

Liberty!

Equality!!

Fraternity!!!

# THE WORD

To Rouse The People, To Combat Fascism, and To Speed Commonweal.

An Organ of the United Socialist Movement, Edited and Published by Guy A. Aldred, at The Strickland Press, 104 George Street, Glasgow, C.1. All unsigned matter is from the pen of the Editor. Annual Subscription, 3s. 0d.

Vol. III, No. 2.

SEPTEMBER, 1941.

Price: TWOPENCE

## FROM WAR TO PEACE— HOW?

### DUKE OF BEDFORD CORRESPONDENCE

Last month we published, in the form of an interview, a full statement of the Duke of Bedford's position on Pacifism, Civil Liberty, Conscientious Objectors, Total Disarmament, and the need for a United Pacifist-Socialist Movement of Opposition to the Churchill Government.

The Duke explained that he would take his seat in the House of Lords only with the support of the working class and the avowed pacifist elements in society, as an enemy of war and poverty.

The interview, and the Duke's article, *Soviet Russia: A Sane View*, caused great interest. The issue had a very big circulation, and despite several reprintings, is out of print. Many orders could not be executed. Readers have inundated us with letters. These have come from all classes and types. We have deemed it our duty to publish some of these letters, even though the fact of so doing compels us to hold over interesting and important essays. The fate of civilisation is in the balance and the opinion of every citizen who thinks at this time of crisis is precious and ought to be known. *Your* opinion and *your* counsel are invited. From war to peace—and to *real* Social Peace throughout the world—how? To each reader we say: Comrade, think, speak, act! Let your voice be heard! What must be done? Say.

Dear Aldred,—This is splendid, the August, 1941, *Word*.

The Duke and you are starting out strongly and clearly on your *Great Campaign*. I would like *definitely* to join you and am drawing up a proposal to send to you shortly for consideration.

In our Great and Desperately Immediate Cause of Socialism and Peace.

Yours Sincerely,

W. M. TEAPE.

Bournemouth, August 7.

[The Rev. W. M. Teape's career was outlined in June "Word." Scholarship and the study of "The Secret Lore of India" brought him to Socialism and Anti-Militarism.—Ed.]

Dear Sir,—I have great sympathy with most of the views expressed by both the Duke and yourself in the interview which you publish in the August issue of *The Word*. Particularly important, as it seems to me, is the advocacy of a United Opposition of critical analysis and peace, comprising all the truly Socialist and the pacifist movements; but such an Opposition would ideally be international in scope, and it is in this regard that the Duke's reading of the situation arising from the fighting in Russia becomes especially significant. I have always held that man is not so inhuman that, if sufficiently stirred, his humanitarian feelings will not come uppermost; and we should be foolish

## THE ARMISTICE PEACE, 1919

### IS THE COMING PEACE TO BE THE SAME



Reproduced from *The Spur*, June 1919.

The above prophetic cartoon was not appreciated when it appeared in "The Spur" in June 1919. It was drawn by our then C.O. comrade, Henry Bernard, and has proven to be a correct prophetic comment on the Versailles Treaty. Many persons were horrified at our suggestion that that Peace was no peace. Time has vindicated the cartoonist and condemned his complacent Imperialist critics. We reproduce it to-day as a challenge and a question. Is the 1919 Peace to be repeated? Are we to be thrilled by more mockery? Or are we to end war and violence for all time? The question is one calling for the wise and determined decision of every good citizen of the world. YOU must decide as well as YOUR neighbour, who is your mere enemy of the moment, but your neighbour for all time.

indeed not to take the opportunity offered by the prospect of a more general disillusionment among the peoples to drive home the lesson that V may stand for Vanity rather than true Victory, which is not the offspring of physical violence at all, but rather of a right sense of moral values resulting in the victory of man's higher over his lower self and a willingness to subordinate selfish interests to the common good round a conference table.

Yours sincerely,

C. GASKELL.

Littleborough, August 13.

P.S.—I enclose a donation towards the cost of producing and publishing *The Word* in recognition of its value to the cause of peace.

[We are grateful to the Rev. C. Gaskell for his consistent support and words of cheer in the struggle to end the crime of militarism and violence. He has been a subscriber to "The Word" almost from the beginning, and he has waved aside theological differences, to concentrate on the critical need of loyalty to pacifism and humanity. He identifies Christianity with tolerance as a human need and right, and the redemption of humanity from the reign of violence and destruction.—Ed.]

Dear Mr. Aldred.—Thanks so much for the letter and for the literature you so kindly sent. The Duke of Bedford is a personal friend of mine. We who want to save humanity before it is too late must be held together in comradeship.

Yours fraternally,

W. ROWLAND JONES.

St. Hilda's Vicarage,

Denton, August 18.

[The Rev. W. Rowland Jones has written a challenging work, "Let's Try Reality." This is published by Allen and Unwin. A review will be published of it in an early issue.—Ed.]

Thanks for paper. I have had correspondence at times with the Duke of Bedford. He must be urged to leadership. I am writing him myself and hope others will also.

I am recommending your paper as I think you recognise that Church *could* do a good work if it were not subservient to the State and vested interests. Some of us are trying to help from within and at any rate refuse to be identified with the present negation of Christianity—principle without practice.

A. K. SHREWSBURY.

Bury St. Edmunds, August 20, 1941.

The Rev. A. K. Shrewsbury is rector of Chevington. We endorse his comments. The Church ought NOT to be subservient to vested interests. In the past teachers of Christianity were opposed to usury, war, and exploitation. Christianity had a definite message of emancipation and social justice for all mankind and did not believe in national frontiers. The Church has sold its birthright. This cannot be tolerated. The pulpit should become the centre of culture and brotherhood, of integrity and democratic social service. Its canons must denounce cannons.—Ed.

Sir,—I was greatly interested in the interview with the Duke of Bedford which you published in the August issue of *The Word*. I would like to say as a Christian minister how immensely I appreciate the stand which the Duke has taken so consistently on behalf of Christian principle. I am aware that many sincere Christians differ from me, but personally I cannot see how it is possible to combine a devotion to the spirit and teaching of the Nazarene with a pursuit of the way of war. The incompatibility becomes increasingly evident as the war becomes more bitter and more ruthless. The Prime Minister's speech of July 14th with its quite open and flagrant appeal to the spirit of vindictiveness, should cause all sincere Christians who have supported the war to re-consider their position. I am quite sure that the Duke is right when he says that "as time goes on, the disastrous consequences of the appeal to arms will become apparent . . . to the most unthinking of human beings."

I believe the Duke's attitude to the question of Fascism is perfectly clear and consistent. What is happening to-day is that under the stress of war the Fascist spirit and Fascist

methods are becoming more and more acclimated in this country. I have no great belief in the possibilities of political action until there is a radical change in the common attitude, and I believe that what is wanted essentially is a living Christianity. At the same time a man like the Duke of Bedford can, I am sure, play an effective part in giving a lead to public opinion. Pacifist opinion in Parliament seems an entirely negligible force at the moment: I can only hope that the Duke will increase its strength by taking his stand as a spokesman on its behalf in the House of Lords.

Yours faithfully,

SIDNEY SPENCER

(Minister, Hope Street (Unitarian) Church, Liverpool).

Liverpool, August 24.

Dear Mr. Aldred,—Ignoring all the accusations made by irresponsible persons against the Duke of Bedford, I would like to comment upon your interesting and revealing interview with him. In these times it is not easy even for the professional philosopher fully to define his political and intellectual position. Obviously, the Duke of Bedford has thought out a policy based upon reason, and has, through stress and strife, consistently striven to maintain it. The fact that he was one of the signatories to an anti-war manifesto as far back as 1932 proves this.

It is probably true to say that the Duke's Pacifism is no more than an outgrowth of his Christianity; it is a necessary, but subsidiary thing. The main object of the Duke's intellectual quest has been to discover how, in society, he can implement his spiritual findings. The Duke is a progressive Christian, a reformer rather than a moralist. He believes (and no modern thinker worthy of the name could conclude otherwise) that ethics, religion, cannot be separated from the political and social life of Man. This fact is an integral one. People who have in the past failed to apprehend where in fact the Duke of Bedford does stand, should reflect upon his statement concerning the relation of religion to society. The Duke, quite logically, has attempted to bring his religion into the social-economic sphere to purify and re-invigorate that sphere. Probably, like many Socialists, he cannot envisage any other positive urge which will effectively resist the Fascist challenge. Christianity as seen by such progressives must cease to be the blind instrument of privilege and become creative of Goodness, Truth and Beauty. Here is the core of this man's faith, and let him who will condemn it.

In respect of the suggested opposition to the Churchill group it is necessary to exercise care in defining what shape that opposition shall take. Personally I cannot actively and directly oppose Churchill *now*, although I am not in agreement with his policy. The Duke of Bedford treads as warily as I do myself. He would lead opposition to another Versailles. Most philosophers and intellectuals would be ready to join in such a crusade. I would place what literary and intellectual ability I may possess, at the disposal of such a cause working for the redemption of man.

Yours ever,

E. W. MARTIN.

Beaworthy, Devon, August 21.

Dear Mr. Aldred.—After reading *The Word's* interview with the Duke of Bedford, I would like to remark that those who accuse the Duke of being pro-Fascist have found a very good way of playing Hitler's game. Let them read any brand of paper to discover what Hitler thinks of gentlemen in public positions who hold pacifist views. It won't take them long to discover—if they don't know it already—that the attempt to discredit such a man as the Duke of Bedford is an attempt to rid Hitler of one more opponent. And anyway, my dear Blimp, is not the persecution of those who disagree with us mere Hitlerism?

Good Heavens! there is no possible excuse for confusing pacifism with fascism. There is

literature enough. The fact that Hitlerism includes some of the essential changes—matters of social justice—is very unpleasant for the conservative; but this does not mean that others who believe in the essential changes have any affinity with those who use bad means to achieve only a small portion of the good ends.

Yes, unless we are to regard words as just emotional noise, to call a distinguished gentleman who is a pacifist (in the true and full meaning of that word) a pro-Fascist is a fine contribution to the campaign for bigger and better truncheons.

To my mind the Duke answers all critics by proving whole-hearted pacifism with his generous offer to be the voice of a minority in the House of Lords. Even the Blimps should be grateful to the Duke for this reminder that an Englishman can undertake the responsibilities of his belief and position without thought or hope of personal aggrandisement.

Sincerely,

OSWALD BLAKESTON.

Ashburton, August 22.

Dear Sir,—In the statement of your interview with the Duke of Bedford on the subject of the present War and the need for its speedy termination, and for a bold drive for a better understanding among the Nations of the Earth, reference is made to the Duke being a Christian, and it is suggested that he should therefore receive the support of Christian Bodies, especially that of the Religious press. But we all know how in these days of war the Religious press has surrendered the first principles of true Christianity, and that largely our Churches of all denominations have allied themselves with the war-mongers. Of course, there are exceptions, but these exceptions are too few to wield any substantial influence with the masses of Religionists in the country.

The minds of the People to-day are far removed from things Religious except when the hand of death comes near. The War is the first concern of our fellow-citizens, be they Religionists or Secularists. I think, therefore, that the Duke could reach the People more effectively and with speed were he first of all to take his Seat in the House of Lords. I feel sure that the press would give him due publicity. This first step would, to my mind, reveal to the People that here was one man courageous and firm enough to voice the mind of hundreds of thousands of others. One does not know how long this War is to last. None but the most foolish will say that Germany will collapse as she collapsed at the last War. And as there is absolutely no comparison between the last War and this War, only a bold stroke by a man of position and standing can possibly save the situation and lead to the avoidance of a prolonged War with its futile run of disaster and death.

You suggest that the Socialist and Pacifist Movement should conclude an alliance to end the War. But where are the Socialists? You must know that true and honest Socialists to-day are as scarce as eggs. The Socialists, so-called, who control the body of workers in the country, are now in the pay of the war-mongers, and it is in their interests that the Duke of Bedford be kept down. Hence I feel that the Duke will require to act on his own, knowing that he has the moral and all other kind of support which thousands of the meantime silent citizens can give him.

The urgency of the matter demands that Action take place at once. With the Duke of Bedford before the public eye and ear, and with *The Word* and such organs driving ahead the Cause for which the Duke speaks, the People are bound in time to make hearty response. For the present Administration at Westminster, especially now that it has proved its incompetence and impotence by the publication of the Churchill-Roosevelt "Scrap of Paper," seems to be on the point of committing suicide. The only way to avoid this is for it to die a natural death. The Duke can effect this in the Lords.

Yours fraternally,

ALEXANDER RATCLIFFE.

Bearsden, August 19, 1941.

[Mr. A. Ratcliffe is the well-known editor of the

Protestant "Vanguard. Since the outbreak of war he has been consistently anti-war and anti-militarist. He holds that a Christian ought not to uphold war and all its horrors and crimes.—Ed.]

Dear Mr. Aldred,—I simply had to write and tell you how enjoyed I am to find the Duke of Bedford's interview with you, in *The Word*, and his splendid suggestion that he should lead a genuine peace movement. I can think of no more suitable man to do so. He seems to possess every qualification needed. The great thing will be to gather together all the true peace-seekers to support him through thick and thin.

The present apology for freedom of speech and thought hampers one considerably, but I do hope the Duke will really get started soon. I only wish that I may be able to do something tangible to help.

I thoroughly appreciate your paper and work. I feel it is so remarkable that, holding your own religious views as you do, you are broad-minded enough to appreciate the Christian point of view so fully.

