

THE WORD

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

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SENTENCED TO DEATH

STORY OF THE OBJECTORS WHO WERE TRANSFERRED TO FRANCE



ALFRED TAYLOR



STUART BEAVIS



FRED MURFIN

Three of the C.O.'s Sentenced to Death in 1916

[In the Christmas "Word," we listed the names of the men sentenced to death in 1916. The following article relates their sufferings, experiences, and stories.]

The story of the thirty-seven conscientious objectors who were transferred to France in May, 1916, and of the thirty who were sentenced to death, has been told well by Hubert W. Peet. We summarise his story.

Whilst conscription was passing through the House of Commons, the highest civil authorities promised that no conscientious objector would be transferred from Britain. The undertaking was given because it was known that such transference meant the death sentence for the genuine conscientious objector. The military authorities rode rough-shod over the parliamentary pledges, and the conscientious objectors were transferred to France from Landguard Fort, Harwich; from Richmond, Yorks; and from Seaford.

The first rumours of the intended transference reached the No. Conscription Fellowship from Harwich, where a party of conscientious objectors were in irons at Landguard Fort. Definite information was received that the Non-Combatant Corps, and its C.O. prisoners, were on their way to Southampton. This warning reached the N.C.F. in a letter, thrown out of the train by one of the ordinary N.C.C. men, while it was passing through a London suburb. The letter was posted by unknown hands and the facts became public property.

The party was delayed at Southampton, by the discovery of an outbreak of measles in the corps. Mr. Asquith, then Prime Minister, telegraphed to Southampton, ordering the retention of the C.O.s in Britain. But the prisoners had been separated from the other men and shipped to Havre. The Army authorities intended to make an "example" of them, it would seem.

They were technically "released" after leaving England. Their first real contest with the Military Authorities came on May 10. It was then that 17 of the Landguard party, alone in the midst of the B.E.F., began their refusal to be coerced into being soldiers.

On the parade ground at Cinder City, this May morning, an extraordinary scene was wit-

nessed. The C.O.s were hustled into their places in different parts of the ranks. The order, "Right turn! Quick march!" was shouted. The company moved briskly off! *But dotted on the parade ground were seventeen conscientious objectors still in their original positions.* This was actually and symbolically true. These men stood in their original positions to the end, the bulwark of the protest against war and militarism, tested, well tested, and not found wanting.

Physical ill-treatment, bullying, and threatening ensued. Here and there an ordinary private whispered: "Stick it!" Finally, the party of C.O.s were split up. Some of the men were

"We were placed with our faces to the barbed wire of the inner fence. As the ropes with which we were tied fastened round the barbed wire instead of the usual thick wooden post, it was possible to tie them much more tightly, and I found myself drawn so closely to the fence that when I wished to turn my head I had to do so very cautiously to avoid my face being torn by the barbs. To make matters less comfortable, it came on to rain and cold wind blew straight across the top of the hill."

In imposing this sentence, the Commandant explained:—

"I have no special instructions about C.O.s. I shall treat you as ordinary soldiers."

The shamefulness of this sentence did not consist in the suggestion that C.O.s should be



SOME OF THE C.O.'s SENT TO FRANCE IN 1916.

ordered 28 days' Field Punishment No. 1. They were marched to the Field Punishment Camp at Harfleur. They refused to work in the quarry and were returned to the main camp.

Hubert Peet described the subsequent happenings by quoting from the account of his experiences, written by one of the men who stood firm:

"The Quartermaster Sergeant had us each handcuffed to a tent with our hands round the pole behind us, which made the shoulders ache to a quite excruciating degree. The young Canadian, who had been so hostile the previous evening, came up. He broke into a torrent of curses at the authorities who imposed such penalties. After three hours, one of the handcuffs was unlocked to enable me to feed myself, after which the punishment was again inflicted."

Finally, hands were handcuffed in front. "Crucifixion" followed.

"Each of us was placed with our backs to the framework, consisting of uprights at intervals of four or five yards, and cross-beams at a height of about five feet from the ground. Our ankles were tied together and our arms then tied tightly at the wrists to the cross-beams; and we were prepared to remain in this position for the next two hours."

"Crucifixion," on the second evening, was in a different part of the camp.

treated as ordinary soldiers. The shame was that any Commandant could sentence an ordinary soldier to such punishment, for the merest trivial offence.

The prisoners were hurried back to Cinder City and told that they were being sent to Boulogne, en route for the front line, "where you will be shot if you continue to disobey orders."

In the eyes of the soldiers and the guard, the threat was no idle one. The following weeks were big with a very real danger to these determined objectors.

Arrived at Boulogne, the men were taken direct to the Field Punishment Barracks, a disused fish market near the Quay. They refused to work. They were placed on bread and water diet, in dark and disgracefully crowded punishment cells. Their arms were handcuffed behind their backs for certain periods. They suffered one imposition of "crucifixion." And they still discussed: The existence of the Devil; the truth of Marx; the merits of Esperanto; the influence of Tolstoy; vaccination.

Meantime, two further parties of conscientious objectors had been sent from France, straight to the Henriville Camp, outside Boulogne. They were placed immediately in the guardroom.

As a result of agitation at home, the War Office permitted Dr. F. B. Meyer and Hubert Peet to cross to Boulogne to see the prisoners, on Wednesday, June 7, 1916. Three days before the C.O.s at Henriville had been warned, solemnly, that continued resistance would result in death. Stuart Beavis smuggled a letter out to his mother. It read:—

"Just a line. We have been warned to-day that we are now within the war zone, and the military authorities have absolute power, and disobedience may be followed by very severe penalties, and very possibly the death penalty, so I just drop you a line in case they do not allow me to write after to-morrow. Do not be downhearted if the worst comes to the worst; many have died cheerfully before for a worse cause.—Stuart."

For circulating copies of this letter, H. Runham Brown was prosecuted under Dora, and "deemed to be fined £50 or imprisoned for two months." His case caused questions to be asked both in House of Commons and the House of Lords and led to debates in both Houses of Parliament.

The seventeen C.O.s who had been taken to France first were each warned. A list was read out to them of men who had been shot already for disobedience.

Hubert Peet was allowed no communication with the imprisoned C.O.s. Colonel Wilberforce, the Base Commandant, finally permitted him to shake hands with four men he knew personally. Dr. Meyer was allowed to speak briefly to the prisoners in the presence of the Commandant and an imposing and impatient staff.

At this time, the prisoners had been court-martialled, but not "read out." Ten days later, J. Rowntree Gillett, who acted as Quaker Chaplain, brought back the news that the death sentences had been passed, though commuted to 10 years' penal servitude.

The writer of the diary, already quoted by P. . . . describes the "reading out" . . .

Monday, the 9th June, we were informed we were to be read out. We found an escort waiting us in the courtyard below . . . We turned towards the outskirts of the town, and climbed one of the hills overlooking it, which affords a wide view of the Channel. I cast many a glance in the direction of the white cliffs of Dover, for this might be our last opportunity. We turned into the midst of a huge military camp and many curious eyes, evidently puzzled by our cheerful demeanour under such circumstances, followed us as we made our way to a large open space in the middle, 150 yards or more square, and evidently used as a parade ground . . . After a wait of perhaps three-quarters of an hour, the various groups of soldiers began to form themselves into three sides of a huge square until several thousands were present . . . When an appropriate hush had been arranged, the Adjutant, who was to read out the sentence, took charge . . . 'Private . . . No. . . . of the 2nd Eastern Company Non-Combatant Corps, tried by Field Court-Martial for disobedience whilst undergoing field punishment. Sentenced to death by being shot.'—(Here a pause.) 'Confirmed by General Sir Douglas Haig—a longer pause—and commuted to ten years' penal servitude.' . . . I was number three on the list, and as I stepped forward I caught a glimpse of my paper as it was handed to the Adjutant. Printed at the top in large red letters, and doubly underlined, was the word 'Death.'

"I can hardly analyse the feelings that flashed through my mind as I caught sight of the word. They could certainly not be described as an emotion. I had faced the possibility of a death sentence before, and now accepted the fact almost without concern, whilst my mind was occupied mechanically and dispassionately with considering the immediate practical effects. It would be a great trial for Mother. My sister would have to leave school. People in England would make a great fuss. The thought of why I should receive a different sentence from the others did not occur to me. I simply accepted it as a fact. . . .

"And commuted to ten years' penal servitude.' So it was not so after all! "But as I stood listening to the sentences of the rest of our party, the feeling of joy and triumph surged up within me, and I felt proud to have the privilege of being one of that small company of C.O.s testifying to a truth which the world has not yet grasped, but which it would one day treasure as a most precious inheritance."

"These men aren't normal. Look at the shape of their heads!" Colonel Wilberforce said to Hubert Peet before he left Boulogne.

THE BISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM

Dr. Barnes Defends Absolute Opposition to War

The *Manchester Guardian* for Thursday, December 7, 1939, published a report of one of many of Judge Richardson's indiscretions as Chairman of the Newcastle Tribunal. The next day Dr. Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham, wrote a powerful letter to the *Guardian*, which appeared in the columns of our contemporary on Monday, December 11, 1939.

Dr. Barnes summarised the incident:—

"It would appear that on Wednesday a man applied to the Newcastle tribunal that he might be registered as a conscientious objector. He was supported by a friend who said that it was not Christian to take up arms. 'How dare you presume that?' said Judge Richardson. 'There are plenty of good Christians helping to remedy the evil of aggression.' Finally the Judge expressed his opinion of the two men who described themselves as 'Jehovah's witnesses,' by saying, 'You are a lot of cranks!'"

Dr. Barnes then poses the direct Christian challenge to Judge Richardson and to the militarists of Church and State in the following trenchant terms:—

"Does the Judge know that for the first two and a half centuries of its history the Christian Church was predominantly pacifist? A careful examination of this question by a first-rate scholar is to be found in the book, 'The Early Christian Attitude to War,' published by Professor C. J. Cadoux in 1919. If it be thought that Professor Cadoux uses the evidence mistakenly, I would refer to the 'Cambridge Ancient History,' vol. xii, 1939, page 659, where, at any rate as regards the leaders of the Church, his conclusions are accepted. Take a concrete instance. Does anyone think that Marcus Aurelius, 'the saint of paganism,' persecuted the Christians merely because they did not worship Jupiter, Mars, Venus and the rest of the traditional gods? **The offence of the Christians was a refusal to offer incense to the genius of the Emperor or to the genius of Rome. A refusal to serve in the armies of the State even against what at that time was literally 'the menace of German barbarism.'**

Judge Richardson's words were addressed to men known as 'Jehovah's witnesses.' Such are members of an organisation called the International Bible Students' Association. Their approach to the New Testament differs widely from my own. They regard it as verbally inspired; my own attitude is that adopted by modern critical scholars. But we agree in our conviction that Christ forbade his followers to do wrong that good might come. We agree, therefore, that Christians ought not to serve in the Army. We agree that even to join the R.A.M.C. is to belong to an organisation forbidden to Christians. We must serve the State by our prayers and give such 'civilian' help as the Christian conscience will allow. Such was the early Christian attitude, as the perusal of a famous passage in Origen's 'Contra Celsum' (ca. A.D. 420) will demonstrate; such is the attitude of present-day Christian pacifists."

Dr. Barnes proceeds to ask Judge Richardson, if, when he calls the Jehovah Witnesses "cranks" for opposing war and militarism, he knows what is happening in Germany. *More than 6,000 Jehovah Witnesses are interned in Germany, with Jews, criminals, "and the depraved," for refusing to bear arms in defence of Hitlerism.* They are nicknamed "Bible bugs" and wear a lilac or violet badge. The recent British White Paper on the "Treatment of German Nationals in Germany, 1938-39" (Cmd. 6120), mentions these men always with respect.

The White Paper states that they are "branded by the Gestapo since they refuse military service." It describes "their courage and religious faith" as "remarkable." It explains: "They are allowed no communication with the outside world."

It must be clear that, if Jehovah's Witnesses are to be applauded for opposing war in Germany, they cannot be condemned for refusing to assist militarism in Britain.

Comments Dr. Barnes:—

"Cranks? I suggest that such pacifists are rather enduring and praying for the Europe that is to be, a group of nations forswearing war and living in unity and peace."

The italics, in the passage referring to the early Christians, are ours. We wish to emphasise the

fact that anti-militarism was the offence for which the early Christians were martyred.

S. Simpson, Russell St., Brandon Colliery, County Durham, was one of the Jehovah's Witnesses whom Dr. Barnes defended in his letter. Simpson appealed on Tuesday, December 19, to the London Appeal Tribunal. He was represented by Mr. R. Fuller, a London solicitor, who belonged to the Jehovah's Witnesses. Fuller produced Dr. Barnes' letter.

Sir Leonard Costello—The Bishop of Birmingham points out that a great many of your faith have been put in concentration camps?—That is world-wide; not only in Germany.

Would you be content to allow the same thing to happen here without opposition from anyone?—They are content to do it in Germany.

They have no power to do otherwise. Do you suggest that no one in this country should resist an invasion by a ruthless and unscrupulous enemy?—Yes, so far as we are concerned.

Do you think other people should resist?—That is their responsibility. As Christians we should not resist.

You are suggesting there are no Christians in the Army?—Emphatically there are none, otherwise they would not be slaughtering their fellow-men.

Isn't that a little intolerant?—No. That is according to the Scriptures.

The Tribunal dismissed the appeal.

Opponents of Dr. Barnes challenged the scholarship and veracity of Professor C. J. Cadoux, to whom the Bishop had referred. Replying to these critics, Professor Cadoux pointed out that his two works, *Christian Attitude to War*, and *The Early Church and The World*, aimed at being strictly historical, presenting and summarising evidence. Professor Cadoux added that the terms employed by the early Church Fathers in denouncing bloodshed excluded participation in warfare.

