

SOCIALIST APPEAL

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE.
ORGAN OF WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE,
(FOURTH INTERNATIONAL)

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BREAK THE TRUCE LABOUR TO POWER

THE RECENT "JOKE" OF ERNEST BEVIN IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS THAT HE WOULD BE KICKED OUT OF THE GOVERNMENT WITHIN A COUPLE OF MONTHS, HAS MORE SIGNIFICANCE THAN THE MINISTER OF LABOUR REALLY INTENDED.

It has always been the policy of the capitalist class to use the Labour leaders at moments of danger and crisis to themselves to carry out the dirty work they could not do themselves, and to palm this off as in the interests of the nation."

So in the last war the Labour leaders were given the most unpopular jobs until they had served their purpose and were then unceremoniously kicked out.

In this war too, Bevin, Morrison and the other Labour leaders have been given the job of squeezing and regimenting the workers in a way that no Tory Ministers could have possibly succeeded in doing. As soon as the Tories think they can no longer usefully use the Labour and Trade Union leaders, they will once again dump them into the political dustbin.

Bevin and the other Labour leaders apparently consider that this is how political life in Britain should be ordered. But the big majority of the working class is obviously disillusioned with the results of the policy of so-called "Coalition" — in reality capitulation to Big Business. If the Labour leaders broke from the strangling embrace of the Tories, it is clear, as the By-elections amply demonstrate, they could win the overwhelming majority of the population

The fact that they dread the possibility of being placed in power when they would be compelled to demonstrate one way or the other their capacity to solve the problems of the working class by their programme and method, is revealed by their obstinate insistence on leaving the political initiative to the Tories. This, while the Labour rank and file is struggling to break the bonds imposed on them by the leadership.

The next step forward for the working class is to exert such pressure on the Labour and Trade Union leaders to end the Coalition and wage a campaign for power on a fighting socialist programme. Labour must take the political initiative and commence an offensive against the capitalists immediately!

In the struggle for this end, our party and our paper will fight side by side with the advanced labour workers, confident that in the struggle to achieve a majority Labour Government on a socialist programme, they will realise that only with the programme and under the banner of the Fourth International, can the workers of Britain achieve socialism and peace.

WIDESPREAD STRIKES OVER PORTER AWARD

ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST WIDESPREAD STRIKES OF THE MINERS SINCE THE WAR BEGAN IS TAKING PLACE AS THE "SOCIALIST APPEAL" GOES TO PRESS.

Miners in Lancashire, Cheshire, Staffordshire and South Wales have taken part in a spontaneous movement of protest against the cynical Porter Award.

The "Daily Telegraph" of February 2nd, reports that 14,000 men at 25 pits in Lancashire alone were still out, and as they put it "seventeen pits were completely stopped and eight were in partial production." According to the "News Chronicle" "sixteen pits out of 31 closed in Cannock Chase (Staffs) coalfield, 14 partly idle and only one working normally." Strikes have also taken place in some pits in South Wales.

The extent of the movement is in itself an indication of the indignation of the miners at the treatment meted out to them by the coalowners and their Government. But the protest movement is not confined to the miners in the coalfields already on strike. Dis-satisfaction has been vocally expressed in the coalfields throughout the country.

The miners have always been among the most underpaid and

sweated workers in the country. The coalowners have mercilessly and ruthlessly taken advantage of every opportunity to squeeze every ounce of energy out of the miners. Even today when coal is one of the vital materials of war, they attempt to keep the miners on as low a wage level as possible. This at a time when the coalowners are making enormous profits and the price of coal has been raised steeply, while the coalowners get fat subsidies from the Government.

It is on this background that the Porter Award has been issued. It represents a piece of callous provocation on the part of the Government and the Coalowners. To large sections, if not the majority of miners, it represents no increase or hardly any increase at all. On surface work, for instance, wages are increased only by 1/- for adult workers. Piece-workers will not receive any increase at all. And so it is among most sections.

Even from the point of view of increasing production, which was its ostensible object, the capitalist press and even the mineowners themselves have been compelled to admit, it defeats its own object. Far from increasing production they themselves say, the Porter Award will inevitably result in a decline in the output of coal.

The only justification the Government, coalowners, and also trade union leaders can find for this shameful decision, as a result of the storm it has aroused among the miners, is that it is a "TEMPORARY EXPEDIENT." Faced with the bitter opposition of the miners to the niggardly concessions, even the union leaders accepted the decision as they express it "under protest." But despite all efforts of the leadership to hold them back, the anger of the miners burst forth in strikes, especially in those counties where the miners might even be faced with a reduction in pay. The "Daily Telegraph" reports the whining complaints of the coal owners:

"An official of the Lancashire and Cheshire Coal-Owners Association said last night: 'The situation is completely chaotic. There is nothing we can do about it. It is a strike — not against the owners, but against the Government.'"

Continued on back page.



The Most Exploited Section of the British Workers.

C.P. SLANDERS TYNE APPRENTICES

The Tyne Apprentices' Guild, which now embraces many thousands of lads from every shipyard and workshop on the Tyne, is already organised together with the lads from Blyth and Sunderland, and has contacts in all industrial areas where a similar movement is afoot.