With all good wishes, your sincerely,

OLGA PIKE.

Llandudno, August 13, 1941.

Dear Comrade,—What can we say but "thanks and thanks"! A very active Wallasey worker for various social causes said last night that she had been puzzling and puzzling who could be got. Others must have been thinking strenuously too as you will of course know. It seemed to me that at last you had got the driver at the wheel, tooted the horn and gently moved the bus on a bit to waken the would be passengers or make them would be passengers. One can work on that. I was very much perturbed to read that the paper may have to be discontinued for want of funds. We owe so much to *The Word* and yet somehow do not come to its aid when it is required. The enclosed is a mere nothing, but perhaps every nothing helps!

With regard to an Opposition, I wonder why so many speak of things being impossible, when all one needs to know beforehand is if the thing is right and needed. It seems impossible to come across one person who has courage and faith to say, "It is needed, and therefore, we shall undoubtedly find the ways and means to get it."

With congratulations and best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

AGNES W. MACKAY.

Liverpool, August 14.

Dear Friend,—The August *Word* was magnificent. I felt happy for the first time for many months. I hope the Labour and Socialist movements will respond to the Duke's splendid declaration of his willingness to lead us. *May that day soon dawn.*

It is wonderful to hear the circulation of *The Word* is rising, but I wish you had a big up-to-date machine and stacks of paper. But your work will prosper, all the same. I will just thank you again for your humane and enlightened work.

Yours fraternally,

DOROTHY HOLMS,

(Widow of Captain John F. Holms, M.C., of the Regular Army).

Bath, August 19.

Dear Mr. Aldred,—Please find enclosed my annual subscription to *The Word*.

We in our home are very interested regarding the interview given by the Duke of Bedford for this month's issue. It would indeed be a splendid thing if he took his stand in the House of Lords as the spokesman of the Socialist Pacifists, whose greatest desire is to see a better order of things in this and every land. Having known many kinds of sorrow myself, I can reach out to all my fellow-creatures with an understanding mind and heart, for whatever country we belong we are all the same. I do hope you will have many more subscribers to your journal, it is so refreshing to read.

When my husband and I were travelling in

a railway-carriage one day last week, we were glad to hear remarks regarding the national press, such as: "Does the Press think that 'the man in the street' is an idiot, taking in the change of front regarding Russia?" "The whiteness of all we do and the blackness of the enemy," etc., etc.

As for the Prime Minister's speech last Sunday evening, I wept in agony that the Christian Faith should be brought into this orgy of slaughter which is sweeping the world.

Yours faithfully,

(Mrs.) ALICE GOODRICK.

Manchester, August 28, 1941.

Dear Mr. Aldred,—Many thanks for *The Word* for August. I do congratulate you upon the fine magazine (or periodical?) you turn out, both as regards the matter, and the satisfying quantity of it as compared with the rather scrappy sheets so common at present—also the good print and general form.

I also have no interest in theology, sectarianism or orthodox religion, which is so largely a sham and convention, with little true belief. I don't believe in an anthropomorphic God.

I sincerely hope that pacifist, socialist, and other likely bodies or movements will continue and request the Duke of Bedford to become leader of a movement towards Peace and sanity. It seems time that some definite move and useful action was put into operation to offset the demoniac character of official activities and motives, especially as the "war" situation may soon develop into a deadlock. Please record my agreement with that cause, if that is any help.

Yours sincerely,

J. C. PAGE.

Winchcombe, August 19.

Dear Comrade,—I would like to express, as a reader of *The Word*, and a member of the P.P.U. and the I.L.P., my approval of your proposal that the Duke of Bedford should be the National Voice of an allied Socialist and Pacifist Movement, and would give all the support I could.

Yours fraternally,

CUTHBERT LEIGH.

Keswick, August 15.

Dear Sir,—We have been told by the M.O.I. that we are fighting to bring into the world a new policy of social justice. We are told also that such a policy must come from the people as part of this war effort. Because of these statements I welcome the interview you publish with the Duke of Bedford.

Those who lead nations in wars and the campaigns of hate that belong to war are not suited to prepare the way for peace. We have no Minister of Peace existing in War Cabinets side by side with the Ministers for War. That is because it is considered impossible to explore the paths of peace whilst pursuing the course of war. Hence those who are prominent in war are, with rare exception, not the best type to promote peace. War blunts their understanding for the tasks of peace establishment. There is a need for someone opposed to war, and outstanding as a champion for peace, to arise, and to take the lead. We need such a representative exponent to define his position now.

Such a man must be outside of all existing parties or groupings. He must possess the spirit of statesmanship so as to be able to effect unity of working between the groups. He must be able to challenge the suggestion of sordid careerism. He must be above the suspicion of political interest.

Your interview with the Duke of Bedford makes me ask: Is he the man? He has certainly opposed his own class for many years and championed the cause of social justice. When the pre-war champions of peace became silent in the dangerous days of War, he asserted his faith in peace and the need to establish peace by negotiation and round-table discussion.

The interview may cause many people to write

to the editor stating that they are prepared to support the Duke of Bedford if he gives practical expression of his belief in uniting all the Pacifist and Socialist elements in a common peace cause. They must say what they are prepared to do. They must stand to the position they define. Otherwise they will but condemn another man to martyrdom in the struggle against war and social wrong.

Yours faithfully,

R. J. SCRUTTON.

(Editor, *Parliament Christian*).

Kensington, London, W.8, August 25.

Dear Sir,—Please send me some more copies of the August issue of *The Word*. Some of my friends are interested and would like to know more of the Duke of Bedford's views, and had not seen *The Word* before.

DOROTHY F. MARTIN.

Weybridge, 13/8/41.

Dear Mr. Aldred,—I want to suggest that you have a magnificent gathering ground for the forces of pacifism and sanity in *The Word*. You might insert a statement of what we are after, and say, that the response to the current issue of *The Word* makes you believe that those who stand for peace and those who stand for Socialism, in opposition to war and militarism, could agree probably on common action against the criminal futility of all this bloodshed; that world peace and reason wants the biggest army in the world to witness for it, an army of thought, vision, and understanding; an army moving towards the establishment of peace and justice; and that all who realise this need should send their names to *The Word*, and so make, and keep in, contact.

More and More, I feel it is needed to get all these different movements of peace and Socialism together at this time of crisis. I believe that is where the Duke of Bedford could play an important part. He could be a reconciler of the forces that must make a coalition for peace, just as other forces have made a coalition for war. I am very keen to gather all the separate movements of peace that would save the world but for their divisions and watertight compartments, into one powerful movement. *So May It Grow.*

Yours Sincerely,

A. RUTH FRY.

Thorpeness, August 13.

[Miss Fry has sent us her important work, "Everyman's Affair, A Plea for a Sane Peace," published at 1s. 0d., by Andrew Dakers, Ltd., London. We propose to review this work at length in next issue. Meantime comrades can order it direct, 1s. 3d., post free, from the publishers, or through this office.—Ed.]

Dear Comrade Aldred,—I attach great importance to your interview with the Duke of Bedford, and heartily endorse all you say of him. There can be absolutely no doubt about the necessity of a Churchill opposition, and if the Duke is prepared to be the voice of this opposition in the House of Lords then we should rally all the support for him that is possible.

The Duke, unfettered by party platform, free from the bureaucracy of parliamentary party executives and possessed of a mind unimpaired by the cancerous growth of careerism, is well worthy of the support of all those who love Democracy, and who believe in the ultimate triumph of Truth and Freedom.

Perhaps it will be possible to arrange for a meeting, at which the Duke would speak?

With best wishes, yours fraternally,

KEN BRYAN.

Caldecote, 15/8/41.

Dear Comrades,—The August issue of *The Word* is the most inspiring issue of any Socialist paper that I have come across in war-time. I want to support the Duke of Bedford's plea for a combination of Socialists and Pacifists in a Churchill Opposition and Peace campaign.

I was until recently Secretary of the Brighton I.L.P. I have now become an Anarchist and have left the Party (which, however, I still regard with great admiration, but feel that party and parliamentary politics are out of date). As a C.O. given N.C.C. by the Appellate Tribunal, I have refused to attend medical, and await arrest. These personal details are

included as *bona fides* of my sympathies.

We need something new, and any new movement must be ambitious. In no way must it be narrow. (I mean that emphatically; I find so many so-called revolutionaries—C.P.'ers in particular—who are utterly narrow, conventional and reactionary in their outlook on life). Its propaganda methods must be original, within the limits of its funds. Unlike the C.P. it would not be financed by Russian roubles disguised as American dollars. Guy Aldred already does a good job of work through his postal mission, a very good job of educational work. But we must not stop at the press, unless we can capture public imagination and sympathy to such a degree as to compel the support of some great national daily or weekly. We must not employ falsehood or exaggeration, after the manner of the Communist Party, but we must have initiative and life, which is lacking in the Labour Party, Trade Unions and Co-operative movement. In selling out to the cause of death, these movements, built up by the workers, as expressions of workers' progress, have destroyed themselves. Radio is a news medium that cannot be captured until we have secured a powerful minority influence. Our message must strike home, until then, from every other possible angle. It must be on everyone's tongue, from breakfast time until night-fall, and after. It must be honest, clear, fearless, optimistic. No tricks! No C.P. tactics this time. We do not want another People's Convention farce, another shadow organisation for a political party.

A mere Churchill opposition is not enough. Churchill might be opposed yet not merely by a pacifist and a Socialist movement seeking the peace of the world, but by a new patriotic nationalist movement, ostensibly Socialist, almost aggressively reformist, that will reveal itself later as a British form of Fascism. We must not oppose Churchill only unwittingly to help the rival leaders of some such movement to power. I do not mean that the British Union of Fascists will recover from being outlawed. I think that autocracy may be ushered in by some purblind, careerist trade union leaders. Unless we preserve fiercely civil rights, as the Duke of Bedford says, serious dangers confront us and the whole of the world's workers. Because of these dangers, I find Guy Aldred's interview with the Duke of Bedford, and his comments, of vital importance. Now is the time to act. Each of us must be willing to play his part, to accomplish teamwork for the salvation of mankind from utter misery and desolation.

There are many people in this country who could come together for such a purpose—Lord Ponsonby, James Maxton, John McGovern, Fenner Brockway, Rhys Davies, Middleton Murray, Stuart Morris, Sir Hugh Robertson, Hugh McDermid, Emrys Hughes, Dr. Salter, Ethel Mannin, etc.

As a final suggestion, I would like to ask the editor to reserve one or more pages as a forum for the urgent discussion of the important issues raised by the Duke of Bedford. I would ask him to reprint from other journals of progress, pacifism, and socialism, comments and contributions. Let us bring together, rapidly and usefully, with a view to definite conclusion, all the ideas and proposals that we can collect. Let us build a volunteer army of thought, struggle, and emancipation. Let us have light and understanding.

I would close with a tribute to John Morley and his family. We need more like you and your sons, John.

Fraternally in The Struggle,

F. W. JEFKINS.

Brighton, August 10.

### THE CHRISTIAN PACIFIST

PUBLISHED BY THE FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION.

Editors: Rev. Lewis MacLachlan and Rev. C. Paul Gliddon.

Price Threepence. Post Free Fourpence.  
Annual Subscription: 4s.

Organ of the Fellowship of Reconciliation; the Christian Pacifist Crusade (Congregational); the Methodist Peace Fellowship; the Unitarian and Free Christian Peace Fellowship; the Baptist Pacifist Fellowship; the (English) Presbyterian Peace Fellowship; the Church of Scotland Peace Society; the Scottish Congregational Ministers' Peace Society; and the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.

Editorial and Publishing Address:

17 RED LION SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1.

METHODIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP: Secretary—Rev. Leslie Keeble, M.P.F. Office, Kingsway Hall, W.C.2.

THE FRIENDS' PEACE COMMITTEE: The Lawn, St. John's Road, Banbury. Secretary—Karlín M. Capper-Johnson.

UNITARIAN CHURCH,  
Hope Street, Liverpool.

Minister—Rev. SIDNEY SPENCER, B.A.  
Sunday Services:—11 a.m. and 6-30 p.m.

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September 21st: "Is Conscience the Voice of God?"

September 28th: "Have the Mystics a Message for Us?"

## MILITARISM AND WOODLAND

[On August 20, 1918, we completed the third sentence of imprisonment imposed upon us by District Court Martial, for resisting military service, and were returned, under escort, from Wandsworth Prison to the Detention Room at Deepcut Camp. Here, on August 29, 1918, we received our fourth Court Martial, and were returned to Wandsworth Prison, sentenced to two years' hard labour. Between the dates mentioned—August 20 and August 29—we wrote a number of essays on our experiences. The one bearing the title, "Militarism and Woodland," was published in "The Spur," (Vol. V., No. 5, page 103) for October 1918. No apology is required for its reproduction to-day—Ed.]

Since my release from prison I have been mentally and morally barren. The emptiness of life has weighed heavily upon me in this Deepcut detention room, and if I can succeed only in conveying to my readers some understanding of the soul crushing monotony which now oppresses me, I shall be rendering a service not only to my fellow C.O.'s, but also to the soldiers, who, in one way or another, and to only a little less extent, travail through the same slough of despond.

