



ISSUED BY THE INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

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LATVIA  
POLAND  
PORTUGAL  
SPAIN  
and other countries

## WHAT WE ARE FIGHTING FOR

**T**HE international labour movement has never cherished any illusions with regard to the ultimate consequences of the authoritarian regimes in Italy, Germany and other countries. It tried to awaken the world to the threatening dangers. In vain. Perhaps it deserves the reproach of having done too little of its own accord to avert those dangers, of having underestimated its own strength, of having failed to develop that strength sufficiently.

These mistakes of the international labour movement, if mistakes they be, are nothing compared with the criminal mistakes of those who passively watched how the workers' movements and all the forces of peace were destroyed in Italy and Germany, of those who permitted the rearmament of these countries, and even made possible their preparations for war by credits and supplies. And criminal we also call those who at present without necessity continue to trade with these two countries.

To-day, however, the last illusions have vanished and there is no longer any difference of opinion between those—states and persons—who consider themselves on a footing of war with Germany and Italy: Germany and Italy must be defeated.

This agreement has not always existed. As long as there was a shadow of hope that Italy would not be involved in the war, there were groups among the forces fighting on the side of Britain who were not averse to coming to terms with Mussolini, who still had not abandoned all hope of a peace by compromise. This was to some extent, perhaps, due to a noble sentiment: anything rather than the mass destruction called war. But to a large extent it was caused by fear of the future.

Just as in Germany the various sections of the nation failed to unite, while there was still time, in resistance to the Nazis because no answer was found to the anxious question "What will come after Hitler?" so in other countries division was caused by the fear of "what will happen after a war."

If the wheel of history could be turned back, would the German bourgeoisie allow, or even promote the destruction of the labour movement, which, for all its weakness, was the carrier of freedom and peace? It is a question which must remain as unanswered as that what General Von Schleicher would have done with his Reichswehr in 1933 if he had known that he and his wife would be foully murdered by the Nazis on 30th June, 1934.

In a negative sense, then, there is no longer any difference of opinion. The dynamics of war has put an end to wishful thinking. But as unanimous as are opinion and desire with regard to the immediate aim of war, the destruction of Fascism and National Socialism, so divided are they with regard to the aim of peace, with regard to what has to come about after the war.

With touching simplicity a British Conservative, whose name we do not recall, recently said that it would be disgraceful if the gallant pilots of the

Royal Air Force who saved Britain from destruction by the superior air power of Germany should after the war be reduced to hawking vacuum cleaners and radio sets. We should not be surprised if the good man dreams of all the brave pilots travelling in aeroplanes.

And yet, without knowing it, he touched the very core of the post-war problem. Only he saw it too small. For it is not merely the economic security of the pilots of the Royal Air Force, for whom our admiration is as profound as anyone's, but the economic security of the peoples, of civilians and soldiers, of heroes and non-heroes, which is at issue.

At the end of the war the question facing us will be how to rebuild the world, how to bring prosperity and welfare to all the ravaged peoples. It is during the present war that the plans must be framed for building

that new world from which the monster of war will be banned.

It is the historic task of the international labour movement to win the peoples for its post-war ideals. If in that task it fails it will be swept away in the upheaval caused by the war. If the movement succeeds in the task it will be one of the powers governing the world of to-morrow. It will succeed if it can frame peace aims at once realizable and capable of inspiring the peoples.

We are in favour of a peace by compromise. But only by compromise with those forces in Italy and Germany which seek the internal overthrow of Fascism and National Socialism. As a reward for their act they will ask not for the right to rule over other peoples, but only for a fair deal, liberty, prosperity and welfare.

## Educating Trade Unionists for their Wartime Tasks.

The Transport and General Workers' Union of Great Britain, probably the largest trade union organization in the world and at all times one of the most important constituent unions of the International Transport Workers' Federation, has on numerous occasions shown that it owes much of its strength to the quality of the army of stewards at its base and that of its officers and leaders at the top. The efficiency and reliability of its vast and complicated negotiating machinery is a sufficient explanation of the power of attraction which the Union has exerted, especially under the leadership of Ernest Bevin, upon a host of small autonomous local and regional organizations, in the transport as well as various other industries, which in the course of time have, with all their members and resources, joined its ranks and raised the total membership to the present figure of close on 700,000.

