

WAR COMMENTARY

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C.I.R.A.

This is Not a War for Freedom !

THE battle of words shows no signs of abating and political confusion reigns supreme. Following pressure of public opinion the Government and the Labour Party stated their war aims. Apart from the fact that Herbert Morrison was more virulent in his attacks on Germany there was little to choose between his speech and the Prime Minister's. "Nazism," that is our enemy. Whereas in the past the Government stated that it was not in the least concerned with the "internal affairs" of Germany, so long as British interests were left alone, now, one of the strongest points to support its war aims is the barbaric regime existing in Germany! To strengthen the hatred of the German people, the White Paper on German Atrocities was recently published. The statements are undoubtedly true,

but the fact remains that such conditions existed in Germany six years ago, and then, far from exposing these crimes, the British Government was eagerly helping the Nazi regime to get on its feet with loans and raw materials. That the sudden interest in the welfare of German political prisoners is based on the humane ideals of this Government can easily be disproved. Fascism in Italy, which has given not a few lessons to Hitler in his rise to power, has adopted methods of repression too brutal to describe. The islands of Lipari, Lampedusa, and Ponza, have for years been vast concentration camps to which political prisoners by the thousand have been sent to languish until death finally freed them. Perhaps, also, Mr. Morrison remembers that his colleagues in the Socialist Party in the Italian Par-

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liament, such as Matteotti and Amendola, were murdered by order of Mussolini. Yet today, Mussolini represents—to quote the Government—the angel of Peace, and at the outbreak of war all parties in the House were unanimous in expressing their appreciation of Mussolini's efforts for Peace. Apart from his brutal activity in Abyssinia and Spain, the recent invasion of Albania should not be forgotten. At the beginning of November the Government decided to apply to the Italian Government for recognition of the Consul-General in Tirana, the capital of Albania. "This—writes the *Daily Telegraph* (November 1st)—signifies *de facto* recognition of the Italian occupation of that country earlier this year." This announcement was naturally hidden in some obscure corner of the newspaper; some daily newspapers did not consider it worthy of even a line! But the moment Germany enters Poland or Czechoslovakia, or Russia enters Finland, the British Press splashes horror and indignation over seven columns! Therein lies the confusion. The Government of this country knows full well that the people, in order to fight, need some ideal which would make it seem worth while sacrificing their lives.* Hitler offers the Germans "great things," Chamberlain offers us "Freedom and Justice," though aware that *we are not fighting to defend these ideals*. He knows, however, that if he told the mass of people that Britain was fighting to defend British copper mines in Rhodesia, or iron mines in India, or British tea plantations in Ceylon, they would not fight.†

* Reg Reynolds, writing on "Power" in "Peace News" (24/11/39), endorses this opinion when he writes: "Actually the hunger for idealism is so great that if people are not offered good ideals, they will follow bad ones—hence their willingness to die for Adolf Hitler or the British Empire."

† e.g. The indifference of British public opinion in the British mines in Spain in 1936-39, and their lack of interest in the seizure of British oil concessions in Mexico by the Mexican Government.

‡ See page 13.

Now, since Russia's participation, the confusion is greater than ever. Four imperialist powers, all of whom deny any imperialist aims. Russia is protecting Russian minorities in Poland and preventing any "acts of aggression by Finland," who, according to the *Daily Worker*, is being urged forward by at least six different powers, including Italy, Germany, Britain, France, and the U.S.A.‡ Germany is seeking recognition for her minorities and looking around for *lebensraum*. Britain and France have "no territorial aims" (there being few native peoples not under their control) and are fighting for the "future of civilisation." And, incidentally, in so doing are trying to induce Italy and Spain, both of whom deny freedom to their peoples, to fight on their side!

This state of affairs will persist until the eyes of the working people are opened. Then also will they realise that they only can either continue or stop the war, for they have the means of production in their hands, and it is they who are made to fight and die in the front line. Without their consent, wars would be impossible; through their indifference wars will always exist. It is for them to decide now before more blood is shed, whether they are really fighting for "Freedom and Justice" or whether, as in 1914-1918, these noble ideals of "Freedom and Justice" were merely the tempting baits to induce them to fight for something quite different: *Imperialism and World Domination*.

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Watch India!

by
Reg Reynolds

ON November 15th the following obscure paragraph appeared in the *Evening Standard*:

"Some 36,000 Indian jute mill workers are now on strike at Calcutta for higher wages. The strike began on Friday, when 10,000 workers came out. A further 26,000 joined them yesterday."

A few days before, the press had reported the jailing of 76 Indian seamen, who had refused to obey orders at Tilbury. Their demand had been for a hundred per cent. increase in wages to cover war risks. Some six weeks earlier the press had not reported gigantic strikes in Bombay against the war. Evidence is rapidly accumulating now that the Indian workers are going to play a leading part in upheavals arising from this war: So far from making a "truce", as our Labour and Trade Union leaders have done, with capitalism, the Indian worker is pushing the struggle beyond the economic sphere—he is prepared to fight now, not only for bread but for freedom.

* * * *

With their usual impudence the Communist Party have claimed to be the leaders of the Indian working class in this new phase of their struggles. An article in the *Daily Worker* of November 13th tells us with regard to the Bombay strike that: "the organisation and leadership of it was undertaken by the Communists."

Droll, indeed! While the Communists here were still urging the support of the "war against fascism" (have they forgotten it?) their comrades in Bombay were apparently three weeks ahead of the party line, and organising a strike to *oppose* this war! Men have been lined up and shot for less than that in Moscow—why, wasn't that Tukachevsky's crime, being slightly in advance of the party line about Germany? Wasn't it Lovestone's crime that he was ahead of the party line on social democracy? And weren't we all Trotsky-fascists for being ahead of the party line on this here war?

But I don't somehow think those Indian Communists (the whole dozen of them) were really so Trotsky-fascist. Their paper, *National Front* had been consistently reactionary

up to the outbreak of the war, when I last saw it. It had attacked me, I remember, for daring to suggest a year ago at a London Conference that the British Government was the worst enemy of India and that Indians had no "democracy" to "defend" against fascism. Indeed, Comrade M. R. Masani, in a covering letter to a statement by the General Secretary of the Congress Socialist Party (letter dated September 26th 1939) says:

"British war propaganda and the rigid censorship of newspapers under the Defence of India Ordinance have caused an amount of confusion in the Indian National movement. The ground for this had, unfortunately, to a certain extent been prepared by the campaign for collective security and a 'Peace Front.'

... "As a result, the most unenviable plight is that of the Indian Communists who till the day before yesterday were talking of 'Democracy,' the 'Peace Front' and German aggression against Poland and are now hard put to it to justify the new Soviet policies."