I have normally small taste for the countryside. Still I know, somewhat, the joy of roaming through the woodlands. From the detention room window I can vision the despoilation which has been made of the country by militarism. Woodland has been turned not into useful residential district but into dreary gravelled sanded stony waste: the trees have given place to dull and ugly huts: and the vision which woodland might have rendered poetical and have matured, the barrenness of soulless hut life has destroyed. Where birds should sing, only guns boom. Where men should love, males only lust. Where the mystery of sex should be wonderfully understood, only the sensualism is apprehended. Men understand the fact of sex in a brutal animal way. But the delicacy of sex, all the subtle tenderness which belongs to it, its tender charm, and the growing innocence which comes with deeper knowledge: all this wondrous realm of real comradeship is beyond the ken of those who dwell in a desert which was once happy woodland. From this window I watch the soldiers and the girls go by. Sex attraction parades its vitality with impudence rather than with dignity. And though with some cases, there may be real tender feeling between the parties, in many, if not most, a conscious vulgarity obtrudes itself. Militarism destroys the woodland and degrades the mystery of life. It vulgarises and prostitutes all that it touches.

Thus in the guard room, men on guard idle round the hours of the clock. In the huts, the men, off parade, are appalled by the barrenness of life. All comfort has vanished from it: and with that loss of comfort departs the sense of delicacy, that loving touch of home, which makes angels out of outcasts, and saints out of loafers. Reduced to its barest need life becomes abnormally brutal: and so the soldier, with his simple life, so far as comfort is concerned, and his regulated burden of duty and obligation, so far as military necessity demands, becomes something less than a man for all normal purposes. The craving of sex is fostered by his barrack-enforced asceticism. The comradeship of human difference is lost sight of, because the vision of it never penetrates the gloom of dull despair and hopeless discipline the war has developed. So the soldier expresses the barrenness of life.

Yet the sons of men, degraded and depressed by "Christian" institutions and capitalist newspapers, are not bad fellows. I have heard the stories of expeditionary men, received their hand clasps, acknowledged their comradeship, and realised the wonderful drawing together which is taking place between us socialist C.O.'s and the soldiers who have fought in Flanders. Stay-at-home civilians and some Red Caps may hate us, but the genuine soldier who has fought and suffered knows no such hatred. He is one of us, and we are all the boys.

But militarism has destroyed the woodland,

the woodland which hallows life, which evidences its mystery, which makes us feel so marvellously at one with all nature. It has seized on our poor human nature, which has been dwarfed by the slum and arrested by gold, and denied us the right to know and to grow. Militarism has discovered woman in slavery and added to her chains. It has found her ignorant and outraged her in addition. It has seized her son and conscripted her womb. Herself, intended by nature to be the channel of progressive revolution throughout the ages, she is but deemed the gutter pipe of venereal disease.

So the war goes on. So woman is deemed a hanger-on of man, an instrument to satisfy his lusts, and perpetuate his ambitions. Good Christian divines, labour leaders, newspaper men, exfeminists, all encourage this loathsome conception of woman's function in life.

Yes, I honour woman. I reverence mother, sister, and sweetheart, because I realise how much we have in common as human beings, how small is the difference between us as sexes, and yet how uniting and vitally harmonious are the consequences, of these subtle differences. Understanding this, I oppose the militarism which is corrupting youth of both sexes. As I look out upon the desert which has supplanted woodland in this district, I vision how militarism thrives in the desert: the desert of barren love, of barren knowledge, of barren comradeship. I turn from the window and hear the sounds that come from the guard room. I hear the cry of human nature going up against this barren life of militarism. Fellowship, knowledge, true holy love are demanding to have their place in life: and so, once again there is the writing on the wall to be read and understood by all who will read and understand. Militarism is doomed. One day the woodland will take us children of the earth into her haunts and glades, and recall us to the romance of love and peace. She will demand that we shall eat of the fruit of reverence and peace, the fruit of the *tree of knowledge* of good and evil.

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Situated in Grey Street—West, East Melbourne (opposite St. Patrick's Cathedral), the Unitarian Church is reached by all trams to and from Collins Street. It is within one minute's walk from Parliament House. The Rev. W. Bottomley preaches regularly on Sunday evenings at the services, beginning at 7. Readers of *The Word* resident in Melbourne are invited to attend. Rationalists, Pacifists, Socialists, as well as Unitarians, welcomed.

During the greater part of the year, the Melbourne Forum meets in the Church on Sunday afternoon at 3-30, when addresses are delivered by well-known men and women on matters of public interest. These are followed by questions and discussion.

*The Crisis of Modern Civilisation*, a sermon delivered by the Rev. W. Bottomley against war, is now issued in Britain by *The Strickland Press*, Price 2d. Delivered in April, 1939, and broadcast at the time, it represents views still maintained by its author.

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## HERBERT MORRISON LABOUR MILITARISTS—NOW!

### HOW DO THEY MANAGE TO BE SO?

#### A Letter of Enquiry from The Duke of Bedford.

Dear Aldred,—When I was a very little boy, there was a rhyme that my father used sometimes to repeat to me.

"Poor old Robinson Crusoe,  
He made him'a coat  
Of an old nanny-goat,  
How the deuce did he manage to do so?"

In *The Word* for April, 1941, our colleague, C. H. Norman, reproduced extracts from a war-resisters' speech made by Herbert Morrison at the Albert Hall, London, on December 5, 1926. To that speech Herbert Morrison owes part of that public status which now permits him to function as Home Secretary and Minister for Home Security in a War administration.

At the Tribunals, conscientious objectors are asked to pledge themselves that, *at no time and under no circumstances* will they support war. If they hesitate to do this, because they feel that they cannot pledge the future, which is correct ethics, they are turned down as not being genuine. On this reasoning, Herbert Morrison and Sir Patrick Dollan could never have been genuine, for they were yesterday anti-war and are, to-day, very much pro-war, urging others to fight and to face the perils of war. Our view is that men who change their views under such circumstances, such changes tending to their political and social advancement, ought to retire from public life. This is the only ethical view to take.

The *Manchester Guardian* for Thursday, June 13, 1940, published a two-column report, headed:

#### "MR. MORRISON CALLS FOR STILL GREATER EFFORT"

The opening sentences of the report read:—

"Mr. Herbert Morrison, Minister of Supply, speaking for the National Defence Public Interest Committee at a luncheon in London yesterday, referred to the increase in the war effort already achieved and to the need for making it greater still."

In the speech that followed, Morrison referred to Britain, France, and the United States, as though there were no divisions of classes in these countries, and as though each country was represented by a single unit of thought and interest. He concluded with a tribute to Mr. Churchill as "our Prime Minister."

We would take no exception to this but for the fact that Morrison owes his position in public life to the fact that he had pretended that class divisions existed in society and that he represented the working class, in opposition to Churchill and his class. He has climbed to the position of being a war-time Cabinet Minister by his past affectation of anti-militarism and Socialist exposition. To our minds, let apologists of various kinds say what they will, such proceedings must rank as expressions of undiluted hypocrisy. Our readers must feel the same when they consider what Morrison wrote in 1914.

The following article is extracted from *The Labour Leader*, for September 3, 1914, page 2, col. 1:—

#### KING AND COUNTRY NEED YOU!

By Herbert Morrison.

Your King and Country Need You!

Ah! Men of the Country, you are remembered. Neither the King, nor the Country, nor the picture papers had really forgotten you. When your master tried to cut your wages down, did you think he knew nothing of your beautiful brave heart? When you were unemployed, did you think your Country had forgotten you? When the military were used against you in the strikes, did you wonder if your King was quite in love with you? Ah! foolish one.

Your King and Country Need You!

Need hundreds and thousands of you to go to hell and to do the work of hell. The Commandment says: "Thou shalt not kill." Pooh! What does it matter? Commandments, like treaties, were made to be broken. Ask your parson, he will explain.

Your King and Country Need You!

Go forth, little soldier! Though you know not what you fight for, go forth. Though you have no grievance against your German brother—go forth and kill him! Though you may know he has a wife and family dependent upon him—go forth and slay him, he is only a German dog. Will he not kill you if he gets a chance? Of course he will.

He is being told the same story!

His King and Country Needs Him!

How can the man who penned this extreme Socialist anti-war and anti-militarist declaration be allowed to remain in public office, in a War Cabinet, as Minister of Home Security?

When I read the startling records that appear from time to time in *The Word* of the past sayings of ex-pacifist members of the Labour Party who are now members of the War Government or ardent supporters of the war, I ask myself again and again, in respect of their present policy and actions, "How the deuce do they manage to do so?" If they had always been fools on the war issue, or even if their attitude towards war had been a negative one, their conduct would be understandable. But the extraordinary thing is that, in the past, they seem to have been really well-informed and enlightened men. They said many shrewd and even courageous things. They used weighty arguments which I myself have been glad to borrow. They even, by investigation, gained a thorough knowledge of the welter of selfish and disgraceful intrigue which lies behind all great European wars and spreads the guilt of responsibility so widely. If they had ever been led to change their attitude one would have thought that it could only have been if a war situation had arisen in which responsibility rested to a quite abnormal extent on the enemies of Britain. Nevertheless, they have been bowled over and induced to abandon their principles over quite the most obviously foolish and unnecessary war which it is possible to imagine. No British interest was at stake, if we decide not to consider the financial commitments in Poland of a great insurance Company a "British interest." No enlightened democracy was being attacked, for the Polish Government was most undemocratic and it, or its predecessors, had a bad record for tyranny or even aggression. It was not even the case that Germany attacked Poland without any excuse; even Mr. Lloyd George has in the past declared in the strongest language that the arrangements made in Poland by the Treaty of Versailles would prove intolerable to the Germans and the democratic German statesman, Herr Stresemann, said the same thing. The proposals made by Hitler for remedying these grievances which our alliance encouraged the Poles to reject, were, moreover, most reasonable, and the objection that he is untrustworthy is irrelevant for wise men agree to the reasonable demands of untrustworthy people with especial readiness, since thereby they strengthen enormously their position if later they should have to oppose them over demands which are *not* just.

The volte-face of the Labour pacifists really strikes me as rather terrifying. It reminds me of certain events which happened when I was a member of the Prisoners' Aid Committee at Portsmouth. At the time which I have in mind, a neighbouring prison, by reason of the excellent and enlightened policy of its governor, was famed for its prisoners' aid work and for the high percentage of men who were brought back permanently to the paths of virtue. In another prison, there was a prison visitor, respected for his experience and general helpfulness; while in London we had got in touch with a retired Army Officer who proved most valuable to us in the important and difficult work of securing employment for the discharged men.

Alas, however, there came a dreadful day when we heard that the Governor of the modern prison had himself got into trouble through misappropriating the funds of the Prisoners' Aid Society! Within a few days one of the members of our P.A.S., on going to Brighton, discovered that the respected member of the Brighton P.A.S. was also enjoying His Majesty's hospitality. Close upon the heels of this came the final blow when the police told us not to have anything more to do with our officer friend, who

was about to be arrested for an exceedingly unpleasant crime. Poor old human nature! How were the mighty fallen! In another twenty years (I shall be just the right age for a War Minister then!) I, too, may be demanding the slaughter of some aggressor, or rather of some aggressor's people. So perhaps, when I feel moved to indignation and even a little contempt for the ex-pacifist Labour men, I ought rather to say, "There, but for the grace of God, goes Bedford!"

Yours very truly,

BEDFORD.

Newton Stewart, August 8.

## 18B. PRISONERS

### DUKE OF BEDFORD'S PROTEST.

We have received a large number of papers, local, national, or devoted to some special interest, containing letters "to the Editor" from the Duke of Bedford on the subject of war, conscience, and civic rights.

In this issue we reproduce one, from the columns of the *Catholic Herald*, London, for August 8 last. This reads as follows:—

Sir,—I have read with interest your comments on the arrest of Mr. Cahir Healy and on the working of Regulation 18B.

The worst and most dangerous feature of this Regulation as an attack on the liberty of the subject, unnecessary even under the abnormal conditions of war, is the failure to secure proper examination by a competent authority of the informants who have made charges against the persons detained. It is fairly obvious that real justice cannot be secured unless these informants are forced to submit to the procedure of a Court of Law.

In the recent Debate on the Regulation the Home Secretary maintained that there were difficulties in the way of allowing proper legal investigation, partly by reason of the length of time which would be involved and partly because Courts of Law are accustomed to deal with questions of fact and not to adjudicate on matters where action is taken on mere suspicion. Even, however, if we accept this view, it remains the duty of the Home Office to see that all informants are personally examined by the Advisory Committee which hears the appeals of detained persons under conditions where the prisoners themselves are available to the Committee and in those all too numerous cases where the Home Secretary decides to disregard a recommendation for the prisoner's release made by the Advisory Committee which he has appointed, he should himself undertake the task of making a proper enquiry, in the manner already specified.

Anyone who has had practical experience in getting to the bottom of a matter where some person, or persons, make a charge against an individual, must be aware that it is impossible for the wisest man alive to reach a just and final judgment merely on the evidence of written statements. This is particularly true where the persons concerned are strangers to him and where, in addition, there is likely to be an abnormal amount of prejudice and even downright falsehood.

Information against detained persons often comes from those whose capacity for forming accurate opinions has been seriously affected by war emotionalism. It may also come from persons animated by jealousy or ill-will; and it may come from official agents. With regard to these latter, it is not at all uncommon for them to seek to prove something against the person whose actions and outlook they have been directed to investigate. Seeing that they will be more likely to gain the approval of their superiors in their department if their enquiries seem to have had positive results, it is only human nature that this should be so: reports of the innocence of the suspected persons, if frequent, are not so likely to win approval and enhance the chances of an increase in salary. For this reason, if justice is to be secured, agents, in place of being regarded as persons of unusual reliability, should be subjected to very strict examination.