The quality of the stewards at the bottom is not a matter of chance. The Union has always devoted particular attention to training and equipping this section of its apparatus, by offering guidance and incentives of various kinds, for their task within its framework.

There is probably not a country in the world whose social and social life has been so profoundly affected by the war as is Great Britain's. The country's geographical insularity, economic constitution and role in the conflict between the democratic forces and the totalitarian powers explain this. Owing to the place they occupy in industry and in the State, the British trade unions have a task to perform very much more complex, more embracing and more difficult than in peacetime. The General Executive Council of the Transport and General Workers' Union does not rely upon the simple expectation that, under enlightened leadership, there will arise of its own accord a body of intelligent and devoted stewards equal to a task which has become ever harder. At the advice of its Workers' Education Committee, the Union has decided to start a special correspondence course on the subject "The Union and the War," in addition to

the course on "The Union, Its Work and Problems," which is a regular feature of the Union's activities in this field.

The special correspondence course is based on the assumption that the student is more or less well acquainted with the history of the trade union movement in general and of the Transport and General Workers' Union in particular, and is also to a certain degree familiar with the structure and machinery of the Union. These matters are dealt with in the ordinary course. The wartime course requires six months of study; the student may, however, allow himself or herself a "vacation" after three months. The first three months are devoted to the study of the position built up by the trade union movement before the outbreak of the present war, of the problems the probability of war and later actual war raised for the Union and of the policy followed by the trade union movement in respect of the present war. Being thus made thoroughly familiar with the general background the student is led to study the special problems connected with the work of the Union under wartime conditions. He is shown the effect of war on working conditions, wages and the cost of living, has to grasp the problem of labour supply and seek to understand how the Union handled these problems. The next step is the study of wartime laws and regulations affecting industry and labour and of the steps the Union took to promote, amend or oppose these. Finally the student is helped to get a clear survey of the vast machinery, consisting of boards, councils and committees, set up to deal with wartime industrial and social problems, and in which the trade union movement has a part to play with the double pre-occupation to push the war effort and to protect the interests of the working people.

The course is offered free to members. Members enrolling for the course are supplied with material for study at the expense of the Union. The industrious student may expect reward for his or her effort in the form of scholarships and grants for further study.

## THE SEAMEN'S NEWS LETTER

### Aan de Nederlandse Zeelieden

Bij de aanvang van 1941 geef ik U een wens op Uw reizen mee. Moge U, waarde makkers, in dit jaar juichend de kust van een Vrij Nederland zien opdopen. Voorts ben ik U een verslag verschuldigd van onze werkzaamheden. Sedert enige tijd beschikken wij over de medewerking van kameraad M. C. Officier, velen Uwer, die op de Zuid hebben gevaren, welbekend. Officier is thans districtssecretaris met standplaats Liverpool. Zijn ijver, werkkraft en ervaring zullen voor onze organisatie zeker vele resultaten opleveren.

Mijn verslag loopt van Juni 1940 toen wij de eerste verbindingen moesten aanknopen met onze schepen. In oorlogstijd in een land, dat toen zijn bestaan ernstig bedreigd zag, is dat niet eenvoudig. Maar met de hulp van onze Engelse zusterorganisatie, the National Union of Seamen, en de I.T.F., die hier voor de zeelieden der verschillende bezette landen het organisatiestuur in handen had genomen, konden wij de grondslag voor onze eigen organisatie leggen. Thans kunnen wij op een ledental van ong. 2000 bogen. Maar zolang het er geen 8000 zijn, hebben wij nog niet aan onze taak en alle Nederlandse zeelieden nog niet aan hun plicht beantwoord. Men kan zich nu reeds tot vertegenwoordigers van ons te—zoals boven meegedeeld—Liverpool, Maritime Hall, Coopers Row, Canning Place—wenden, voorts te Glasgow, 127 Govan Road, en Cardiff (voor het kanaal van Bristol) Maritime Hall, Beete Street. Maar ook aan de andere zijde der grote plas hebben wij twee makkers zitten. In New York, in het hart van de city, luidt ons adres: P.v.d. Berge, 564 West 52nd Street. Met deze, onze mensen zijn wij voortdurend in contact. Bovendien vindt men ons elke Maandagmorgen bij de Nederlandse Scheepvaart-en Handelscommissie, 27 Leadenhall Street te Londen, E.C.3, waar het klachtenbureau zitting houdt.

