

A N T I - M I L I T A R I S M

We

A N T I - C O N S C R I P T I O N

MUST

A N T I - W A R

Resist!

A N T I - G O V E R N M E N T

ONCE again the nations are preparing for war. Before the noise of battle dies away, before the homeless and displaced peoples of Europe and Asia are provided with even the simple necessities of life, the grim shadows of another ghastly struggle darken this unhappy earth.

The enemies of 1939-45 are vanquished and but for the echoes aroused by trials of war criminals, wherein the victors satisfy their lust for vengeance and strive to hide their own misdeeds, the causes for which some 20 millions perished would be forgotten. And well might they be forgotten, for the events since the end of the war have shown

all those who wish to see how hollow was the mockery, how hideous the sham behind the parrot-phrases of the politicians, the exhortations of the back-room boys.

What price democracy to-day? What price this freedom from both fear and want when in a world of man-made shortage we are conscripted for a new destruction? Of course, the patriotic leaders find excuses. They have a world

to play with, a world divided up by frontiers, beyond which, they tell us, dwell our enemies, those wicked men who'll steal our liberties—as if we were free men, with liberties to lose!

So, to prevent our enslavement by somebody else, our leaders enslave us themselves. To save us from Hitler, Churchill enslaved us; to save us from Stalin, Attlee enslaved us—but who will save us from Churchill and Attlee? Who will break our chains so that we are free to save ourselves from tyrants everywhere? Who will prevent the tyrants from having the power to enslave us? Will anybody? Anybody but ourselves, that is?

The question begs the answer. No Leader will free us, for who can be a

leader over free men? No politician will save us, for politics is the science of government and men who are governed are not free men and those who wait for a messiah will wait into their graves and those who just don't care are as good as dead anyway. The man who lives is the complete man—the man who uses his eye and his brain and his hand and his will and his courage and who says “NO” when the saviour comes along with the shackles.

The Government has no mandate from the people to enforce conscription. On the contrary, in the inarticulate way we have, we have shown them we have no desire to join their fighting forces. The call for voluntary service has failed because we have stayed away and if the

Government were representative it would recognise the will of the people. But the Government is not representative and has no interest in the will of the people and must act as any authority must act—by bending the people to its will.

If the people bend or break they have themselves to blame, for they are the strength of the world. They are the creators of wealth; the builders of houses and growers of food. Not in the files of government offices, but in the horny hands and the hard-won skill of the workers lies the wealth of the world. If the people surrender, that wealth and their lives are lost and we go down to a dark age of tyranny and destruction.

We must resist! We MUST resist! On the steppes of Russia and the plains of Spain; on the prairies of America and the rice-fields of China; in the teeming cities everywhere the struggle must be joined, the struggle of the people against the State, the international struggle of the common man to win a world of peace and plenty in the absence of government and division.

Refuse to fight your brother worker at the behest of your Government. Refuse to add your mite to the suicidal madness of political lunacy. Not Capitalism nor Communism nor Fascism nor the State in any form, but the road of direct action to the free society of world Anarchy.

That is the path for free men.

The Anarchist Record against War & Conscription

THE crime of crimes has been committed, and England is at war. In view of the Government's foreign policy during its whole existence, no one need feel surprised at this. When it was seen that the Imperialists in the Cabinet had the controlling voice, and when later Churchill was made First Lord of the Admiralty, it became a certainty that in the next great struggle of the European powers, England would be involved. To discuss the hideous machinations of international diplomacy, however, is worse than useless. The plague of war has infected all the nations, and its breath will spread death and destruction on a scale never seen before . . . And it is this organisation for profit and plunder that modern Governments serve. It is to satiate their monstrous greed for wealth and power that ten millions of men, who ought to be gathering harvests that their dear ones will never taste, are thrown at each other's throats. For their advantage the corn-fields of Europe will become the graveyards of the tens of thousands who are doomed to die for a cause they do not even understand.

—Freedom, August, 1914.