BEDFORD

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## THE EDITOR'S TRIALS IN THE DOCK

In *The Word* for September, 1940 (Vol. II, No. 2, pages 13-16), we commenced a record of our various trials. In that issue was published both the legal and ordinary press reports of the 1909 London Trial for Indian Sedition. Mr. Justice Coleridge's definition of sedition in his summing up became an important legal ruling. It was quoted considerably in "the trial of the twelve," which opened at the No. 1 Court, in the Central Criminal Court, Old Bailey, on Monday, November 16, 1925. Harry Pollitt, J. R. Campbell, and William Gallacher defended themselves. Sir Henry Slesser, since elevated to the Bench, and the late W. R. Pringle, M.P., defended the other defendants between them, Slesser founded the legal case for the defence on the rulings in cases of John Burns, Guy Aldred, and Sullivan. Sir Douglas Hogg, as Attorney-General, prosecuted, and the late Mr. Justice Rigby Swift presided.

*The Workers' Weekly*, the C. P. organ, for November 27, 1925, carried very full reports of the trials. "Court Impressions" were contributed by T. A. Jackson, who wrote:—

"The counsel work in relays. Sometimes the Attorney-General is replaced by Sir Travers Humphreys, and he in turn by Mr. Percival Clarke. Sometimes Sir Henry Slesser is deputised for by Mr. Arthur Henderson, junior. Pollitt, Campbell and Gallacher each in turn takes a hand. Slowly the work goes on. . . .

"Law cases are cited, whole libraries grow on the shelf behind counsel and on the judge's table. Famous cases bringing in a savour of stirring historical episodes—Tom Paine's case, with its memory of the French Revolution and the 'Rights of Man'; Sir Francis Burdett's case, a memory of Radical exorcisms with the Life Guards clearing Piccadilly with their pistols; Thomas Cooper's case, an echo of the Chartist days and the 'Sacred Month'; T. D. Sullivan's case from the Fenian days; John Burns' case from the early days of the S.D.F. and the unemployed riots; Aldred's case and Indian Nationalism; Bowman's case and Syndicalist anti-militarism. Echoes of the past waft from the pages of the soberly-bound volumes, quoted in almost casual tones by the bewigged and begowned men of the law.

Do the jury know the history drama indicated in the legal title 'Rex v. Paine' or 'Rex v. Sullivan'?

From *The Workers' Weekly* summary of Douglas Hogg's speech, we make this excerpt:—

"The test cases which Sir Henry Slesser had referred to were those of Burns, Aldred and Sullivan. He would take a test from the judgment in each case and use them to show that these were as he had claimed. . . .

"From the judgment in Aldred's case the Attorney-General quoted the test 'was the language used calculated to advocate the use of violence and its justification.' He claimed that passages which he read showed that the ends of the Communists could be attained only by armed revolt and the forcible overthrow of bourgeois society."

If this argument meant anything at all, it implied that all Communist propaganda was outlawed.

We pass to our second trial for sedition. This took place in Glasgow in 1921. So far as we know, no legal report exists of this trial. It was reported well in the local press; in the *Daily Herald*, by the present Lord Provost, who approved and applauded our defence; discussed in *The Worker* by William Gallacher, now M.P., and John S. Clarke, who wrote well on the matter of prosecution; and in *The Socialist*, the organ of the Socialist Labour Party, by Harry McShane, at that time associated with John MacLean, but later a member of the Communist Party and National Unemployed Workers' Movement. The bringing together of these various reports is a service to the history of the movement.

After these reports have been published, we shall collect our following trials: Court-Martials, for resisting military service in time of war; irregular marriage; birth-control propaganda, with which we were casually and accidentally and not actively associated, for we object to birth-control propaganda being conducted as a money-making racket; and Free Speech Trials, which we won on law, only for the Glasgow Labour Town Council to fail to implement the law. This censure applies to the I.L.P., as well

as to the Labour Party members. In due course we will deal with this matter thoroughly.

Below are the reports of the 1921 Glasgow Sedition Trial.

### I. THE BRITISH WHITE TERROR BY W. GALLACHER, M.P.

[Gallacher (not then M.P.) wrote a very human and very feeling account in "The Worker," Glasgow, July 30, 1921, under the title, "The British White Terror." He gave a lengthy and powerful description of how Scotland Yard runs the country, rather than the Cabinet. Then followed an exposition of the class struggle. He proceeded to detail the trial. —Ed.]

Imprisonment of Communists is now a matter of daily occurrence, and is generally being accepted as such.

The workers look dully on while Freedom is being slowly strangled in the interests of a decaying capitalism, as though it was something of no importance to them. But dull and apathetic as they may be, there surely is not one of them who makes any claim to manhood or womanhood, but must feel the spirit of protest arise within him or her at the unspeakable savage treatment that has been meted out to our comrade, Guy Aldred. Think of it! Kept in prison in solitary confinement for over three months while his enemies were plotting and planning to get up a case against him. . . .

Three months to prepare their case, and Aldred a prisoner all that time, and then—what a wretched show they made.

Aldred was accused of advocating violence, yet it was not he but his accusers who had the court and its environs packed with police and plain clothes men, all of them armed and ready to use their weapons in the most violent manner at the slightest provocation.

See the Lord Advocate's deputy standing there mouthing empty platitudes about peace and religion, the while he is surrounded by hired gunmen whose principal duty is to retain for capitalism the wealth that has been stolen from the worker. See in the dock, supported only by his loyal comrades, McLeish and Jenny Patrick, our comrade Aldred fighting the age-long battle of the slave class against those who would keep them in subjection. No one could sit in the court without recognising the debasing meanness of the accusers and the intellectual superiority of the accused.

In the midst of all this humbug and sham that pervaded the court, Aldred stood out clear and distinct, a man among mannikins.

No one can have more cause to hate the thought of prison than the present writer, yet in spite of all the suffering that it entails I'd rather a thousand times be Aldred with his twelve months imprisonment than the Lord Advocate's deputy with the price of his hire.

In attacking Aldred or any other advocate of working-class emancipation, they are attacking not only the individual but the Class the individual represents. The response to the Capitalist "White Terror" is organisation that will put Capitalism out of business.

Aldred and the others are in gaol, because the class they represent is weak. We are weak because we lack organisation. . . .

Our spokesmen are in gaol, and we are in chains.

We must break the chains and open the prison doors.

### II. GUY ALDRED'S TRIAL By H. McSHANE

[Reprinted from the "Socialist," June 30, 1921. The heading is the one used by McShane.—Ed.]

The trial of Guy Aldred, Miss Patrick, D. McLeish, and A. Fleming took place at the High Court, held in Glasgow on the 20th June. The charge was one of sedition.

The local members of the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Party, on the advice of Guy Aldred, had issued a paper of their own entitled the *Red Commune*. Only one number of the paper appeared. The articles were mostly taken from other papers. Extracts here and there formed the indictment.

The judge was Lord Skerrington. Out of a jury of fifteen, eight were women.

Mr. Morton appeared for A. Fleming, Fleming is the printer, and has no connection with the Party.

At the outset, Mr. Morton raised the question of relevancy, but his objections were overruled by the judge.

Among the articles complained of was one entitled "Our Word to You." Another was an article, "Boycott Parliament," by Col. Malone, M.P.

Guy Aldred also raised objection to the proceedings. He quoted Lord Justice Coleridge, who stated that a man is entitled to express his opinion on any subject, and that courts and juries were not judges in such matters. He pointed out that a revolution by a majority was constitutional. He said further that sedition changed its meaning from age to age. What was considered sedition at one period becomes part of the constitution at another period. He said that despite these things, the law still remained the same.

The judge overruled all the objections.

Detective-Lieutenant McGimpsey was the first witness. He started off by relating the history of the Glasgow Communist Group. After he had spoken for some time, Guy Aldred wanted to know what all this had to do with the charge. McGimpsey also gave evidence regarding a visit paid to Miss Patrick's house.

He was followed by Superintendent Keith and a few other police witnesses.

Evidence was given about a visit to Burnbank Gardens.

Further evidence was given regarding the arrest of Aldred.

Accounts were produced in court to show that there were transactions between the G.C.G. and Fleming.

Aldred questioned the witnesses frequently and effectively.

One of the police witnesses was questioned closely regarding Aldred's arrest. Aldred asked at what time the warrant was issued for his arrest. The reply was, four o'clock on the afternoon of March the 2nd. The witness did not know that Aldred was in London. A visit was paid the same night, at eight o'clock, to Bakunin House in Glasgow.

Aldred then wanted to know how it was that he was arrested in London the same day at four o'clock. Aldred said that according to law before a man can be arrested in London the warrant must be endorsed by a London Magistrate. The witness said that his warrant was endorsed by a London Magistrate, but Aldred said that was on the 5th March, but he had been in prison from the 2nd.

All the witnesses for the prosecution were police except one young lady who had been a former minute secretary of the Group. She was called and questioned regarding whether or not Aldred was present on the night on which the Group had decided to issue the paper. She could not say.

Witnesses were then called to testify to the character of A. Fleming. Among the witnesses there appeared a schoolmaster, a clergyman, a doctor, and a Quaker. They all stated that Fleming had done good work among children, and that so far as they knew he would not in any way help in the spreading of sedition! The Advocate Depute questioned them pretty closely regarding the cartoon in the *Red Commune*.

In the cartoon a worker is portrayed as stamping out crowns, eagles, and several other things representing militarism, and various forms of authority. Among these things is a Bible. The Advocate Depute made the most of that, but Aldred put another interpretation on it which entirely altered the complexion of things.

No witnesses were called for Aldred, McLeish or Miss Patrick.

The Advocate Depute spoke for the prosecution. He went over all the sections of the

indictment, making the most of every point.

He was followed by counsel for Fleming, who contended that Fleming was not responsible. He held that there was no sedition in the paper. He quoted some parts which he said he could not understand, and which could only be described as "a mouthful of words." If there was sedition then Fleming could not be blamed as he was very busy at the time the paper was printed.

He was followed by Guy Aldred.

Aldred at the outset stated that he was defending McLeish and Miss Patrick. The judge said that since he was not a member of the Faculty he could not do so, but, he said, that his statement had no meaning because the other accused could adopt Aldred's defence as their own. Aldred was allowed to leave the dock and face the jury.

He was easily the smartest man in the court. He stood upright and his voice was clear. Nothing short of a verbatim report would do justice to his speech. He charged the other side with conspiracy and sedition. He quoted legal authorities freely. He pointed out that sedition was not an ordinary offence like murder or theft. It all depended on what interpretation one put on your statements, and it changed with circumstances. He mentioned the fact that some time ago the Liberals raised the cry of "Abolish the House of Lords," and that was not sedition. "If the Lords why not the Commons." He characterised the prosecution as dishonest, and said that honesty was often on the side of defence. He didn't think it criminal to express his opinion, but it would be criminal to surrender his right to do so. His method was to start a campaign to convert the people by reason. He mentioned that some of the articles in connection with which he was charged had been published previously by the *Forward* and the *Worker*. He asked if the authorities had been sleeping when these articles first appeared. He spoke about the fact that the indictment was composed of extracts from the articles. He said, "When you read a paper, one or two words don't come out and hit you on the eye." Much fuss had been made of the statement in the paper, about making war on the Parliamentary Communists. On this matter Aldred quoted the fact that Bunyan always spoke in military terms. He also quoted the hymn, "Onward Christian Soldiers." It simply meant "fight the good fight with all your might," that's what I'm doing at the present time." At one stage he described the prosecution as "futile, stupid and imbecile." His speech finished nicely. He had stated openly where he stood, and left it to the jury to decide. He didn't ask for "not proven" but "not guilty."

The judge summed up in the usual way. He said that a cartoon is never sedition. He also said that to demand a change of Government by "Act of Parliament" was all right, but any other method was sedition. He ended by telling the jury that they had first to decide whether or not the articles complained of were seditious and if so were the accused responsible. After an absence of a few minutes the jury returned a verdict of "guilty." The jury were unanimous with one exception.

Mr. Morton asked for leniency for Fleming.

Aldred took full responsibility, and suggested that he should get the heavier sentence.

Miss Patrick said that she was prepared to take her share of the responsibility, and did not desire Guy Aldred to take her share of the punishment.

D. McLeish said that he took his share of the responsibility, and had no desire to shelter behind "Comrade Aldred."

Lord Skerrington then passed sentence on all accused. Guy Aldred, one year; D. McLeish, 3 months; Miss Patrick, 3 months; A. Fleming, 3 months, and £50 fine, failing payment of which another three months' imprisonment.

(To be concluded.)

## RICHARD LEE'S ANTI-WAR HERESY

### UNITARIAN WAR DISCOURTESY CONSIDERED

We are somewhat surprised at our Unitarian contemporary, *The Inquirer*.

In its issue for June 14, 1941 (page 200, No. 5163) it published the following editorial attack on *The Word*, and on the Rev. Richard Lee, M.A., of Coventry, for writing in our columns:

#### "UNITARIANS AND THE HOLY WAR"

*The Inquirer* receives—as probably a number of Unitarian ministers receive—a contemporary, which, although unconnected with any particular movement, prints in the current number what it calls Unitarian notes. It also contains an article by the Rev. Richard Lee, of Coventry, entitled "Unitarians and the Holy War." The article purports to be an account of certain phases of the last annual meeting of the General Assembly. Mr. Lee writes of the resolution on Peace Aims, moved from the chair by Mr. P. M. Oliver, and seconded by the Rev. Lawrence Redfern, as follows.—

"The mover of the resolution in his address from the chair and the seconder acted far otherwise. One speaker spoke of the war as having its cause in a beer-cellar at Munich. The other questioned whether the Treaty of Versailles was not too lenient for the guilt of the Germans who made the last war.

