

# SOCIALIST APPEAL

Organ of the Revolutionary Communist Party BRITISH SECTION of the 4th INTERNATIONAL

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## MINERS MUST CONTROL

### Out with the Capitalist Coal Board!

During the past few weeks the capitalist press has carried panic articles on the "coal crisis". Factories in Lancashire and in many other areas have threatened to close down because of the lack of fuel. The biggest of these organised panic campaigns was the threatened closure of the Austin motor factory. Subsequent facts showed that the factory had actually received its allocation of coal and had no need to close down!

It is not at all accidental that this capitalist scare campaign coincides with the taking over of the mines under the Labour Government's nationalisation scheme. It is clear to all that these campaigns have as their object to slander the miners and to discredit nationalisation.

As in the past, the capitalists try to place the responsibility for the present crisis onto the shoulders of the miners. Shinwell and Morrison have directly participated in this campaign by holding that "absenteeism" and "unofficial strikes" are responsible for the present situation. Horner and Lawther, who now "defend" the miners, also participated in this reactionary campaign. These same gentlemen, one of them a "National Production Officer," devoted their whole energies to campaigns for speeding up production, sabotage of strikes, and ways and means of increasing the sweat of the miners.

The facts, repeated in almost every paper, leave no doubt that absenteeism and unofficial strikes have nothing to do with the coal crisis. The coal crisis is a product of a century of plunder by the capitalists, whose only concern is profit. Absenteeism and strikes are themselves products of capitalism.

The nationalisation scheme of the Labour Government places the whole mining industry in the hands of the State, a capitalist State. No less than six members of the Coal Board, which is to manage the industry, are drawn from the top layers of the capitalist class. Nationally and in the pits themselves the same managers and directors will remain in power under nationalisation.

Already the miners of Whitburn colliery, South Shields, have expressed opposition to the maintenance of the capitalists in power. The "News Chronicle" (30/12/46) reports the Lodge Secretary as follows: "They are disappointed with the Coal Board personnel, and contend that in the main they are the men responsible for the chaotic conditions before nationalisation."

This is the essence of the problem. There can be no solution to the coal crisis and a betterment of the miners conditions so long as the capitalists remain in control. The present nationalisation, that is state-capitalism, can only increase output, pay dividends on state bonds and the huge sums of compensation, at the expense of the miners conditions, wages and safety.

Because they say that the members of the National Coal Board and the Northern Region Board are mainly representative of the owners, the miners at Whitburn Colliery have refused to take part in celebrating on New Year's Day the transfer of the pits to public ownership.

The miners of Whitburn have understood that the same managers under a different name will not solve the problem. If the pits are to be run in the interests of the miners and the working class then firm control must be in the hands of pit committees elected by the miners. That would be a real step in the direction of workers democracy, of socialism.

The miners have generally welcomed the taking over of the pits from the hands of the grasping coal-owners. It is indeed a step forward, but only in the sense of economic centralisation.

The miners and the working-class as a whole must conduct a struggle for workers' control of the mines, for the removal of the capitalist managers and directors, who for years have carried out the orders of the coal barons, for an end to the payment of compensation which places colossal burdens upon the miners, and for the immediate application of the miners' Charter.

## CHARLIE DUKES BRINGS 'PRESTIGE' TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS

In the new honours list are several misleaders of the working class, titled for services rendered to... the ruling class. Among these is Lord "Charlie" Dukes, leader of the General and Municipal Workers' Union.

"There doesn't seem much sense in covering up your name when it is fairly well known," said Dukes. "I think I shall just call myself Lord Dukes." "There used to be a great deal of criticism of the House of Lords among Socialists. You never hear it nowadays. We have moved from the idea of abolishing the House of Lords. In the last quarter of a century the House of

Lords has restored its prestige." "Evening Standard", Jan. 1st. It may be true that one never heard a criticism of the House of Lords in the circles of Charles Dukes. This only goes to show how long it is since these leaders have mixed with the members of the working class. When the members of his union read about his promotion to the illustrious Upper House, Charlie should have heard the rude, but good old socialist remarks!