Professor Cadoux explained:—

"Tertullian certainly had a horror of the contamination by pagan worship to which Christians in the armies were exposed. But he also makes it perfectly clear that he had an equally strong objection to the killing. This comes out quite definitely, both in his pre-Montanist work 'De Idololatria' and in his Montanist work 'De Corona Militis.' Neither Origen nor Lactantius, in dealing with the question of military service for Christians, even mentions the danger of idolatry; they both concentrate on the iniquity of bloodshed. Origen in particular (about A.D. 248) is concerned to reply to the complaint of the heathen philosopher Celsus, who (about A.D. 178) had criticised Christians for refusing to serve in the Imperial armies. Presumably Celsus, like Origen, knew that their objection to military service was mainly humanitarian. Yet both Celsus and Origen wrote as if refusal to serve was the general attitude of the Christians of their day."

It was asserted that Dr. Barnes' translation "Blessed are the pacifists" was a "serious misquotation" of Matthew V.9. Professor Cadoux denied that this was so. He added:—

"It is perhaps not a happy rendering, since the word 'pacifist' raises a host of modern associations; but linguistically it is the exact equivalent of the Greek word used, and, seeing that Jesus was in all essentials himself a pacifist in our sense of the term (see 'The Congregational Quarterly,' January, 1936, pages 58-67, for the evidence in detail), the bishop's translation cannot be ruled out as incorrect, in deference to 'the recorded translation.' And, in any case, what authority has a translation by virtue of the fact that it is 'recorded'?"

Writing from the Bishop's Hostel, Lincoln, the Rev. Patrick Blakiston supports the Bishop's attitude, by stating that there are other pacifists among the ante-Nicene Christian writers, besides Tertullian, Origen, and Lactantius:—

"Thou wishest to make war," says Tatian, "and thou takest Apollon as thy counsellor in murder." [six. 849.] Apparently to Tatian murder and war are one and the same thing. Minucius Felix states: "It is not right for us either to see or hear of a man being slain." [xxx. 6.] St. Cyprian speaks of wars scattered everywhere with the bloody horror of

camps.' 'The world,' he says, 'is wet with mutual bloodshed, and homicide is a crime when individuals commit it, but it is called a virtue when it is carried on publicly.' [Donat. 6.] To conclude, 'Fraud, adultery, homicide is mortal sin.' [Bon. Pat. 14.] Arnobius affirms that 'We, a numerous band of men as we are, have learned from His teaching and His laws that evil ought not to be requited with evil, that it is better to suffer wrong than to inflict it, that we should rather shed our own blood than stain our hands and conscience with that of another.' [Adv. Gent. i. 6.]

"That these are not just the voices of individuals may be shown by the rules laid down in the Egyptian and Syrian Church Orders and in the Canons of Hippolytus, which forbid Christians to join the Army. Finally, there is Maximilianus, saint and martyr of the Catholic Church, who in the year 295 at the age of 21 laid down his life for Christ as a conscientious objector."

Against this historic statement one correspondent quoted Article 37, which insisted that war was lawful in order to combat the Anti-Militarist views of the Anabaptists.

Dr. Barnes answered very effectively by declaring that the Articles of Religion of the Church of England were not decisive against the ancient (and modern) Christian refusal of military service. He added:—

"What are the facts? In article 37, entitled 'Of the Civil Magistrates,' there appears, after a number of other statements, the assertion that 'it is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the magistrate, to wear weapons, and serve in the wars.' The Elizabethan framers of the articles had a nice sense of words and were not wholly ignorant of the early history of the Christian Church. So they contented themselves with a platitude. Military service, when commanded by the State, is obviously lawful. It is not, for a Christian, lawful 'and right'."

Mr. W. P. W. Barnes, undergraduate son of the Bishop of Birmingham, appeared before the Conscientious Objectors' Appeals Tribunal in London on February 8.

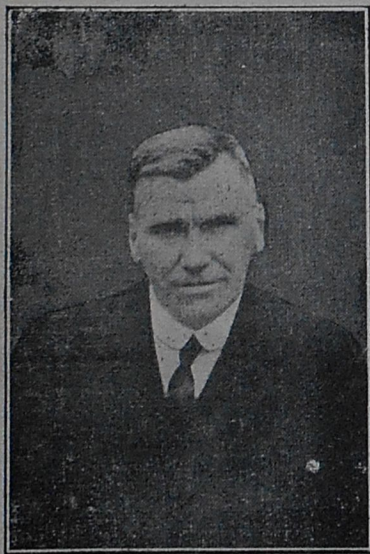
He appealed against a decision of the East Anglian Tribunal to remove his name from the register of conscientious objectors without qualification.

Barnes said he was willing to do voluntary work, but not in the Royal Army Medical Corps.

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PRINCIPLE OR CRIME

When the history of this war comes to be written perhaps the most discreditable thing connected with it, so far as this country is concerned, will be found in our treatment of the admittedly genuine conscientious objector to military service—leading Quakers and others as to whose complete sincerity there can be no manner of doubt. Several of them have lately died in prison, not directly from the result of the severe ordeal of long periods of hard labour, but in all probability through the prostration which made them the ready victims of any casual infection. Some time ago it was understood that the Prime Minister had so far relented as to agree that men who had served the maximum period allowed by law of two years' hard labour, should be released. The most ordinary sense of equity, to say nothing of mercy, would appear to dictate that the limit placed by law on sentences of hard labour for single offences should apply also to sentences for repeated offences when these are virtually the same offence and a man is rearrested and resented almost as soon as he is released. But it is not being done, and this injustice and cruelty go on in defiance, or in pure evasion, of the law. Several of these prisoners were yesterday released from Pentonville Prison, but it is understood that they are to be rearrested shortly, or so soon as it is thought they have somewhat recovered strength to endure a further term of the hardest punishment known to the law. We publish a letter to-day from the editor of the "Spur," who has been sentenced four times for the same offence and already suffered two and a half years' hard labour, aggravated by extreme special punishments for what is regarded as contumacy. He has been hunger-striking, was let out for a month to recover, and is shortly to start on the miserable round of protest and punishment again. He and several others who acted with him expect this will be their last arrest; the next he feels pretty sure will come from the hand which sooner or later arrests us all. And this is our way of giving thanks for victory and approaching peace and of encouraging men who, however mistaken, prefer principle to life. It is a glorious device, and, if truth be told, fools though they be, such men are of the salt of the earth, and perhaps there is not one of their persecutors, from the Prime Minister downwards, who can compare with them in high regard for the things of the spirit and for loyalty to what they believe to be truth. It is a sorry and degrading spectacle. When is it to end? — *The Manchester Guardian*, Tuesday, January 14, 1919.

By the time these lines are in print many who were hardly born, or else were mere infants, when the *Guardian* "leader" was published, will be facing their first court-martial. Ere long, some paper, maybe the *Guardian*, will have to refer to their cases, in similar terms to those employed in 1919. Where is it all going to end? How long must mankind endure war and militarism? How long must sanity and service and brotherhood be outlawed among the nations?

Youth and Conscience

Dear Sir,—The chairman of the Lancashire Tribunal (Judge Burgis) was reported in the press recently as having said that a man should examine his conscience about participation in war at frequent intervals.

If this is true of those about to register for military service or to appear before a Tribunal, it must surely hold good for all young men of military age at all times; and they must continue to examine their consciences while training for military service and when they reach the front, and, if they come to the conclusion that they have chosen the wrong course, they must take steps to follow the guidance of their consciences.

May I ask what provision, if any, is made by the Government for men who may thus become troubled in conscience about their decision to perform military service?

Yours sincerely,

C. GASKILL.

The Vicarage, Littleborough, Lanes.,
26th February, 1940.

MEDITATION

[This meditation was written on the eve of my first Court Martial. It was published in "The Spur," June, 1916. E. Armand translated it into French and published it in his paper, "Par dela la Melee," Orleans, February, 1917. It was reproduced in other French Anti-Militarist papers and widely circulated in leaflet form by French War Resisters.—Editor.]

I have a sheet of paper on which to prepare my defence to the many charges standing against me before to-morrow's court martial. And I intend to use it to prepare no defence. I am thinking of things good and bad, of persons virtuous and vicious. I want to indict the good, to deplore the bad, to denounce the virtuous and to heal the vicious. For good and bad, virtue and vice, are not what they seem.

I am thinking not of the good in essence, but the accepted good, the good in appearance. This good of fair speech, modish manners, and pretty dresses has been accepted as good throughout the ages. And it is a lie. It is vice through and through, lust instead of love, adultery instead of integrity, sham, upon sham. It is a business piety, a carnal wit, a stomach morality. Christ denounced it, Guatama exposed it, Socrates analysed it. And we must slay it.

What is reputed vice then? But reputed virtue in disgrace—the pomp with the shoddy showing, the respectability with the prostitution exposed. Sometimes even, reputed vice is real virtue seeking a resting place for the night, after a weary day of witnessing to the truth.

Man is ignorant. But there is an ignorance of innocence, which one day will know truth and testify accordingly. That ignorance is splendid. Its charms are felt like the possibilities of a marvellous child, whose brilliant future all can foresee. But there is an ignorance of squalor, of mental and moral mud, of stagnation, crime, filth, disease. That ignorance breeds war, feeds on superstition, is found on the bench, preaches in the pulpit, and exalts itself in politics. That ignorance counts itself respectable and controls the marriage mart. That ignorance I fain would destroy.

And now let me pray. To the destiny of man, to the instinct of my own nature; to the martyred spirit of all dead pioneers, let me pray. Let me commune for health and strength and endurance in captivity. Let me pray for zeal of spirit and power of faith. Let me pray for intellectual vision and fervour of passion. Let all vulgarity slip from me and the word the spirit of truth, become incarnate in me. Let me never deny the truth either in word or spirit. Let me work for the overthrow of scoffers in high places, for the destruction of the scoffing. Let me become a prophet against the scepticism of worldly piety and social unbelief. Let me become a son of man, the enemy of God, the foe of kings, the destroyer of ritual, ceremony, and all useless form. Let truth and truth alone be my mistress, and may I bring witness to her integrity from all lands and climes. May no worldly ambition, no temptation in this wilderness of understanding, lead me to serve the enemy of man, the principle of power and domination.

O holy spirit of truth, thou comforter, I have felt thy warm inspiration. May I deny at no time thy claim upon me. Dwell thou in me and with me in the days to come, and grant me perseverance in thy cause, until harmony shall dwell in the habitation of man, and peace and justice prevail through the land.

Fovant, Tuesday, May 16th, 1916.

THE C.O.—THE TRIBUNAL—AND AFTER

A Guide for Conscientious Objectors, Explaining Their Rights and Status under The National Service (Armed Forces) Act. Edited and compiled by Guy A. Aldred.

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C.O.s WHO DIED: 1916-18

Facts Revealed in the House of Commons

Below we reproduce questions from the House of Commons reports, relating to those who died. The date in italics is that of the day when the question arose in Parliament.

1. DIED IN PRISON.

1. ARTHUR BUTLER.

Thursday, 13th December, 1917.

Mr. Snowden asked the Home Secretary whether he is able to report the result of his inquiries into the health of Arthur Butler, a conscientious objector, now undergoing his third sentence of imprisonment at Preston?

Sir G. Cave—At the time when I made the inquiry the prisoner was recovering from an attack of influenza and doing fairly well. Last Tuesday, however, an attack of pneumonia suddenly developed, his parents were summoned to see him on that evening, and I regret to say that he died last night.

Mr. Snowden—Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that more than a month ago I made representations to him in regard to the condition of the health of this prisoner, who at that time was known to be spitting blood as the result of consumption; that I received a report from the Home Secretary saying that there was little or no foundation for these allegations; that letters which had been sent out of the prison by this prisoner have had statements in regard to his health obliterated; and in view of the fact that this man undoubtedly died yesterday as a result of the treatment he has received in prison, does the Home Secretary intend to take criminal proceedings against the medical officer and the Governor of the prison?

Sir G. Cave—In consequence of the inquiries which the hon. Member and others made a careful medical examination of this man was made, and he was reported not to be suffering in any way from tuberculosis. With regard to the other statements, the doctors did take the greatest care in this case. An inquiry will be held, and all the facts will be gone into.

Mr. King—Is the right hon. Gentleman able to assure us that he will give his personal consideration to this matter, and not leave it merely to some subordinate like the head of this institution, who may be himself in some way implicated?

Sir G. Cave—Of course I will try and do so.

Monday, 17th December, 1917.

Mr. Snowden asked the Home Secretary whether he has received a further report upon the case of Arthur Butler, a conscientious objector who has died in Preston Gaol; and what action he has taken or proposes to take in the matter?

Sir G. Cave—The inquest in this case, which was opened on the 14th instant, has been adjourned to the 18th to allow of a postmortem examination being held. I can, therefore, make no statement at present.

Thursday, 20th December, 1917.

Mr. Snowden asked the Home Secretary if he is now able to make a statement about the case of Arthur Butler, who recently died in Preston gaol?

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir George Cave)—Owing to delay in the post, I have not yet received a full report of the inquest, but I understand that the verdict of the jury was to the effect that Butler died from pneumonia, that he received proper care and attention during his illness, that he had been humanely treated and properly nursed, and that no blame whatever attached to anyone. The post-mortem examination showed that he died from pneumonia, and that there was no trace of tuberculosis.

2. ARTHUR HORTON.

Thursday, 5th February, 1918.

Mr. Whitehouse asked the Home Secretary

if he has made any inquiry into the circumstances of the death of Arthur Horton in prison; and, if so, with what result?

Sir G. Cave—An inquest was held in this case, and all the circumstances were fully investigated by the coroner and jury, who found that this man died of pneumonia. Allegations had been made that the prisoner had not been properly treated in prison, but the jury, after having heard the evidence and seen the diet, found that these allegations were not founded on fact. I can see no reason for any further inquiry.