"As a considerable proportion of the audience resented this war manufactured history these garbled versions were not allowed to pass without protest. One speaker of the pacifist group, among other arguments aroused a violent storm by pointing out that we were doing the same things as the Nazis in Bremen, Hamburg and Berlin and boasting about it.

"We were not such Holy Innocents as the war-supporters pictured us. When another speaker got up to show how the post-war treatment of Germany had created Hitlerism, the British Nazis cried "Vote, Vote, Vote," and the closure was applied."

Mr. Lee's special interpretation of the first two speeches was made by him also, soon after the meeting, in the correspondence columns of "The Inquirer." Since it was ignored there it can be ignored here. As to the implications of the second paragraph only those present at the meeting can judge, and Mr. Lee can be left with his own particular dramatisation of what took place. But the third paragraph does not need comment. Perhaps it was not possible for Mr. Lee to indicate that the speaker referred to was himself, neither may it have been possible for him to say that the billed end of the meeting had arrived when he got up to speak, neither, perhaps, was it possible for him to appreciate that the discussion into which he desired to intervene had little to do with the resolution, and the extraneous matters with which the discussion dealt had been most ably put from different sides; but common courtesy might have suggested to him that at that late hour, most delegates wanted the meeting to end. Instead he chooses to assume an air of pugnacious persecution and to call his fellow Unitarians "British Nazis."

Mr. Lee chooses his own violence of language, and makes his own dramatisation of events—and in spite of that will be understood by many who disagree with him. But to traduce a meeting conducted with scrupulous fairness (the closure was put to the meeting and carried by a large majority), in an outside paper that is willing to take his account, is hardly a promising introduction into the peaceful world brotherhood in which, apparently, he believes.

The tone of this article shows how thoroughly the spirit of war has conquered the spirit of love and understanding which is supposed to be the inspiration of all Christians. Such understanding is alleged to find full expression in the lives and conduct of Unitarians because of the persecution they have experienced for their heresies. Yet our friend, the editor of *The Inquirer*, casts aside all pretence of charity and even ordinary secular courtesy. He states that *The Word*—which he does not name but mentioned in a roundabout way as a certain type of contemporary—is unconnected with any particular movement. The writer of this nonsense has followed our career as well as any man in the kingdom and knows that we have been connected with the Socialist, Anarchist, and Free-thought movements for over thirty-five years. This sneer is untrue in substance and in form. It only means that at the beginning of our rebel thinking days we stepped outside the popular careerist alleged expressions of the Labour movements. We have stood for the spirit of progress and not relied on the machinery of power and corruption. Is this an offence in the eyes of our Unitarian editor? With what particular movement was Jesus connected? If we remember our reading rightly, no particular movement sorrowed for him at his execution. Did the Unitarians,

either in England or the United States in their best days, form an actual organised movement. We gathered that they existed rather in spirit, yet very definitely, than in organisational form.

Failure to name *The Word* is cowardice. If he wanted to attack *The Word*, the editor of *The Inquirer* ought to have attacked honourably and openly.

What connection has the reference to "any particular movement" to the fact that we printed "Unitarian Notes." They were Unitarian Notes. We have published in our columns articles by, and appreciations of, the Rev. H. J. Adlard, of Bath, with records of his great United States activity, for which our contemporary had no room. Was that wrong? Or does our contemporary wish excellent work to be buried in oblivion unless its editor pleases to take official notice? So would the Pharisees have silenced Jesus, and the Trinitarian Churches have rendered futile the work of the Unitarian pioneers.

Our contemporary sneers at the thought that a number of Unitarian ministers receive *The Word*. Is it afraid? Of course we conduct a postal mission, as means permit. Of course we sometimes send copies to the Unitarian ministers. We pay them the undeserved compliment of believing that they are free spirits and willing participators in any feast of Truth and of reason to which they may be invited. We did not realise that they were so busy over secular affairs and careerism that Truth meant nothing to them. We believed them guilty of so much promising spirituality. Unfortunately, it was promising only, but not vital. Too many Unitarian speakers are incapable of maturity.

Our contemporary passes to the real complaint. The Rev. Richard Lee, M.A., well-known in the Labour movement of Great Britain, a personal friend and a doughty opponent of the present writer, a fearless Anti-Militarist speaker and a pioneer enemy of Fascism, wrote an article in our columns attacking Unitarians for being pro-war! What unforgiveable heresy!

*The Inquirer* complains that Richard Lee wrote for "an outside paper that is willing to take his account." This slurs not only Richard Lee, but also ourself. It implies that, knowing the account to be false, we were willing to publish such an account. This is libellous.

We are not willing to publish false accounts. We are anxious to publish the truth. We were willing to publish Richard Lee's account because we know him to be a fearless propagandist of the Truth as he sees it. He was victimised in Glasgow for serving the Truth and he has sacrificed careerism in the Labour movement for the sake of Truth. Further, our contemporary does not deny the truth of his writings. It only seeks to explain the circumstances. *He who excuses himself, accuses himself.*

There was indignation and not violence in Richard Lee's writing.

Richard Lee is sneered at for not mentioning that the speaker who did not receive a fair hearing was himself. Was that necessary? Is it not enough that, at the Unitarian Assembly, the Anti-War speaker, in war time, was greeted with cries of "Vote," "Vote?" Does the fact need specious explanation? Is the name of the speaker relevant?

Richard Lee refers to himself in an anonymous third person from modesty. *The Inquirer* resents such anonymity and demands that he name himself in an article which attacks, under anonymous description, *The Word*.

Had we attacked *The Inquirer* by innuendo it would have been from cowardice allied to discourtesy. We conclude that editorial rules are the same, no matter who the editor may be, or what the alleged status of the paper.

*The Inquirer*, for July 26, published the following reply by Richard Lee to its unworthy editorial:—

Sir,—Your article of June 14 has only reached me to-day. Though my comment is belated I hope you may be able to publish it. Your anonymous contributor asserts that my proposed contribution at the Assembly and the discussion were irrelevant and had nothing to do with the resolution.

Our attitude to our own past and to our own wrongdoing in 1919 has everything to do with the possibility of that happy future pictured in the resolution. It is entirely relevant to the resurrection of the better German mind without which Europe will be a desolation of the ages.

"Our deeds still travel with us from afar  
And what we have been makes us what we are."

As to the other point raised. The Nazi spirit is to suppress all opinions except the one official view which is divinely right.

I do not blame the chairman or those responsible for keeping to time but the noisy minority who interrupted Mr. Spencer and were unwilling to stay five minutes to hear the other side did manifest that intolerance which is very contagious in war-times.—  
Yours,

RICHARD LEE.

Coventry.

The Rev. Sidney Spencer, B.A., of Liverpool, and the Rev. Richard Lee, M.A., of Coventry, adopted the correct Christian and Unitarian position. They are uncompromising Anti-Militarists, but with charity of mind towards the rank-and-file victims of militarism. The official Unitarian position is neither Christian nor Unitarian. It is simply a chaos of statist war theology, paganism labelled Christian; a diabolical riot of murderous mock respectability, utterly unforgiveable when engaged in by alleged heretics and the children of heretics. Statism knows nothing about heresy. The spirit of war is the spirit of thoughtless violence and orthodoxy. No genuine Unitarian can uphold it, express it, or compromise with it.

## WAR AND CHRISTIANITY IS THERE A FUNDAMENTAL CONTRADICTION?

REV. SIDNEY SPENCER'S POSITION

The discussion between Richard Lee and the editor of *The Inquirer*, considered in another column, directs attention to the anti-war position adopted by the Rev. Sidney Spencer, B.A., of Liverpool. Sidney Spencer is a vigorous and consistent anti-militarist and we are tempted to recall a sermon he delivered over a year ago to the congregation of Hope Street Church, Liverpool.

Preaching on the evening of Sunday, July 14, 1940, Mr. Spencer asked if the recent outer change in events called for a corresponding revision of their inner attitude. Since the outbreak of war, the proportion of men taking the stand for conscience sake had fallen very considerably. Well-known people like Mr. C. E. M. Joad, Bertrand Russell, and Miss Maud Royden, felt, under the circumstances, they could no longer maintain a rooted opposition to all war. Were they right?

We spoke sometimes of "the Christian conscience," but the conscience of Christian people was not something fixed and final. A Christian leader like Martin Luther declared that war was an essential element in God's scheme for the world. But Erasmus taught that war was completely wrong, and the early Unitarians—the "Socinians"—and the Anabaptists followed the same rule.

Luther and Erasmus both sincerely tried to do what was right. One believed in war; the other rejected it. Could we decide between them?

Erasmus was not entirely alone, and behind him there was a certain tradition. To-day it was widely recognised that there was a common standard, a Christian spirit. By that test Erasmus, not Luther, was the true exponent of the law of Christ.

Even those who considered war was necessary were prepared to admit that war was anti-Christ! He had never been able to understand how it was possible to hold that position, and still to believe in Christianity. To him it seemed to involve a fundamental contradiction. The churches had advanced to the recognition of the fact of the essentially un-Christian character of war, and yet they could pray for the divine blessing and help on a method that in principle they condemned! The position was utterly

lacking in moral consistency. If the Christian witness against war had any reality in it at all, it surely involved a renunciation of war.

The Christian position of opposition to war was not easy to maintain in war-time. It was so eminently contrary to the traditional national outlook and practice. But Christianity was essentially revolutionary. The only position that could be harmonised with the life and spirit of Christ was that which took its stand on the law of love, and rejected the way of war.

## IS THE WAR A CHRISTIAN CRUSADE?

By The Rev. RICHARD LEE, M.A.

(Minister, New Street Meeting House, Coventry)

I have been handed a leaflet published by F. C. B., St. Stephen's Church, London, E.C.2. It states boldly and unashamedly what many Christian folk believe in a furtive, shamefaced sort of way that the war is being fought for the holy cause of Christianity. The leaflet ends thus:—

### IN THE NAME OF CHRIST

We can win this war,  
We must win this war, and  
We WILL win this war.

The clergyman who writes the leaflet holds among other things,

That killing others in war is taking up the Cross of Jesus.

That war is the only way to subdue evil.

That Pacifists are disloyal not only to the State but to Christ.

That Jesus counselled his disciples to buy swords and use them.

These are the easy assumptions of F.C.B., and of millions of others, which I want to examine.

There is one thing in the leaflet with which one may be in agreement—"Nazism is an evil thing and must be destroyed." There are, however, some glaring errors as to the causes of Nazism, the methods of its destruction and the attitude of Christ to modern war.

Let us begin with the practical situation. This leaflet is blind to the facts as to what Nazism is and its causes.

(1) Nazism is a disease. It is an aggravated form of Nationalism and Imperialism. It is caused by other Imperialisms, including our own. The deeper causes of the war will not be touched by killing millions of Germans.

(2) We helped to create Nazism by joining with France to make the League of Nations a farce and a hypocrisy. We refused to fulfil our pledge to secure all-round disarmament and revise the Treaties. Had we done this there would have been no Hitler and no war.

(3) The only people who can destroy Hitlerism are the German people themselves. A minority would be against him now if they thought Britain would make a just peace. But they were tricked before, and have no reason to think that they will be any better treated this time.

(4) A moral and spiritual disease can only be destroyed by moral and spiritual remedies. It is nonsense, wicked nonsense, to think that cowardly bombing, poison gas, food destruction, brothels and all the other beastly methods of modern war can overcome evil.

(5) To quote the example of Christ in favour of modern war is the most blasphemous part of the leaflet. The Spirit of Christ is utterly opposed to casting out evil by means of doing evil. Paul summed up the whole attitude of Christ's life and death in the words—"Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good." The Sermon on the Mount is a dead letter if we are permitted to destroy our enemies by mangling little children and defenceless old men and women.

(6) The two passages used to support modern war have nothing to do with it directly, but indirectly may support the peace position.

Jesus did not drive out the money-changers

by violence: He used his moral power to compel them to leave the temple. The money changers with their friends could have beaten down Jesus in a few moments by force.

When Jesus advised his disciples to buy a sword and they brought two swords, he replied: "It is enough" (Luke 22, v. 36). It is quite clear all that Jesus meant was that his disciples would have to withstand evil forces. The sword was symbolical, as when it was said that a sword would pierce the heart of Mary. The reply, "It is enough," showed how Jesus was grieved at the dense minds of his disciples.

(7) The leaflet ignores the example of Paul and the Christian Church in the first three centuries. Paul was a fighter and had to meet with physical violence, but he never used violence. He believed supremely in the power of the Spirit and not in carnal weapons. For three centuries Christians took no part in war, they condemned it both in word and deed. They followed their Master's example.

(8) The alternative policy is to confess our own wrong and be willing to turn away from it into the way of mutual aid and brotherhood.

The longer the war the worse the peace. Even while the war is waging the terms of peace should be discussed and the peoples should know how they could end the war.

What Lloyd George said before the war is true now even, if only some leader had the courage to act on it and guide this people out of darkness, the cruelty and the cowardly falsehood of war into the light, the love and the truth of a real peace.