But the capitalist press, after some comments in the first few days now maintains a stolid silence—ably seconded by the "Daily Worker"! But they have deliberately splashed the "happy smiles" of the lads who have "opted" for the pits. By this silence they betray their nervousness of the movement of resistance among the apprentices.

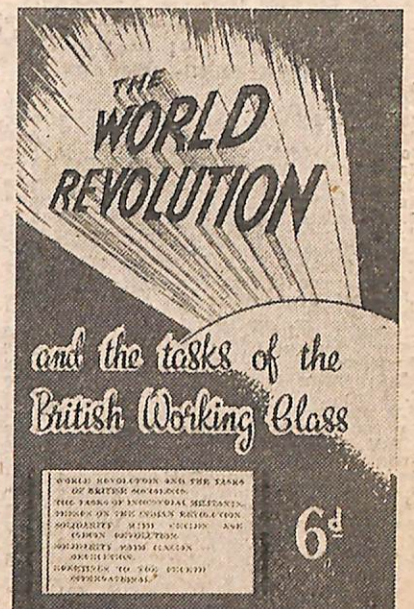
In the "Daily Herald" of January 31st, there is a short report that Mr. Bevin "... has given a pledge to the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions that no apprentices in these industries will be interfered with or called to the mines under the ballot scheme if they are under 20 or have not completed their apprenticeship" and concluded with the statement that Mr. Mark Hodgson said: "While Mr. Bevin's pledge would be

a brake on the claiming of youths from the shipbuilding trades it is still somewhat unsatisfactory that employers remained responsible for making application for the deferment of apprentices."

Whilst this report would indicate that Bevin is making at least a verbal concession to the shipbuilding apprentices—the core of the Tyne Apprentices Guild—in fact it is an obvious attempt to split the shipbuilding apprentices from the youth who are likely to be called up as a whole. And this, from the tone of the Tyne lads' leaflets, is what they will not allow to happen.

The Stalinists are extremely active in trying to split and destroy this new-found solidarity of the Tyne lads and are raking up all kinds of reactionary arguments to that end. But inside the ranks of the "Communist" Party there is a growing support for the Tyne Apprentices' Guild, and the "loyalists" who support the "Party Line" are finding it difficult to convince their friends of the need to oppose the apprentice movement.

So strong is this feeling that the "N.E. District of the C.P." have



Letters



FOR A SOLDIERS' TRADE UNION

Editor, Socialist Appeal.
Dear Comrade,

As an ex-worker and now a member of the forces, I must tell you how much I appreciate the fighting stand your paper is now taking.

However, there is one criticism I have and that is the omission of a fighting programme for the members of the forces.

I have studied the history of the working class to some extent, and as far as I can gather in the early days of industrialisation, the working class, in order to improve their wages and conditions, built up their own organisation for this purpose, and they developed, for better or worse, to what they are today. Later came the political parties of one shade of red or another. Today these organisations still serve the worker to maintain or better his conditions.

But what of the millions of workers thrust into the forces? They must face and accept conditions worse than those prevalent in industry, with no organisation of their own to speak on their behalf.

True, unions and working class organisations such as yours, now and again raise some major issue in their papers. Now and again some M.P.'s raise a particular issue in Parliament. But is this enough? Most members of the forces will answer in the negative. We, at present in the forces, have our wages and conditions fixed for us and we have no kick! If we have a grievance, we must go individually before the C.O. and make the complaint, after requesting to see him. A gain, when a soldier is court-martialled he can only have an officer to represent him.

To my mind the crying necessity of the day is a Forces Trade Union to defend the worker conscript. Just as the early workers were forced to organise so must we. But unfortunately, the task is extremely difficult when hampered and victimised by military discipline. I would like to see this demand given nation wide publicity—resolutions demanding the right for the workers in uniform to organise, passed at every Trade Union Branch, Trades Council, and Labour Party. What about the "Socialist Appeal" giving the lead? With the Forces Trade Unions linked up with the Trades Councils and the T.U.C. the struggle of the workers in the forces would be co-ordinated. Many of the workers now in the forces were formerly with Trade Unions and most I have spoken to have been enthusiastic about the idea. After all with the first upsurge of revolt after the last war the soldiers and sailors organised their own committees. The idea is not new by any means. Hoping, Comrade, you will find space for my views, and if possible I would like your views and criticism of my proposals.

Yours fraternally,
MILITANT MATELOT.

The above letter is eloquent expression of the growing desire among the workers in the forces for an organisation capable of fighting for the most elementary conditions and rights for the worker in uniform and we gladly print it.

With the whole theme of the letter we are in entire agreement and in the columns of the "Socialist Appeal" we have consist-

antly explained the need to link up the worker soldier with his industrial class brother through the trade unions, trades councils and Labour movement generally.

The exact nature of a specific forces organisation, trade union or Soldiers' Councils seems to us to be rather a flexible question. But in view of the whole character of the armed forces we are of the opinion that representative organisation in the forces will largely be a spontaneous movement and will find its expression in ad hoc Soldiers' Councils rather than in a Forces Trade Union.

This is in line with the whole history of representative organisation in the armed forces—as seen in Russia, Germany and other countries in the last war.