* * * *

Unlike the Communists, the Congress Socialist Party has consistently opposed imperialist war. Unlike the Congress leadership, which is prepared to support Britain on terms (i.e. on condition of large concessions or—it may be in the end—of vague promises) the Congress Socialist Party has declared for "unconditional resistance to war." The C.S.P. is still part of the Indian National Congress, and on issues of this sort it can generally command about one third of the votes in Congress. Outside Congress it has the support of the trade unions, on most issues, and of the Kisan Movement, that great and growing force among the peasantry. Thus the peasants, the industrial workers and the best of the Indian "intellectuals" (who are mostly in the Congress Socialist Party) are united in a policy of vigorous and uncompromising resistance.

* * * *

What forces lie on the other side?

Firstly there are the Princes. They are a mediaeval survival, bolstered up by the British Raj. Periodically one or another of them goads his long-suffering subjects to re-

bellion. The British invariably step in and save him. In return Britain demands loyalty and assistance in her wars. The princes are not likely to fail so friendly a power, for where would *they* be if British imperialism foundered? In the last war one prince forgot this. He refused men and money to his British benefactors. Soon after the war this prince—The Maharajah of Nabha—was deposed for maladministration. . . . Oh, yes, he maladministered all right. But what about all the others who were quite as bad? No prince this time is going to risk a little coincidence like that.

Most of the bigger landlords and many of the big industrialists side with Britain for similar reasons. This applies more to the Moslems than to the Hindus, because, in its concessions to Indian privileged classes, the Government has always been careful to favour the Moslems. To the masses—Hindus and Moslems—these little favours make no difference, which accounts for the general absence of racial and religious strife among them. Hindu-Moslem riots among this vast population of over 350,000,000 are actually so rare that with all the publicity our press gives to the smallest incident we seldom read of a really wide-spread disturbance. (When there is one it invariably proves to be of economic origin and not a religious riot at all!)

But among the wealthier Moslems, whose organisation is the Muslim League, the minority mentality flourishes. Favourites of a deliberately cultivated British policy, they have more reason than the better-off Hindus to fear that Indian self-government may bring them more losses than gains. Like the Ulster Protestant landlords and industrialists or the Zionists in Palestine, they are part of the British "garrison," though less reliable than the "garrisons" of Ireland and Palestine.

* * * *

Between these rival groupings—the masses and the privileged classes—stands the Congress leadership, a right-wing leadership, middle-class in origin and outlook. But though it is the right-wing of the Congress which dominates its policies, the position it now takes up, provided that position is adhered to, is sufficiently menacing to British imperialism to cause angry squeals from the Viceroy and the British press.

At the outset of the War a number of measures were rushed through Parliament. Among them was one that provided for putting the

whole of India under a direct and undisguised dictatorship with greater ease. The machinery for suppressing the sham legislatures already existed, of course. This was just an amendment, in order to grease the wheels of despotism. It was put through in a few minutes, the only comment from the Labour "opposition" being a little speech by Wedgwood Benn, who

"said that the Bill was a war one, and as such the Opposition accepted it. He hoped our Indian friends would realise that in the struggle in which we were about to enter their cause was ours, and our victory would be theirs (Cheers)"

This from *The Times* of September 2nd 1939. "Our Indian friends," with deplorable obtuseness, failed completely to see how and why, in a war against fascist aggression, the first necessity was for the defenders of democracy to take away such few pretences of self-government as existed in India, committing by a casual stroke of the pen an act of aggression and a declaration of dictatorship infinitely worse than anything Hitler has ever done or all his crimes put together. They replied by demanding democracy in India if India was to participate in the war, and the shocked refusal of Britain (not without much whining about "ingratitude!") led to the resignation of the Congress ministries.

* * * *

In Britain we find a certain response to the Congress demand, notwithstanding. In addition to those few who have long lived in the political Adullam of anti-imperialism, others have come forward to support India's claim. Leonard Barnes, who shares with Frank Horabin the distinction of being one of the most honest of our reformists, has written courageously on this subject both before and since the outbreak of war. But what is more significant is the fact that some months before the war the proposal to bid for Indian support by making sweeping concessions was put forward in the *Manchester Guardian* by Mr. J. T. Gwynn. Now the *Manchester Guardian* has always in the past been hostile to Indian self-government, has used its reputation for "fairness" to publish strings of lies about India and has suppressed the truth whenever truth was inconvenient. In this way, just because of its supposed "fairness," it has done far more damage to the cause of Indian liberation than—say—the *Daily Mail*, which few people take seriously. And Mr. J. T. Gwynn

was one of the principal exponents of imperialist views on this subject in the *Manchester Guardian* columns.

Therefore, when such an attitude is taken by the *Guardian* and by Mr. Gwynn in a series of articles, when the same opinions are echoed by the *News Chronicle* (October 5th), we may rightly conjecture that imperialism is in a bad jam. As is usual in recent years, our so-called "left" in Britain has shown itself a wiser and more wary guardian of British capitalism than the "right." They knew when British imperialism should have advanced, in its own interests—against both Hitler and Mussolini, before Germany grew to her present strength. They know now where it should retreat strategically. But I hope and believe their advice will not be taken. Congress has offered a bargain, but thank God and Churchill no bargain will be made. Which means that the initiative lies once more with the Congress "left," the Socialists, the *Kisans* and the trade unions. Those who fled in horror from Gandhi's olive branch and denounced it as a treacherous weapon of attack are soon to discover that they have turned down their last chance of saving the wreckage of an empire from a social earthquake.

* * * *

It is not long since *The Times* (October 23rd) published an account of the annual general meeting of the Indian Iron and Steel Company. The company was paying 15 per cent., though many shareholders expressed dissatisfaction and said it should have been 20 per cent. (They knew that capital invested in India has been known to pay anything up to about 300 per cent., bless their hearts). But all were agreed on one point: the worker was a selfish fellow who ought to be glad to produce such dividends for a few handfuls of rice per day, and it was wrong of him to grumble. The chairman, Mr. Leslie Martin, said: "*I am sorry to say that the general tone of labour still remains most unsatisfactory.*" He spoke of the labour leaders as "self-interested" (they probably were and are, many of them, but it seems odd that shareholders should consider self-interest a vice) and he said they "stirred up hatred and discontent."

Well, the average income in India was recently estimated by Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao in an *Essay on India's National Income* (Allen and Unwin, 6/-). He showed from official statist-

ics that this income averaged a little over £5 per person per year. And, after making carefully estimated deductions for the amount that fell to the wealthier classes, Dr. Rao found that over 300,000,000 people lived on about £4-6-0 per annum, or 3½d. a day. People don't need to be terribly self-interested, beyond the normal, to want a little more than—one ninth of the "dole." And they don't need labour leaders to stir up a spot of hate, for its there already.