"The only chance of a world peace is an assembly of nations to discuss without reference to past experiments or present ideologies the best means of a just and desirable world peace." Where is the statesman who will take this project in hand and will press it through? His name will endure forever as one of the greatest benefactors of mankind.

"Victory" is a mirage unworthy of the minds of sensible folk.

"Victory" can never bring peace.

To get peace we must seek it earnestly and seek it now.

## EDITOR'S APOLOGY

Our circulation last month was very big. We reprinted several times, yet the August issue is completely out of print, and many orders could not be executed. We have done our best but we could not overcome the paper difficulty. Last month we far exceeded our February printing when we also went right out of print, after a very big circulation. A similar fate befel our June issue.

In November, 1940, we issued a special appeal for £1,971 11s. 3d. Last month that deficit stood at £1,825 10s. 9d. The August response has been the best response so far. The matter is urgent and we do not want to stop printing. We also want to list the donations received and end this appeal. Unless the sum requested is received our work must stop. At present we are staggering along. A Birmingham working man comrade sent £3, almost anonymously, and very simply. Lady Clare Annesley sent £10, because she felt how urgent is the struggle towards pacifism and reason. Other comrades sent donations with splendid letters. A few visited the George Street shop. Many who could give little, and some who could give nothing, either wrote or came in person to thank us for our work. The total return last month was £45 16s. 4d. This leaves the deficit at £1,780 14s. 5d. As stated last month, this is to make up the loss as it stood in November, 1940. Since then there has been a steady monthly loss. If we can obtain the sum mentioned we can carry on for a long time without making further appeals. We hate to beg but comrades we must. The work is urgent. Without your immediate response we must close down. We apologise, but—!



# ON THE ROCKS AND WHY

By C. H. NORMAN

[This essay was written for publication in the June 1941 issue. The Soviet situation changed as we went to press and we held the essay over. The author wishes to be judged by the fundamental principle he expounds and is unwilling to change his writing to suit altered circumstances. Comrade Norman writes with some authority on diplomacy and international relations, and his approach merits thoughtful study. We publish it as a contribution to the understanding of the present sorry political situation.—Ed.]

The writer of this article is a survivor of the small minority of English people who were opposed to the Lansdowne-King Edward VII-Sir Edward Grey policy of the Anglo-French *Entente* not because of any hostility to France, but because, on a long view, that policy was certain to produce the calamities which have befallen Europe since its initiation. It is also worth remembering that the latent hostility between France and Germany (which was deliberately kept alive by French gangsters like Clemenceau, Poincaré and Co., and fostered by Englishmen like Winston Churchill, Leo Maxse, and others in the period from 1908 till 1914), was not the only element contributing to the inflaming of European political society in that period. The Imperialism which has brought the British Empire to its present grave state of peril began its acute development with the bombardment of Alexandria, the suppression of Arabi Pasha, the bleeding of Egypt at the instance of the European and British bondholders, ending with the catastrophe of the piratical war, conducted by "methods of barbarism," as Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman described it, against the Transvaal and Orange Free State Republics. As the United States is proclaiming its humanitarian interest in the second European War it may be worth noting that Dollar Diplomacy, as instanced by the use made of the sinking of "The Maine" in Havana Harbour in justifying the predatory war against Spain by the United States in 1898, and the seizure of the Panama Province of the Colombian Republic in 1904, was a main principle of the Anglo-American Imperialism which has so largely led to the existing catastrophic position\*.

It is fashionable for writers like Sir Robert Vansittart, by distorting some matters and ignoring others, to throw the whole blame on the German race; but the above brief recital of undoubted historical facts, well within the memory of millions of people living, will demonstrate how unfounded and ridiculous such a view is.

Passing to more recent events, the terrible error committed by the Allies in 1919-1920 was in ignoring the advice given by the Duke of Wellington at the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars that not a foot of French territory was to be taken from France. The partitions of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey, which were imposed on the defeated in 1919, had no moral, economic or political justification. Accompanied as they were by the partition of Russian territories and a campaign, engineered and carried out without the consent of the House of Commons by Mr. Winston Churchill against the Bolshevik Revolution, they were the height of insanity, for it was certain as anything could be that, unless those partitions were revoked by agreement, the enemy of 1914, Germany, and the friend of 1914, Russia, would unite against Britain and France to shatter those partitions and repudiate the documents which were their sanction. Germany and Russia waited from 1919 till 1933, but neither England, France, nor the League of Nations attempted to put into force the clauses in the Treaties providing for their revision, should a demand for revision be made. The partitioned countries (a fact carefully concealed from the English people), began asking for revision in 1923.

It is complained against the Vichy Govern-

ment that their acts have been in betrayal of the "Cause of democracy," whatever that phrase may mean, as the three protagonists of democracy were the caste-ridden society of England, the corrupt plutocracy of the United States, and the rogue-banker bureaucracy of France. But the collapse of France was inevitable in 1940 with Russia abstaining from participation in the war. What happened in France in 1940 would have happened in France in 1914-1915 had it not been for the enormous pressure put upon Germany and Austria by the Russian Armies until the Battle of the Marshes. All the thanks that Russia received was to see her territories partitioned and her revolution blockaded and sabotaged by her allies, France and England, in 1918-1920. It was natural for Stalin to decline to pull the chestnuts out of the fire which was lit in Europe by the mad act of guaranteeing the Polish frontiers as defined in 1919, a guarantee which was valueless without Russian military support. Those who prate about the voice of the people controlling English policy might tell us when the British people authorised Mr. Chamberlain to enter upon such a suicidal pact as the one with Poland. The House of Commons may have sanctioned or confirmed his act when it could do nothing else; but the House of Commons was certainly never elected on such an issue. The House of Commons has far exceeded any mandate granted by the people, and most of its proceedings since 1938 have been proceedings against the interests and welfare of those who in good faith elected it on quite other issues. Moreover, those who had travelled in France in 1937, possessed of any kind of insight and feeling for atmosphere, knew well that the clique of politicians, financiers and Left Wing Jingoos who were clamouring for war against the Nazi system were totally un-representative of French opinion; just as are General de Gaulle and his farcical "Free French" movement today. The French women were wholly against any adventure of the kind. France in 1914-1918 had lost 1,900,000 dead out of an effective male military age population of about 10,000,000. No country could be expected to face such a blood-letting a second time in 20 years. Not the least of the many dis-services Mr. Winston Churchill, in a somewhat maleficent career, has committed against his country, was the way he misled Mr. Chamberlain and the Cabinet of that day on the true attitude of France on the German question.

Another example of the incapacity of the present Prime Minister and his colleagues was shown during the Russo-Finnish conflict. At that period Great Britain was being pushed by these men into war in aid of Finland. But for the impossibility of rendering effective aid to Finland except with the assistance of the Swedish State, Great Britain and France would long ago have been involved by their respective governments in war with Russia over Finland. One has only to examine the existing military position to reflect how much graver it would have been had the Germans been backed since 1940 by the active strength of Russia. It is not going too far to assume that the British Empire by now would have been close on destruction. Had Russia chosen to regard the actions of Britain and France in the Finnish War as a *casus belli*, no one could have been surprised at that result of the misplaced belligerency shown by the British and French Parliaments during that time.

A further disastrous error of judgment may be seen in the policy of the blockade adopted by Churchill & Co. In the nineties an American naval captain, Captain Mahan, obtained some reputation by the production of several pseudo-historical works beloved by a certain type of American mind, the most renowned of which was called "The Influence of Sea Power upon History." The book is filled with the most absurd fallacies in reasoning and has been heavily criticised on the technical side by some Japanese naval writers; but it must be confessed the book has kept its hold in U.S.A. and British naval circles, with the melancholy results which are before the watching world. The book strengthened its reputation by the apparent justification of its argument in the effectiveness of the blockade of Germany in 1914-1918. But the deductions drawn from the Napoleonic War are quite un-

sound so far as the blockade of England is concerned, as at that time the blockade was only a trade blockade, because England was self-supporting then in the matter of food, only having a population of about eleven millions. The contentions of Captain Mahan are only sound if the blockading power has overwhelming naval strength at its command, and if the blockaded power is exceptionally dependent on other states for various articles of necessity in war time. The position in the War of 1939— is quite different in that respect to the position in the War of 1914-1918 when the blockade was utilised to enforce the Peace Terms on Germany, Austria, and other states. Then the blockade was conducted by the joint efforts of the British, French, Italian, Russian, Japanese, United States and other fleets, which were able to operate with much more elasticity than is possible to-day. Also those fleets were not subject to air attack to anything like the extent that the fleets of to-day are. What is the comparative situation now? The British Fleet has had the partial assistance of the French and the United States Fleets for a short period. The Italian, French, and Japanese Fleets are to-day not available at all but contain within them the possibilities of use against Britain should the United States become a full belligerent. The British Fleet also has been helped by the Dutch Fleet and several smaller naval units. Germany started the war in 1939 at a relative naval disadvantage as compared with her strength in 1914, as, owing to loyal adherence to the Anglo-German Naval Treaty of 1935, the German Fleet had not maintained its proportionate power in effective naval units. Against that, however, there is the curious fact that every merchant ship over 3000 tons sailing the seas in peace time is carrying as part of its cargo goods destined directly or indirectly for England. In the war of 1914-1918, the small maritime nations, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Holland and Greece were neutral. Four of these countries have been involved in the present war, with the result that there has been a tremendous lay-up of merchant shipping which did not occur in the last war. Then there has been the policy of scuttling ships which is a new factor in reducing available tonnage, combined with the circumstance that the British naval authorities have embarked on the destruction of hostile shipping by submarine and other methods not adopted in the last war. So the wastage of merchant shipping tonnage, for many reasons, has been so far proportionately on a greater scale in this war than in 1914-1918. Should Russia and Japan, both of which have powerful submarine fleets, enter the war on the German side, all the theories of Captain Mahan, which are the governing factor in the naval strategy of Mr. Churchill and his advisers, will collapse completely in their application, as they have shown every sign of doing since the withdrawal of the French Navy from active operations.

Incidentally, one may observe that Professor Beesly, in his essay on the growth and use of British Sea Power, in the series of essays on International Politics, issued by the Positivist Society in the eighties, is very cutting and sarcastic about the English attitude on the alleged beneficial results of the English mastery of the sea. A powerful naval ship capturing a merchant vessel on its noble avocation of transporting merchandise and food from one part of the world to another is doing nothing more than acting as the armed highwayman who held up the citizen on Hounslow Heath and robbed him of all he possessed. The merchant ship is helpless under the guns of the battleship or cruiser which may be its captor and has no option but to follow the directions of the naval commander. It is a little strong for a country which has specialised in that kind of warfare to pride itself, as England always does, upon its meritorious conduct in international policy; in fact it is humbug from beginning to end. In that particular essay, Professor Beesly quoted the words under the portrait of Pitt hanging in the Guildhall: "Presented by the merchants of the City of London in recognition of Mr. Pitt's policy in advancing the trade and commerce of London by war." Perhaps there is a certain Nemesis in what has befallen the Guildhall and that portrait in recent times.

\*[The Imperialism of the United States was well analysed by an admirable article by the editor of *The Word* in an early number.—C. H. N.]

Though to the casual looker-on, the events of the day would suggest that the power of the State over the individual has increased to such an extent that the English and European peoples have practically reverted to a state of slavery, the development of air warfare is really evidence of the breakdown of the State in its primary justification of protecting the individual citizen in time of war. Notwithstanding the sacrifice of half his income, notwithstanding military and industrial conscription, notwithstanding the destruction of every kind of guarantee from the Great Charter, the Petition of Right and Habeas Corpus, the individual citizen must look after himself, his family and his property in air warfare. All the power of the State has not prevented the Temple and many parts of the City of London being reduced to ruins, while the casualties among the civil population have reached a figure never touched in modern warfare. Mr. Churchill and Sir Archibald Sinclair may tell us, with glib assurance, that "the R.A.F. has command of the air," just as the same gentlemen and others tell us that "the British Navy has command of the seas," but one can only wonder at the surprising results to the British people of these boasts and vauntings. Mr. Churchill told the people when he was First Lord of the Admiralty in the autumn of 1939 that the U-boat menace was under control; but in 1941 the losses by U-boat activity remain as great as ever. It may be unkind to recall these statements to memory, but the fact that they can be made, so recklessly and wantonly, is the best evidence of the defective judgment of those in command of high matters at the present time. It was Mr. Churchill's Government which instituted the campaign of night-bombing against Germany after the Dunkirk evacuation. Then the people were told that the German Air Force could not engage in night bombing with any efficiency, as they had not been trained in that regard. It was an insane policy to begin, considering how inferior in numbers the British Air Force was to the German Air Force. The fact that the German Air Force, with its overwhelming superiority in numbers, was practically inactive in air attacks on England (except on naval and military stations) from September 1939 to September 1940 was evidence that the German Government had no desire to engage upon unrestricted air warfare till challenged by the English campaign of night bombing. It is absurd to excuse the English night bombing on the principle that the English bombs are only directed against military objectives. Night bombing on either side is subject to the handicap that the objective cannot be seen with any accuracy whether the objective be on German or British soil, as the shades of darkness are as neutral as the moonlight in both countries.