SAILORS "WELCOME"

BADOGLIO

Last October we painted ship for the reception of an "important personage" who was coming aboard. We were not told who. The turnout to greet the "personage" was made voluntary with the exception of the special parade of Marines, but the whole crew turned out to see who the visitor was. It turned out to be Badoglio!

He was accompanied by Eisenhower and the order was given "Attention". Hardly a soul moved; the crew continued to stand at ease, when Badoglio left the ship only the Marines were present, the rest of the crew didn't turn up.

The captain told us later that we had put up a "bad show". But the feeling of the crew was definitely hostile to Badoglio—a few because he was Italian—but the overwhelming majority because he was a fascist and had butchered and used gas against the Abyssinians.

Geordie.

DEPUTIES ON THE MOVE

The cause of the present wave of discontent, which is rife among the Yorkshire Mine Deputies and Shotfirers, is not far to seek.

Like their collier brothers, they are feeling the pinch due to the struggle which is going on between capital and labour. Indeed the pinch is getting so bad that sooner or later it will drive this class of worker towards a showdown with their oppressors.

Without a doubt, the Mine Deputies have rapidly become the most exploited class of workers in the coal industry. This is proven by the fact that the owners, with the assistance of their manager-stoges have slowly but surely transformed this class of workers, who are intended to be safety men of the mine, into production maniacs for the benefit of the owners. In many cases they are hounded about the mine by stooges of the owners in a manner that would shame Hitler himself.

The present militant attitude and the one which has been festering for months now, is an indication that the Deputies are fast coming to the conclusion that they come under the same whip as the collier does. They realise that the boss can no longer grant them the privileges he did in the past, while the means of production remain in the hands of private ownership. This is having an effect in Yorkshire that will make the owners sit up and take notice in the very near future.

A further indication of the militant attitude of the Deputies and Shotfirers is noted by the fact that the Y.D.A. is now taking a more active part in the present industrial troubles—a thing that has been more or less unnoticeable in the past. The recent case at Bentley Colliery is further confirmation that the Y.D.A. has weakened and realises that they must fight. The facts of the case in question are briefly as follows:

A Deputy was sacked for refusing to pay a 10/- fine imposed on him by the manager. It must be understood that at this particular colliery the manager has been deducting between £15 to £20 per year from the already small wages of the Deputy, for the most ridiculous things imaginable, as was the case here.

This Deputy, however, decided that it was time this thing stopped, and rightly refused to pay the fine (which was for carrying out the usual practice of riding one way to his work in the 'Paddy' provided for this purpose, which was allowed by the Manager and which all deputies took advantage of, as this particular part of the mine is a good way out.)

However, the reason given by the management for his dismissal, was not for refusing to pay the 10/- fine, but one of incompetence, which is of course, a hard-faceted lie, seeing that this Deputy is the holder of an Undermanager's Certificate, and has been a member of the Pit Rescue Team for several years and a first aid man more years.

The Y.D.A. have taken up the fight in this case and intend to get him reinstated even if it means strike action—action which they are very reluctant to take at a time like this. All other means are, of course, being tried first, but the deputies realise, like their collier brothers, that strike action is the final instrument they have left with which to fight.

The Y.D.A. have entered this fight in order that their members will be assured of a square deal in the future. It is to the benefit of all deputies in Yorkshire to rally to their banner.

W.B.

1,400 BUS WORKERS STRIKE

J. MILLIN

Over 1,400 Nottingham Corporation Transport Workers ceased work in a four hour protest strike on Thursday, January 27th over the action of the Corporation Transport Manager in discharging Harry Hart, Driver, who committed suicide a few days after his discharge.

Hart, who had been employed by the Corporation for 16 years, and who possessed a good record, was dismissed after having been found guilty of careless driving after an accident which caused injury to several passengers.

The Transport Workers were not necessarily disputing the findings of the Court, but the arbitrary action of the Transport Manager in discharging Hart before his Appeal had been heard.

One Driver, expressing the feelings of his colleagues, stated that the treatment meted out to Hart was not even comparable with that received by Railwaymen involved in a smash. He pointed out that in such a case a Court of Inquiry was held on which Railwaymen were represented.

They considered that Hart had had a raw deal, and at worst he should have been given alternative employment by the Corporation.

The Strikers attended Hart's funeral during the stoppage, and one of the biggest features was the solidarity of the Women Workers with the men. During the stoppage, a small skeleton service was maintained. This despite the fact, as reported by some of the Workers, that none of these vehicles were driven or conducted by regular Workers, but by Depot Scabs, and Office Staff. It is understood that Office girls acted as Conductresses, some of whom were allowed to do so although they did not possess Conductor Passenger Service Licenses.

The local gutter press came out with the usual line about the cynical disregard of the bus workers for the inconveniences caused to thousands of passengers. But the Working Class are beginning to get fed up with this type of propaganda, and the transport workers had the sympathy of the vast majority of organised workers in the district.

This action of the Nottingham bus workers shows that they will not allow their interests to be trifled with lightly. It is the second example of the splendid fighting spirit in their ranks, the first being the action they took over the recent Arbitration Award. It is an indication of the manner in which the Transport Workers will take their place side by side with the workers of other industries in the coming struggles. They deserve the congratulations of every organised worker on the stand that they have taken.