Mr. Lees-Smith—Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that after this man caught pneumonia he lay a month in his cell without any nurse and without any fire, which is a sentence of death upon the strongest man; and it was only after the Home Office Inspector, Dr. Dyer, came that nurses were suddenly summoned when it was too late; and will he have inquiries made into the conduct of the prison doctor?

Sir G. Cave—That was the allegation which was made before and at the inquest. It was contradicted by reliable evidence at the inquest, and was disbelieved by the jury. I regret very much that it should be repeated here.

Mr. Whitehouse—Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that not only that, but many other shocking allegations have been made regarding the treatment of this unfortunate man in prison, and has his attention been called to the fact that the doctor who gave evidence and whose evidence had weight, is reported in the *Manchester Guardian* as having made a very great attack in public upon these prisoners who are in gaol?

3. E. W. BURNS.

Monday, 15th April, 1918.

Mr. R. Lambert asked the Home Secretary whether the inquest on the death of E. W. Burns, who died in Hull Prison on or about 13th March, shows that death was in any way connected with forcible feeding; and whether an independent inquiry has been ordered?

Sir G. Cave—At the inquest held in this case the jury found that death resulted from pneumonia consequent on the inhalation of some fluid food during forcible feeding, and that no blame whatever was attributable to the doctor. Although I had not reason to feel any doubt as to the finding of the jury, whose inquiry was perfectly independent, I thought it right, in view of the importance of the question of forcible feeding, that a special inquiry should be made by medical men of the highest standing, and at my request my hon. Friend the Member for the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrew's, who was recently president of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Dr. Maurice Craig, Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, who has an exceptionally wide experience of this matter, undertook the inquiry. I have now received their report, which entirely confirms the finding of the jury. They are satisfied that the case was one where resort to artificial feeding was necessary, and that the death of the patient was not due to any want of care or skill on the part of the medical officer.

Monday, 10th June, 1918.

Mr. T. Richardson asked the Home Secretary whether an inquiry was held in Hull Prison on or about 6th April, 1918, into the death of E. W. Burns; whether the Report is to be made public; who conducted the inquiry; what action has been taken on the Report; how many prisoners gave evidence; if any were legally represented; if they were indemnified or protected should their evidence be against the staff; if the evidence was taken down; if it can be made public; and how many of the staff gave evidence?

Mr. Brace—The inquiry in question was made

by the hon. Member for the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrews, and by Dr. Maurice Craig, F.R.C.P. The result of the inquiry was fully stated by the Home Secretary in reply to a question in this House on 15th April last. To what he said I need only add that it is not proposed to publish the evidence, but that evidence was given by the governor, the medical officer, and three other officers of the prison, and by three prisoners who asked to be examined. The prisoners, who were all conscientious objectors, were given an opportunity of making their statements privately to the Commissioners—the governor and all prison officials withdrawing at the governor's suggestion.

4. P. E. GILLAN.

Tuesday, 9th April, 1918.

Mr. Richard Lambert asked the Home Secretary whether Paul Leo Gillan died in Winchester Prison on 16th March; whether the inquest showed the cause of death; whether the medical officer had already reported this case as one of acute heart disease; and whether the Home Office possesses and exercises the power to release from prison any prisoner whose continued detention is likely to have grave consequences?

Sir G. Cave—Gillan was admitted to hospital on the 12th March but serious symptoms only developed on the 16th, the day of his death. The inquest showed that death was due to heart failure following on pleurisy. The medical officer had not previously reported the case, and there were no symptoms to show that the prisoner's heart was affected until the day on which he died. I have no reason to think that removal from prison during his illness would have been in any way beneficial to the prisoner.

Mr. Byrne—Is there any evidence to show that this man died as the result of ill-treatment, and was he ill-treated because he was an Irishman?

Sir G. Cave—There is no evidence of ill-treatment of any kind?

Mr. Whitehouse—Has the right hon. Gentleman made inquiries as to why the medical officer did not report the condition of this man's health?

Sir G. Cave—The matter was thoroughly gone into at the inquest, and it appears that the medical officer had no reason to suspect serious illness until the actual day of the death.

2.—DIED IN THE ASYLUM.

1. ALFRED EUNGBLUT.

Wednesday, 14th March, 1917.

Mr. Chancellor asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether he is aware that Alfred Eungblut, a conscientious objector who voluntarily gave himself up on 12th September last, was court-martialled at Salisbury, sentenced to two years' hard labour, sent to Wormwood Scrubs, and from there to Epsom lunatic asylum; and, seeing that this man was driven insane by the ill-treatment that he received at the hands of the military, and is now in a serious state of health and possibly dying, will he say what action he proposes to take?

Sir G. Cave—My right hon. Friend has asked me to reply to this question. This man was sentenced by court-martial on the 28th September last to 112 days' imprisonment. On the 10th November he was certified to be insane and removed to an asylum. I have no reason whatever for supposing that his insanity was due to ill-treatment by the military, but if the hon. Member has any evidence to support this very serious allegation he should submit it to the Army Council. The case is one for their consideration and not one that comes within my purview.

2. JOHN TAYLOR.

Tuesday, 13th November, 1917.

Mr. King asked whether John Taylor, a conscientious objector at the Wakefield work centre, recently attempted suicide by cutting his throat; whether this man is the John Taylor, No. 23,162 D Company, 3rd Battalion, Essex Regiment, who was granted a non-combatant certificate by his tribunal, was forced into a combatant regiment, ordered to do rifle drill, and afterwards subjected to field punishment No. 1; whether it is owing to this and subsequent treatment that the

man was driven to attempt suicide; whether he has now been certified insane; and whether inquiries will be made into this case with the view to fix responsibility?

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir G. Cave)—The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. I have no information as to the allegations contained in the second part, which should be addressed to the War Office. As regards the third part of the question, six of Taylor's friends among the men employed at Wakefield have voluntarily supplied a report on the facts of the case and on Taylor's mental condition. It is not suggested in this report that his condition was in any way due to his treatment while in the Army or in prison: on the contrary, it is mainly attributed to anxiety caused by an explosion near his home and by subsequent air-raids in London. Taylor has now been certified insane. I see no ground for further inquiry into the matter.

Mr. King—Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this man is now in a dangerous condition and that his friends have been sent to see the last of him?

Sir G. Cave—I have not heard that, but I am sorry if it is so.

Tuesday, 5th February, 1918.

Mr. R. Lambert asked the Home Secretary whether John Taylor, a conscientious objector, has recently died in Wakefield work centre; whether an inquest was held; if so, what verdict was returned; and whether he will have an independent inquiry by persons other than officials concerned into the circumstances of the deaths of the various conscientious objectors who have died during the last twelve months?

Sir G. Cave—This man died on the 20th January at the West Riding Asylum, of which he had been an inmate for over two months. His death was the result of wounds which he inflicted upon himself on 2nd November while he was an inmate of the Wakefield Work Centre. As regards the causes leading up to the suicide, I would refer the hon. Member to my reply to a question addressed to me by the hon. Member for North Somerset on the 13th November, from which it appears that at the time when he committed the act he was in great anxiety as to the effect of the air-raids upon his home in London. An inquest was held on 25th January, and a verdict of *felo de se* was returned. I see no ground for any further inquiry.

3.—RELEASED TO DIE.

Tuesday, 30th October, 1917.

Mr. Snowden asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make any statement as to the health of Thomas Darling Matchett, a schoolmaster, of Bath, confined to a Dorchester prison as a conscientious objector; whether his wife has been sent for as the man is not expected to live owing to haemorrhage of the lungs; and can it be stated what circumstances brought about this condition?

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir George Cave)—This man, who had not previously been in bad health, had on the 12th October a severe haemorrhage from the lungs probably arising from latent tuberculosis, and his wife was sent for. He is now much improved, and is no longer considered in immediate danger. If his friends can arrange for his reception in a sanatorium, I shall be prepared to exercise my power of release under Section 17 of the Criminal Justice Administration Act, 1914.

We propose to exhaust completely the questions in Parliament concerning the treatment of the conscientious objectors during the Great War. Also we shall reproduce some of the splendid debates in both Houses.

The list published in the Christmas issue, under the heading: "CONCHIES, 1916-1919," should be corrected. The line reading: "B.S.P. Objector . . . 21" should read "S.L.P. Objectors."

CONSCIENCE STRUGGLE: 1916-1919

Told in Press Cuttings

Those conscientious objectors who have not been deemed genuine by the Tribunals are facing a great struggle. For them the 1916-1919 struggle will have some interest. Part of the story is related in the press cuttings we reproduce. The *Daily Herald* had become *The Herald* for the duration of the war. With all its faults, it endeavoured to be some kind of a workers' paper during the Great War of 1914-1918.

GUY ALDRED.

Guy Aldred, a conscientious objector of indisputable sincerity, whose views were widely known long before the war, has been in prison since May 17, 1916, without intermission, and has just been re-sentenced to two years more of imprisonment. We are informed that his state of health is such as to make the sentence highly dangerous; but, indeed, this endless torture would break the health of the strongest man. We call upon the Labour movement to do something about these outrages.—*The Herald*, September 7, 1918.

THE ABSOLUTISTS.

Whether the Government cannot, or whether it will not, understand the attitude of the absolutists, is immaterial. Certainly it does not. And the Wakefield scheme is only the latest of its follies. Some 120 men who had consistently demanded absolute exemption and had refused the Brace scheme, or any other system of industrial work under semi-penal conditions, were brought to Wakefield and offered the following conditions:—(1) nine hours' industrial work a day; (2) 3d. a day pocket money, spendable at the canteen; (3) free association with each other after 6.30 p.m.; (4) one censored letter and one visitor a week; (5) "idleness" or "misconduct" to be punished by confinement in a separate wing under ordinary prison conditions. The inevitable result has followed. On Tuesday a general meeting was held to consider the position. On Wednesday 11 men were transferred to "Wing F" for "idleness" or "misconduct." A second general meeting by 102 votes to 1 rejected the scheme, and a unanimous vote proclaimed (a) a strike while any men remained under punishment, and (b) refusal to do any prison tasks or to recognise any prison discipline while in Wakefield. The Government's answer is to return the men, in small batches, to various civil prisons. So ends a futile scheme. Meanwhile Guy Aldred at Wandsworth is undergoing solitary confinement for refusal to work. There are, indeed, only two courses open to the Government—the old course of brutality or a wiser one of decency. Is their imagination so dead that they still cannot see that they have everything to gain and nothing to lose by respecting their own laws and their own pledges, by granting to these men that absolute exemption to which they have so gallantly proved their right?—*The Herald*, September 28, 1918.

Mr. Guy A. Aldred, the conscientious objector, and editor of "The Spur," has been released from prison owing to failing health. He maintained a six-day hunger strike.—*Daily News*, January 7, 1919.

GUY A. ALDRED RELEASED.

After six days' hunger strike Guy A. Aldred, the well known Shepherd's Bush Socialist and conscientious objector, was released on Monday last from Wandsworth Gaol. Readers will remember that he put up a very elaborate defence at Blackdown Camp, where he was last court-martialled, but was for a second time, following two shorter sentences, sentenced to two years hard labour. He expressed his intention to work strike from the beginning, and this he carried out with a discipline strike at the same time. He hunger-struck with the commencement of the new year, and his health failing, was released under the Cat and Mouse Act for one month. He is now in a very bad state of health.—*West London Observer*, January 10, 1919.

CONGRATULATIONS.

Fourteen absolutists—including Guy Aldred—were released from Wandsworth Gaol on Tuesday after hunger strike. Congratulations to them on the success which has rewarded their pluck and determination. They are out under the Cat and Mouse Act; and it is now up to organised Labour to see that they are never sent back again.—*The Herald*, January 11, 1919.

CONSCIENCE MEN IN PRISON.

Of the 1,500 conscientious objectors who are still in prison 700 have served terms of hard labour amounting to 2-year sentences. By the end of February 140 will have completed 2-year sentences without any break whatever; 115 have been court-martialled since the armistice. Of the 54 men who have died since arrest

6 committed suicide; 37 men have become mentally affected; and 189 have been released because of their shattered health.

Mr. Guy Aldred, a conscientious objector, has been released from Wandsworth Prison after hunger striking.—*Daily News and Leader*, January 31, 1919.

Mr. Guy A. Aldred sends us a protest against the desertion of the C.O.'s in prison, and calls for a general strike, both inside and outside prison, to effect their release. He himself is to be re-arrested under the "Cat and Mouse Act."—*Forward*, February 22, 1919.

HUNGER "STRIKES" IN GAOL.

Mr. Henry Sara, formerly assistant editor of the "Spur," and eleven other men are on hunger strike at Winchester Gaol. Mr. Guy Aldred, editor of the "Spur," was released on January 8 after a work, discipline and hunger strike. Fourteen men in all have been released from Winchester and 14 from Wandsworth under the "Cat and Mouse" Act, but it is understood that warrants have been issued for the re-arrest of some of the men.—*Daily News*, February 27, 1918.

Over 60 conscientious objectors have been released from Wandsworth, Maidstone, and Winchester Prisons. They include Guy Aldred, Henry Sara, and P. C. Herbert.—*Daily News*, Tuesday, March 4, 1919.

THE "SUPER-MOUSE."

G. Aldred, editor of the "Spur," was yesterday again released from Wandsworth prison under the "Cat and Mouse" Act after hunger striking for four days. This is the second time this year he has been released after hunger striking.—*Daily Express*, Thursday, March 6, 1919.

To the Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*.

Sir,—At the request of my husband, Guy A. Aldred, I send you this intimation of his arrest this afternoon on Clapham Common, after addressing a meeting protesting against the treatment of C.O.'s. He proposes to pursue the policy of hunger-striking. I have great fears of the effects forcible feeding will have upon his system, weakened as he is by three-years' imprisonment. May I through you urge upon the House of Commons the cruelty and futility of forcible feeding men who have suffered so much already at the hands of the law for the sake of principle, and pray that such barbarous treatment as was recently meted out in Wandsworth Prison may be ended?—Yours, etc.,

—Rose Witeop Aldred.