It is, apparently, admitted by Mr. Churchill in recent speeches that the British people have been led by him and his colleagues into such a sad plight that the only hope of survival or success is through the active intervention of the United States, which is still a little coy at being invited into the slaughter-house. It must be pointed out that this calculation is as defective as the rest of Mr. Churchill's estimates have been. It is true that the intervention of the United States in the war of 1914-1918 was as decisive as the blockade in defeating the Germans then. But there was no possibility in 1917 of any counter-move by Germany to American intervention. That is not the position on this occasion. The victory of Pitt and the Holy Alliance against Napoleon and the principles of the French Revolution established reaction in Europe for over half-a-century. That will not be allowed to happen in 1941 or 1942 or 1952, or whenever the decision may take place in a collapsed Europe and America, as it is plain that Russia, Japan, Spain, France, Italy and Germany, plus a number of lesser States, are determined on seeing that the Anglo-American-Dutch plutocracy will not retain the hold which it has exercised over the world for the past seventy years. That is why the state of affairs is so serious. Europe may not like the Nazi system but they are not prepared to face again a domination such as occurred after 1918 of Europe by the Anglo-American plutocracy, which reduced the Central European peasantry to a lower standard of life than that obtaining in the Middle Ages. The

control of agriculture by industry, the control of trade by gold, the control of the seas by the blockade are the three things which the British Empire, the United States and Holland (through the Dutch Indies) stand for in the eyes of Europe and all those three things are anathema to the citizens of Europe, who believe they represent reaction and degradation.

It is well therefore that the British people should understand clearly what a catastrophe may be lying ahead of them should this war continue on the present lines of policy, which is based upon some fantastic idea of imposing upon Europe some system of government which is wholly discredited in the countries of origin judging by the refusal of over 50 per cent. of the population to exercise the franchise. All attempts in the past to impose systems of government on powerful States by means of war have failed completely and there is certainly no sign that the present crusade against what is called National Socialism is likely to have any greater success.

The madness of warfare as a method of achieving any result when powerful combinations are engaged on both sides cannot better be demonstrated than by the following quotation of the lines put on the graveside of Rupert Brooke, the young English poet, who died in the Greek island of Scyros while on service with the Navy during the last war, 1914-1918. This is a translation of the Greek inscription written by the Greek interpreter with the British forces and placed on the cross of the grave:—

"Here lies the servant of God, Sub-Lieutenant in the British Navy, who died for the deliverance of Constantinople from the Turks."

Constantinople is still in the hands of the Turks who are much-courted as a possible ally by the British Combination in the present war!

## OUR LETTER-BOX

Dear Sir,—Will you please be good enough to send me the August *Word* and the Duke of Bedford's *Parliament and Peace*. Seeing the name, Guy A. Aldred, seems like old times when I used to listen to him in Brockwell Park, London.

Yours for a bit of sanity.

W. A. GREATWOOD.

Stonehouse, Glos., August 7.

Dear Aldred,—Please forward to an old comrade a copy of *The Word*. You may not remember my name but we were faithful comrades in resisting militarism during the 1914-18 war.

Your comrade in the struggle,

F. W. CARTER.

Hillingdon, August 7.

Dear Comrade,—I want to say that I appreciate your work for pacifism and socialism, and regret that my measure of assistance is so little. With the most fraternal of good wishes,

Yours fraternally,

GEORGE WILLIAMS.

Manchester, August 5.

Dear Comrade Aldred,—As you are undoubtedly aware, the *New Leader* "once again" has been making some "amazing predictions." The Prince Paul Government of Yugoslavia contained Dr. Matceck as Vice-Premier. When this Government was overthrown by Limovitch, Dr. Matceck remained Vice-Premier. This was heralded by the *New Leader* as the beginning of workers' revolts across Europe. You know, the little groups here and there stunts.

A week before Russia was invaded, the editorial column of the *New Leader* prophesied this as most unlikely and declared that it was capitalist wishful thinking.

All this irrelevance may be added to Brockway's prediction, made in 1932, that within four years, there would be a bloodless revolution in Britain. This was reproduced in *The Word* for September, 1940.

Yours fraternally,

GEORGE PLUME.

Edmonton, N.9., July 26.

Rash prophecy is an unfortunate tendency of I.L.P. leaders. James Maxton has spoken boldly against the war, and on behalf of conscientious objectors and 18B prisoners in the House of Commons. We record these facts gladly. Nevertheless, he also had the tendency to play the foolish rôle of prophet.

On August 21, 1931, James Maxton made a speech in which he forecast the collapse of capitalism not later than February, 1932. He said:—

I am perfectly satisfied that the great capitalist system . . . is now at the stage of final collapse . . . They may postpone the collapse for a month, two

months, three months, six months, but collapse is sure and certain.

(*Daily Record*, Glasgow, Aug. 22nd, 1931.)

Six months later, namely, February, 1932, the I.L.P. was planning to bring out the *New Leader* in a new and improved form!

This is very much like the prophet Baxter, who used to run *The Christian Herald*. Everyone knows how he made investments that contradicted his prophecies as to the end of the world, and from time to time, advanced the date of his prophecies, when their fulfilment failed. Speaking in the House of Commons, on April 8, 1932, Maxton made another try. He said:—

I believe it will crash within measurable time, because I do not think that anything that we are doing now will do more than postpone the inevitable act.

(*Hansard*, April 8, Col. 476.)

The "two, three or six months" of August, 1931, gave place to the wise vagueness of "within measurable time" of April, 1932.

This is not an attack on Maxton. It is an interesting, illuminating and quaintly amusing record of fact. And it has a factual moral.—Ed.

Dear Sir,—I was sent two copies of the June issue of your admirable paper, *The Word*, some little time back. I had not heard of *The Word* till then. Thank you for it. I suppose your open letter to Winston Churchill is not printed as a leaflet.

Yours faithfully,

DOROTHY HOLMS.

Bath, August 6.

Dear Comrade Editor,—A.B.C. I have read many alphabets, political, religious, militarist, anti-militarist. But I think we might have a "Communist" one. A.B.C.—A Burlesque Communist. Just now we are enjoying the tragedy of the burlesque.

I listened to a "Communist" meeting recently. I was amused at the cross-examination of the C.P. speaker by a poorly-clad passer-by. He put three series of questions:—

(1) How could the victory of Russia and Britain secure a lasting peace, if Russia really stood for Socialism, and Britain remained capitalistic. Was not Communism diametrically opposed to Capitalism? Had the speaker forgotten about Archangel, Koltchak, etc.?

(2) Why had the Moscow broadcasts dropped playing the Internationale? Why did these broadcasts no longer mention the need for the triumph of "Communism" throughout the world?

(3) The *Daily Worker* was suspended for criticising the Government. The C.P. no longer wishes to criticise the war or the pursuit of war. It is now in with the Government and is prepared to dubb all genuine critics of the Government and the war, Fifth-Columnists. Is it necessary, in the interests of truth, to withdraw the suspension?

I do not believe in any paper being suppressed and I am not defending the suppression of the *Daily Worker* in repeating those questions. Nor does the C.P. suffer much from the suppression, for it has other publications which circulate quite widely and serve as a substitute for the *Worker*. I repeat the questions because they raise points of interest.

Yours in Socialist Unity,

G. CALDWELL.

Glasgow, August 11.

Dear Guy,—Funny, but I don't seem to be disturbed at the thought of being shut up for a year, to cure me of conscience! I know that it is for the cause of pacifism. I am innocent of any crime against the moral and natural law. If refusal to be medically examined for purpose either of becoming cannon fodder, or reducing another man to such, merits imprisonment, then democracy does not exist for me. I could weep at times when I think of the Church upholding militarism, and of our apathetic churchmen who pay lip service to the name of Jesus.

Temptations against religion are, thank God, rare with me; but one thought bothers me a great deal. That is, why be attached to an organised body that promotes mass murder, or does not oppose it, but, ironically, shudders at abortion!

In the struggle, sincerely yours, a Catholic comrade,

PATRICK SCANLAN.

Dumfries, August 14.

Dear Comrade Aldred,—Please accept this small gift of 10/- as a token of goodwill towards your movement and paper, *The Word*.

We think the title of the paper is very apt and choice, as it cuts out all the superficial, therefore seeking to give to the people *The Word*, the "TRUTH."

Your Comrades, of the Ashton Pacifist Group,

WILLIAM JOHNSON (Secretary).

Ashton-in-Makerfield, 19-8-41.

## U.S.M. Meetings

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MONDAY: - - Group Meeting  
THURSDAY: - - Study Circle  
SUNDAY: - - Lecture

Meetings Commence at 7-30 p.m.

## JUDGE BURGIS

On Wednesday, July 1, Frank Metcalfe, poultry farmer, Bradshaw Street, Nelson, a member of the I.L.P., and an Atheist, was registered by the Preston Tribunal as a conscientious objector, on condition that he did whole-time land or civil defence work. Metcalfe said that he opposed war and military service on rational, humanitarian, and social grounds.

The chairman, Judge Burgis, said that Metcalfe had a depraved type of conscience.

On Thursday, June 9, the Manchester Tribunal registered for combatant military service, Philip Shelmerdine, of Wilmslow. Shelmerdine was converted to Catholicism in 1934 and is also a member of the British Union of Fascists. Shelmerdine opposed war until the collapse of France. He then became willing to soldier to defend the country. But he was interned under 18B. Recently he was released. He was unwilling to soldier now because of the invasion of Russia. He said that, as a Catholic, according to the latest Papal encyclical, a Catholic could not collaborate with Communists or Communism in any way, which makes nonsense to our mind. Shelmerdine was bitter about his 18B internment. Here is the discussion between appellant and chairman on this point:—

Shelmerdine: Do you not think that in a democratic country a man should have the opportunity to answer the charges brought against him?

Judge Burgis: Not if it is against the safety of the State.

We think Judge Burgis's remarks in Metcalfe's case argues a bias against Atheism, though he granted exemption. We do not think Shelmerdine is a real conscientious objector, but we consider that Judge Burgis made an injudicial and illegal reply to his question. Shelmerdine was right and Burgis was wrong, utterly and unforgivably wrong. His was the reply of inquisitors, tyrants, and persecutors down the ages. A man with the mind of Burgis ought not to seek a place in such ranks; for he has recorded remarkably just and painstaking decisions. His reply disgraced his better, juridical self.

The same day as the Shelmerdine lapse, Burgis made comment on the case of Arnold Baker, clerk, of Rosamond Street, Bolton, who was granted exemption by the tribunal on December 20, 1939. In January, 1941, when the Battle of the Atlantic was at its height, Arnold voluntarily joined the Liverpool steamer, *Eurgloehus*, as a writer. Fourteen days later, on its first trip out, the ship was shelled off the Azores by a German surface raider. Of the 80 men in the steamer, more than 50 died. Young Arnold was on the bridge when the attack was made, voluntarily keeping look-out with the chief officer, Mr. John MacGregor.

When Chairman Burgis obtained news of the event he sought information from the chief officer, and received a long reply, which he read at the public sitting of the Manchester Tribunal on July 9. We quote part of Mr. John MacGregor's letter:—

Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter in which you ask me to tell you of Arnold Baker's closing part in life. This I am honoured to do, although he bore such a wonderful Christian character that my words will never express the feeling I have in my heart for the youth who showed such wonderful courage and bravery in face of death without a single thought for himself. I knew that this young man was given unconditional exemption. . . .

When our ship was attacked with unbelievable brutality, Baker, who soon after leaving home had expressed his willingness to keep a look-out, was on the bridge with me but on the opposite side. Salvoes and guns of heavy calibre were firing from very close range. The bridge was struck and Baker noticed that the wheel had been left unattended. He immediately informed me of the fact and said, "I shall take it if you show me what to do." I went into the wheelhouse and explained to him and he stayed at the wheel until our steering-gear was wrecked. He then asked if there was anything else he could do. So I told him to make for his boat as the bridge was being shelled. At this point I was wounded, and I learned on inquiry that Baker was killed soon after he left the bridge. He certainly fulfilled his promise to pull his weight and died a wonderful example of courage and bravery.

Judge Burgis commented:—

"No words of mine are adequate to describe the grandeur of this young man's courage or the magnificence of his devotion to duty. One can only contemplate his conduct with silent reverence. His life and his death are the clearest justification of the privilege which Parliament has granted to conscience."

In this case, Judge Burgis, by insisting on full publicity of the facts, and the terms and tones of his comment, did justice to himself and to his office.

## C.O. MICE, 1941

Section 13 of the National Service (Armed Forces) Act, 1939, contains a provision designed to prevent any repetition of the "cat-and-mouse" treatment of conscientious objectors which disgraced the administration of the British Military Service Acts during 1916-1919. This provision gives to any man who through failure to establish his objection before a tribunal finds himself in the position of a disobedient soldier, and is sentenced by court-martial to three months' or more imprisonment, the right to have his case reheard by the Appellate Tribunal with a view to his discharge from the Army if he succeeds in establishing his case.

The War Office has sent round to all commands for the information of presidents of courts martial several documents which make this position clear. Several courts martial ignore these instructions, and make a practice of giving either long sentences of detention or sentences of imprisonment less than three months, the latter even for second and third offences. Either deprives the C.O. of the right of appeal, since "detention," even two years in duration, does not in law count as imprisonment.

In justification of a short sentence it is argued that the award is such as would have been given to any soldier committing a similar offence. The argument is unconvincing, because in 1916, when no right of appeal depended on the length of sentence awarded, conscientious objectors were regularly charged not with simple disobedience but with "disobedience in such a manner as to show wilful defiance of authority." Courts martial experienced, at that time, no compunction in awarding up to two years' imprisonment in such cases.