T.U.C. Prepares Post-War Sell Out

with the declaration by the General Council of the T.U.C. that they are prepared to accept labour control after the war is witnessed another flagrant betrayal of the interests of the working class. As the "News Chronicle" of 27.1.44, puts it:

"Indeed the T.U.C. yesterday went so far as to declare that in the controlled industries after the war any worker who 'unreasonably refuses' to be directed should lose unemployment benefit subject to an appeal to an independent tribunal."

It provides yet another example of the servile character of the Trade Union leaders, who, not prepared with their sell-out during the war, are preparing to continue to shackle the workers to the capitalist class in the post-war period.

That sharp differences exist among the Labour leaders reflects the pressure of the workers, who are revealing in no uncertain terms that they will not submit easily to these continued betrayals.

The workers must demonstrate clearly through their Labour and Trade Union organisations, their irrevocable opposition to this attempt on the part of the T.U.C. to handcuff the working class to capitalism. Demand the withdrawal of the Labour and Trade Union leaders from the Government, as the first step towards re-asserting the independence of the working class, and demand that the Labour leaders struggle for power on a socialist programme.

C.P. ATTACK TYNE LADS

Continued from Page 1.

issued a special bulletin on the question for internal party consumption, and as an argument against the apprentice movement. As usual with such Stalinist material it is full of falsifications.

"It should be noted," says the statement, that the Apprentices' Guild and the Trotskyists say nothing about the improvement of the conditions of the miners." This stupid lie is so easily destroyed that it is really astonishing that the Stalinists have the neck to print it. In the leaflet appealing to apprentices, the Tyne lads say:

"The responsibility for the coal crisis must be placed where it belongs—on the shoulders of the coalowners.

... it is against them that compulsion must be directed. Let the government take over the ownership of the pits from the coalowning saboteurs! Let the Government nationalise the pits, and operate them under the control of the miners, through their trade unions! Let the government immediately accept the minimum wage demands and working conditions proposed by the miners!"

And this theme is repeated in all the apprentice leaflets.

Another entirely false statement is that the idea of the Tyne apprentice Guild is being fostered as an alternative to the trade unions. The falsehood is readily exposed when one considers that the Tyne Apprentices appeal in particular to trade unionists and link the whole of their activities up to the shop stewards and trade union movement.

Numerous quotations are given from the "Socialist Appeal" and false chauvinistic arguments deduced from them. But the beauty of the piece is the reactionary statement that:

"... the Tyne District Committee of the A.E.U. has completed a list of ex-miners working in the factories and shipyards. It has submitted this list to the Ministry of Labour for appropriate action" (to be kicked out of the factories and driven down the pits!) "A resolution calling for this step to be taken was moved by a Communist (stool-pigeon) at the last Quarterly Meeting of the Shop Stewards!"

This vicious attempt to victimise workers who have been lucky enough to get out of the pits in the past and to make them scapegoats for the coal crisis will be treated with the contempt that it deserves from the organised workers. In particular it will be rejected by the apprentices who, we hope, will see in it only too clearly, a vicious attempt to split them from a section of the adult workers.

Certainly the miners and ex-miners will see in this activity of the Stalinists a reflection of the old-time stool pigeons of the Economic League.

The best workers in the ranks of the C.P. will reject this reactionary policy and will give full support to the lads who have elected to fight the coal barons and the reactionary Churchill government which supports and initiates the Pit Compulsion Scheme.

In their struggle to organise the apprentice youth against the Bevin Pit Ballot scheme the Tyne apprentices have conducted themselves like experienced fighters. All their leaflets, issued to apprentices, to trade-unionists generally, and to the miners in particular, stress the class character of the Pit Compulsion scheme, and put forward a positive and clear alternative policy which has undoubtedly received wide support among the workers who have been fortunate enough to read their leaflets and hear their case.

WORKERS INTERNATIONAL NEWS

NOW ON SALE



FIGHTING FUND—JANUARY.

Dalmuir	4	1
Plymouth	6	6
Canadian Soldier	2	0
Napiers	4	0
Coventry W.I.L.	4	0
East London Worker	1	6
Sheffield W.I.L.	3	9
Newcastle W.I.L.	7	1
N.W. Factory	15	0
U.S. Sailor	4	10
Brian Crookes	2	0
Henry Parker	2	15
S.W. London W.I.L.	1	8
Liverpool Sympathiser	5	0
Leeds W.I.L.	1	0
Liverpool W.I.L.	1	4
"Mac", Liverpool	3	2
Engleman	3	8
East London Friend	3	0
T. Dias	5	0
U.S. Forces	2	8
Jackson's Factory, Hammersmith	7	6
A.P.V. Workers	1	13
Anon	10	0
Coventry Engineering Factory	1	0
R.A.F.	2	0
"Militant Matelot"	5	0
Manchester Friends	17	9
M. L.	3	0
Rugby Militant	5	0
	£51	10 8

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New Headquarters

Readers will notice the change of address for the "Socialist Appeal." This is a step forward for our Party and our paper which has been undertaken despite the greatest difficulties. We are moving from the famous "loft" at King's Cross from where we conducted our "class warfare" to quite the gutter press, to more suitable premises. Here our office staff and the party members can work under reasonable conditions. In the past we had to work under conditions where we were forced to face not only the attacks of the class enemy but the forces of nature—rain, wind, and cold.