U ziet, de organisatie is er. Maar er moet meer worden gedaan om ons nieuwe leden toe te voeren. Er moet aan boord van elk schip een vertrouwensman worden aangewezen, die van ons dan een kaart ontvangt, welke hem officieel tot Uw vertegenwoordiger stempelt. Hij wordt verder in het bezit gesteld van formulieren, kaarten en zegels en hij heeft tot taak in de havens, waar wij vertegenwoordigers hebben of zich een afdeling van de Engelse bond bevindt, af te rekenen.

Het is nu aan U om onze Bond te versterken. U strijdt door onze Bond voor de vrijheid van Uw kinderen, van Uw land, van de wereld.

J. C. Esveltd, *Secretaris.*

25, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

### Till Danske Sømand

Det hænder ret ofte, at der ved Afmønstringer er divergerende Meninge mellem Fører og Mandskab om sidstnævntes Tilgodehavende. I den Anledning kan i nærmeste Fremtid en dansk Oversættelse af de engelske Artikler forventes at ville udkomme.

Hvor Enighed om Afregningen ikke kan opnaaes,

bør denne ikke underskrives uden at man samtidig udfylder en Protest—en saakaldt «M» Form—som erholdes af den afmønstring Myndighed. Er en saadan «M» Form ikke udfyldt og underskrevet, er det meget vanskeligt—for ikke at sige umuligt—for Forbundet senere at rejse Krav om Efterbetaling af eventuelt for lidt udbetalte Beløb. Hvor det er muligt, anbefales det at faa en Repræsentant fra N.U.S. til at være til Stede ved Afmønstringen for at være behjælpelig og optage saadanne Krav, som maatte være en Følge af Underskrivning af en «M» Form.

I det hele taget maa det paa det mest indtrængende tilraades, at man sætter sig i Forbindelse med en Repræsentant fra N.U.S., naar der opstaar Tvistigheder ombord; denne vil altid gøre sit Bedste for at sætte alt paa sin rette Plads, og denne Fremgangsmaade er langt at foretrække for utidig Arbejdsnedlæggelse eller utidig Afmønstring, som ikke alene i meget stærk Grad skader de paagældendes egen Sag, men ogsaa skader hele den danske Sømandsstands Stilling overfor England. I Virkeligheden kan nogle af de uheldige Forhold, som der udtales Utilfredshed med i Dag, fores tilbage til at skyldes visse danske Søfolks forfejlede Optraeden i Tilfælde, hvor der har været Disput.

En Del af de danske Førere og Officerer har indset dette og har paa alle mulige Maader været deres Besætninger behjælpelig med at faa den rigtige Forstaaelse af de forandrede Forhold.

Paa den anden Side er det baade ønskeligt og paakrævet, at en Del Officerer of især en Del Førere lægger gamle Unoder og daarlige Vaner paa Hylden og i Stedet lærer at indse, at vi alle er i samme Baad. Det er ikke nu Tiden til at optræde som Slavedrivere, saa meget mindre, som vi staar midt i en Kamp paa Liv og Døg mod den moderne Tids værste Slavedrivere.

At der maa være Orden og Diciplin ombord, er vi alle indforstaaet med, men dette opnaaes ikke—og har aldrig været opnaaet—ved Forsøg paa at chikanere og kujonere Besætningen.