17 Richmond Gardens, Shepherd's Bush,
London, W.12, March 2.

—*Manchester Guardian*, Tuesday, March 4, 1919.

THE COWARDLY PERSECUTORS

By George Lansbury.

Last week we briefly announced the fact that the "Herald" petition, containing nearly 130,000 signatures, asking for the release of conscientious objectors, had been presented to Mr. Shortt, the Home Secretary, by myself and Gerald Gould. I would like readers of the "Herald" to understand that these martyrs for the conscience sake are being kept in prison and persecuted simply because of the callous indifference of their friends in the Labour movement. I know that organised Labour does not desire these men to remain in prison, but I also know that organised Labour does not desire their release strongly enough to take drastic action to compel the men in office to release them. The latest reports from Wandsworth Prison prove how vilely some of these men are being treated, and prove, too, that we should demand a full and impartial inquiry into the charges brought against the Governor and other officials at that prison. Guy Aldred and scores of other well-known men are being dragged back to endure again the tortures of hell in prison. . . .

The C.O.'s, whose only crime is that they have demonstrated in the most definite manner their claim to receive the relief accorded to men of their faith by Act of Parliament, are now persecuted by being kept in prison, and Ministers, when asked to explain, sit like mutes. They refuse any explanation, and take their stand on what those men have been deemed to be by the tribunals.

Where The Real Power Lies.

I appeal not to Governments but instead to those with real power, if only they will use it, to Miners with real power, Engineers and Dockers; indeed to all and Railwaymen, who care for righteousness, my fellow men and women, who care for justice, and by the organised force of will compel the Government to forthwith release all political prisoners of every sort and kind, including the C.O.'s and soldiers.

—*The Herald*, March 15, 1919.

THE LIVERPOOL CONSCIENCE TRIBUNAL

The personnel of the North-West Tribunal for Conscientious Objectors, sitting at Liverpool, is the same as that of Manchester.

This Tribunal was dealt with very fully in the February issue.

On Thursday, December 7, 1939, Charles H. Lawton, 63 Karslake Road, Liverpool 15, a Methodist local preacher, said that he was prepared to bring food on any merchant ship that was unarmed, or to serve in an ambulance, but not in the Royal Army Medical Corps. He stated that he would not be allowed to preach "Love your Enemy" in the Army. This would be interpreted as incitement to disaffection.

He was registered as a conscientious objector, conditionally on undertaking approved civilian work.

James Lowe, Pearl Lane, Chester, a Methodist and Sunday School Secretary, said in a written statement:—

"Try to imagine Christ in khaki, saluting a Union Jack!"

To imagine Christ murdering a man, just because he was a German, was utterly fantastic! The mind of God, he explained, could not be altered at will by Act of Parliament.

Lowe said if he joined the R.A.M.C. he might be called upon to resist a so-called enemy and he would want to assist wounded Germans. He had no guarantee that he would be allowed to remain in the R.A.M.C.

The Chairman—But you have. The Minister of War has given it.

Lowe—I regard the guarantees of such Ministers as quite worthless, in view of the Prime Minister's guarantee that conscription would not be introduced. Ministers might plead circumstances.

He was registered conditionally on doing civil work to be found by the Ministry of Labour, and, in the meantime, on rendering suitable civil service.

James Maddocks, 28 Speedwell Road, Claughton, Birkenhead, had his name removed from the register of objectors. We hold that this decision was wrong.

Maddocks said he could not accept training to kill his fellow-men. He had been a violinist in most of the prominent orchestras of the North of England, and had attended the St. John Ambulance classes, but if he joined the R.A.M.C. he would lose his freedom of conscience.

The Chairman made the point that Maddocks had changed his attitude towards the R.A.M.C. since June. Maddocks could do much to encourage and to cheer his comrades in the army. As Maddocks is only 20 years of age, too much ought not to have been made of his changed attitude towards the R.A.M.C. Older men have been known to change their attitude towards questions and institutions.

On Tuesday, December 12, the Tribunal heard the case of Ernest Allen Mann, 12 Alexandra Street, Warrington, a communicant of the Church of England, and a member of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, partly in private, at his own request. He alleged victimisation and gave details in private. The Rev. John Lowe, of the Anglican Church, spoke to Mann's sincerity.

The tribunal directed that Mann should be registered as a conscientious objector, conditionally upon his undertaking civil work under civil control, provided by the Ministry of Labour. Meanwhile he must qualify for first-aid work, and then attach himself to a recognised local first-aid unit.

Gordon Russell Kirby, another member of the Church of England, 62 Margaret Road, Liverpool 4, said he did not mind going into danger, but he would not kill because he felt it would

be a mortal sin. He had volunteered for service on a minesweeper.

Replying to the chairman, Kirby said he would not give orders for a minesweeper to ram a submarine, if he were in a position to do so, because that would be taking life. He would not mind losing his own life.

The Chairman—If a job is found for you on a minesweeper, are you prepared to go?—Definitely.

The Chairman said: "This is a most refreshing and inspiring case."

He declared that Kirby's powers of reasoning were somewhat primitive and his use of words was limited, but his courage was supreme.

"We believe there is something innate in this man which tells him it would be wrong to kill," added Judge Burgis.

Kirby was entered on the register of conscientious objectors, without conditions, and the chairman said steps would be taken to enable him to serve on a minesweeper.

Walter J. Jannaway, Oak Street, Southport, is a Christadelphian, an assistant air-warden at his work, and a student of first-aid. He was registered unconditionally as an objector.

Registration subject to doing civil work to be specified by the Ministry of Labour, was granted to: Bertram W. Knight, 6 Hicks Road, Seaford; Percy Lionel Hallam, 12 Matlock Avenue, Southport; Edgar J. McCoy, 172 Hawthorne Road, Bootle; Edward Makin, St. Polycarp's Parish Church, Everton.

The previous day John David Frimston was registered unconditionally as a conscientious objector.

Alderman C. Aveling cross-examined the Rev. Hubert Watson, of the Richmond Baptist Church, Liverpool, as to his own views on pacifism, when he appeared to testify to the genuineness of the views of an applicant who is a member of his congregation. The question occasioned a demonstration in court.

On the Thursday, Judge Burgis explained the reason for the cross-examination:—

"Mr. Watson took the point which he was perfectly entitled to take, that such cross-examination was irrelevant; but I allowed the cross-examination to proceed; I held that it was relevant in order to test the value that should be put upon Mr. Watson's evidence.

"There is a very well-known rule of law that, if a man gives evidence contrary to his own interests, or in support of a person whose views are contrary to his own, then that witness is entitled to a high degree of credibility. But it does not follow that a person who gives evidence in support of another whose views correspond with his own is not entitled to credence.

"Mr. Watson's views as a pacifist in support of a pacifist may well be entitled to great respect, but if Mr. Watson had been a militarist or an army chaplain, and had been giving evidence as to the views of a pacifist, his evidence would have been entitled to still greater credit, as he would have been giving evidence in support of a person whose views were contrary to his own."

Douglas Armand Sissons, Okehampton Road, Liverpool 16, a Methodist lay preacher, was asked a number of fool questions as to what could be done to persuade Hitler to act differently. The Tribunal never faced the fact that Hitler's power had been built up by British support and most active assistance. Rev. John T. Gray testified to Sisson's sincerity.

The Tribunal directed that Sissons should be registered as a conscientious objector, conditionally on undertaking civilian work to be provided by the Ministry of Labour. Meanwhile he must qualify for and join a recognised first-aid organisation. Sissons agreed to receive this training.

The following were registered unconditionally as conscientious objectors:—Stephen Emlyn Roberts, 152 Harrowly Street, Liverpool 6; Arthur Scott, student, Emmanuel Bible School, 1 Palm Grove, Birkenhead; Malcolm Jones Service, 43 Link Avenue, St. Helens.

The Tribunal directed that the name of John David Roberts, 26 Brazenose Road, Liverpool, should be removed from the C.O. Register without qualification. Roberts was condemned for making an honest statement:—

"I refuse to fight, not because I dislike war, but because I am not going to fight to protect a system which has never given a man a decent chance." He added that he would be willing to serve if there was a Labour Government in power.

On December 13, the Tribunal registered Eric Graham Chirgwin, 210 Claughton Road, Birkenhead, as an objector. He is an arts graduate of the Liverpool University and approved student for the Presbyterian Church of England ministry. He could have avoided military service without having his case heard by the Tribunal, but insisted on having his conscientious objection registered.

Sydney Cattrell, 19 Storeton Road, Oxton, Birkenhead, a railway clerk, now employed at Hoylake, said that if his work was connected with the movement of munitions he was, and had been, prepared to give it up. He had worked at fifteen different stations during the past two years. At each he had stated his views, and he had been derided for them.

Cattrell was granted registration conditionally upon his remaining in his present employment.

Unconditional registration as a conscientious objector was granted to:—Keith Malcolm Conway, 26 Snowdon Road, Birkenhead, a member of the Society of Friends from birth; John Gordon Davies, Newton Rise, Chester; Norman Brown, 4 Portia Avenue, Woodley, Rock Ferry.

Conditional exemption was granted to Philip Neville James Chipperfield, 7 Crawford Avenue, Wavertree, Liverpool, an Agnostic, and secretary of the University Biological Society. Chipperfield is a Liverpool University science graduate, now taking an honours course in zoology.

On December 14, the Tribunal granted conditional exemption to Ronald Eric Osborne Taylor, printer, 54 Gonville Road, Bootle. Taylor's father was a conscientious objector during the Great War. Taylor declared that a military uniform was a devil's uniform. Judge Burgis said that the Tribunal thought that Taylor's views were erroneous but deeply sincere and conscientious. He had had pacifism presented to him from his very earliest days.

Thomas Bernard Green, art student, 8 Newry Park East, Chester, was removed, without qualification from the register of objectors, because his objections were based on reason, not conscience.

Green said that the real result of war was waste, to victor and vanquished—waste of money, materials, time and brains—even apart from the loss of life—was enough to bring all progress to a standstill.

Green made a splendid case. His removal is a disgrace to those who reached such a decision.

George Llewellyn Snape, a bank clerk, 27 Knowsley Road, Ormskirk, a Christadelphian, was granted conditional registration. Yet he answered, in the affirmative, the following question, put to him by Alderman C. Aveling:—

"Would you sell £500 worth of War Loan for me to-morrow?"

Snape explained that it would be in the course of his duties as a bank official; but that would not affect his conscience in any way.

William Leslie Cross, 50 Moor Street, Ormskirk, a member of the Ormskirk Parish Church, said that, since he was fifteen years old, he held that his Christian beliefs were inconsistent with soldiering. Douglas Donahue, 23 Rimington Road, Liverpool 17, refused to join any fighting unit. The Chairman said that Donahue had his views but no convictions. Ronald Fowler

Chandler, 151 Orford Lane, Warrington, a member of the Latter Day Saints, said that Christianity was opposed to war.

The names of these three applicants were removed without qualification.

Non-combatant service was ordered in the following cases:—Victor Holdgate Speakman, Devondale, Hoylake Road, Moreton, a member of the Salvation Army; Leonard Gordon Tucker, 89 Parkhill Road, Liverpool 8; Colin Smith, 14 Rufford Road, Bootle.

Conditional exemption was given to Albert Mansel Harrison, 125 Broad Lane, Liverpool 11, a student of Chester Training College.

Unconditional exemption was granted to Charles Tom Griffiths, 32 Oxford Street, Liverpool 7; and Herbert Gwilym Brooks, 25 Kensington Road, Southport.

TRIBUNAL REPORTS.—Next issue: Leeds; also further London, Glasgow and Edinburgh reports: Edinburgh and London Appellate Tribunals. Comrades are invited to send details and cuttings relating to all Tribunals.

WHO ARMED HITLER?

Conscription was the subject of full-dress debate at the Scottish Trade Union Congress, at Rotheray, on April 28, 1939.

Mr. Arthur Woodburn, now M.P., but then Scottish Secretary to the Labour Party, said:

"The Labour Party is still against war and the Labour Party believes that war troubles can still be settled by other means than by war."

"I read in the Press that this country, between September, 1938, and February, 1939, has exported 39,000 tons of pig iron to Germany, against 5,000 tons in any similar period in previous years."

"There is no question at all that profiteers are still supplying the aggressors in Europe with the means of making war."

Mr Woodburn is now a war-monger. But this point about the arming of Germany should be remembered by the Chairmen of Tribunals, when putting stupid questions to conscientious objectors.

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- Socialism and Parliament.—Part I.—Socialism or Parliament.** 1934 Rewritten and Revised Edition Out of Print. Shortly to be reprinted. 16 chapters and 8 appendices.
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- These booklets will be issued in popular form, for wide circulation, at absurdly cheap prices, to stimulate purchase and study.

- Why Jesus Wept.** A series of historical essays.
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- Richard Carlyle, Agitator.** Enlarged, to include selections from Carlyle's writings.
- These books will be issued rapidly from the Press—in slightly less popular form than the works previously mentioned, because they belong to study rather than to ordinary propaganda. The interest in these writings will be special rather than general.

At Grips With War. First Edition, 1929. Second Edition, 1932. This work will be re-issued at an early date.

Other Pamphlets are being prepared and other Reprints issued. This will bring the Author's writings up to date and restore to circulation essays too long out of print.

"The Word" Library, and other Socialist and Pacifist works, can be purchased at **The Strickland Press Bookshop and Office, 104 George Street, Glasgow, C.1.** Open Daily: 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. Order your literature through this office.

HANDED OVER!