The change has acted as a stimulant to the party nationally and especially in London. The taking of new headquarters is regarded as a mark of confidence in the future of the working class, and of our party and press.

This achievement has only been rendered possible by the efforts of our party members and sympathisers. They, together with the readers of our press have responded nobly to our appeals for aid. We hope that our supporters will visit the new party headquarters and become acquainted with the personnel of the party. We believe that this step forward will ensure that our supporters will rally to the defence of the "Appeal" and the party by extending further assistance than they have done in the past.

Our party has withstood the persecution of the capitalists, of the press, and of the Government and the trade union bureaucrats. We are still being persecuted by the refusal of the paper controller to grant us a paper licence. With the aid and assistance of our supporters and members we can overcome all difficulties and build the party and paper which can lead the workers to victory.

FIGHT FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES IN ULSTER

The news that the Northern Ireland Labour Party at its last Conference, voted a large majority in favour of taking the initiative in the formation of a Local Council of Civil Liberties, will be welcomed throughout the British Labour movement.

The police regime in Ulster, backed by the entire weight of British imperialism is a monstrous obstacle barring the movement of the masses towards unity and the struggle for Socialism. The notorious Special Powers Act, on which the Government of Northern Ireland is based, gives absolute power to the police authorities to do anything to anyone at anytime. The most elementary democratic rights which are taken completely for granted by the English workers, rights of association, freedom of speech and even of trade union activity, exist in Ulster only insofar as they meet with grudging police approval. The right to claim public trial for any alleged political offences has never existed at any time during the history of the Government of Northern Ireland.

In the past, this totalitarian legislation has been used almost solely against the Republican section of the Ulster working class. Judicious—and vicious—use of the Act has been made in order to preserve and extend the historic caste split (economic, political and religious) amongst the workers.

So long as this chasm in the ranks of the workers could be maintained the possibility of a mass backing for Socialism was out of the question. For this reason the Ulster Tories never previously considered their interests seriously menaced by the small and isolated Labour movement. In addition the Government spokesmen like to peddle the official fairy-tale that it was the noisy violence of the unruly Republican minority which reluctantly

compelled it to introduce the Special Powers Act, and that it is only against that particular minority that the Act is used.

Because of this the Labour Movement in Ulster has been hitherto relatively untouched by the Act: There are however, certain outstanding instances where it has been applied as a naked weapon of the capitalist class in an attempt to trample the Labour movement underfoot. The authorities in such cases have shown no inclination to discriminate between one section of the workers and another. Thus, during the Outdoor Relief Strike of 1932, police fired into the ranks of demonstrators without first enquiring as to the political or religious beliefs of their victims. Labour speakers have been charged under the Act whenever it was seen that their views were gaining ground. Socialists from Great Britain and Eire have been interned and deported on the grounds of their Socialist activity. Armed with dictatorial powers the police can enquire into the activities of every remote corner of the Labour movement and into the private life of every member of it.

However, on the whole, in their drive against Socialism the authorities prefer to use the backstairs method of economic victimisation, to drive leading militants out of work and to bludgeon them into a state of demoralisation by denying them the right to work.

Always under a suspicious scrutiny on the grounds that it was a potential source of unification for the masses, these indirect methods of the police, together with a divided proletariat have sufficed in the past to keep the movement small and totally incapable of influencing events.

Today, however, the picture is entirely different. The turn in the situation created by the Imperialist war has resulted in the closing of the working class ranks. The sectarian

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POLISH—SOVIET CONFLICT

BY ROSE CARSON

The Soviet-Polish conflict cannot be regarded merely as a frontier dispute between two states, it must be regarded as the reflection of the wider and deeper contradictions between two social systems: Poland and the Allied Imperialisms on the one hand, and the first workers' state on the other. Only the veriest novice can believe that Poland has acted independently in the dispute. The fact that Mr. Eden himself handed the Polish reply to M. Gusev, Soviet Ambassador in London, is sufficient evidence that the Polish Government has acted in close collaboration with the British Government. M. Mikolajczyk, the Polish Prime Minister, has left for consultations in Washington. Moscow's rejections of the Polish reply, and the polite refusal of the American offer of mediation, together with the publication in "Pravda" of the allegation that high British officials had been negotiating, "not without results" with Ribbentrop for a separate peace, is an indication of the seriousness of the rift that has developed. The Anglo-American imperialists feel no concern for the territorial integrity of Poland. However they do not intend to develop the rift, but prefer to have the matter disposed of in such a fashion as to nourish the Anti-Soviet sentiments of the Poles, and thus leave the question open for "revision", should the necessity arise at a later date.

THE POLISH GOVERNMENT

A glance at the composition of the emigre Polish Government reveals the reason for the hysterical outbursts of vituperation that have flooded the Polish press of London and New York. M. Mikolajczyk presides over a government composed of representatives of four Parties, one section of the Nationalist Party, the Front Morges (Christian Democrats), the Peasant Party and the Polish Socialist Party.