Især vilde det hjælpe meget, hvis de ansvarshavende Officerer vilde søge at give mest muligt Frihed, medens Skibet ligger i Havn; Forholdene paa Søen kan sikkert uden at overdrive siges at berettigge hertil, og en Besætning, der har haft mest muligt Frihed i Havn, kan møde udhvilet og veloplagt til de enerverende Pligter, som udkræves af dem, naar Skibet atter gaar til Søs, medens man ved f. Esk. at sætte Mandskabet til et saa lidet presserende Arbejde som at banke Rust paa Dækket i Regnvejrs ved Land, kun vil opnaa at faa en modvillig og gnaven Besætning, som i mange Tilfælde vil føle sig provokeret til selv at tage sig Frihed, hvilket kun vil skabe Ubehageligheder for alle Parter.

For i Kampen mod vore «would be» Undertrykkere hurtigst muligt at opnaa det bedste Resultat er det nødvendigt, at vi alle mødes i Forstaaelse og Enighed; vi opnaar som bekendt mere ved at trække i samme Ende af Tampen end ved at trække hver sin Vej.

B. Møller, Repræsentant ved NATIONAL UNION OF SEAMEN, DANISH SECTION.

### Medlemsmøde

I September 1940 blev Repræsentant B. Møller forflyttet fra London til Newcastle, og Hyreanvisningen af Restaurations—Dæks—og Fyrbøderbesætning overgik derefter til NATIONAL UNION OF SEAMEN, DANSKE SECTION.

I den Anledning afholdtes d. 23. September et Medlemsmøde, som behandlede Spørgsmaal, opstaaet Forbindelse hermed og ensstemmigt vedtog de Regler, hvorefter Hyreanvisningen nu foregaar.

Endvidere vedtoges eensstemmigt at tilsende det danske Konsulat en Tak for det store og uegennyttige Arbejde, som man der havde udrettet paa dette Omraade.

### Nye Lokaler

Under Navnet «Dansk Sømands Club» er nye Opholdslokaler blevet taget i Brug i Newcastle d. 2. Januar 1941. Lokalerne skulde have været indviet d. 29. December 1940, men da Møblerne blev bombet under Transporten, maatte Indvielsen udsættes og vil finde Sted d. 5. Februar 1941.

Lokalerne er centralt beliggende og er under Ledelse af Repræsentant B. Møller, som ogsaa der har Kontoret for den danske Section af N.U.S., og der er Opholds- og Læsestue, Servering af Forfriskninger og naar Lejlighed gives, Underholdning i Form af Filmsforevisning, Foredrag o.l.

Adressen er : 2, St. Nicholas Buildings, St. Nicholas Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Telefon Nr. Newcastle 23759.

### Rettelse

I Cirkulære Nr. 1. af 20/6 1940 bekendtgjordes, at danske Søfolk ikke skulde betale til det engelske Forbunds Pensionskasse. Det har imidlertid ved indgaende Undersøgelse vist sig, at det dog er nødvendigt at betale hertil for at opnaa de fulde Rettigheder ; det anbefales derfor enhver at paase, at dette kommer i Orden ved næste Kontingentsbetaling.

Det drejer sig om lsh. pr Kvartal.

### Rejsehjaelp

I saadanne Tilfælde, hvor en dansk Sømand rejser paa Ferie i U.K. og selv maa betale sin Rejse, kan han ved Henvendelse til det nærmeste Forbunds kontor faa udstedt en «halv Warrant» mod Forevisning af sin engelske Forbunds bog. En saadan «halv Warrant» indleveres paa Stationen, hvor man køber sin Billet og vil betale Halvdelen af denne ; men man maa sørge for at være i Besiddelse af denne «halve Warrant» ved Købet af Billetten, da man ikke efter Rejsens Tilendring vil kunne opnaa nogen Refundering i Henhold til ovenstaaende.

### British Seamen—Reduced rail fares for Relatives

Wives of Merchant Navy personnel when visiting their husbands' ships in home ports are granted reduced rail fares. She may travel on single journeys at half fare and on return journeys at single fare. The same reduction applies in the case of children from fourteen to sixteen years of age. Children under three travel free of charge and from three to fourteen years on a single journey at a quarter of the ordinary fare and on return journeys half the single fare.

The name of the port to which seamen's wives and/or children are travelling must not be inserted on the voucher.