What it means

I was arrested at 17 Richmond Gardens, Shepherd's Bush, on Thursday, April 13, 1916, and charged with failing to surrender myself for service under the Military Service Act. I appeared at the West London Police Court the following day, and appeared again at the same Court, on April 27 and May 4. I was never called to the Colours under that Act; and there can be no doubt, and there never was any doubt, that the first Military Service Act never applied to me. I had made myself a nuisance, by championing the case of Henry Sara and C.O.s generally, and the authorities of the time were resolved on my detention or imprisonment. The question no longer matters because sooner or later resistance to Conscription would have come.

To those who now face being handed over it is useful to know how the Conchies felt in 1916. From the columns of *The Spur* I make excerpts which takes the readers down to my first court-martial. I made notes of all that happened and wrote voluminously. This helped to preserve sanity.

1. POLICE COURT FAREWELL.

West London Police Court, May 4, 1916.

After editing a monthly journal of Socialist and rebel thought continuously since December, 1910, I must bid a graceless farewell to the editorial chair. A flag I do not respect, upheld by a militarism I detest, is being borne aloft. The enemy compels my physical presence, even though it cannot command my allegiance. I must line up with many comrades similarly placed. Our fight is against a foe which gives no quarter, and knows no honour in battle. Only humiliation awaits those who war against Conscription at home and so strive to secure real freedom in the commonwealth. I trust that, in this struggle, I may prove a humble but no mean warrior. Whether I shall survive the fight or not, only a godless providence can say. I hope I may, for in the days to come I have other, but not less important work to do than I am attempting now. Action tests the strength of one's thought: and it is good to be tested. But there are days of thought and quiet in which one accomplishes more solid work than in those moments of storm and stress. And besides, the present strife is but guerilla warfare. To the future belongs the real battle, in which passive resistance plays no part, the great campaign of social revolution.

2. IN THE HANDS OF THE MILITARY.

Davis Street Barracks, May 4, 1916.

I was taken from West London in a taxicab. Refused medical inspection there, but was treated courteously enough. Brought here. Refused to put on uniform, but was treated courteously and reasoned with. Am going to hunger strike, I think.

Fovant Camp, 5th May.

I am a good few miles from Hurdcott Camp (Sara was at this time at Hurdcott). I have little to say, beyond stating that I am standing firm by my principles. My journey down here was pleasant enough. I am in one of the finest companies of men one could be amongst. Did I believe in soldiering I could ask for no better comrades, but *I do not*. In other times, my civic virtues would be recognised as splendid qualities. But now, well good men as well as bad are opposing each other. It is a shame and a fact. My attitude, from the military viewpoint is unforgivable. There are opposite views of duty!

Fovant Camp, 6th May.

When I was taken to the Davis Street Headquarters of the 9th London Regt. I refused to sign for my kit or to don khaki. I was sent down here under escort with the kit. I refused

to don khaki or to strip for examination. Was charged to-day with six charges of "refusing to obey orders." After this, I was forcibly examined and put into khaki. But my protest remains. On Monday, I shall be called upon to sign my papers and to drill. After this I shall be put into the guard room to await court-martial. I put up a hunger strike till to-day. Received a decent dinner on condition that I withdrew strike until end of week. It is possible to get two years for my refusal to drill.

Fovant Camp, 7th May.

I shall go back to the Guard Room to-day, as I intend to refuse all parade, all drill and shall finally strip off the uniform entirely. I am told that if I persist, I shall get 3 years' penal servitude. At Hurdcott, Sara lays down on parade. He is terribly treated.

Fovant Camp, 10th May.

On Monday I refused to put on my puttees and hat to go down to breakfast. Was ordered to do so by Sergeant Mortimer and replied that I would take no breakfast. Was charged before Capt. Henderson, and then got my own way. Refused to button uniform, so the Regt. Sergt-Major did this for me. Later same morning charged before the Colonel. He remanded me till afternoon parade. Capt. Henderson came into the hut and ordered me to assume equipment and to go on parade. I refused. Was taken under armed guard again before the Colonel. He said one man like me caused more trouble than 100 good men. He asked me to accept his punishment and I demanded a court martial. He seemed surprised and said it would be secret and that I would gain no cheap notoriety from it. I retorted that I wanted no cheap notoriety, but would stand by principle. Was then taken back to detention room and marched out again under armed escort to Major Willoughby, who drew up particulars of evidence. I am still kept in close confinement, without exercise of any kind, awaiting court martial.

Fovant Camp, 12th May.

On Thursday, the Colonel visited me. He is bitter, but not bad. He complained that it was against the Army regulations to mention liberty in my letters. Asked me to reconsider my position since I was a man of intelligence. Complained of people writing to me as "conscientious objector." Told me I had no sense of duty. I smiled. Wanted to know what would happen if all men were like me. Admitted there were a few like me in Germany, but failed to realise there were a few here. I am awaiting my court martial—D.C.M.

I want you to know that solitary confinement finds me reflective, strong and bold. I am awaiting the day when we shall destroy this cursed system of lies and misery. Believe me, the day will come. Our tyrants have not all the power they think.

13th May.

Colonel again visited me. Said he was sorry, seeing my fine intellect that I should remain in such a position. Urged me to change. Asked what 500 or 600 men in London and such a number in Berlin could do to end war. *Agreed that war was wrong and horrible.* But admitted that England must maintain a large Army ready for more war! Finally said I was in a minority and must suffer for my principles. Confessed his regret that I could not throw in my lot with the others.

3. DETENTION ROOM MUSINGS:

[These "Musings" were published in *The Spur*, June 1916. Only part are printed. Penned while waiting my first court martial.]

I believe that the warriors of the world are the curse of the world. Do you then think that either cajolery or menace will make me ally myself to a curse? Whoever thinks so knows me not at all.

The working women of the world are doing the *Manual* work of the world. They are being told that they are equal to man because they are driving man to self-slaughter. When they proved mental equality, women were jeered at.

and brutally treated. Now they are showing slavish equality, they are applauded and told they should have the vote. But who will the vote benefit? Working women or their mistresses?

The great argument against Socialism was that it made all men equal in servility. That was said to be the vice of Socialism. Now magazine articles are being written to show how nobly militarism accomplishes this task. How funny despotism becomes when it tries to argue.

Militarism can starve, cage and chain. But it lacks prestige. It boasts the trappings of pomp, but lacks the soul of majesty. To want majesty is to be without power. Finally militarism will fail. Only revolution has majesty. That is because revolution means liberty.

Militarism is a machine. You refuse to do up a button, and the machine is out of gear. You refuse to wear a hat and half the machinery is at a standstill. You refuse to "right turn" and the machine is scrapped.

Militarism is at an extremity. Its cogs are thinking, thinking and becoming clogs. They feel themselves gripped by trickery and resent the pressure. They have discovered their own sense of worth, and hate to be classed as worthless. So the crude machine is scrapping.

Thought is active and questioning and virile. Thought will be spoken and written and read. Thought will be uttered, communicated and received. In vain are papers suppressed and thinkers jailed. No Bastille prevents a revolution.

What are we Sons of the army of the night, they ask. We are what our martyred forbears were. We are the fates. Let the timid and the powerful beware.

"Be a man," said the Colonel, "and give up these ideas." This is like saying "be a soldier and desert your colours." How wise are those in authority above us.

What can 600 like you do? Asked the Colonel. "Vanquish militarism" I replied.

"You are not like others, you are an intelligent man," exclaimed the Colonel, "which accounts for my position, Sir," I answered.

"Join up with us now," said another officer, "and we'll give you a week-end at home." So much generosity appalled me. But I smiled.

The chaplain has not visited me, and I have not visited him. We are on excellent terms with each other.

"Resist to the uttermost as long as you are able," writes a Glasgow comrade, in a letter which escaped the censor. Quite so, and after that—I'll resist again.

The king of beasts is reputed by hunters to be the most cowardly of brutes. Is that why the military machine can tame it?

It was after I was getting used to being marched about the camp under armed guard. I was brought in contact with an officer, who was blazing with fury at my "tom-foolery," as he phrased it. "The army," he exclaimed, "can cast out demons." "I am sorry, sir," I replied, "but I am only one. It will need to cast me out however."

Life here resembles somewhat civilian life. In the city, the more crimes you commit, the less offences are recorded against you. I have committed so many offences since I have been here, that many have been overlooked.

"You have refused all orders," queried a Derby recruit, in wondering amazement. "Yes, even holy ones," I replied.

The Colonel cannot understand me quoting Jesus Christ, since I am an Atheist. And I cannot understand the chaplain preaching Jesus Christ, since he is a militarist.

One of the Captains visited me. "I am not a Field Marshal," he said, "only a Captain. I travelled miles to join up. I wish you could be one of us. But I admire a man who stands by his guns. Shake!" I shook. That was a soldier's greetings—and I welcomed it.

BUILD THE N.C.L.

(By ANNESLEY G. ALDRED.)

Questions and arguments put forward by audiences at recent meetings show, only too plainly, that the "bogey-man" has been well boosted. "Because of one man" cry has been revived effectively. In 1914, the one man was the Kaiser. To-day, it is one who was then hungry and insignificant. The Allies of 1916-1918 deposed the Kaiser to elevate Hitler whose present importance is the product of that "blood-bath," and its aftermath. Now we must destroy Hitler, we are told, in order to "achieve decency in International Relationship." Once more the English and French workers are lured into the position where they must kill, and be killed by, the German workers.

This last point is one on which those of us who are conscious of the full implications of this war, and are actively opposing it, must not allow ourselves to be misled. We must realise that the apparent ease with which working-class acceptance of this war has been won is due not so much to the stupidity of the workers (which is the easy way of dismissing the fact) as to the strength of the war propaganda. Indeed, so insidious is this war propaganda that it is difficult *not* to be deluded into the feeling that "the British and French cause" has justice on its side and that, even if one is not prepared to kill, one should at least render some equivalent form of non-combatant service or work of national importance. The atmosphere makes one feel that he ought to apologise for his scruples of conscience. It is, in fact, only by realising that the fundamental issue is still the same, that the war is being fought for age-old capitalist interests, that one feels certain that the need for absolute opposition to the military machine is as great as ever, and senses that there is no justification for any relaxation of that opposition, no justification for any compromise.

The Parliamentarians have, as usual, betrayed the workers. They excelled their performance of 1914. In so doing, they have acted exactly as the Anti-Parliamentarians have always said they would. The I.L.P.M.P.s, to their credit, were alone almost on the Opposition benches in opposing conscription, apparently having retained some shred of principle.

The Labour Party, sitting on the fence, and the Communist Party, still trying to explain Russia's alliance with Fascism in the terms of Socialism, are both a menace to working-class unity. The chief danger from the latter organisation, it is true, arises from the confusion and contradictions in the efforts to save their own face and standing. Thus they praise Russia for "saving" millions of Polish workers from the clutches of the Gestapo; and at the same time hail the treaty with the rulers of Germany, who maintain that Gestapo, as a determined step towards peace. Who assert that war is serving the cause of Fascism; and who, in the same breath, accuse those who oppose war of serving that same end find difficulty in dissociating themselves from a rooted belief in parliamentary democracy. We can only say that it makes no difference to the effect of a bomb whether it is dropped with the hatred of a Fascist Dictator or the love and kisses of a Democratic Prime Minister; whether it is dropped on London or Berlin, Guernica or Helsinki, Central China or the North West Frontier. In every case it is the workers who are killed. And any form of government which condones that killing must be intolerable to the workers.

The inference from these facts is obvious. We must oppose the Conservative and various avowed capitalist factions supporting war. We must oppose the Labour Party bureaucracy, now so busy destroying democracy and civil liberties at home in ill-advised pursuits of Imperialist war.

The stand taken by the absolutists in the last war should have shown that there worse things than imprisonment or even death. It is up to those of us who have the knowledge, the understanding and the determination to rally all who are opposed to warmongering, and the

system of which war is an integral part. Neither the workers of Britain, nor of any other country, want war. But the old tricks still work; and the threat, which was so illustrated so well in *The Spur* during the last war, "What would you do if you were threatened with the bayonet?" serves once more to palsy the wit of the man who would oppose the war. So few think. So many fear. So few have the courage to express conviction. So many are too cowardly to disdain the official uniform of seeming courage. The people will not understand that it is they who wield the bayonets, and it is for them to say that they will wield them no longer. Only when they do say this, will war end.

Apart from the challenge of war to the individual conscience, even the use of a bogey-man cannot obscure the social reality of the class struggle. That issue remains the same whether bombs drop on cities or only on battleships. In war-time, as in peace-time, the struggle to attain a saner system of society must go on. Objection to war, to be replaced by direct individual resistance wherever the Tribunal does not recognise the imperative dictate of conscience, is merely the first negative-positive step towards the new social order.

Because I know that this step must be taken, that paralysed and paralysing Labour careerism must give place to direct stand against militarism, I have identified myself with the No-Conscription League.

The developing of a powerful anti-war movement, the emphasis on the supremacy of individual conscience over the herd-instinct of blind obedience, are required at this crisis. Only thus can we arrest the toll the "bogey-man" propaganda is taking of humanity and end its menace to civilisation. Because of the "bogey-man," those now effected by conscription must square their action with their conscience, resist war, and build the movement of war resisters, the men of conscience—the N.C.L.

VIEWS, COMMENTS AND PROBLEMS.

One of the great problems confronting C.O.'s when they appear before the Tribunals is how they are to deal with the "trick" questions which are put forward in order to lead them into an untenable position. Judging by the reports of the various Tribunals many of the C.O.'s are falling only too easily into the traps laid for them, and putting up a very poor case as a result. The seriousness of this lies not in the fact that the particular individual may suffer as a consequence, however regrettable that may be, but in the deliberate publicity which is given by the press to such cases.

For example at a recent Mock Tribunal held in West London one young C.O. found himself opposing the existence of Fire Brigades! In the obviously friendly surroundings we were able to laugh and pull his leg. But really it was not a laughing matter.