The Nationalist Party of Pilsudski disgraced itself by its cowardice on the field of battle before the German in-

vader. The heroic Marshall Smigly-Rydz fled to Rumania. The defence of Warsaw was left in the hands of its citizens, and the Socialists played some part in this defence. To restore their moral prestige, and to present an acceptable face to public opinion, the Nationalists, militarists and landowners are prepared to allow the other Parties to participate in the government-in-exile. The 1935 Constitution, which the other Parties opposed in Poland, has been accepted by them as the legal basis of the Polish government-in-exile. Under this Constitution the President is responsible "before God and history" and to no-one else. He has unlimited power to assure any decree without consulting the government. Likewise there is more power vested in the Commander-in-Chief than in the government itself. The present Commander-in-Chief, Sosnkowski, is well-known for his anti-Soviet sentiments and his hatred of Bolshevism. As an instance of his depth of hatred for the Soviet Union, the "New Statesman" of January 22nd published the following anecdote: The Polish Foreign Minister to Tokio advocated that

"... Poland have a special alliance with Japan, so that in the coming war against Bolshevism the U.S.S.R. could be attacked on two fronts."

This clique of militarists, landowners, anti-Semites and Fascists, whose past is a record of repression and reaction second to none, have only one real concern, to maintain their power and privilege in Poland.

THE SOVIET OFFER

The Soviet-Polish dispute is of first-class importance because it reveals the hollowness of the "achievements" of Teheran, the class interests of the Polish Government and the reactionary plans of the Kremlin bureaucracy. When the Red Army crossed the 1939 Polish frontier on January 5th, Mos-

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A Soldier Looks at Italy

This article was written by a soldier just returned from Italy.

Much publicity has been given to the plans of the United Nations to "feed starving Europe". How are they feeding Italy? Here is the food situation as the writer found it.

Food under Mussolini was scarce, but the occupation by the Allies did not make it more plentiful. Bread, while I was there was rationed at 150 grammes (5½ ozs.) per person per day, some classes of workers receiving an extra 3½ ozs. for heavy work. Here is a typical day's menu as given me by an Italian school teacher. There were four in the family—himself, his brother and their father and mother. No breakfast; midday meal consisted of peas or beans (unobtainable except on the black market), fried mussels (fried in olive oil), bread; supper—mussel soup, the rest of the bread ration, and olives.

Meat, sugar, coffee, spaghetti were practically unobtainable, except on the black market at prices which put them out of reach of all but the rich. Here is a list of prices given me by another Italian—these prices are approximate and vary from place to place.

	Legal Price (when obtainable)	Black Market Price
Meat (per kilo)	40 liras	80 liras
Cheese	25 "	200 "
Sugar	7 "	120 "
Butter	28 "	100 "

Bread	2-3 "	20-30 "
Beans	5 "	35 "

It was a common sight to see children, and also men and women hanging around army camps and collecting the swill. Outside the cookhouses and canteens one would be accosted by crowds of children asking for "beefa" (corned beef) or biscuits. Once at Messina I saw a dixie placed on the ground a few yards from the cookhouse, immediately surrounded by a crowd of kids and one or two women all dipping into it, arguing and shouting. I don't know what was in the dixie—food or swill—I did not have time to see.

All the time I was in Sicily and Italy the only food I saw eaten that was supplied by the Allies was bread made from imported flour—otherwise the Italian masses had to rely on home grown produce—So much for the "feeding" of starving Europe by our capitalist governments!

While the masses existed on a starvation diet the black market flourished, apparently unchecked by AMGOT. In cafes in towns like Catania and Taranto, pastries and cakes were displayed at exorbitant prices (high even for British Tommies to whom the rate of exchange gave 400 liras to the £). In restaurants one could get a meal of meat, eggs and potatoes and spaghetti for 60 to 80 liras 3/- to 4/- in English currency). So that you may judge how far out of reach of the workers' pockets these prices and those quoted on the black market were. Compare them with the wages of 50 liras (12/6) per day paid to workers employed by the military authorities on the docks, roads, food depots, etc.

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Polish—Soviet Conflict

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cow suggested the Curzon line of 1919 as the basis for the frontier settlement, with the offer of "the ancient Polish lands in the West wrested from Poland by Germany" as compensation. These lands include East Prussia, Danzig, Pomerania up to the Oder, Lower and Upper Silesia. The population affected runs into nine millions. It is proposed that the entire population be driven from their homes. This is nothing less than the acceptance of the dismemberment of Germany, since "these ancient Polish lands" cover a third of German territory.

The treatment meted out to the peoples of the Ukraine and Eastern Galicia after their seizure and occupation in 1923, undoubtedly provided Hitler with a textbook for the slaughter and exile of millions in the German-occupied territory. The hatred for the Germans which has been engendered in the Polish population by the deeds of the Nazi barbarians will undoubtedly provide the Polish junkers with a plausible excuse for inflicting on the peoples of Eastern Germany a terror such as has not yet been witnessed in modern times. The Bonapartist clique in the Kremlin, by offering this territory to Poland; thereby takes responsibility in advance for the massacre which would inevitably ensue. The dismemberment of Germany, the pivot of European industry, can bring nothing but misery and poverty to the entire continent.