### N.Z. Seamen support the war effort and condemn communist defeatist propaganda

The Executive Council of the Federated Seamen's Union of New Zealand, pledges its loyalty and co-operation to the Right Hon. P. Fraser, Prime Minister, as Leader of the N.Z. Labour Party, and places on record our deep appreciation of the splendid work accomplished by New Zealand's first Labour Government on behalf of the useful people of the Dominion, and its sincere efforts to maintain and improve, under most difficult circumstances brought about by the war, the cultural and living standards of the workers. We realise that the standard of living enjoyed by the workers of New Zealand can only be maintained by increased production of goods and services, and to this end we pledge our wholehearted support to the Government.

We again place on record our support of the Government's war policy, and condemn that section who through subversive propaganda are weakening the efforts of the country to bring about the defeat of Nazi and Fascist imperialist aggression, and we call upon the Government to safeguard the country and the workers in particular by using its powers to deal effectively with those who are apparently satisfied to hand this country over to the forces of imperialist totalitarian aggressors.

*Resolution adopted in December, 1940.*

*German Italian Shipping Axis? continued from page 5.*

such as Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland and Belgium, not to mention the Baltic countries and the Mediterranean and Black Sea countries, would be relegated to the background.

Germany is out to rule the waves. But she will have to shoot the bear before she can sell the skin. For the present it is not the British, but the German and Italian flags which have disappeared from the Mediterranean.

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What interests the officers and seamen of the maritime nations of Europe is that they would become the slaves of the German shipowners and Nazis. They would be used to oust American shipping from the high seas, on the calculation that American seamen could not be made to work for such low wages and under such bad conditions as would have the seamen of Europe under the threat of unemployment and oppression.

The announcement of the Nazi-Fascist plan for domination of world shipping calls for the formulation of a counter-plan based upon co-operation between all nations, maritime and other, upon the idea of rendering the most useful service to the world, and last but not least, that of ensuring human conditions for those who will earn their livelihood in the international mercantile marine of the world to come.

The seafarers, who to-day risk their lives in the most gigantic struggle for freedom of all times, will claim their rights once peace has returned.

## GERMAN-ITALIAN SHIPPING AXIS ?

### CATCH THE BEAR BEFORE YOU SELL HIS SKIN

After this war careful attention will have to be given to the future of shipping. Economic planning on a world scale will have to include transport, and as one of the most international forms of conveying goods, sea transport will have to be given a prominent place. In fixing the part to be played by the different countries, regard must be had to their economic structure, their past contributions, and their potential development. A country unable to supply the world with raw materials, agricultural produce or manufactured goods, must be allowed to render other services to the world, and one of them is shipping.

Economic planning means co-operation instead of competition. Efforts have been made in the past by shipping interests to avoid unfair competition, but they were confined to certain trades and always in danger of breaking down. Things will be different, however, when merchant shipping is no longer regarded as an auxiliary of the Navy, a position leading to the existence of larger fleets than required to cope with the actual volume of sea-borne traffic. A reserve of tonnage will of course be necessary, but it will be far less than the surplus with which the world's mercantile marine has been burdened since the first world war.

We are aware that in certain shipping circles the idea still exists that after the present war shipping will continue as hitherto, leaving private firms or countries free to build as they please and to seek to profit from the disappearance of certain flags from the seas, but we do not believe that such capitalist interests will see their dreams come true. If they should, it would mean that the world has learned nothing and forgotten everything, and very soon the world would be in the same predicament as in 1921 and after. Not only the running of ships, but international trade itself will have to be subjected to international agreement, and also the replacement of ships, that is the building of new tonnage, will have to be regulated by some international licensing authority. In a world impoverished as a result of war the avoidance of waste of equipment will be imperative.