## BEVINISM JUSTIFIED BY L.P. SECRETARY

### Foreign Policy Discussion in Labour Party

BY J. HASTON  
FOLLOWING ON THE HEELS OF THE LABOUR "REVOLT" IN PARLIAMENT ON THE GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY, THE SPELTHORNE DIVISIONAL LABOUR PARTY HAS ISSUED A LETTER TO ALL DIVISIONAL PARTIES CRITICISING THE GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY AND PROPOSING THE OUTLINE OF AN ALTERNATIVE POLICY.

According to the "Daily Worker" nearly 40 replies have been received favourable to the Spelthorne letter. This is about 6 or 7 per cent. of the total number of Divisional Parties.

#### SPELTHORNE LETTER

This Spelthorne letter was made public by the "Daily Herald", of Dec. 17th, when Morgan Phillips, secretary of the Labour Party, devoted columns of space in reply to it. Phillips' reply is being circulated to all branches and organisations of the Labour Party as a printed folder. Thus both documents will be the subject of a widespread discussion in the next few weeks.

The Spelthorne circular is an exact replica of the current foreign policy advocated by the Stalinists in this country. "Tribune", the organ of the one-time Labour Lefts, commenting editorially on the Stalinist inspiration of the document, said that: "It bears no resemblance, either in content or purpose, to the Parliamentary

opposition against specific and debatable issues of the Government's foreign policy." The Spelthorne document commences with a correct generalisation that capitalism gives rise to wars. Nevertheless it attempts to shift the responsibility for both world wars onto the shoulders of Germany by emphasising "the conditions created by the expansionist needs of German monopoly capital..."

The document criticises the actions of the Labour Government in Greece, Spain, Egypt, Palestine, Indo-China, Indonesia and elsewhere, and correctly argues that the Labour Government aids the reaction and opposes the progressive movement of the masses in various parts of the world. Exposing the tendency of the British Government to bow with America against Russia, the letter argues that: "The Anglo-American line-up has turned U.N.O. into a political weapon against the position of the Soviet Union in world politics." This situation must "sooner or later" result in a new world war.

The solution to this situation is, according to the Spelthorne document, to adopt the alternative "policy of genuine political and economic collaboration with the Soviet Union and the new democratic states in Europe." This would transform U.N.O. from "a battle-ground of world politics into a real arena for the instrument of world peace."

Despite the kernel of truth contained in it, which is often to be found in Stalinist documents, this is a dangerous and indeed poisonous document, which, if it gains support, can divert the attention of those workers who are genuinely critical of the foreign policy of the Labour leaders and who seek to change that policy.

It is much more likely to help the Labour leaders than to assist in crystallising a Left wing of opposition. Its false orientation gives ammunition to the Labour leaders and has been taken up by them as a welcome pretext and opportunity to wage a campaign against all dissidents on foreign policy within the Labour Party.

The weakest point in the Spelthorne document, at least that most easily subject to attack, is its blatant whitewash and support of Russia's foreign policy. It is precisely this weak spot that has been seized upon by Morgan Phillips to direct the discussion from the channels of socialist criticism to that of a comparison between Russia's foreign policy and that of Britain.

#### PHILLIPS' REPLY

Replying in the "Daily Herald", Morgan Phillips says: "While it is true that socialists believe that capitalist society contains tendencies which may lead to war they do not believe that only capitalism produces war." He proceeds to argue that capitalism is a fairly

modern phenomena and that wars have taken place throughout the history of man. He points to Russia's invasion of Finland and other countries prior to the outbreak of the present war and argues that "even a dictatorship of the proletariat can act first and justify itself afterwards."

It is difficult to imagine greater confusion being concentrated into a few paragraphs. Yet so degenerate have the theoreticians of Stalinism become, so often have they spread a number of the false ideas now put forward by Phillips, and so false is their alternative line that they have not found the possibility of answering him two weeks later.

#### Dictatorship And Democracy

Phillips here, falsely, and deliberately so, identifies the Stalinist dictatorship against the proletariat, as the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The "dictatorship of the proletariat" means nothing other than the rule of the working class. It means that the democracy of the country is a workers' democracy; that the state, industry and the control of the machinery of government, this presupposes a more widespread democratic regime than exists in any capitalist country, where not only industry, the government and the state are controlled by the bourgeoisie but also

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## GREEK WOMEN APPEAL FOR AID

### STOP DESPATCH OF ARMS TO GREECE

THE U.N.O. SECURITY COUNCIL HAS DECIDED TO SEND AN INVESTIGATING COMMISSION TO GREECE. THE FUNCTION OF THIS COMMISSION IS MOST LIKELY TO BE THE WHITE-WASHING OF THE BLOODY TSALDARIS ROYALIST REGIME AND TO JUSTIFY THE OCCUPATION OF GREECE BY 50,000 BRITISH TROOPS.