The fundamental error seems to be that most of those who are appearing before Tribunals are hoping to obtain exemption and are basing their answers on that hope. This must not be construed into meaning that they are not genuine, but it does mean that they are bound to be more nervous in expounding their views than one who has no hopes of exemption and is consequently indifferent to the construction which the members of the Tribunal may care to put upon his case.

The answer to the problem seems to lie in the realisation that the Tribunals are not sitting to grant exemption to as many C.O.'s as possible but to refuse exemption, to incorporate into the military machine as many as they can. Realising that one can go forward; state one's case boldly and clearly; and not afraid of admitting what seems to be a slight inconsistency. Such inconsistency proceeds only from being trapped under the system and is not fundamental or wrong in itself. Compromise—or Starve! That is, in effect, the choice which is thrust upon many of those who have shown by word and deed their opposition to militarism and the military machine. A choice that is all the more difficult to make when there are dependents to be taken into consideration; one that may well test the determina-

tion of the most ardent. Indeed, one may well wonder if this more subtle, economic weapon is not more effective in compelling support for the war than the Tribunals could ever be.

With the passing of the months and the approach of "Prison Time," this problem looms ever larger and more urgent. In many parts of the country it is being tackled by an endeavour to build up funds to assist the C.O.'s and their dependents. A great task, because our movement is essentially of the workers, and we, none of us, have overmuch to spare. However, the difficulties of collecting these funds need not be enlarged upon here.

What is important is that, having overcome those difficulties, the administration of the funds should be organised in such manner as to ensure that they are not used to defeat our own objects; not used to weaken our resistance to war or to encourage compromise.

One question which must arise is: shall the application of the funds be limited to members of certain organisations? Or shall their application to C.O.'s be non-sectarian?

As far as the N.C.L. is concerned it would seem that this question can be answered in only one way—refusal to give support to members of any organisation which is likely to support an imperialist war. This is, unfortunately, not so simple a proposition as it sounds. It may easily involve a break, at some stage, with other organisations which, whilst quite definite in their opposition to war, are prepared to co-operate with those of dubious integrity. It will, certainly, lead to the accusation of splitting the "United Front" against war. But our cause is surely too pressing, the need for an absolutist stand too necessary, for us to pursue any path which will, inevitably, lead us on to the treacherous quicksands of compromise.

We must remember that in the development of the powerful anti-war movement, which is required at this crisis, the emphasis must be placed on the supremacy of individual conscience over the herd-instinct of blind obedience. Only thus can we arrest the toll that "mass propaganda" is taking of humanity and end its menace to civilisation. Because of this those now affected by conscription must square their action with their conscience, resist war, and build the movement of war resisters, the men of conscience—the N.C.L. And also because of this it behoves those who are conducting the fight outside the prison gates to see that no action of theirs betrays the cause.

Actually the chief danger lies in accepting too easily the fact that it is almost impossible to be absolutely consistent. Having once accepted it the tendency is to smile benignly upon each small concession, and forget to review their sum. With the result that many schemes which start off with quite genuine intent to encourage and assist war resisters, finish up by defeating their own object and being unworthy of either support or attention from any C.O. worthy of the name.

In this respect many "Community" schemes are clearly suspect. One such scheme, for instance, proposes to form a farming community which is expected to be practically self-supporting and, indeed, hopes to be able to supply some produce to a town community to be run in conjunction with it. In fact it is even hoped to run a canteen for the aged and unemployed of the district. A laudable venture—no doubt. But can it be classed as furthering resistance to war. Hardly entitled to claim support from a C.O. fund. For the number of C.O.'s who are exempted conditional upon their taking up agricultural work leaves no doubt that it is work of "national importance." The fact that is undertaken voluntarily makes it no less so. Participation in such a scheme is, therefore, undoubtedly an evasion of the issue. And however unreasonable it may be to expect all conscientious objectors to take an absolutist stand, it is, surely not unreasonable to expect them to face up to the issues at stake. The fact that they may be willing to allow themselves to be drafted in, as unskilled workers, to, say, agricultural occupations does not mean that they should

The CAREERIST DANGER

By MATT KAVANAGH.

The Southend N.C.L. is getting some good work done indoors with "Mock Tribunals," lectures, and debates. So far, we have had two of our members up at Southwark: one obtained complete exemption; the other was given work on the land. I think we can count this as two victories against the "body-snatchers." The real struggle will come when the older groups are called up, consisting of men who have a greater sense of their responsibility, and are old enough to remember the last blood-bath.

Unfortunately, in this town, the P.P.U., the F.O.R., and other like bodies have been reluctant to co-operate with the N.C.L. This lack of co-ordination is not the fault of the N.C.L. Because we advocate mass action (the general strike), as well as individual refusal to serve war, we are denounced as a *political* body. Yet those who oppose us support the actions of the politicians whom we oppose. The Southend N.C.L. has held the view, consistently, that mere opposition to *this* war is not enough. Such action is mere sentimentalism. We must teach the workers the cause of war: capitalism and government. To stop this war by negotiation, or any other means, *without coming to grips with war and its cause*, is only going to prove another armistice. This time, the armistice will be for a considerably shorter period than last time. If we do not eradicate the root cause of war, we are entering on an epoch of a series of wars.

It is because of mental myopia, that such bodies as the P.P.U. will not sell THE WORD. The paper is too sane, too realistic, for these sentimentalists. Rather than use the lancet, and cut out the evil cancer of capitalism, they prefer to apply the futile plaster of State Federalism. They cease to be the opponents of militarism and prove themselves the promoters of future wars. For Federal Unionism is only the old, useless, bankrupt League of Nations. The old long-firm swindle has opened business under a new name.

This mental perversion arises in our intellectuals and pacifists because of their goody-goodness. They have been bitten badly by the bug of respectability. They sense, if they ally themselves with a group of militant workers, they will not be able to adorn their platform with a crowd of M.P.s, Reverend Sky Pilots, and J.P.s. Why they should stop there, and pause so modestly, I do not know. The Public Hangman would be a bigger draw than any parson or M.P. Was not the Kaiser to be handed over to this public official after the last war? I seem to remember the slogan: "Hang the Kaiser!"

Some of this criticism applies as much to sections of our own organisation, the N.C.L., as to the P.P.U., and the F.O.R. The N.C.L. seems to be becoming a happy hunting ground for would-be M.P.s, dear good comrades who are out to save the soul of the Labour Party! Men who went to prison during the last war, and who have spent a life-time in the service of the movement, who have sought neither place nor power, whose policy has been to give and not to take, are over-looked or side-stepped. They are told they are not platform attractions. Political careerists, seeking the golden letters, M.P. after their names, yearning for £600 per annum, secured income, are given the limelight. The funds of the movement are dissipated callously to make careers for these useless self-seekers. Unless the workers in the N.C.L. guard against this tendency, they will discover that their organisation has been turned into a mere political machine. This tendency is manifest already.

I write in no narrow spirit. The Southend Group of the N.C.L. does not wish to force its opinions on other groups or branches. In a spirit of tolerance, recognising the right of all C.O.s to unite for mutual aid, but denying the right of those who are not really C.O.s to exploit comrades menaced with imprisonment and

suffering, we say: if your sport is parliamentary politics—and that is all this political window-dressing under N.C.L. auspices amounts to—join the I.L.P. or the Labour Party.

The N.C.L. is, or should be, above the sordid atmosphere of parliamentarism. The N.C.L. should be a body of class-conscious workers and anti-militarists, who are determined, by the method and weapon of Direct Action, to smash militarism and to root out the cause. The N.C.L. ought not to be employed creating a new set of masters, evolving more careerists, more Judas Iscariots. It should be pioneering a world and era of Freedom for All Mankind.

EDITOR'S PERSONAL APPEAL

This appeal is for a special sum of £166 13/3d, to cover losses on the paper prior to Xmas, 1939, and on the London Law proceedings in connection with the Hyde Park fight. Since then, each issue of the paper has entailed a heavy loss. We set up machinery at great cost. And we are producing pamphlets of large size. Your immediate response is requested to make this work possible.

Address donations to editor's private address: Guy Aldred, 5 Baliol Street, Glasgow, C.3.

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throw the onus upon the Government to do so. The fact of their doing so of their own accord, and before being forced to do so, constitutes a quite definite evasion of the issue and is reasonably entitled to throw doubt upon the whole basis of their opposition to war.

The only inference is that the ultimate guide in the administration of these funds must be the same as that which directs all activities against the war—the discontinuing of compromise and the encouragement of a firm and definite stand against militarism—absolutism.

Recently, I attended the meeting of one of the branches, where discussion turned on the question of conscience in relation to the social struggle. The chief point that seemed to arise—as far as I could tell, between the I.L.P. section on the one hand, and independent and unattached comrades on the other—was on the question of "Militant Pacifism." The I.L.P. comrades maintained that they could conceive of circumstances in which they would be prepared to (a) defend a Socialist system against a counter-revolution at the barricades, and (b) would if necessary be prepared to execute such people as they considered were likely to incite or conspire towards a counter-revolution. The arguments against seemed to be that essentially Socialism was based on what might be called (without any religious meaning) the "sanctity of human life," and that consequently we had no right to urge such a procedure as (b); and also that it was a dangerous proposal to advocate in so far as one was paving the way for Fascist acts of violence which they could justify on the same grounds.

The C.O. Tribunals are reported very scantily and very poorly. If those in other parts of the country are like the London one, each Tribunal has no standard in its decisions. The result is a pure gamble, which has no relation either to reason or to conscience. From the reports, some of those removed from the conchie register in London seem to have more claim to be registered as C.O.s than those left on the register. Another iniquitous expression of a rotten system.

ADAPTABLE "COMMUNISTS"

William Gallacher stood as C.P. candidate at Dundee in 1922. He issued an election address full of hot air. It opened thus:—

"Comrades and Fellow Workers—On November 15th you will be called upon to make a decision that will have far-reaching consequences for you and to the future of our class."

Had Gallacher been elected at that time, his speeches at Westminster would not have lightened the load of the jute workers in Dundee for a moment. The hooters would have blown and they would have bent their backs to the yoke as before. Gallacher's election for West Fife has not benefited the miners in his constituency one little bit.

Gallacher's election address proceeded to describe Parliament as a sham. He added hastily:—

"If it is your will that I shall carry on the struggles in Parliament, I will give my whole strength to the task."

Only James Russell Lowell's classic vernacular poem on "I'm just a candidate in short," could do justice to Gallacher as a nice adaptable man.

He made a mild reference to Russia, to prove that the revolution was not so hot after all:—

"Recognition of Soviet Russia means an opportunity for the workers there and work for the unemployed here."

He promised to support movements towards national independence in Ireland, India, and Egypt, and added:—

"In general, I will support the Labour Party."

Which makes nonsense, since the Labour Party does not stand for such national independence.

In his concluding sentences, Mr. Gallacher says he has "neither respect nor loyalty for the Monarchy and the Constitution." He fell over himself three times to demonstrate his loyalty when Edward VIII. abdicated, in his haste to prove his capacity to swear allegiance to the Monarchy.

In *The Commune* we referred to Gallacher's articles in the *Workers' Dreadnought* and the *Worker*. In February, 1920, in the former paper, he wrote scathingly of Parliamentary action and those seeking Parliamentary honours. Writing in the name of the Scottish Workers' Committee, he said:—

"This Committee is definitely anti-Parliamentarian. . . . We represent the revolutionary movement in Scotland. . . . For a considerable time we have been sparring with the official Parliamentarians. . . . But this state of affairs cannot continue long. We are winning all along the line. The rank and file of the I.L.P. in Scotland is becoming more and more disgusted with the idea of Parliament, and the Soviets or Workers' Councils are being supported by almost every branch. This is very serious, of course, for the gentlemen who look to politics for a profession, and they are using any and every means to persuade the members to come back into the Parliamentary fold. Revolutionary comrades must not give any support to this gang. Our fight here is going to be a most difficult one. One of the worst features of it will be the treachery of those whose personal ambition is a more compelling force than their regard for the revolution. . . . The official I.L.P. is bitterly hostile to the Third International, the rank and file is for it. Any support to the Parliamentary opportunists is simply playing into the hands of the former."

The *New Leader*, in its issue for September 23, 1938, published the following account of the C.P. Congress:—

"The Communist Party of Great Britain held its annual conference at Birmingham last week-end.

"I had not attended a C.P. Congress before and looked forward to it with interest. The opening by Willie Gallacher was disappointing. . . . He appealed to 'all who love peace and progress' to accept C.P. policy. He appealed 'in particular to the people of the Catholic Church who throughout history have shown such devotion to the cause of progress'."

The writer later on describes the Congress:—

"The second session was what one might call the opening of the serious 'Pollittics' of the Congress. Harry Pollitt read his printed report—it took him exactly two hours. Again one had the impression of the product of the machine.

"From this time on speakers were called to the platform according to a pre-arranged programme. With one exception they all automatically repeated the Party line.

"The one voice raised in opposition to the platform was in some ways more telling because it was pathetically confused and aggressive. It was the voice of Jack Cunningham, an early leader of the International Brigade. 'If any man wanted to come up with a point in opposition, or not quite in line with something, I am damned sure he couldn't do it!' Cunningham exclaimed.

The writer concluded his account:—

"As the Congress proceeded I found the uniformity of the speakers absolutely terrifying. Their tone, manner, phrases, even the adjective before every noun, were repeated time and time again. Nothing new was said after Pollitt's pronouncement except for the two speeches to which I have referred and a few reports from districts of actual work done.

"The C.P. is evidently as much an automaton as any Nazi party. The delegates acted as one man, sang the 'International,' clapped, shouted 'Hurrah,' stood up in respectful show of admiration, waiting for signals to cheer or sing, just as you would expect a trained corps of Nazis to do.