The Nazis and Fascists who aim to establish a new economic order in Europe have not overlooked the shipping problem, and their solution is of great interest, showing as it does the spirit in which they would rebuild Europe and the world. A prominent German newspaper on 1st December last published an article by a representative of German shipping interests recently back from a visit to Italy—we mention the date because it is not altogether impossible that the Italians may have piped down somewhat in the meantime. The article stated: "The arguments of Italian shipowners in favour of a German-Italian shipping axis are that the co-operation which has shown such good results in the political and military fields should be extended to transport. German and

Italy are interested in avoiding harmful competition. If the two countries were to arrive at a comprehensive agreement shipping would be a profitable proposition to both of them. So far Mediterranean traffic has been shared between Italy, France, Britain, Greece and Jugoslavia. Neutral shipping (sic) usually made up for any British deficiency. All that is going to change. In the future the British flag will disappear from the Mediterranean. French shipping will in the main carry the traffic between the mother country and such colonies as she will retain. But on the other hand, American competition will enter all the principal sea routes. If only for that reason, an Italo-German united front in shipping would be indispensable. Since the two countries will be political friends for a long time to come, they can, when dividing up the traffic areas, put aside political motives and take into account only economic and geographical considerations. Transport will thus be cheapest, freights will not drop unduly, and the states will be saved the granting of subsidies."

Such are the Italian arguments, with which the writer of the article is substantially in agreement. He considers a division in Atlantic and Mediterranean trade to be necessary (meaning, of course, that Italy would be confined to the Mediterranean and that Germany would control the Atlantic), and further advocates co-operation in respect of the African coasts. One of the reasons for co-operation is the desire "to bring the shipping of small nations down to European requirements." In this connection the article says: "What Norway means for Germany in this respect the price-cutting Greek fleet out to seize every opportunity is for the Italians." (Is this perhaps the reason why Greece has to be eliminated?) Co-operation in another field is also necessary in view of the severe shortage of tonnage which will be felt after the war. According to Italian estimates, three to three and a half million tons of new ships will be required. The enormous tasks which would be placed upon Germany and Italy by plans for the development of Europe and Africa would call for the investment of huge sums of money, which would require as economical as possible a use of resources and the avoidance of all waste and overlapping. We, that is to say the Germans, have a shortage of man-power, the Italians a surplus. Would it be impossible to conceive a joint programme for the shipbuilding industries of the two countries, a programme which would allot to each the types of ships to be built and provide also for an exchange of man-power?

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Thus is the Nazi-Fascist programme outlined with an amazing degree of frankness. Japan is not mentioned, nor is Russia. Presumably they would have to agree on a division of the Pacific, and fight it out with the United States. The small countries of Europe,

*(continued on page 4).*

## The New Zealand Locomotive Engineers, Firemen and Cleaners' Association

This Association at the end of the year ended June, 1940 had a membership of 2,147, which was 210 less than the year before. Some 300 members enlisted in the military forces. Over 200 members were withdrawn from the service almost overnight to form Railway Operating Companies.

During the year it was agreed between the New Zealand railway trade unions and the Minister of Railways to make continued employment conditional upon membership in a recognized railway organization. This decision had hardly any effect upon the membership of the Association, as practically all locomotivemen were organized already.

After a ballot of the members of the Association, it was decided to alter the rule governing the composition of the Association's Executive, which in future will consist of members drawn from all main areas of the country. The Association also considered a proposal to affiliate with the New Zealand Federation of Labour, to which most trade unions belong. The ballot on this question resulted in rejection of the proposal by 476 votes for and 892 against. From this it must not be concluded, however, that the Association lives aloof from the rest of the labour movement. In the political field it maintains close relations with the New Zealand Labour Party, to which it granted a donation of £500 during the preceding year.

The finances of the Association are in an excellent condition. Membership contributions totalled £2,453. From other sources, chiefly rents and interest on assets, the Association drew an income of £564. The balance sheet showed a credit balance of £924. The organization voluntarily conscripted part of its wealth and loaned £1,000 free of interest to the Government for the duration of the war.

Among the numerous claims submitted to railway authorities on behalf of members there was one on the question of promotion, which affected a substantial number of locomotivemen. Improvements of locomotives and rolling stock and reconditioning of track have resulted in a diminution of the number of locomotives in use in cases where the volume of traffic has remained stationary and in stabilizing the number where traffic has grown in volume. This state of affairs produced an almost complete standstill in the promotion of locomotivemen. Strong representations by the Association led to examination of the situation by a Joint Tribunal, which recommended staff adjustments, with the result that some 150 acting engine drivers were advanced to engine drivers and 60 cleaners to firemen. Representations aiming at

an increase of lodging allowances were also successful.