#### 14,000 Politicals Deported To Islands

Since the Stalinist dominated Left laid down their arms, the situation has steadily deteriorated for the workers.

It is reported that 14,000 politicals have now been sent to concentration camps on the infamous penal islands. 400 are reported to be on the small island of Anathi. Half starved, with insufficient clothes and bedding, without fuel and short of water.

These are the islands to which the bloody Dictator, Metaxas, exiled worker-militants during his reign. The Royalist reaction continues to strengthen its control of all the commanding positions. Soldiers are recruited on the basis of personal invitations, and "enemies of the nation" are not invited.

#### Anti-Royalist Conscripts Dismissed

Vourladis, Greek Under-Secretary for War replied to questions from the press on the dismissal of conscripts from the army. Anti-Royalist conscripts from Crete who presented themselves at Corinth, were stated to have been dismissed as superfluous, as were three-quarters of the conscripts who went to Missolonghi, Haidari, Athens.

Court martials are functioning uninterruptedly, condemning to death civilians as well as troops. Many of the latter having been accused of fraternisation with the "rebels". In the first week of December, 25 death sentences were pronounced and more than 100 condemnations to life imprisonment, as well as other heavy penal sentences.

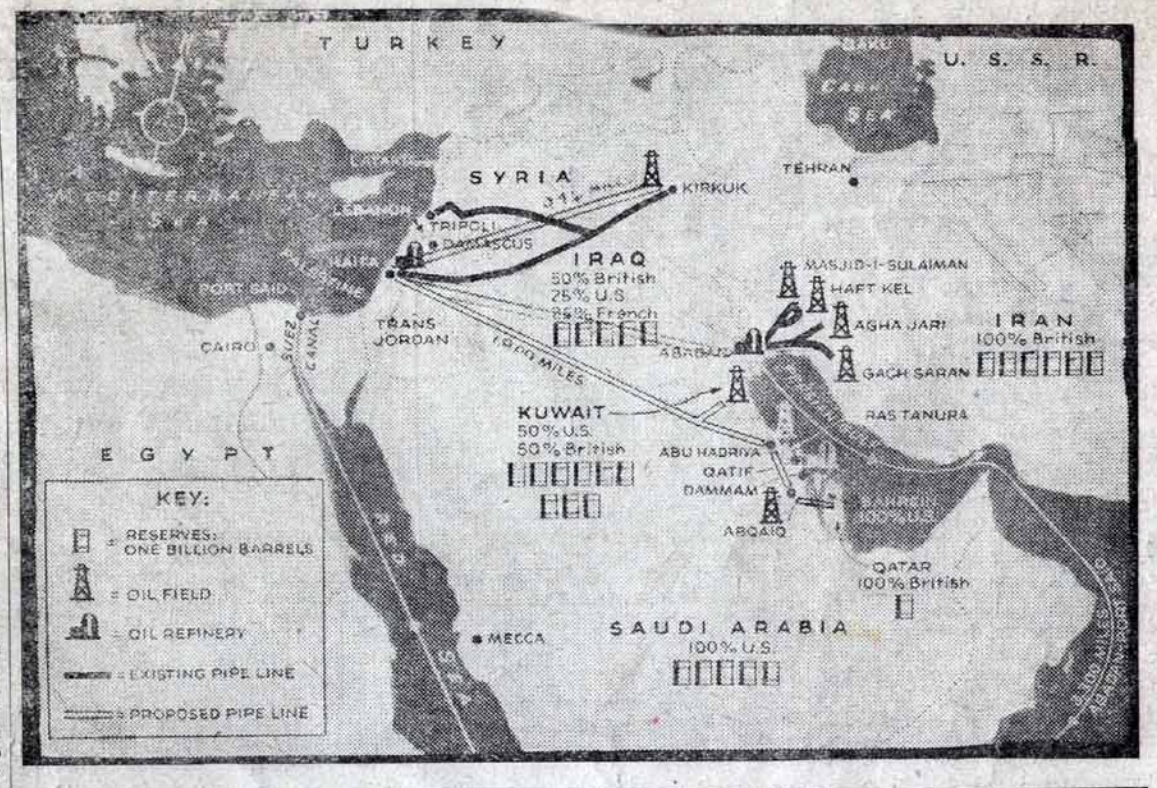
12 Republican soldiers, including one officer and two civilians, were sentenced to death by court martial on the 5th December alone.