* * * *

I always said this empire business would come home to roost. Did you read Anderson's speeches, defending all that outrageous emergency legislation? And did you perhaps remember how this hero of the "*Black and Tan*" régime in Ireland was sent out to crush Bengal in 1932? Or how Harold Laski praised him to the skies in the *Daily Herald* (April 2, 1932) and said that though Anderson was "a representative of a quality in British public life too little recognised by the man in the street," India would be glad one day of his having gone there?

Well, the man in the street over there got hit on the head by Anderson's police so often he soon learnt to appreciate what Anderson was there for, which is more than the mutts at this end can say so far. And I am inclined to echo Laski's own words, with a different sense to them, for I'm frankly glad of every piece of vicious legislation that goes through, so far as it affects England. We too may be glad of Sir John one day—glad when we look back at the experiences which taught us precisely what imperialism was like—*on our own door-step*. A little more Anderson and E.P.A. may help us to see the point of view of these self-interested colonial workers and join hands with them. . . . Or will even that not do the trick?

The Sanscrit proverb says: "You can arouse a man who is asleep, but you cannot arouse a man who is not asleep." Think that one out.

BITTER HUMOUR

The London "Star" reports that one of the films to be shown to the British troops in France is called "There Ain't No Justice." Only too true!

The "Left" and the War

There is a growing anti-war feeling on the industrial front. One need look no further than the plain fact that increasing numbers of trades councils, local unions, co-ops and other sections of the labour movement are passing resolutions condemning the war as a war of rival imperialisms, despite the efforts of the leadership to pook-pook such talk.

Now we want to see genuine anti-war feeling: which we differentiate from the opportunism of the communists and the fascists. They are not anti-war, but pro-the-other-side. They do not believe the war to be one between rival imperialisms: but one of capitalist-imperialist Western Allies against the "dynamic socialism" of Germany and Russia. (Believe it or not, Hugh Ross Williamson, latest Mosley convert, used that phrase in a letter to "Reynolds News").

One might as well call Chamberlain pro-peace—because he wants Hitler to stop—or Hitler pro-peace—because he wants Chamberlain to stop!

For genuine anti-war feeling one must look elsewhere. There are people—no inconsiderable number—who are either opposed to all wars, as pacifists, or to all capitalist wars, as socialists.

There is still plenty of genuine socialism in the organised labour movement, even if seldom articulate. True, the Second International has lost all pretence of internationalism, illegalising "illegal" parties—even the Czechs, whom even Chamberlain regards as "friendly" and not "hostile aliens". Mond-Turnerism, class collaborationism, T.U. and employer representatives on Government committees, national unity entailing greater sacrifices from the poor than from the rich (inevitably, in a class society,) acquiescence in repressive legislation and the war itself: all this the "organised labour movement" is guilty of; yet there are still some who still believe in organisation for its original purpose: socialism and who realise that this isn't the sort of socialism they learnt to believe in (!) but who are as yet not prepared to go "into the wilderness" of forming fresh organisations.

The rise of the No Conscription League is significant in this connection. Important sections of the labour movement are allying themselves to this definitely anti-war organisation. It is a new trend, and a trend in the right direction,

for labour's rank and file. Without a doubt, the working-class movement is waking up to opposing the capitalist war now it has come.

An analysis of the anti-war resolutions of working-class gatherings is interesting. One of the principal ideas is for a "conference of Governments," "immediate armistice," "declare peace now": in the influential journal "Forward" it was actually suggested (I hesitated before realising it was meant to be serious) that King George should come to the microphone announcing peace—"Yes, now!"—and Chamberlain, Daladier and Hitler should "talk it over!"

Doesn't Versailles mean anything? Is Munich forgotten? Don't even the socialists who are still socialists know anything about the class struggle, about the conflict of imperialisms, and about the fact that if governments unite for anything, they unite to crush the working-class?

The same old story in the socialist movement! In the majority are the pro-war "socialists": in the minority are socialists with the old, old faults of lack of reasoning.

Remember Spain. Up and down the country the socialist movement was roused on its behalf. "Aid Spain" Committees everywhere. The word on everyone's lips.

And everywhere, meetings, resolutions, and above all, telegrams to M.P.'s.

No industrial action: no direct actionist move to send the Spanish workers arms with which to overthrow their tyrants.

Now again: now the capitalists have forced us into war: no action, nothing more than telegrams and hopes that the leopard will change his spots. The bastions have fallen in Spain: they are falling here, and Chamberlain, be he flooded with telegrams, won't help to rebuild them. Nor would a conference (even if including imperialist Russia, as the Communists want) be of the slightest use: capitalist wars will continue just as long as capitalism lasts.

A useful trend in the No Conscription League is the importance being insisted on by many upon industrial action; upon the defence of wages, and the gaining of conditions; upon the strikes and workshop-committees that will arise.

(continued on page 8)

Will America Rule the World?

Mr. Roosevelt seems to have stepped into the shoes of the Almighty. From all sides come flattering greetings and most urgent requests. These requests do not reach him from rulers of the world only but also from the pens of pacifists and socialists. In "Peace News," for instance, it has been suggested that it is up to Roosevelt to call a conference to end the war, and the Editor of "Forward," having apparently lost hope since the end of September of hearing King George VI announce over the radio that peace had been made with Germany, suggested, on October 28th, "an International Peace Conference to be called immediately to be held in the U.S.A., under the presidency of President Roosevelt. . . ."

A naive observer may well ask himself what are the qualifications of the President of the United States to justify such universal confidence. Roosevelt's moving appeals which have reached Europe during the last few years have been strangely contradicted by his eagerness to turn to profit the war as soon as it was declared. Thanks to this great pacifist, Wall Street is rubbing its hands at the prospect of French and English orders, and the importance given, during the debate on the Neutrality Act to the cash and carry provision leaves no doubt as to the disinterested sympathies of the U.S. for the two democracies!

The "Star" of Kansas City puts it in a nutshell: "Plain commonsense and national interests require this country to throw open all its resources to the nations who come to buy American goods of whatever sort." Furthermore, it has been "estimated by a Government economist that between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000

of America's unemployed will obtain jobs by January if war brings large foreign orders and stimulates more intensive investment of private capital." The economic situation in America can hardly be called bright at the present time. She needs new markets for her products; the New Deal has not met with the success hoped for and the war may just bring the prosperity to increase Roosevelt's popularity.

* * *

If the United States were so anxious to help the democracies why did they not repeal the Neutrality Act in favour of Abyssinia and above all Spain? It is thanks to the arms embargo that fascism triumphed in Spain. The U.S. Government, in spite of public opinion which was in the main hostile to Franco, allowed the anti-fascist militiamen to defend themselves with rifles from the last war. Presumably Roosevelt felt that there were not enough interests involved in it to justify a departure from his conventional neutrality. But for the Sino-Japanese war it was quite different. It was declared that to apply the Neutrality Act to China would have been sheer cruelty. The Chinese children moved the Government more than the Spanish children and young American

women even expressed their horror by refusing to wear Japanese silk stockings! Which, of course, did not prevent the United States from continuing to sell aeroplanes and almost all its Californian petrol to Japan.