Great dissatisfaction prevails with regard to the settlement of wage claims. Long before the outbreak of war the Railway Staff Tribunal recommended certain increases. The Government Railway Administration, however, did not grant the recommendations in full and a series of long drawn out negotiations followed. In the meantime nothing was done to implement part or whole of the Tribunal's recommendations. Finally the Association decided not to take part in any further negotiations on the Tribunal's recommendation but to raise new claims calculated to meet the requirements of the membership under wartime conditions.

Another matter which brought the Association together with the other railway trade unions was a plan of the Government to suspend during the war the functioning of the existing negotiating machinery, i.e. the Railway Staff Tribunal. The Government proposed that the Tribunal's activities should be discontinued, on the grounds that during the war no matters could be considered involving the State in further expense. The trade unions, however, considered that the economic and social repercussions of the war would frequently require negotiations and adjustments of working conditions in the railway as well as in private industry. While it is considered that the Arbitration Court set up for settling disputes in industry will be of greater importance during the war than in peacetime, the railway unions could not contemplate to leave unsolved all problems which will confront railway workers. This union opposition to the Government plans was successful.

The periodical reports of the general secretary, Mr. T. H. Stephenson, and the records of the Executive Council bear testimony to constant vigilance and zeal in furthering the members' interests, and the same may be said with regard to the activity of the local branch secretaries and committees. Branch meetings are regularly held and appear to be well attended. Ballots held from time to time show that members take a keen interest in the affairs of their Association.

The New Zealand Association of Locomotive Engineers, Firemen and Cleaners was the first railway trade union of Australasia to affiliate to the I.T.F. a number of years ago, and it has been a loyal member of the International ever since. We hope that at the end of the war it will be possible to reorganize the work of the I.T.F. and of its Railwaymen's Section in such a way that the Association may reap the moral benefit of its loyalty in a closer contact and collaboration with railwaymen of other countries.

## Three Million Slaves in the Clutch of a War Machine

### **A principle of war economy**

When Germany—whether that of the Kaiser or that of Hitler—prepares for a war, she leaves nothing to chance. The problem of foreign man-power in wartime preoccupied official economists in Germany in 1912 already, and once again in 1936. In January, 1914, the Reich's Minister for the Interior circulated in the government offices concerned a "memorandum on the question of mobilizing economic resources." In 1936 there circulated in the German circles concerned a book on *Man Power in War Economy*, by Beyer. Other documents followed during the ensuing years. The more recent documents, just like those of 1914, emphasize the importance of foreign labour as a factor in war: "The usefulness of employing foreigners in case of war lies directly in the possibility of making use of their labour, but indirectly also in the fact that they are unable to get away, so that the adversary is deprived of them as workers and as soldiers. . . . In so far as their mentality is concerned, they can be classed with those Germans who are a hindrance to national defence and (in case of war) will be necessary to handle them separately and isolate them from the more valuable German labour . . . imposing upon them rigorous forced labour in agriculture and industry." (Beyer, 1936, *Arbeitseinsatz in der Wehrwirtschaft*).

Hitler Germany applied herself to organizing the country's economy for war from the moment when Hitler achieved power in 1933. Systematic extension of the military machine, the building of fortifications and many other military installations, and increasing utilization of industrial resources for rearming the country, led to the absorption of unemployed workers at an ever faster rate and even to a shortage of labour. "It is therefore not surprising that from about the time of the beginning of the Four Year Plan there should have been a systematic recourse to foreign labour, chiefly in agriculture. Year after year their number increased, a process which the war has not interrupted but rather caused to become more marked." (*Reichsarbeitsblatt*, official organ of the Reich Ministry of Labour, 25th August, 1940).

### **Slave trading**

At the beginning of July, 1939, there were half a million foreign workers in Germany. How did they get there?

Austrians and Sudeten Germans are, in the Nazi jargon, "Germans freed from foreign domination". We know from reliable sources that the Austrian and Sudeten German workers, especially those working in Germany, feel anything but "freed". The Nazi authorities installed in their towns and villages are equipped with all the means for "recruiting volunteers". Thus they are in a position to question a person's claim to unemployment benefit and suspend it for weeks and months, to reduce or cancel it altogether. They can forbid or make impossible the employment of workers whom they desire to enrol

willy-nilly for work in Germany. It is not known how many Austrian and Sudeten German workers have been thus carried off to Germany.