It is a far cry from Lenin's policy of peace without annexations or indemnities to the monstrous plans of the Kremlin—for the re-carving of national states according to its own conception of power politics. The temporary "benefits" which might possibly accrue to the Soviet bureaucracy are far outweighed by the isolation of the Soviet Union from the sympathy of the labouring masses of Europe.

OUR ATTITUDE TO THE PROBLEM

But without a socialist solution, nothing else is possible for the Kremlin. And as Stalin has decisively turned his back on the revolution, there is no other course he can take.

The imperialists of Britain and America have guardedly given every support they could possibly render to the Polish landowners and capitalists in this dispute. This despite the fact that the territory in dispute was forcibly seized by the Poles, with the encouragement and assistance of the British and French governments in 1920. And that the Ukrainian and Byelo-Russian people who inhabited this area were placed under a yoke of extreme terror, exploitation and national oppression by the Polish landowners.

The British and American imperialists pretend that all they are con-

cerned with in the disputed question is that all territorial changes should be made only by the consent and negotiation of the parties concerned. This nauseating hypocrisy is merely used as a cover to blind the masses as to the real issues involved. Especially as the Polish Government now echoes the same story. However, it is interesting to note that the Polish Government in 1938 seized Teschen from prostrate Czechoslovakia at the invitation of Hitler—an annexation the present Polish Government has not to this day repudiated. So much are they against "unilateral seizures" when their imperialist interests benefit!

However, what is at issue here is not only the future of the disputed areas, the people of whom in the overwhelming majority would be in favour of unification with their Ukrainian and Byelo-Russian compatriots in the Soviet Union—as they demonstrated by seizing the factories and the land when the Red Army was vociferously welcomed in their march in, in 1939, what is at issue, is the future of Poland itself. The Soviet bureaucracy while in favour of a capitalist Poland, in Poland proper, even with its borders extended at the expense of Germany instead of Russia, wants a Poland under her domination. The imperialists, while prepared grudgingly and temporarily to cede the disputed area, wish for a Poland which will remain a puppet of Anglo-American capital, to be used as a base against Russia in future, if necessary. Hence the clash of interests.

The Soviet bureaucracy has formed the "Union of Polish Patriots" in Moscow to serve its ends. Not of course, for the purpose of promoting Socialist revolution in Poland—this would represent a mortal danger to Stalinism right on the borders. Indeed, the Soviet bureaucracy has already dissolved the illegal Polish Communist Party before the war and massacred its leaders in Moscow because they insisted on a policy they considered would promote revolution in Poland. The imperialists continue to support the emigre government in London which is not representative of the Polish masses.

The only progressive solution to the problem which would ensure the defence of the Soviet Union, of the Polish workers and peasants, lies in the hands of the Polish workers and peasants. They hate the regime of landowners, capitalists and generals, who were only capable of savagely repressing the worker peasants and of conducting pogroms against the national minorities of Jews, Germans and Ukrainians, and who ignominiously collapsed at the first blows of the Nazi war machine. The only way out for Poland in the coming days lies in the conquest of power by the working class, who would then march hand in hand with the workers of Germany and Russia in the construction of a Socialist Europe.

SOLDIER LOOKS AT ITALY

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Workers in small engineering shops (there is very little industry in the South) were paid wages varying from 8 liras an hour.

Some people may try to put the blame for this exclusively on the Badoglio government and the local Italian administration. But who put them and keeps them in power? In Sicily the local officials were working under AMGOT and carrying out its orders. AMGOT, far from having purged the country of fascists, is ruling with their aid. True, some fascists have been jailed, but the local administrations are still full of them. Two examples: The Podesta (Mayor) of Catania under Mussolini was a certain Marsuis San Juliano—a big landowner and fascist. In Taranto, the commander of the Carabinieri (police) in charge of the Arsenal won promotion under Mussolini as a result of his zeal in hunting down communists and anti-fascists. As far as I know, he and the Mayor are still at their posts and co-operating in

the "war of liberation" at the side of the Allies.

The policy pursued by AMGOT—its retention of the fascist administration, is no accident. It flows from the general policy of the British and American ruling classes, who, as their actions show, are fighting not to destroy fascism and liberate the oppressed masses of Italy and Europe—but for exactly the same aims as their capitalist rivals of Germany and Japan, etc.—for the redivision of the world's markets, raw materials and sources of profit. The Italian workers and peasants have experienced both the "New Order" of Hitler-Mussolini and the "liberation" by the Allies under AMGOT and Badoglio. They have found little difference.

Today, in German occupied Italy, Hitler's puppet Mussolini is trying to rally the masses to continue the war; while in Allied occupied Italy, Badoglio and the Liberals and so-called "communist" party of Italy, are urging the

(Continued foot of next Column.)

CIVIL LIBERTIES IN ULSTER

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rubbish of the past has been almost completely swept away, temporarily at least, perhaps into the dustbin of history. This process has cut the feet from the Orange (Tory) Sectarians. The mass basis for their caste has dwindled to a shadow.