The American industrialists, with the excuse that they were helping the great Chinese democracy, were piling up immense fortunes. Actually they were helping both sides. Up to June 1st, 1938, they had delivered 8,660,000

Asc.
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* * *

The United States are ruled by capitalist interests (probably to a greater extent than any other country) and these interests seem to identify themselves with American imperialist interests. In fact, one can justly ask whether, from an imperialist point of view, the United States have not a great deal to gain by a war which will weaken their three great rivals: Germany, Britain and France. No matter where the United States have attempted to establish their domination, whether in Asia or the Americas, they have always clashed with British or German interests.

In China, British interests are more extensive than American interests. Whereas Britain owns the banks, railways and mines, America, who arrived on the scene later, has the monopoly in aviation and only a few investments in the mines and railways. Even in these, they clash with German interests.

In Latin America the conflict between European powers and the U.S. is no less noticeable. It was manifest recently in regard to the nationalisation of the Mexican petroleum companies which concluded with an American victory. As the "Bulletin of the Archives of Geneva," dated the 7th of June, points out:

"From now onward, the United States is the indisputable master of all the domains of Mexico. The last British stronghold (in Latin America) has been demolished to its foundations. The United States have employed the only means of driving the English from Mexico without firing a single shot."

It is also suggested in the Bulletin that it was with the aid of Cardenas that the English were finally driven out of Mexico. This was accomplished without difficulty. While the English were rejoicing in the possession of 60 per cent. of the petrol in Mexico as opposed to the 40 per cent. controlled by the American companies, Cardenas expropriated it all. But, while the expropriation aroused a storm in London, it was greeted calmly in Washington. What would that suggest? According to the Bulletin, an understanding was reached between Washington and Mexico by which all the petrol would be American "thus demolishing the last British stronghold in this hemisphere."

And a recent report which appeared in the "Daily Telegraph," (26/11/39), states that all

the Mexican petrol had been sold to an "Independent American Firm."

In South America, too, the dreams of American hegemony have been badly jarred by German propaganda in recent years, and no doubt the U.S. would welcome the removal of such a dangerous rival.

Is it too much to suggest that the United States have the opportunity of gradually ousting Britain, even in the Dominion markets, due to the increasing difficulties brought about by the war or production and transport from the Metropolis?

* * *

Let it not be said that the above is pure Machiavellism and that American opinion, and perhaps Roosevelt himself, do not experience a genuine sympathy for the democracies. The opinions of the masses (or rather, what the press makes them believe) has nothing in common with the combined capitalist and imperialist interests which determine the policy of the country. But it must be recognised that these interests have everything to gain by a European war. And if it is yet too early to forecast accurately the results of this war, one can however state that the United States by promising help to the democracies, and Russia by promising help to Germany, are ready to reap the fruits of their cunning political manoeuvres.

M. L. BERNERI.

THE "LEFT" AND THE WAR

(continued from page 6)

Among the militant workers who are against the war, who are endeavouring to create a new society, who place no reliance upon the words of Governments, we must raise the slogan: BACK TO THE SHOP STEWARDS' MOVEMENT! The last war gave the workers of Britain some experience of the beginnings of industrial unionism: which, had it not been captured by the trade union bureaucrats might have led to anarcho-syndicalism.

Only by this method: by propaganda and by organisation for the shop stewards' movement as it was in the last war, can we hope to offer any sort of a resistance to the demands of the State. For those who still stand for strength in unity, for co-operation, for socialism: here is the only way to maintain the stand for the best of causes.

Albert Meltzer.

THE "BLESSING" of EMPIRE

Do The Colonies Still Pay ?

It is generally accepted by the average man or woman in this country that British Imperialism, far from being imposed on the native peoples in the colonies, is welcomed by them, and these opinions are strengthened at the present time by the propaganda launched by most of the British Press on the "loyalty of the Empire." The "Daily Telegraph," for instance, refers to the recent visit of representatives of the British Empire in the following terms:



"The Secretary of State and the Viceroy both insist that responsible self-government in India in the form of Dominion status is still the eventual goal of constitutional reform; but the root difficulty at the present time is that there does not exist in India that unity which must be the basis of representative self-government... That cleavage of opinion makes it impracticable... to embark on the framing of a Federal scheme..."

(an absurd argument when one tries to seek "unity" in countries like Britain, where half of the electorate is in the opposition and has no representation in the Government!)

"Cabinet Ministers and representatives of the Dominions and India are now assembled in London...to consider...how best each nation in the British Commonwealth can contribute to the common task of vindicating the cause of Freedom. The Dominions are not suffering from British exploitation. Each determines its own policy. Their millions of people, their great resources are on our side because, as the Prime Minister of Canada has put it, they are convinced that only by the destruction of Hitlerism can the nations of the British Commonwealth continue to enjoy their present liberties and the world be saved from a descent to barbarism."

It should be noted that (either by accident or intelligently) the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph* omitted INDIA when referring to exploitation, though he quite definitely made a distinction between "THE DOMINIONS and INDIA" in the previous sentence. That subtle (or accidental) distinction happens to be only too true. The great mistake made in this country is to consider Canada or Australia as being typical examples of British Imperialism. Unfortunately the population of the self-governing Dominions is but one-seventh of the total population of the British Empire!

Another attitude to the colonial question is that British occupation of India, for instance, is essential owing to the racial and religious hatred that exists in that country. In other words, "we are policing India for the benefit of the Indians"! This is no exaggeration. The *Times*, in an editorial "*India's Part in the War*," gives this point of view:

Again, the *Times* editorial of October 18th makes extraordinary reading. Once more to grant freedom to India through the Congress Party would constitute "an injustice to other very important interests, the Moslem community among them." (A policy of "Divide and Rule" traditionally favoured by British Imperialism). If progress towards self-government has been slow—continues the *Times*—it is "due chiefly to Indian disunion."! Similar arguments are used in the correspondence columns of the press, save rare exceptions such as the *Manchester Guardian*.

The outstanding feature therefore of British Imperialist propaganda is that the British are protecting the native peoples from invasion by some marauding Nazis or other piratical hordes! Of course British Imperialism does not ruthlessly exploit labour and raw materials in India, or Africa, or Jamaica! It is only their love for the Indians and Africans that keeps them there. After all, it was only the ill-treatment of the British minority that compelled the British to massacre the Boers, and not the lure of their diamond mines!