#### British Chiefs Summoned

Meanwhile, British military chiefs were among those summoned to a National Defence Council on the 10th of December, held under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Premier, General Gonatas, which undoubtedly discussed the Royalist strategy against the militants who had taken up arms and gone to the mountains as in the heroic days of the Nazi occupation.

Women members of the Greek Resistance have issued an appeal to British women to oppose any re-equipment of Greek Military forces. "It is untrue to say that your sons are in Greece to ensure order," they say. "The British occupation is in support of Fascism and is aimed at civil strife. Prevent any new bloodshed between our children!" Stop British arms being sent to Greece! Force the Labour and Trade Union leaders to help the Greek reaction.

## THE CENTRE OF OIL IMPERIALISM



## World Struggle for Oil

### U.S. to Extend Influence in Middle East

BY T. CLIFF

THE ANGLO-IRANIAN OIL CO. HAS ANNOUNCED AN AGREEMENT FOR THE SALE OF LARGE QUANTITIES OF CRUDE OIL TO THE STANDARD OIL CO. OF NEW JERSEY AND THE SOCONY VACUUM OIL CO. FOR A PERIOD OF 20 YEARS.

#### Vast Resources in Middle East

The oil reserves of the Middle East are tremendous. Although until now less than 150 "wildcat" wells have been drilled in the whole Middle East in order to tap its reserves, in the U.S.A. more than twenty times this number are drilled every year. But it is already clear that the Middle East reserves are at least comparable with those of the U.S.A.

U.S.S.R. 11.3, Venezuela 11, Netherlands East Indies 18, Mexico 1.2, Columbia 1, and Rumania 0.8. The great resources of the Middle East have hardly been touched. This region, so rich in reserves of oil, produces only 5.7% of world output (1943), while U.S.A. produces 33.1 per cent. The output of Middle East oil wells is thus only 0.7 per cent. of the proven oil resources in the region, while U.S.A. output is 6.3 per cent. of its proven oil resources. Other estimates rate the richness of the Middle East countries in oil even higher. According to one, the oil resources in Saudi Arabia alone could satisfy the total world demand for 15 years. The quantity of oil in Iraq or Iran is estimated

to be no less than that in Saudi Arabia. E. de Golyer, the noted oil expert, in a report prepared for the United States Petroleum Resources Corporation stated: "The centre of gravity of world oil is shifting from the Mexican Gulf and Caribbean area to the Middle East-Persian Gulf area and is likely to continue to shift until it is firmly established in that area."

#### Imperialist Interests

The position of the various imperialist Powers differs as regards control of oil in the Middle East. The Oilfields of Iran are in the hands of the British alone. The attempts of the U.S.A. to acquire a concession over oil in Northern Iran have failed, owing to Russian

opposition. The fields of Saudi Arabia on the Persian Gulf, and Bahrain, are in American hands. The U.S.A. has also got exploratory leases for areas in Egypt. France has no company of her own, independently active in the field of oil output in the Middle East, but a French Company is a partner of the Iraq Petroleum Co. In the Iraq Petroleum Co., two British groups - Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. and D'Arcy Exploration Co., own 47 1/2 per cent. of the shares, an American Company - Standard Oil Co. - 23 1/2 per cent., and a French Company - Compagnie Francaise de Petrole - 23 1/2 per cent.; the other 5 per cent. belongs to a rich Armenian who owns the fields. The Iraq Petroleum Co. has

concessions in parts of the Arabian Peninsula, including the whole length of the Red Sea coast; and also in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. The concession over Kuwait belongs half to the Anglo-Iranian Co. and half to the Gulf Exploration Co., subsidiary to the Gulf Oil Corporation of the U.S.A.

#### Britain Held Decisive Position

Until now, with the oil wells of Saudi Arabia and Bahrain not developed, England has had a decisive position in the production of oil in the Middle East, as may be seen from the following figures of the distribution of oil production in the Middle East among the

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