"There can be no hope that a party of this kind can bring human liberty."

William Gallacher is the parliamentary leader of this outfit, now defending under Moscow orders the Soviet alliance with the German Government after shouting for war with Germany, and upholding the bombing of Finnish towns: an unforgivable outrage when committed by Fascist or ordinary capitalist armies, and an indescribable horror and blasphemy when "justified" by alleged Socialists. But has not Gallacher for hireling pay, justified the execution of his old masters—Zinoviev, Kameviev, etc., on bogus charges?

The adaptable Gallacher has been "boomed" in Scotland as the real leader of the Opposition to Chamberlain. If he leads the Opposition, it must be in answer to Chamberlain's Unitarian prayers. For no Premier was ever blessed with such an incapable and such an adaptable opponent. The only thing Chamberlain has to fear is a new change of front. Willie might decide to support the Government as servilely as he obeys Moscow.

With Gallacher has been boosted "the Youth leader," John Gollan. Here is a paragraph from the *New Leader*, issue quoted already in this essay, on Gallacher's associate:—

"John Gollan, leader of the Young Communist League, spoke at the National Congress of the C.P. on the 'attitude of the Communist Party to religion.' He did not point out how the Church backs the vested interests, how the Bishops acted as recruiting sergeants in the last war—and will do in the next; how religion is a 'dope' of the people (the original Communist view). He contented himself with 'rejecting the slander that Communists are anti-religious'!"

Which proves how adaptable and how servile the "Communists" really are. Without principle or vision, they must perish. No wonder they hate conscientious objectors!

Lest Parliamentarians Forget

Speaking at the I.L.P. Conference, on Easter Monday, 1919, Philip Snowden—who became a member of the First and Second Labour Governments, and followed Ramsay MacDonald into the National Government, said:—

"In industrial matters the Parliamentary Labour Party was doing well, but it was disappointing in regard to such fundamental questions as civil liberty and economic and international policy. It had remained silent while conscientious objectors had been tortured in prison, while the Government had used its powers unconstitutionally to subsidise private commercial enterprise by a veiled form of Protection, while the military forces had been used to suppress the just aspirations of the subject-peoples of Egypt and India, while statesmen had been conspiring in Paris to deprive the people of the promised just and lasting peace, while the infamous blockade had been starving millions to death, and while the British armies had been employed to suppress the new European republics."

We anticipated this general treachery when we left the parliamentarians and the S.D.F. in 1906. Snowden earned a title developing the treachery. We recall the passage to-day because of the Labour Party attitude towards the conscientious objectors and war. The folly of Labour parliamentarism must be apparent to all but those who, either from fear or from interest, are blind.

A SCOURGE OF SMALL CORDS

"The Scourge of Christ" was translated from the French of Paul Richard, and published in English, about seven or eight years ago. The book was recommended by Rabindranath Tagore. The Indian poet and philosopher found this book "full of suggestions and surprises." The idea of the book is taken from the passage: "and he made a scourge of small cords."

Paul Richard's book is actually a commentary on the life and teachings of Jesus.

Describing the 70 missionaries that are reputed to have been sent out on the first Gospel Mission, Richard says:—

"To-day should the Seventy start on their mission, they would first take out an insurance policy."

Probably, it would have been the Wesleyan and General Assurance Company!

Richard attacks hypocrisy bitterly in the following passages:—

"Twelve apostles.....and that even was too high an expectation!"

"Peter followed afar off"—and the Church follows Peter.

"When the cock crew, Peter wept; his successors choke the cock.

"For greater security, Christians have put off the second coming of Christ—until the end of the world.

"The good Christian yearns for Heaven—without impatience!"

Paul Richard treats us to some definitions that improve with lapse of time:—

Life—the time allotted to men for dealing death to one another.

Civilisation—the privilege of a few peoples estimated by the number of their firearms.

Barbarism—not to have your firearms up-to-date.

Moralist—one who has a high sense of other people's duties.

Dogma—the living faith of the dead become the dead faith of the living.

Christian—a person who believes that Christ was like him.

Patriot—a man who feels pride when his mother-country slaughters or steals.

Colour Prejudice—a species of skin disease especially malignant amongst white people.

With Christian nations preparing for and against bomb attacks, with the skies declaring the glory of hell, it is well to know how to handle Richard's scourge of small cords. Hypocrisy is not merely individual but national. In time of war, national established hypocrisy is privileged in every country, to the suffering of humanity and the devastation of the world.

Richard's comments prove what a living book the New Testament is.

He quotes: "Woe unto the rich." He adds: "Not Lenin, but Christ said this."

Richard quotes again:—

"Go to now, ye rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you, for your riches are corrupted.....Ye have lived delectably on the earth and taken your pleasure.....The hire of your labourers.....which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth out, and the cry of them that reaped hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Hosts."

He comments on this passage: "Not Trotsky, but James the brother of Jesus, wrote this."

In a powerful passage, replete with wisdom and understanding, Richard says:—

"When the rich assemble to concern themselves with the business of the poor it is called charity. When the poor assemble to concern themselves with the business of the rich it is called anarchy."

Richard attacks sectarianism with a cord that binds rather than lashes:—

"What matter cults or sects: the Spirit pours its wine in all the cups that men hold out."

There is hope and comfort in this thought for those who frequent doctor and saint, and hear much argument, and depart by the same door as in they went! Comfort, also, for those who see war succeeding war, clouded skies, the black-out of humanity, and no promise of dawn. Rebukes Richard:—

"Impatient man! Does the tree complain because it bears fruit only in the autumn?"

(Concluded page 67, col. 2)

OUR LETTER-BOX

essay in THE COMMUNE, entitled: "Why Jesus Wept." Your essay has strengthened us here, in our determination to retain our manhood and uphold THE WORD till the last.

Fraternal greetings in the Cause,
SIDNEY KAYE.
London, N.W.10, February 6.

Dear Guy,—I note your remarks about political objections. I can confirm your conclusions after attending a comrade's hearing at the West London Tribunal. My view is that the Bench deliberately attempts to confuse, belittle and intimidate the C.O.s. Alderman Marshall, especially, makes no attempt to conceal his animosity to the applicants. Young lads—who, obviously are sincere in their conscientious objections—are made to feel like criminals. It does no credit to those "learned and able debaters" on the Tribunal. They aim to trick the lads by most irrelevant arguments.

One applicant, Mr. J. Bull, remarked that his nature was one of kindness. Alderman Marshall remarked "kindness is not a moral objection." He called the lad a humbug. **Deep-rooted kindness may define and express moral objection.**

Every attempt is made to ridicule sincere, Christian principles. Honesty of belief in moral principles is ridiculed by the learned Court as an evil infatuation to be abandoned in time of war.

The practical silence of A. B. Swales—except for constant reiteration: "Will you accept work of national importance?"—shows what careerism involves.

In the case of A. L. Cohen, who took the Socialist stand, the Tribunal was not eager to participate in discussion. Cohen is appealing. No doubt you will mention this case in THE WORD.

Cohen stated his objections in written form. He maintained that, as a Socialist, he was opposed to war. He stood for the Brotherhood of Man and would not kill his fellow-worker in the interests of capitalism.

Alderman Marshall sneered. Swales asked him to take civil work under civil authority. Cohen replied that he would not assist the war, directly or indirectly. Mr. Coker, from the Shop Assistants' Union Legal Department, spoke of Cohen's sincere work in Trade Union affairs. I spoke from long knowledge of Cohen's sincerity. Swales was impressed and said to Judge Hargreaves: "There is no doubt of the sincere conviction of Mr. Cohen." But the Bench refused exemption.

I have found your "Letters to the Editor" deeply interesting. Let me pay tribute, once again, to your untiring devotion to the class struggle and to the cause of Freedom. I only wish that your pen and voice—too long and too frequently silenced—may continue long to batter at the fortress of capitalism. You have held high the torch of Freedom—keep it burning.

Yours for Socialism,
ALEC KAYE.

Mile End, February 6, 1940.

Dear Comrade.—In response to appeal published in last month's issue, I enclose £1, being a small contribution in appreciation. May I congratulate you on such an excellent paper. It has been a pleasure to read THE WORD.

COMRADE MARSHALL.

Kirkintilloch, February 6, 1940.

Dear Guy Aldred,—I am very glad to know that you are still going strong and to have the journals you are publishing.

Yours sincerely,
A. CREECH JONES.

Transport House, London, S.W.1.
12th February, 1940.

Dear Comrade Aldred,—I went to Romford yesterday to see my old friend, G. F. Dutch. He says THE WORD is good and remembers you at Wandsworth. Dutch is making enquiry into the case of George Plume and I hope to report that something useful has been done for this comrade in the near future.

Wishing you all the best,
C. JONES.

Willesden, N.W.10.
(Another letter, page 59).

Concluded from Col. 3, page 66.)

Finally, he would have us witness against war. We must not serve Caesar or wear his honours: "Let thy crosses make of thee—a Christ."

Witness during the night even though the dawn reveals your corpse hanging on the gallows-tree! Witness during the night, that the morning might reveal your witnesses, and consecrate your purpose. Witness—that war and want might end and brotherhood be realised. Witness—that Freedom may come with the Sun.

Dear Comrade,—I have received the Xmas issue of THE WORD. May I, as a present-day C.O., congratulate you on your courage in standing so solidly for true democracy and Socialism against the black reaction of militarism and capitalism. Your excellent magazine is awaited by me eagerly each month.

I am a member of the I.L.P. and P.P.U., which seem to have been consistently anti-militarist. But I must confess that I am much attracted to Anarchism, as this seems to be the only consistent doctrine of real freedom.

With Best Wishes,
ALBERT McCARTHY.

Shirley, Southampton, December 22, 1939.

Dear Sir,—I would like to thank you very much for sending me THE WORD. It is inspiring, and was a fillip in a dull moment.

I have been before the Fulham Tribunal and objected on Religious Grounds, but was given R.A.M.C., against which I have appealed. I now await the summons to appear before the Appellate Tribunal.

It was a grand experience and I felt that I was walking in the footsteps of Our Leader, Jesus; and those of Paul and all the others who have stood for Truth and Freedom in the past.

Thank you for THE WORD. I would like my friends to have it, and send you the names of some who would like to hear the news as you give it.

I wish you well in your future efforts. May success come to us soon, although it is a slow and sure way we head. We must not expect too much.

Yours sincerely,
WILFRID I. DALLY.

Hford, Essex, 30/1/40.

Dear Friend,—I have already expressed an appreciation of your paper.

Douglas Jackson, a member of this pacifist community initiated by Max Plowman, was given unconditional exemption at Cambridge on Tuesday, January 23.

The important point is that he appeared to receive exemption on purely pacifist and fully pacifist grounds. I mean not as a Christian, or a politician, or a rationalist, but because he renounced war and sought to live a pacific life and to build up a peace-making society. The tribunal was fair and courteous. Another applicant from here was granted unconditional exemption before Christmas. Incidentally the local paper reported that both were "conditionally registered as C.O.s"—a meaningless phrase.

Another interesting case was that of a man who was plainly incapable of writing out a statement of his conscientious objection. He had no verbal language or means of communication. He was advised to say so frankly, and added that he would probably be unable to answer many of the tribunal's questions; that nevertheless he could not participate in war. The tribunal granted him unconditional exemption. As the Chairman said to Mr. Barrett, it placed them in an awkward predicament; they had in truth little or nothing to work on, to question him on. The decision seems one of exemplary fairness.

Yours sincerely,
LEONARD READ.

Colchester, January 28.

Dear Comrade Guy,—If the workers capitulated before the war machinery was started, how are they ever to control economic conditions, or stop the war now?

No: it will be left to the individual: to those individuals who have learnt that as Ibsen says: "The strongest man in the world is the man who stands alone." Not alone, after mass enthusiasm for wrong ideas has evaporated. The Labour Party's acceptance of the last weapon of Imperialism, will see that enthusiasm for the Labour Party, along with the Fascists, will be discredited.

I am reading the literature you sent with painful pleasure. Yes, indeed, I have been through the Pope's indecently wealthy palace: alabaster baths, original statues from Greece. It takes one hour to view it all, even in a superficial way. As one of them said: "All this we get out of the fable of Jesus Christ."

But for the creeds, and supernatural trimmings, with which he is dressed up, Christ would be misrepresented to-day, as Wat Tyler and other Christs have been. To our way of thinking, he is not only misrepresented but ignored.

There will be a press gang always, so long as capitalism exists.

A parliament that can have rich and poor under the same constitution in a land overflowing with milk and honey, is Parliament—the People's enemy.

Yours fraternally,
CLARA COLE.

Kirby, Essex, Feb. 4, 1940.

Dear Comrade Guy,—Many thanks for copies of THE WORD. Your essay, "Word To The World," was indeed fine: comparable to your old prison-written

The NO CONSCRIPTION LEAGUE

Glasgow and West of Scotland Council
Headquarters—

S.S.P. Rooms, 70 Robertson Street,
Glasgow, C.2.

Chairman—GUY A. ALDRED.
Hon Secretary—BERT VALLANCE.
Hon. Treasurer—W. McCLURE,
1720 Great Western Rd., Glasgow, W.3

This is a League of Individual Members and Affiliated Organisations opposed to War and to Military and Industrial Conscription.

The League appeals to all conscientious objectors to join its ranks for mutual aid and support, and the furtherance of the end of violence.

Finance is urgently required. Send donations to the Treasurer.

GLASGOW AND WEST OF SCOTLAND COUNCIL
C.O. FUND—Already acknowledged, £36 3s. 10d.

Further contributions will be acknowledged in our next issue. Communications regarding the fund should be addressed to the Fund Secretary, DAN McARTHUR, 8 Househillwood Crescent, Househillwood, Glasgow.