THE SHAREHOLDERS PARADISE

But when in doubt, the best thing is to consult the financial columns of the Press. Almost every day company meetings are held in London, at which the chairman has the satisfaction of informing avid shareholders that he can once again report that their mine in

India, or Rhodesia or Johannesburg, wherever it may be, has provided them with substantial returns for their investments. Examples are unending. At the Annual meeting of the "*Malayan Plantations*" the chairman announced that the profit on Rubber and Tea amounted to £238,751 and a dividend of 10 per cent. was proposed and readily accepted. Continuing, this patriotic Empire builder, announced that "it was impossible to forecast what effect the war might have on the rubber industry, but it was hoped, in the interests of labour and of Government revenue in the Empire producing countries and of shareholders there and in Gt. Britain that such arrangements as might be made would permit of a reasonably remunerative price for the product being maintained". The "*Tanganyika Concessions*" showed a profit of £139,489 of which the preference dividend takes £92,231 (not a bad return for idleness!) The *Anglo-Burma Tin* showed a profit of £16,370, and the *Trinidad Petroleum Development* £181,074 with a mere 15 per cent. return to investors. The "*Pahang Consolidated Co. Ltd.*" also had a good year in their tin mine returns. Profit £92,686 and a dividend of 10 per cent. on ordinary shares. Other tin mines are also lucrative propositions. The *Amalgamated Tin Mines of Nigeria* show a profit for the September quarter of £180,478 against £57,229 for the June quarter. For *Am-pat Tin Dredging* the corresponding rise is from £5,701 to £20,256, *Southern Kinta* from £37,761 to £94,199.

But the most spectacular figures are provided by the "*Rhokana Corporation Limited.*" Money invested in Rhodesia amounted to £1,896,294 and their holdings in Mufulira Copper Mines was valued at £3,496,525 and the market value of their holding in Nehanga Consolidated Copper Mines Ltd. was £3,629,922. The profits were £2,107,062 and the dividend for the year 50 per cent. The previous year's dividend amounted to 62½ per cent!*

No mention has yet been made of British investments in India. From the *Daily Telegraph* we learn that "India sends over annually 300,000,000 pounds of tea to the United Kingdom. The tea industry in India and Ceylon represents an investment of over £120 million of British capital." In an article by the city editor of the *Evening Standard* further proof is given that India is an asset and not a liability.

He states that between 1932 and 1935 the Bengal and North Western Company paid dividends on its ordinary stock of 16 per cent. and in the last two years has increased them to as much as 18 per cent. The *Indian Iron and Steel Co.*, which held its annual meeting in September reported a profit for distribution of Rs. 43,13,036/- and proposed a dividend of 15 per cent. But the shareholders wanted their full pound of flesh and demanded 20 per cent! Disturbances followed and in the words of the *Telegraph* "in view of the general disagreement and many interruptions there appeared no chance of proceeding to dispose of business." And whilst these vultures quarrel over their prey, the natives are obliged to suffer from undernourishment, inadequate sanitary precautions and the basic needs of life. Whilst our politicians prattle about the loyalty of the Empire (meaning the princes and other hirelings of British Imperialism) the native worker toils for a miserable wage. In *South Africa* there are 2 million whites and 6 million natives. Whereas the white man earns an average annual wage of £214 the Natives earn an average of £40. Disease in many parts threatens to wipe out the population. The *Evening Standard* (22/4/39) publishes the statement by Dr. B. A. Dewar of the King George Government Hospital at Springfield, Natal, in which he declares: "Before the coming of the white man, tuberculosis was unknown to the native. Now there are 15,000 native cases of disease in Natal. Unless we do something immediately the native population of Natal will be wiped out completely." Prof. Gangulee in "*Health and Nutrition in India*"† makes the amazing disclosure that 80 per cent. of the native population is suffering from hookworm, due to under-nourishment. And did not the Government Commission recently make known the results of its investigations in the colonies, where it discovered that 80 per cent. of the colonial peoples were underfed?

These are the "blessings" of British Imperialism. These are the "privileges" which the Indian, African, Jamaican, Arab and so many other native workers, under British (and French) domination are expected to defend with their lives.*

†) Published by Faber & Faber.

*) These are only the material "privileges." In a future article the moral "advantages" of British Imperialism (concentration camps in Palestine and the ruthless shooting down of strikers, imprisonment without trial, etc.) will also be discussed with facts as in the present article.

*) All the figures given above have been obtained from the "*Daily Telegraph*" between August and November, 1939.

HOW WILL THE WAR END?

What the war aims of the Allies are no one yet knows. To destroy "Hitlerism"? Yes. Positively—what? There will be talk of "peace, democracy, international federal union," and what not, but these mean nothing. What do they actually aim at?

The principal war aim seems to be "revolution" in Germany. The champion revolt-busting interventionist Imperialism calls now for "Revolution" and wonders there is no response to the call! The leopard hasn't changed his spots. All he wants is a new regime in Germany: "Fascism without aggression" if need be—that is: "have all the dictatorship you want and we're with you, but don't injure our capitalist's interests or there'll be trouble."

You've read the Government White Paper on atrocities of the Nazis. They're probably true (I don't say such things can't happen in the Empires of France or Britain too). But note this: They've been true for six years. The Government know this as well as the anarchists. Before the Government didn't complain—even supported Hitler in various ways. Now he's a rival imperialist, it's different: Truth becomes propaganda. And remember: all this was true when Chamberlain went to Munich. Why wasn't it said then, if the Government "sincerely" believe it and are only forced into saying it because of its hideousness?

There will be revolution in Germany. The German people will arise against Hitler. When? If they did it now, and ended the war, what would happen? Would the Government keep its word—it never does—or would it march into Germany and, as after the 1918 revolution, when Kaiserism was overthrown, impose a new Versailles? It did that to the "liberal democratic Republic" before—why not to the second? Besides: the Weimar Republic signified to the Germans unemployment, degradation, poverty: they will never go back to it voluntarily: it's all or nothing now.

Suppose Germany went Communist? Germany and Russia would be allies then. Would France and Britain tolerate such a bloc: stretching from the borders of China to those of France, from the North Pole to Asia? "Communism" today is rival imperialist to "Democracy": it would mean a new war.

Suppose there was a "stooge revolt" in Germany to help the Imperialist Allies win. What would follow? Perhaps a "second Portugal": a Government, of whatever character, favourable to the outside Imperialisms. Duff Cooper speaks of a possible right-wing "revolution" with a move back to monarchy. (They seem to be friendly with the Kaiser now!) France broadcasts to Austria calling for the restoration of—the Habsburgs! Meanwhile Britain broadcasts to Austria calling for restoration of the Republic.