Fenner Brockway has directed the attention of the Secretary of State for War to the cases of more than seventy men who have failed to obtain a qualifying sentence at their first court martial, of whom fifteen failed similarly at their second court martial. As Principal G. H. Sutherland, of Dalton Hall, Manchester, remarks, either presidents of courts martial do not read the War Office documents sent to them for their information or they deliberately ignore them.

## ROBERT TAYLOR

This is an appeal to Freethought readers. We wish to issue our "life" of Robert Taylor, better known as "The Devil's Chaplain," as No. 4 of *The Word Library*, Second Series. But our MS. is incomplete.

In *The Freethinker* for July 8, 1923, we commenced the biography of Robert Taylor that we wish to publish now in pamphlet form. Of the July 8 instalment, we have the first page (426), but we want the following page, 427.

The biography was continued in the columns of *The Freethinker* for July 29, August 26, and September 2, 1933. We have copies of these issues but would like duplicates. But the biography concluded in some later issue—maybe September 9, 1923, but we are not sure. Anyway, we have not got the issue containing the conclusion. Could any comrade lend it to us? It will be returned. Please write if able to assist.

We would like also to obtain copies of the *Agnostic Journal*, containing our serial "life" of Carlile, as it contained many references to Robert Taylor omitted from the book version. We have lost our copies.

## UNITARIANISM AND WAR

### "CHRISTIANITY AND COMPROMISE."

"We share to-day the life of a world at war. Our personal life is so bound up with the life of society as a whole that there is nothing that we can do to isolate ourselves from it. . . . We are all of us involved in the guilt and the responsibility which rest upon the world for the evil and devastation from which men are suffering. . . ."

"What, then, can we do? People say sometimes that because we are involved to a greater or less extent in the war-effort (if only through our contribution to the revenue), therefore we should not attempt in any measure to stand aside. . . . Is that so? Are we of necessity involved, not merely in the partial compromise which is forced upon us by our membership of a community at war, but in an inner compromise of idea and principle, and in the active support of war which that entails?"

"It does not follow in the slightest degree. The first necessity which arises from the acceptance of common guilt is the necessity of repentance. If we feel in our very souls 'the measureless shame and humiliation of our race' involved in the wrong and inhumanity of war, we must first of all repent of that wrong and inhumanity. 'We must save the world's honour (Bernard Shaw once said, speaking of social wrong), if we are to save our own.' How can we 'save the world's honour' to-day? Not, surely, by giving our free and willing consent to the desolation which defiles it. To save the world's honour, we must erect the standard of a higher conscience. We must erect the standard of the Law of Christ, which bids us overcome evil with good."

—Rev. Sidney Spencer at Hope Street Church, Liverpool, Sunday evening, June 15th.

### "V" FOR VICTORY.

A great deal of childish nonsense is being talked, and written, just now, about a "V" sign. The underlying idea is ancient, ancient as the race. It belongs to the darkest of the dark ages, when ignorance bred fear, and fear evolved superstition, and superstition evolved the mascot for protection—as inevitably as a tight shoe will induce the callosity on the foot familiarly known as a corn! There are plenty of empty-headed people to-day who fill the vacuum abhorred by nature with a stock of preposterous notions, such as touching wood to avoid ill luck, throwing spilt salt over the shoulder to neutralise misfortune, and inducing another person to pick up some article one has dropped, so that one's good luck may not fail! There is some danger alleged in regard to looking at the new moon through glass, faithfully observed by a short-sighted friend of my own, till one night, after removing his glasses to view the crescent-orb according to the ritual, he was disastrously immobilised by a lamppost! So with the "V" sign. The horror of the times is such that our statesmen know the people must enjoy some kind of light diversion, and catering for the superstitious appetite involves no inconvenience of rationing. The crop is rank and rife, and, particularly in war time, there is no question of "control." I wonder what our soldiers, sailors, and airmen think of this perfectly safe, and perfectly silly, proposal to help on the day of victory. "Mr. Punch," who has just attained his hundredth year, produced a stinging commentary on this type of thing when he pictured two soldiers, during the Crimean war, in rags, thanks to the efficiency of the contemporary commissariat. One soldier, with a newspaper in his hand, informs his comrade that they are to have medals for their services. "Aye," said the comrade, "and perhaps we'll get coats to put them on!" The soldier is ever a realist, and if his commentary on the "V" sign were uttered in soldier-like language, I do not think it would be printable in the "Calendar!"

But after all there is reason for gratitude. The mascoters are welcome to their "V" sign. They might have annexed the Sign of the Cross.

—D. Paterson, in August Monthly Calendar of Hope Street (Unitarian) Church, Liverpool.

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# CHURCHILL'S 1925 QUESTION THE PEACE CHARTER

"SHALL WE ALL COMMIT SUICIDE?"

Mr. Winston Churchill, the present Prime Minister, wrote an article under this heading, "Shall We All Commit Suicide?" in 1925. It is published in his volume entitled *Thoughts and Adventures*.

In his essay, Mr. Churchill tells us what he thinks would have happened if the war had continued for another year. This is the forecast:

"The campaign of the year 1919 would have witnessed an immense accession to the power of destruction.

"Had the Germans retained the morale to make good their retreat to the Rhine, they would have been assaulted in the summer of 1919 with forces and by methods incomparably more prodigious than any yet employed.

"Thousands of aeroplanes would have shattered their cities. Scores of thousands of cannon would have blasted their front.

"Poison gases of incredible malignity, against which only a secret mask (which the Germans could not obtain in time) was proof, would have stifled all resistance and paralysed all life on the hostile front subjected to attack. No doubt the Germans, too, had their plans. But the hour of wrath had passed. The signal of relief was given, and the horrors of 1919 remained buried in the archives of the great antagonists."

Churchill felt that a second European war must come out of the Versailles peace. He says:

"The causes of war have been in no way removed; indeed they are in some aspects aggravated by the so-called Peace Treaties and the reactions following thereupon.

"Two mighty branches of the European family will never rest content with their existing situation.

"Russia, stripped of her Baltic power, will, as the years pass by, brood incessantly upon the wars of Peter the Great.

"From one end of Germany to the other an intense hatred of France unites the whole population. The enormous contingents of German youth growing to military manhood year by year are inspired by the fiercest sentiments and the soul of Germany smoulders with dreams of a war of liberation or revenge."

"These ideas are restrained at the present moment only by physical impotence.

"France is armed to the teeth.

"Germany has been to a great extent disarmed and her military system broken up.

"The French hope to preserve this situation by their technical, military apparatus, by their shield of fortresses, by their black troops and by a system of alliances with the smaller States of Europe; and for the present at any rate overwhelming force is on their side.

"But physical force alone, unsustained by world opinion, affords no durable foundation for security.

"Germany is a far stronger entity than France and cannot be kept in permanent subjugation."

Churchill addressed these clear thoughts to all those, who—

"wish to spare their children torments and disasters compared with which those we have suffered will be a pale preliminary."

## NEW ZEALAND CONCHIES

The New Zealand Congregational Union discussed, in Committee, on Thursday, March 13, the question of conscientious objectors. It adopted the following statement, which was accepted by the Assembly, as the official pronouncement of the Congregational Church in New Zealand on the subject of conscience:—

"The assembly affirms the right of the sincere objector to combatant or other military service to sympathetic hearing by an appeal board, upon which should sit at least one person competent to understand the religious or other scruples of the objectors.

"Further, the assembly urges that ministers and other leaders of its churches, should do all in their power to assist sincere conscientious objectors among their people when called upon both by advice and testimony at the hearing before the board. In the event of an appeal being dismissed after due hearing, further dealings with such objector shall be in the hands of the civil and not military authorities.

"The assembly supports the right of the Government to demand alternative service at a rate of pay not higher than that of men in the forces from men whose religious scruples are regarded as valid by an appeal board."

## THE PEACE CHARTER

The Duke of Bedford's Views

To the Editor.

Sir,—Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt have made a statement of their peace aims in very general terms, but if their words are not accompanied by deeds, the value of the statement will, I fear, be small.

Who will trust the sincerity of our claim to "respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live" as long as thousands of Indian Nationalist leaders are kept in prison?

Who will have confidence in President Roosevelt's power to increase the economic prosperity of Europe unless he has first shown himself willing and able to offend Wall Street by instituting those reforms of the monetary system which can remove poverty from the U.S.A.—that country of vast potential wealth?

What is the use of saying that we will endeavour "with due respect to our existing obligations to further the enjoyment of all states of access on equal terms to the trade and raw materials of the world"? Our "existing obligations" must presumably include the Ottawa agreements which render impossible for countries outside the Empire fair trade and fair economic opportunity.

Was it sensible and was it good tactics to suggest that negotiation could not take place until the Nazi Government had been overthrown by war and also to threaten one-sided disarmament of enemy nations, as in 1918?

Apart from wishful thinking and a very unexpected change in the Eastern war in favour of Russia, is there now any reasonable chance of overthrowing the Nazi Government by direct military defeat? If there is not, what sense is there in irritating the German people and consolidating them behind Hitler by assuming such a defeat?

If we desire to promote revolution in Germany, is not the only way to try and trap the Nazi leaders into some grave blunder of which the rejection of reasonable peace terms would be by far the most fatal?

Is it not worse than foolish to try and dictate to the undefeated Germans the kind of Government they shall have, when conditions make our attempts at dictation no better than mere bluff. The German people remember, moreover, that they had to submit to a one-sided disarmament after the last war as part of a victor's peace and it did not result in justice, nor in a satisfactory European settlement. Is it not rather silly, therefore, to suggest anything but disarmament by all belligerents on fair and equal terms.

Yours truly,

BEDFORD

Newton Stewart, August 25.

## F. W. JOWETT'S OPINION

F. W. Jowett is a veteran of the Parliamentary Socialist Movement and a man of outstanding integrity. He lost his seat for East Bradford in 1931, at the time of bankers' ramp election, when Ramsay MacDonald became the leader of the Tory Party. He had won the seat in 1929, after losing it at the "Zinoviev Letter" election of 1924. Prior to that he had sat for West Bradford from 1906-1918, but lost the seat at the famous Lloyd George Khaki-coupon election. It will be seen that Jowett entered Parliament in 1906, the very year we had left the S.D.P., and renounced parliamentarism as careerism and Anti-Socialism. Jowett was First Commissioner of Works in the First Labour Government of 1924, but possessed too many inhibitions to adapt himself to mere parliamentarism. He is now seventy-seven years of age and still struggling to serve the cause of Socialism to which he dedicated himself in his early years.

In the *Bradford L.I.P. News*, Jowett discusses the Churchill-Roosevelt statement as follows:—

"The Eight Point Charter of Churchill and Roosevelt is so much less promising for the German people than were President Wilson's Fourteen Points that it is inconceivable that it will have any influence on

the German people, even if it were possible to think of them trusting such promises a second time.

"It is the eighth Point which is vital—and fatal. It kills stone dead all hope of mobilising German public opinion for active opposition to Hitler and his Nazi militarist aggression.

"There can be no doubt that with their bitter memories of the starvation and suffering of the German people during the Allied blockade (continued long after the war ended, with the object of enforcing an unjust peace on a disarmed nation), Goebbels' challenge will be approved by practically the whole German people.

"If we had gone through a similar experience, and were threatened with disarmament to enforce dictated peace on us, our answer would be no less emphatic.

"Therefore, I say without hesitation, that the much belauded Charter will carry no weight as a declaration of peace aims."

## RED ARMY STATUTES

Last October, the Red Army, which was forged by Trotsky during the Russian Revolution, was placed under disciplinary Statutes harsher than those operating in any army, except that of the Nazis.

The Statutes introduced on October 12, 1940, gave the commander unlimited powers:—

"In case of insubordination, the commander has the right to apply all measures of coercion up to and including the application of force and firearms."

"The commander bears no responsibility for the consequence in case he finds it necessary to apply force and firearms in order to compel an insubordinate to fulfil a command and to restore discipline and order. . . . The commander who does not in such instances evince firmness, resoluteness, and who does not apply all necessary measures to fulfil an order is remitted to trial before the court martial." (*Red Star*, No. 232, October 15, 1940.)

This means that, without being responsible to any civilian control, a superior officer has the right in *peace time* to shoot down a Red Army soldier for not fulfilling a command—not for mutiny, not for an insurrection, but for insubordination!

Article 7 of the Statutes which were in force from 1925 to October, 1940, reads:

"The nachalniki (men in charge) have the right to apply armed compulsion only in a military situation and only in the execution of battle orders."

V. Ulrich, presiding judge of the Moscow Frame-up Trials, in an article in the *Red Star*, special organ of the Red Army, for October 22, 1940, gives the following accurate descriptions of the effect of the new Army Statutes:—

"The disciplinary statutes considerably extend the right of commanders as regards the use of force and firearms."

"Comradely relations between soldiers and officers are no more.

"The hail-fellow-well-met spirit in the relationships between a commander and a subordinate can have no place in the Red Army. Discussion of any kind is absolutely prohibited among the subordinates."

Lt.-General V. Kurdyumov clarified the Statutes in his article in *Pravda* for October 6, 1940:

"Grievances may be introduced only personally and individually. Submission of group grievances or grievances for others is prohibited. No more group declarations, no more joint discussions—whether concerning an order, or bad food, or any other topic—all this comes under the heading of 'insubordination' and for it a soldier may be shot on the spot without so much as a court-martial, hearing or investigation, if a superior officer solely and personally so decides.

This is how Stalin has militarised the Red Army. We do not see any difference between Red militarism and any other kind of militarism.

In the Press.

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