Perhaps the best illustration of this is the fact that a strong and confident Shop Stewards movement claims the full allegiance of the masses. This sweeping industrial movement confronts the Tories in their former citadel of Belfast as an unmistakable challenge. The awakening of the masses shows itself in continuous short, sharp battles throughout the industrial arena, where an important section of the future revolutionary Socialist leadership is in the process of being forged.

The most vital factor of all is that no caste differences divide the youth, who are learning to stand together and fight the boss side by side, blow for blow. The most striking proof of this new unity was afforded during the threat of the Tories to thrust Conscriptio onto the Six Countries. The Catholic Youth led the stormy struggle against the threat, but the solidarity of the Protestant youth was unmistakable. An entire generation of young, militant workers has come to life, untainted by the poison of sectarianism, the greatest possible guarantee of success for the coming class battles. The Labour movement has grown swiftly during the war years, as the by-election results will amply testify. Orangeism has been ousted in its former strongholds. To attempt to cope with the growing Labour movement in Ulster today, by means of

economic victimisation of its leading cadres, is to try to dam the Tagan with a brick.

Thus, the Tories must and will attempt to stake all on their totalitarian legislation. If, in the past, the Special Powers Act has always been a dagger held at the heart of the Ulster working class, so much more so does it represent a mortal threat today.

This is, therefore, a particularly timely movement for the Northern Ireland Labour Party to carry into effect its resolution, and inaugurate a Council of Civil Liberties. Naturally, the first tasks of such a body will be to make a report on the Special Powers Act, the sweeping powers and conduct of the arrogant and power-drunk police force to investigate and give maximum publicity to valid complaints of maltreatment. This latter will gain abundant testimony.

But by itself this proposed Council cannot conquer the Special Powers Act. The demand for Civil Liberties in Ulster is a revolutionary demand. Only through the firm harnessing of the proposed Council to the Labour movement can the struggle be victorious. Capitalism in Ulster can only live behind the protective barriers of an Act which can be operated to divide the workers' ranks.

But with its reformist leadership and policy, the Northern Irish Labour Party will not be capable of completing the progressive and revolutionary task which it has begun. To do so will require the building and forging of a revolutionary socialist party with a programme aimed at the complete destruction of the capitalist system.

For the workers of Ulster, as for the workers of Ireland as a whole, only the Socialist Revolution can supply the solution, a Revolution, moreover, which cannot be confined within national boundaries, but which must inevitably become part and parcel of the coming European Revolution.

Widespread Strikes over Porter Award

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To add insult to injury, instead of attempting to get speedy redress of the miners' grievances, the N.W. Regional Controller of Fuel and Power, Mr. Gordon Macdonald, has attempted to drive them back to work by threats of prosecution and imprisonment. This man, an ex-miner has climbed to his present position on the backs of the miners and now proceeds to attempt to kick them in the face. Instead of standing with his own class, he now sides with the bosses.

But the miners who face death and injury in the pits every day are not so easily intimidated. As was to be expected, it had the opposite result. The pits affected remained out despite the threat. And any attempt to operate it would result in a bigger explosion among the already embittered miners.

The problem of increased production of coal, better conditions for the miners, and decent wages can only be solved by the nationalisation of the mines without compensation to the coalowners, and their operation under workers' control. This is the objective for which the miners should strive. But it is clear that the capitalist government is not interested in the problem of coal as such. If they were this solution would long since have

masses to be more enthusiastic for the "war of liberation". The Italian Communist Party, in its Bari paper "Civiltà Proletaria" demands the creation of an "army of the people to fight the war of liberation" side by side with the Allies. But liberation can only be won by the independent struggle of the Italian workers and peasants, side by side with their class brothers in Europe against both the German and Anglo-American imperialist camps. For a Soviet Italy and a Socialist United States of Europe.

"Private X."

been adopted. They are not even interested in radically improving the bad conditions of the miners; what concessions have been made have been wrung from the coalowners and the Government by the movements of the miners. The Government is fundamentally interested only in protecting the interests of the coalowners, as of all capitalists.

The lesson for the miners is clear. They cannot expect the coalowners and their government to act in their interests. But while it is necessary to exert pressure on the union leadership, it is clear that they too, are bound up with the Government and the coalowners. The miners must fight inside the unions to convert them into fighting organs really representative of the workers. But at the same time, as the disorganisation of the strikers and the lack of connection between the rank and file in the different pits and between one county and another demonstrates: that in any struggle of this nature, the workers should get into touch with their comrades in other pits to explain what action they are taking, and to co-ordinate such action and present a united front to the coalowners. Isolated and sporadic struggles place the strikers in exceptional difficulties in the face of the united front of coal-owners, Stalinists, union leaders and Government officials. This would avoid the occurrence of one pit going back while another is just coming out, etc.

Miners should immediately demand that their leaders struggle for the minimum demands presented by the M.F.G.B. They must organise rank and file committees of the miners in every pit with delegates in contact with one another. They must fight for the control of the unions and union officials by demanding the re-election of officials every two years. These are the major lessons of the Award and its consequences for the miners.