France would favour an arrangement as in the early nineteenth century: a Germany split into small States: with preferably an Army of Occupation in Prussia. As for Poland! She can't be "reconstructed as before" without war with Russia. She'll resume her status as buffer state. Czechoslovakia will be reconstructed by Benes from his Putney villa, of course! And what would follow? Remember history repeats itself. Once before vic-

torious Allies tried these games. The Allies were Britain and Germany: the enemy was — France. Napoleon was defeated and the Bourbons re-established, having "learnt nothing and forgotten nothing." Napoleon came back from Elba, and swept France. It needed **another** war, and Waterloo, to crush him.

Hitler may not be a Napoleon. But the spirit of patriotist chauvinism must be implanted in many German minds. Might not Hitlerism dash from a spiritual Elba, wherever Hitler himself was?

How then, asks the reader despairingly, can the war be ended? Surely revolution is then impossible? Might it not be best to hope and work for a military victory, followed by the crushing of Germany at least for a number of years before the next war? Or perhaps the complete crushing of Germany will mean peace for ever?

The crushing of Germany could not mean peace. Even supposing it could rule out Germany from participation in any more wars, what guarantee is there that the Government of Britain will not go to war against anyone else? The last war was not over a couple of years before the Winston Churchills were advocating alliance with Germany against ex-ally Russia. Prior to the last war the Allies had been Germany and Britain against France. There had been war between Germany, France and Britain against Russia. This is to name but a few of the different alliances there have been —and will be again.

War can be ended by revolution, But no revolution can be won by compromise with Imperialist War. Revolution is international force against all gangs of capitalists, from the workers of the world. The prospects are not unhopeful for revolution in the world, if the workers of Britain will take the initiative. This is not to say that revolution is daily imminent in Great Britain but certainly there must be a revolutionary movement in this country powerful enough to embarrass the Government in intervening against revolutions abroad (even if not strong enough to win here, at once). And after revolution abroad—our turn.

The circumstances of the war are favourable to revolution. Germany and Italy are forced (Germany through her participation, Italy through her fear of participation in the war) to withdraw their forces for intervention in other countries. The chances of a second Spanish Revolution—which would certainly spread across the Pyrenees to France, and not unlikely to Italy) must inevitably increase with the withdrawal of Italian troops: not to speak of South America, dominated by German, Italian and Yankee Imperialisms, who, with the first two withdrawn, might take her chances for workers' revolution against the latter. The Syndicalist unions in these countries, will seize the opportunity for directing the revolution on anarchist lines.

One can foresee the strengthening of the revolution as the capitalist war in Europe dragged to an end. In trying to end the war we help the revolution all the more. Who can doubt but that the example of these countries alone would considerably influence the workers of Germany, Russia and Britain in the struggle that is bound to supersede the finish of the war, against their Governments? And, if acting on the principles of direct action and the examples of anarchism, how could they lose?

A.M.

Censorship of the Press in France

Long before war broke out it was customary for the French police to raid the offices of Left newspapers—in particular the Anarchist Press—and seize the entire issue before it could be put on sale. Several militants have been sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for daring to criticize French Imperialism by exposing the conditions of the workers in various parts of the Empire.

It is not surprising therefore that practically no left paper has been able to survive, since the outbreak of war. Papers like *l'Homme Libre*, *La Justice*, *La Flèche*, *Le Combat Syndicaliste*, *Le Libérateur*, *La Révolution Proletarienne*, *Le Reveil Syndicaliste* have discontinued publication and those such as *l'École Emancipée*, and *Juin* '36 appear completely censored. But the Press censorship does not end here. No criticism of leaders of other countries, be they Fascist or democratic—is permitted. Thus the weekly newspaper *Euzko Deya* ("the Voice of the Basques"), published in Paris contains material mainly in French, since the main object is to enlist the foreign

public in the Basque cause. It is far from being a revolutionary newspaper. The fact that the Archbishop of Paris belongs to the committees connected with the International League of Friends of the Basques should be sufficient proof!

Censorship is exercised with much arbitrariness and little intelligence. In the first wartime issue of *Euzko Deya* more than half of the French text was wiped out by the censor. Eliminated, for instance, was an article comparing the air bombardment of Polish cities by the Nazis with the bombardment of Durango and Guernica in the Basque country. Every word referring to Spain, Franco or the Basques was cut out so that what remained made no sense at all. Other news items and articles were treated in the same way, while four articles were suppressed altogether. It was much the same with the second wartime issue, which appeared with large white spaces. Even simple quotations from Spanish Nationalist newspapers were not tolerated.

The result is that *Euzko Deya* cannot deal any longer with the political situation in Spain, or in the Basque country, and that articles on the Basque language, literature and history are practically the only matter that can still be published besides quotations from French newspapers on Nazi totalitarianism.

"God is With Us" — "Gott Mit Uns!"

That is the history of all religions; that is the effect of all divine inspirations and legislations. In history the name of God is the terrible club with which all divinely inspired men, the great "virtuous geniuses," have beaten down liberty, dignity, reason, and prosperity of man.

—MIKHAIL BAKUNIN.

The British Government

"Now may God defend you all and may God be with the right" **Chamberlain** (3/3/39) "... and we reverently commit our cause to God." **King George** (3/9/39).

His Majesty's 'Opposition'

"May God be with you" — **Greenwood** (for the Labour "Opposition") "... with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence. . . ." **Sir Archibald Sinclair** (for the Liberal "Opposition").

The German Government

"We only wish that God Almighty, who has blessed our arms, may enlighten other nations. . . ." — **Hitler** (Danzig Speech).

The Polish Government

"... the blessing of the Almighty rests on our fight." — **President Moscicki**.

The Church

"May God help us in the great ordeal which now awaits us." — **Archbishop of Canterbury** and other dignitaries of the Church.

"When you come to think of it, it is a great honour to be chosen by God to be his ally in so great a contest" — **Canon C. Morgan Smith**.

"We thank God that He gave us a speedy victory to our arms. . . . We thank Him that injustice, centuries old, has been broken down through His grace. . . ." — **The German Evangelical "Opposition"** in the **Spiritual Coun-**

cils Proclamation on the capture of Poland.

Lesser Dignitaries

"I am certain, as sure as I sit here, that if Christ appeared to-day he would approve of this war." — **Judge Richardson** (Chairman, Newcastle Tribunal of Conscientious objectors).

"Hitler is lonely. So is God. Hitler is like God." **Dr. Frank** (Reichsminister of Justice).

"With blood you swim the seas, you soak the sod, But have a care! lest by this devilish deed,

You rouse to wrath ONE — not of German breed —

The aloof and awful last Great Neutral, GOD."

—(Coulson Kernshaw in "Sunday Times")

● High Pressure Behind Finland

IN the first issue of **War Commentary** we offered readers a long selection of Communist statements and facts, which exposed their opportunist tactics and complete servility to the Comintern. But we never expected to see more contradictions which reflect on the intelligence both of the leaders of the Communist Party as well as its supporters who still swallow all these statements like so many blind mutes.