AGGREGATE MEETING. Christian Institute, Bothwell St., Glasgow, 7 p.m., Wednesday, March and 20. This meeting is held every fortnight. All N.C.L. members should attend.

ADVISORY BUREAU: 104 George St., C.1.—Every Afternoon, 3—5 p.m.

GLASGOW N.C.L. CENTRAL GROUP—Every second Wednesday (alternate to Aggregate Members' Meeting) and every Thursday. Bakunin Hall, 29 Castle Street, C.4, 7.15 p.m. Secretary, John Fallor, Glencorse Street, Carntyne.

YOKER AND KNIGHTSWOOD N.C.L.—Every Sunday, 3 p.m. Band Hall, Knightswood Road. All comrades in this area are invited. Secretary, Thomas F. McLuckie, 38 Cowdenhill Road, Knightswood.

GOVANHILL N.C.L.—Every Monday and Friday, I.L.P. Rooms, Batson Street. Secretary, Henderson Petrie, c/o Ovens, 239 Victoria Road, Glasgow.

BRIDGETOWN N.C.L.—Every Friday, I.L.P. Rooms, 548 London Road. Secretary, Frank Gaffney, 333 Nunaton Street, Glasgow, S.E.

GOVAN N.C.L.—Every Thursday, I.L.P. Rooms, 634 Govan Road. All comrades in the South West Area invited. Secretary: A. Porter, 164 Carsaig Drive, Craigton, Glasgow, S.W.2.

S.C.W.S. EMPLOYEES' BRANCH—Every Thursday, S.C.W.S. Welfare Rooms, Morrison Street, Glasgow, C.5, 7.30 p.m. Secretary, Malcolm Walter, 16 Ruel Street, Glasgow, S.4. All employees invited. Subscription, 1/- per annum.

PARTICK N.C.L.—Every Monday, 7 p.m., Young Painters' Hall, Chancellor St., Partick, Glasgow, W.1. Secretary, Campbell Wilkie, 12 Baldrick Road, W.3.

GORBALS AND HUTCHESONTOWN N.C.L.—Every Friday, I.L.P. Rooms, 207 Rutherglen Road, at 7.30 p.m. Secretary, J. Vincent, 768 Rutherglen Road, C.5.

SPRINGBURN N.C.L.—Every Friday, Reid Hall (lower), Queenshill Street, 7.30 p.m. prompt. Secretary, Wilfred Holmes, 22 Hillkirk Street, N.

MARYHILL N.C.L.—Every Thursday, Labour Hut, Kelvin Avenue, 7.30 p.m. Secretary, Vincent Kelly, 51 Kirkland Street, N.W.

POLLOKSHAW.—Meets alternate Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Labour Hall Shawholm Street, Pollokshaws. Secretary, Murdo McLean, 714 Bodystone Road, Thornliebank.

SHETTLESTON.—Meets every Sunday, 3 p.m., I.L.P. Hall, Darleith Street (off Old Shettleston Road). Secretary, Miss Betty Williamson, 232 Amulree Street, E.2.

BARRHEAD.—Meets every Thursday, 7.30 p.m., I.L.P. Rooms, Coogan Street, Barrhead. Secretary, Robert McCubbin, 52 Bellfield Crescent, Barrhead.

PAISLEY.—Meets every Sunday, 7 p.m., Abstiners' Hall, 10 Forbes Place (near Square), Paisley. Secretary, Miss M. Barr, c/o (Treas.) Steen, 20 Underwood Lane, Paisley.

OUTWITH GLASGOW.

SOUTHEND W.R.L. (or N.C.L.)—Every Thursday, I.L.P. Hall, 6 Broadway Market, 7.30 p.m.

HAMPSTEAD N.C.L.—Secy: Annesley Aldred, 85 Addison Gardens, London, W.14.

Hammersmith Group meets every Monday at Secretary's address until headquarters are obtained. THE WORD can be obtained in London from this address.

A. Aldred is addressing N.C.L. meetings throughout London. Phone: Shepherd's Bush 5402.

HAMPSTEAD N.C.L.—Hon. Secretary, Mrs. M. Westrope, 3 Warwick Mansions, Pond St., Hampstead, London, N.W.3.

All other N.C.L. Groups or Branches are invited to send announcements.

SOUTHAMPTON N.C.L.—Albert McCarthy, Secy., 14 Colebrook Avenue, Shirley, Southampton.

ABERDEEN N.C.L.—Every Friday, 7.30 p.m., I.L.P. Hall, 126 George Street.

ABERDEEN I.L.P.—Branch Rooms, 126 George St. Branch meets every Monday, 8 p.m. All unattached Socialists should join. Comrades in outlying districts should contact and send subscriptions. Sunday meetings, 8 p.m., Belmont Cinema. Questions and discussion at all meetings. Anti-war films shown.

PRISON: WHAT IT MEANS AND REQUIRES

An Essay for Conscientious Objectors

II. Thomas Dowd.

In life, Dowd seemingly was a very ordinary person, a man of criminal impulse, unworthy thought. He was a thief, with no claim to goodness. He worked alone, and shrank from the society of his fellows. He possessed no gift of speech or writing. He enunciated no philosophy. His language was the argot of the underworld. Whatever wisdom inspired his struggle, it remained his secret. No public opinion upheld his attitude and he sought no admiration from any man. Not even a cause enthused him. Yet he stood alone against almost unbearable torture within the solitude of the prison and won two wonderful victories towards a very poor and very ordinary freedom. He proved one thing—that he was indomitable. This courage deserves to be remembered for all time. Every conscientious objector, who, being inspired by a cause, yet faces his captor sometimes with doubt and often with fear and trembling, must learn, as must every champion of liberty, how to be indomitable. Thomas Dowd taught that lesson. He led a useless life that preached the greater a... most useful of all sermons for all time. Through courage, his life, of shabby detail and sordid error, has been transformed into a wonderful saga of untiring patience and heroism, so unostentatious as to seem commonplace in its grandeur. In death, poor, unknown, criminal Thomas Dowd mounts the pulpit of good faith, and bids all those who have the cause of humanity at heart, to battle without fear. To declaim this message faithfully may have been his destiny.

Thomas Dowd died one dull autumn day, in 1911, in the town of Lanford, North Carolina. He was shot to death whilst resisting arrest. There is nothing glorious in such a death. Nor is there in the details that police records of the United States supply for his biography. He is described as an expert cracksman, master of trick escapes from jail. Altogether an undesirable character. It has been said that there are sermons in stones. No one has avowed that there may be inspiration unto patience, courage, and virtue in a criminal. The real story of Thomas Dowd is replete with "inspiration." The burglar and thief came from the environment and mis-education of the man. This aspect of the man was the product of the social system into which he was born. His courage and patience belonged to him as an individual: was, in fact, the man himself.

The story begins some years before August, 1911. Thomas Dowd and his brother, Vince, were engaged in a housebreaking expedition at Asa Bradley's store, in Birmingham, Alabama. The two brothers stole furtively up to the back window of the store, started to pry it open with a jemmy. They found that the window had been unlocked. They climbed in gently, discovered an old-fashioned cash drawer, emptied its contents, and found themselves the possessors of 27 dollars in bills, and \$3.65 in coin. After making certain that there was neither safe nor strongbox, the brothers gathered up the implements of their craft, and turned back to the shaded rear windows by which they had entered.

Unfortunately, the brothers' movements had been noticed by Officer Joe Chapman, who turned back to Officer Smiley, on the next beat, for reinforcement. The Dowd brothers made their exit almost openly. They had secured so little that they felt that no crime had been committed. Chapman and Smiley ran to intercept them. Vince was ahead of his brother, caught the flash of the policeman's shield, ducked aside, crying out: "Look out, Tom."

Vince and Tom found shelter of a sort. Chapman and Smiley closed in with great caution. Each had drawn his revolver.

"Step out, you two," Smiley ordered, "and come out with your mitts in the air!"

Vince answered impulsively with a shot. Both policemen fired. Vince fired again. Then Tom took a hand in the fight. Vince's third shot struck Chapman full in the face and killed him instantly. The Dowds made a dash for liberty as Smiley bent over Chapman. Seeing that his comrade was dead, Smiley gave immediate chase to the pair of armed and now desperate criminals. He fired as he ran, with greater accuracy, considering the uncertain street lighting. One bullet grazed Tom Dowd's head. Another struck Vince's elbow. A third bullet struck Tom in the thigh. He staggered, pitched forward, and fell with one leg doubled beneath him. A few feet distant was an open cellar entrance. Vince turned back to help his brother. "Go on, kid—beat it," Tom ordered. With amazing quickness and fortitude, he dragged his injured leg to the cellar entrance, and literally dived down it. "Keep going, kid—you can outrun any of 'em," Tom's voice urged. "I'm set!"

So far as Vince could see, his brother had secured a miraculous hide-out. He was accustomed to his brother's fast thinking. He ran—and ran so as to draw the chase right away from Tom's impromptu cover. He leapt clear of the show, and crossed the street deliberately beneath an arc light, and so exposed himself to Smiley's accurate fire. The policeman's gun got him in the cheek. He ran on recklessly and might have escaped but for his very fleetness of foot. He ran into another blue-coat and gleaming shield. The officer fired and missed. Vince fired and missed. It was his last shot. Smiley charged round the corner and fired—and did not miss. He did not die but lingered in the hospital, recovered, was put on trial, and hanged.

Tom Dowd lost hold of his gun when he fell. But he had the jemmy and other tools in his pockets. His clothes were sticky with blood. Crouching there, unarmed and spent, he heard the relentless, pounding steps that passed by in pursuit of his brother. Shots were heard from a distance. There was much excited discussion between people who passed near his haven. Odds and ends of phrases finally pieced themselves together in his mind. If caught, he and his brother would hang for a crime that netted them only \$30.65.

Hoping that his brother would escape, Tom Dowd made a heroic effort to ensure his own safety. His wounded leg was numb. His body was scratched and bruised. He had a small electric lamp. From time to time, when the footfalls sounded some distance away, he held his coat as a kind of canopy and flashed the torch to examine his wound. At last, he opened the cellar door with his jemmy, and dragged himself inside. It was mouldy-smelling but he was out of imminent danger. He shut the door, located a semi-disused water-tap, found the water undrinkable, but used it to dampen his bandages. He knotted a handkerchief to mask the lower part of his face and hugged the shadows. An old negro caretaker appeared. Dowd told him to be silent; exchanged clothes; bound the old man up gently enough; discovered a cork and burnt it, blended it with dust, and made himself appear like a negro. As the dawn broke, he made his way to the negro quarter of Birmingham, sick, feeble, yet plucky and persevering. The cellar from which he had escaped was in litigation. The caretaker he had captured was its sole resident. Tom Dowd discovered this

sometime later, after he had gained a place in which to hide and nurse his wounded leg. He was sheltered and cared for tenderly and loyally by an underworld friend. Tom Dowd's thigh-wound had turned to blood-poisoning. But the attention of his undercover samaritan saved both his life and his leg. Otherwise his leg would have had to be amputated and he would have become a cripple.

He learned sadly of the fate of his younger brother, Vince, who lay, dangerously wounded in five places and closely guarded, in a prison ward. "Everything was being done to nurse Vince back to health in order that the State might hang him. The authorities had traced the bullet in Chapman's skull to Vince's weapons and announced that he alone was the killer. Although weak, Tom Dowd left his hiding place, pulled off two burglaries, and gave the proceeds to the lawyer for his brother's defence. Although he never saw his brother again, he contrived to cheer him and to communicate with him, and did all he could for him, up to the very moment of execution. After his brother's death, Tom Dowd resolved, for the future, to work alone.

Tom Dowd wandered through the country, attacking safes in villages and small towns. At last, in Bloomington, Illinois, he broke into a general store, exploded the safe, but jarred the telephone wire. This acted as a burglar alarm and the store was surrounded by armed men. Vince had been dead two years and Tom was unarmed. He surrendered and was tried and sentenced to the Illinois State penitentiary at Joliet for a term of fifteen years. He settled down mildly to prison life, and although the police had declared that he was a lone and resolute marauder, no one dreamed that he would attempt an escape. Joliet was said to be impregnable. In his heart, he believed that there was no such thing as an unbreakable jail. He had heard of others who had failed, even when aided with big sums from outside. Dowd had no money and no confederate. He belonged to no organisation. He was utterly alone. And he was unconquered within. He determined to escape. To do this he had to discover the flaw, mental or physical, in the prison or its system. This job of unearthing the "soft spot" was subtle and extensive. It demanded resourcefulness and patience. After two years he discovered what he wanted. One way and another, he had inspected every inch of the prison except the hospital. Then he managed to get into the hospital, and studied it thoroughly. One department remained closed to him—the insane ward. He resolved to penetrate this chamber of horrors.

After several more weeks of waiting and trying, Dowd got himself attached to the gang that cleaned the prison. One day he strolled into the ward of those whom crime and punishment had driven insane. His work was almost complete, when the keeper or warden in charge left the ward for a few moments. Dowd dashed to the windows and found one of the gratings loose. He left his bucket behind "accidentally" and reported it: was reprimanded, and sent in the next day to recover it. He owned a file, stolen during his "visits" to the machine shop. He slipped this behind a water-pipe before he left the maniacs' ward. And now, remembering how he had played the Negro in Birmingham, he resolved to play the maniac in Joliet. His aim was to be transferred to the maniacs' ward, and then to the room, in which he had concealed his weapon of liberty! What a man!

Tom was clever. He again waited a few weeks before going crazy. It would never do to assume madness immediately. At last the time came to execute his stratagem. One morning, a keeper found Dowd lounging in his cell, flushed with fever apparently, rambling extravagantly.

"Tell the warden," he airily instructed the amazed keeper, "I'll have my breakfast served in the cell after this. Get me some good cigars. I'm going to change a lot of things around here. No work before noon, and not much then—"

(To be concluded).