guts out to win coal.

Production Has Increased

Despite the increase in production of 54,500 tons a week over March 1945, coal stocks have been reduced to a level which faces Britain with the prospect of a coal famine next winter. Production must be increased by a further 800,000 tons weekly, if the minimum domestic requirements are to be met. Like Major Lloyd George, Churchill's Minister of Fuel, Shinwell holds "absenteeism" and "unofficial strikes" responsible for the failure to measurably increase production. Facts would show that this is a most reactionary lie, which serves to obscure the real cause for the failure to solve or ameliorate the coal production problem.

Absenteeism Not The Cause

Official figures are not available but we have the right to suspect a dishonest sleight of hand by Shinwell, when he claims that absenteeism is 17.13 per cent. There is a difference between voluntary absenteeism and involuntary absenteeism (caused by illness and accidents, etc.). The former accounted for 9.1 per cent. in 1943; the latter for 8 per cent. in the same period. The loss of labour-time through accidents and illness is greater than that lost by "absenteeism". This means that if all voluntary absenteeism was stopped it would not produce

a third of the required increase in production!

Also, in 1943 strikes accounted for less than 10 per cent. of the total tonnage lost. This was during the period of the Green Award strikes, the tonnage, therefore, lost today would only be a minute part of that lost in 1943! These figures themselves indicate what up-to-date figures would most certainly prove: that neither "absenteeism" or "unofficial strikes" can explain the failure to measurably increase production. In repeating these allegations Shinwell repeats the lies of the capitalists who attempt to shoulder the burdens of capitalism onto the backs of the workers.

Real Causes of Crisis

The cause for the failure to increase production lay in inefficiency, lack of modern machinery and the steadily worsening of underground conditions. The mines have been nationalised, but the control is still in the hands of the capitalists, and the payment of millions in compensation to the coal-owners places an intolerable burden upon the miners. Shinwell tries to hide these facts.

Figures Tell The Story

The man-power situation in the coal industry is part of the problem because "this astounding 'wastage of labour', as it is cynically termed, is directly caused by the economic and technical chaos of this industry. During the recent coal debate in the House of Commons, J. Duggan, M.P., gave the following pregnant facts:

"In the 12 years, 1932-43, we lost in the mines no less than 10,306 workers, equal to the population of a decent sized town. In addition, more than a million and a half mine workers are injured and rendered incapable of working for three, six or more days. More than 261 boys

(Continued in next Column.)