In the issue of December 1st the **Daily Worker** attempts to justify Russia's attack on Finland, and though the paper has now been reduced to 4 pages the following are the explanations that appeared in that issue:

"Had it not been for the German-Nazi influence in Finland and the anti-Soviet feeling stirred up it is probable that the exchange of territory would have been accepted and everyone would have commented upon how sensible it was." (Sir Stafford Cripps, page 1.)

* * *

"... Finland is being advised by the British and French Governments, this being due to their extreme hatred of the U.S.S.R." (Alex Gossip, page 1, three lines below Cripps' statement.)

* * *

"The Finnish semi-Fascist state is the outer tentacle of an octopus whose vital centres are London and New York." (Editorial, page 2.)

* * *

"The Italian Fascist Press has for several days been openly declaring its support for the Finnish reactionaries—including certain "Socialist" and Co-operative leaders—and has been demanding war against the Soviet Union." (Page 1, leading article.)

* * *

"... There is talk of preparations having been made to enable young Italians to volunteer for service in Finland." (Page 1.)

In other words, in the same issue, "German-Nazi," British, French, Italian and American influences are accused of forcing Finland against Russia! A curious bag! It needed only Russia itself to make it even more fantastic!

● "Red Scum" No Longer!

A list of anti-bolshevist publications withdrawn from sale on the orders of the Nazi authorities is published in No. 234 of the **Boersenblatt**, the daily news bulletin of the German book trade. Here are some of the books which it is henceforth forbidden to sell or buy:

Adamheit: **Red Army—Red World Revolution—Red Imperialism;**

Komoss: **Jews Behind Stalin;**

Bockhoff: **International Law Against Bolshevism;**

Norman: **Bolshevist Grip Towards World Domination;**

Greife: **Forced Labour in the Soviet Union;**

Hartwig: **Social Politics Under Bolshevism;**

Keiserling: **How the Russian Worker Lives;**

Krawetz: **Five Years in the Soviet Air Force;**

Butenko: **Revelations About Moscow;**

Naerk: **That's What the Red Army Means;**

Kamphausen: **Among Workers and Peasants in the U.S.S.R.;**

Reese: **Settling Accounts With Moscow.**

● Self Confession

The "Freethinker," referring to the British White Paper, writes:

But the following criticism of the mentality of our Berlin Ambassador is also worth noting: In paragraph 5, Sir Neville refers to "the great achievement of Hitler who restored to the German nation its self respect and its disciplined orderliness" and in the next sentence writes: "The tyrannical methods which were employed within Germany itself to obtain this result were detestable, but were Germany's own concern." This does not make sense. How can it be a "great achievement" to restore "disciplined orderliness" by "detestable tyrannical methods?" ... Sir Neville continues: "Many of Herr Hitler's social reforms, in spite of their complete disregard of personal liberty of thought, word or deed, were on highly advanced democratic lines." Many contradictions are packed into these few words. It must obviously have been very hard for Sir Neville to find that after all Hitler, as a champion of advanced democracy, in the end over-stepped the mark. What a hero he would have been to the Ambassador if only Hitler had confined his "advanced" ideas to such trifles as the monstrous persecution of the Jews, or the horrors of a concentration camp.

War Conquers the Press

At the end of the last war, the press of the belligerent world had reached the lowest possible depths of falsification, subservience, and irresponsibility. On September 3rd, 1939, like a dog digging for carrion it started where it left off in 1918 and went down from there.

Thousands of examples could be cited, with the war only a few months old. Some of the more revealing ones will suffice, but they will show a trend that will justify press readers everywhere in using caution. The selections which follow have been made, not because they are more sensational than others, but because they indicate the more familiar devices by which the public is systematically deceived. From abuse and invective the customary technique varies all the way to mere suggestions that what propagandists want to happen has already taken place.*

British dailies carried a recent report that German planes were now deliberately and regularly violating Belgian neutrality; some leaflets intended as propaganda among French troops came down from the air into a Belgian town near the French frontier. Did these reporters purposely deceive? No; their deceit lies in the nature of war itself, for they told what they believed. They could not have known that inside the Dutch frontier, the Danish frontier, and the Luxembourg frontier, on far more numerous occasions, leaflets from British airmen intended for German consumption had been dropped.

Even the stolid London "Times", which prides itself on its sobriety and poise, make a regular practice of printing each day a quotation from some German about the wickedness or stupidity of the Germans as a whole. Spengler, Nietzsche, Goethe or some other German, either with a generally critical attitude or a temporary and limited complaint, is quoted, and not, as a rule, so much against that peculiar Nazi bent which is characteristic of the present German government, but against the German nation as a whole. This is precisely what spokesmen for Britain have insisted they were not going to do; the "Times" justifies it

on the ground that the Nazis do it against the British. Which is likelier to have good effects on neutral opinion—to ape the worst Nazi habits, or at least rise above them?

Not the least curious thing about this most curious of wars is the regeneration of Nietzsche. In the last war he was universally cited as proof of German militarism and philosophical degeneracy. Now he is the bosom friend of every Allied journalist who wants to print his bitter criticisms of German culture? By an adroit exegesis, he can be made to suit any argument that serves the moment. But why this particular reversal?

Madame Geneviève Tabouis continues to out-rival the soothsayers of old. She writes for a multitude of papers. Her publishers usually describe her as "world famous." She really has a wide experience and a fund of diplomatic knowledge. But she travels through keyholes as one only could if possessed of an astral body. She couples her frequently informative articles in her own French paper, and in the London "Sunday Dispatch" with word-for-word accounts of Hitler's confidential speeches in secret meetings with this diplomat or that, or with his army chieftains. She has given many times a blow-by-blow description of the great German offensive on the Western Front, placing the date at so many times one loses count, and in almost every place available. So far if she has been once correct, her prophecy must have been published in some obscure journal. After a series of such prognostications, made with minute detail, she finally said, in "Marianne," "Thus, Hitler hesitates. The disaccord is complete between the Reichswehr, the generals, the diplomats, over the attack in the West. But, on the contrary, on the lack of effectives to undertake this attack, the agreement is unanimous." The disaccord seems to have included Madame Tabouis; for she now has it that Hitler can't attack for lack of effectives, after long weeks to make ready, which by all her previous writings he had ready in abundance even long before the war began. Yet even a magazine as ordinarily intelligent as "The New Republic" plays her up to American readers as a correspondent "par excellence."

The "Daily Mail" runs an article which points out how often—quite truthfully—the German

*) The examples quoted in this article are but a few supplied by Devere Allan in No-Frontier News Service, Dec. 22nd, 1939.

trenches along the Rhine and the Moselle have been flooded by high water. It says that in contrast the French forts of the Maginot Line are "perfectly dry." But John Elliot, a reliable American newspaperman, writing of his first visit to the Line, found only one fault—the dampness, about which he queried an officer regarding its possible effect on men compelled to remain there for long periods.