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CONSCRIPTION is the culminating point of the attack on the few liberties which the people had gained by generations of struggle against their rulers. The latter had made these con-

THE Anarchist record is a clean one of constant anti-militarist and anti-war activity. We have been consistent against conscription since its first introduction, have not switched our “line” in the middle of a war like the Communists or in any way betrayed our principles like the Labour politicians. Here is the proof, in quotations from Anarchist publications during and between the two world wars—and we are already against the next one, too!

cessions in times of popular revolt, but had always waited for the day when they could take them back again. The war has given them the opportunity, and since it began they have crushed freedom of the Press, free speech, and freedom from arbitrary arrest . . . This is the direct result of the servility of the people, who of recent years have begun to look on the State as their guardian angel anxious to do things for their welfare. Shakespeare sums up the situation very nicely in “Julius Cæsar”, where he makes Cassius say:—

“And why should Cæsar be a tyrant then?

Poor man! I know, he would not be a wolf;

But that he sees, the Romans are but sheep.”

—Freedom, March, 1916.

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AGAIN the European sky is black and sinister with impending war. The powers that breathe war and their allies who grow rich on the implements of

death and destruction are again competing with each. The cry for armaments, more deadly machines, more devastating explosives, greater manpower, a mightier navy, again rend the air. The shibboleths used in the last world conflagration to deceive the masses are again to serve the warmongers of to-day in their conspiracy to lead the masses to slaughter. “The War to end War,” “The War for Democracy.” What a lying face was hidden under the hideous mask of democracy. Spain and the World, May, 1938.

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WARS between capitalist nations are fought to safeguard illegal conquests from being conquered by other marauders. The next war, we repeat, and will repeat until our voice is stifled by the forces of law and order, will not be a war for “democracy against Fascism” for democracy does not exist under Capitalism.

Revolt! May 1st, 1939.

THROUGHOUT the belligerent countries there are those who would rush to defend their own chains without even waiting to be conscripted (at the beginning of the war, at least!) Still there is to-day little enthusiasm but conscripted workers go off like lambs to the slaughter.

There still remain others who are not fooled by the old slogans of “saving Democracy” or “defending the Fatherland” and who are unmoved by frenzied and repeated appeals to patriotism, national honour or other false ideals. For these the question is, not how best to serve their Government but how best they can serve their class, and humanity itself.

The Anarchists believe, of course, that there is one way in which war, capitalism, fascism, and imperialism can be utterly vanquished, and that is by a libertarian revolution—for only by overthrow of ALL governments will freedom and lasting peace be established.

Direct Action, and, in this case, industrial direct action, is the supreme need. By a social stay-in general strike, the workers can oust their bosses, and make a revolution. All industrial action which leads to strike action, fights against a capitalist system and war.

—War Commentary, Nov., 1939.

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ANARCHISTS were in the forefront of the fight against Italian Fascism and German Nazism. They fought

reaction on the continent while the rulers of Britain were applauding the "social Achievements" of the fascists. Anarchists fought Franco from the first day to the last of the Spanish War. And they are still fighting him, while the British and American governments seek friendly relations with him.

Always our programme has been the same: solidarity between workers of all lands against their common enemy, International Capitalism. British workers are exploited by British and international capital, not by German workers. And the German workers are not oppressed by their British fellow workers but by their Nazi bosses and bureaucrats.

Who is our enemy? It is the capitalist and his political henchmen, both in this country and abroad. And in this class war which we proclaim, the fight for liberation, of struggling and suffering workers and peasants throughout the world, our allies are the workers of all countries. Let us recognise the true enemy; let us join hands with the oppressed of all nations and throw off the oppressors for ever.

—War Commentary,
Mid-November, 1943.

THE period between September, 1939 and May, 1940, was popularly known as the phoney war. The period between May, 1945, and some unspecified date in the future may well be called the phoney peace. The war has dragged on through many years, under leadership which had told us repeatedly it is inspired and brilliant but has failed to do anything to speed up the six years of drawn-out war, and that war is still unfinished. For even while the black market is raking off quick profits in selling at advanced prices Union Jacks which they bought up cheap after Dunkirk, the war in the East goes on. There is method in this madness. The idea is to get us accustomed to "war in peace": to be used to what were thought war-time sacrifices and restrictions being carried out in peace-time, and even if Japan surrenders, this "phoney peace" is scheduled to go on in the name of keeping order, occupation, preparation, etc. Our struggle against the war is therefore not ended, nor can it be ended except by dissolution of the system which breeds war.

—War Commentary,
19th May, 1945.

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