Most common of all, perhaps, is the pack-dog technique. Let one set up a cry and bedlam breaks loose everywhere. A writer reports gravely in some newspaper, without proper qualification, that some startling event has occurred. He may have qualified the report himself, but the next one to lift the report does not. It may be, for example, the purported resignation of General von Brauchitsch.

Without waiting to confirm the report, hundreds of correspondents, eager not to be left behind in reporting something they missed (frequently because it never happened), rush into print with stories that begin, "Now that Germany's leading General has split with the Fuehrer..." This is followed by a series of long, learned articles by anonymous "diplomatic correspondents" and editorial commentators who show why the resignation took place, what is at stake for the Nazis, who is likely to succeed in the army command, and what vast portents are involved for the world. The economic, political, scientific strategic, psychological, moral and metaphysical aspects of this news item are exploited to the full in thousands of pages all over Europe (and, it must be said, often also in the United States).

A day comes when it is clear that von Brauchitsch never resigned at all. What happens? Do any of the reporters, editors, diplomatic experts, commentators, ever admit their mistake? Don't be silly! They are too quickly off on the scent of new rumours, in a vague hope—which unfortunately is all too well justified—that if they bark loudly enough up a new path, the time wasted along the old one will be forgotten.

The victims of all this, in all countries, are the plain people. Victims, that is, for a time. The day will possibly arrive when, so cynical, disillusioned and fed up with falsehoods will they become, that the entire publishing world, the good along with the rest, will lose its influence until the cheats and tricksters are kicked out. Worse things, perhaps, could happen.

● France - Land of Liberty!

At a time when the Government is trying to rouse public opinion against Germany by publishing the White Paper on Nazi atrocities it is of great importance to bring to the notice of the English people the actual conditions existing in the allied countries, France in particular. For the regime imposed by the French democracy on all foreigners who happen to be living in French territory compares favourably with the brutal treatment meted out by the Fascist powers to their worst enemies.

But all this is ignored; in vain does one seek for any information in the Press. Tens of thousands of men and women are rotting in the concentration camps and the prisons without even a single protest being voiced.

We have just received a bulletin clandestinely produced in France (for in France, as in Germany, the Press is controlled!) which describes the conditions of our comrades in the camps, and which gives an account of the position of foreigners resident in France, particularly of the Italian anti-fascists, who preferred to return to Italy rather than submit to persecution at the hands of the French authorities.

The following is an extract from an eye-witness account of the camps. "There I was able to see men who can no longer stand upright, constantly guarded by the bayonets of Senegalese troops; men who for the past month have been living in this frozen mud, their feet almost bare. Every day some die and the sick can be counted by the hundred."

"After leaving the camps and after having seen comrades in filthy conditions, wearing clothes not even worn by beggars; when one has seen two men share one blanket and have practically no straw with which to make their bed and are obliged to sleep on the sand by the sea-shore; to see so many sick men unable to have special attention, one realises even more how great is the responsibility of those who have not experienced the horrors of these camps."

From Paris, one writes: "A dozen comrades from our group joined the Foreign Legion. Others will also join up. Only those who have already weathered other storms will remain. We learn that other comrades are in exactly the same position. The news has been spread that an amnesty will be proclaimed in Italy on the 28th. I am wondering whether this is not an opportunity to be seized..."

After having read these letters we are not surprised to read in the "Non-Frontier News Service" that the French Army includes about one million foreigners and that, "so numerous have been the foreign volunteers that recently several classes of Frenchmen have been demobilised. But this situation, deemed so fortunate by the French Army command, is not without anomalies. Along with the anti-Nazi Germans, Austrians and Czechs, for example, are to be found many Russians of the most reactionary views, who have been a thorn in the flesh of the French because of their erstwhile pro-Nazi propaganda. . . . Although thousands of the Spanish refugees have been going home, other thousands are staying to fight for France. They

are former members of the Republican Army, many of them, who fought with Communist help against Franco, Mussolini and Hitler. Now they are not permitted to raise their voices against Franco or Mussolini but they can fight to counteract the aid being extended to Hitler by their former helper Stalin." And the writer continues: "While many men who are now fighting feel genuinely moved by principle, others seem able to throw themselves into one cause or other, even in swift contradiction, without a wrench of mind."

It is quite obvious that—in the words of the writer—many foreigners have joined up with the French Army without being aware of having acted in an illogical way. But the fact is that the majority have joined the French Army for reasons beyond their control. Such a flow of foreigners into the French Army would be inexplicable were one to ignore the conditions in which they find themselves at the present moment. But in the light of the letters quoted above the position is made clearer. Spaniards who struggled for three years in Spain prefer to go to the trenches and be killed by a bullet or a shell rather than die a slow death in the camps.

The conditions of other foreigners is no better, for militant Italian Anarchists prefer the prospect of being sent to the Italian penal islands than to remain in France. Certain Russian Anarchists have been threatened with deportation to Russia if they do not join up. Siberia or the Maginot Line; they have chosen the latter!

A million foreigners, Senegalese and North African troops... Thus France fights the war for Freedom with an army of SLAVES!

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To Our Readers

We have—we admit it—undertaken a big job in printing the second issue of **War Commentary**, and whether we are to continue such an ambitious effort depends largely on the support given to this issue. As readers must be aware, printing costs, paper, etc., have increased beyond all proportions and to meet these added difficulties we must increase our sales. This can be done only by our supporters' constant efforts in selling the **War Commentary** at public and group meetings. The first issue of **War Commentary** was sold out in the first fortnight after publication, special credit being due to Glasgow comrades who disposed of over 500 copies. At the present moment we have agents in a few towns in England, who are organising sales in their districts. But we can never have too many, and we are anxious that any comrades willing to assist in this important work of distribution should get in touch with us at once. We also appeal to the London comrades to give us every assistance in organising "mass sales" during the week-ends.

We are also anxious to have readers' opinions on the articles published in this journal. Future issues will include a correspondence page which should be not the least interesting feature of **War Commentary** if comrades will take the trouble to send us their opinions on the war and discuss the vital problems dealt with in the articles.

All correspondence and moneys should be addressed to:

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To avoid the possibility of letters being mislaid will correspondents please not address letters to individuals at the above address.

* * *

PROTECT YOUR HOMES!

An argument often used by supporters of the War is that by fighting Germany you are actually protecting your homes from Nazi hordes.

Even supposing this to be true (which it isn't) it is not a good pretext as far as the British working man is concerned, judging by the contents of a new publication, "Tuberculosis and Social Conditions," in which it states, among other things, that bad housing conditions and poverty have checked the decline in tuberculosis in Britain. Tuberculosis—the report continues—is prevalent in those areas where poverty, particularly inadequate housing, is most marked.

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