Italians are employed in Germany. They were recruited under an agreement concluded between the two Axis powers. The bribing of Italian officials, big and small, by the Nazis, is said to have played sometimes an important part in encouraging "voluntary" enrolment for deportation to Germany.

Slovakians are employed in Germany. They were recruited by the same methods as in Italy.

Czechs are also numerous. The means of exerting pressure at the disposal of the Nazi authorities are a great deal stronger than the workers' aversion to Germany.

In Rumania and Bulgaria, Denmark and Holland, in the Baltic States and Jugoslavia, Nazi agents, aided by Fifth Columnists, have carried on cunning propaganda among unemployed and low-paid workers, holding out dazzling prospects of employment in Germany. Several tens of thousands of workers in these countries have responded and gone to work for periods of varying length in the Nazi paradise.

Reports of foreign workers returning from Germany before the war were unanimous: the work was hard, the food poor in quality and often insufficient in quantity; the working day was more often ten hours than nine, if not eleven or twelve hours; lodging conditions were rarely more than tolerable, usually bad, and sometimes abominable; earnings were lower than promised and expenses higher. In a sentence, the workers all felt they had been cheated, that they had been exploited, sometimes to a degree nothing short of outrageous. There were cases of Bulgarian workers who returned home without a penny after several months of work in Germany. Thrifty Italian workers could only save half as much as they had been led to believe by the recruiting agents. The experiences of foreign workers employed in Germany before the war were so unsatisfactory that many of them, coming from countries where men are free, simply broke their employment contract and went home. The great majority refused to renew the contract for a second term, preferring unemployment at home to employment in Germany. Such was the verdict of workers who could return to a country where men are free. As far as Italians, Austrians, Sudeten Germans, Slovakians and Czechs are concerned, they had no choice.

### **Slave hunts**

After the first ten months of war, the great majority of workers on the European continent had lost the freedom they once possessed in their home countries. The armies of occupation not only put an end to freedom, they brought in their train widespread unemployment and serious distress, and converted the occupied territories into hunting-grounds for slave traders. The information given by Nazi statisticians and propagandists about the success of the recruiting

agents, though at times fragmentary and contradictory, is consistent enough to permit of the following estimate of the minimum numbers of foreign workers employed in Germany at the end of 1940 :

Danes	about 25,000	Alsatisans	about 30,000
Dutch	„ 100,000	Other French	„ ?
Belgians	„ 100,000	Czechs	„ 140,000
Italians	„ 90,000	Poles	„ 800,000
Jugoslavs	„ ?	Slovakians	„ ?
Bulgarians	„ ?	Norwegians	„ 500

These figures have been taken from various Nazi publications published during the last quarter of 1940 and the beginning of 1941.

What are the means of persuasion employed by the Nazi agents to induce workers of the countries crushed under the boots and tanks of the invading armies to place themselves in the service of their oppressors, to leave *their families to face alone the hardships, the bombardments, a hated soldiery and a notorious Gestapo* ? Every possible method is employed, from the most cunning propaganda tricks to the most barbarous brutality. In Norway, Holland, Flanders, they seek to awaken and foster the racial instincts. Norwegians, Dutch and Flemings are told they belong to the great family of the "Nordic race," the "master race," and they are urged to join with their brothers of the German race in establishing order in the world. Nazi agents speculate on the trade unionist and socialist convictions of the workers and call upon them to take part in the struggle of "German Socialism" for the final dethronement of Jewish-British-American plutocracy. Elsewhere these propaganda themes are adapted to local conditions. Everywhere they are backed by the pressure which the Nazis are able to exert owing to the fact that they have the public authorities entirely in their power : reduction and cancellation of unemployment benefit, exile to the labour camps established in the occupied territories, police persecution, discrimination in regard to supplies and rationing, etc. A method reported to be particularly effective is the worsening of working conditions at home to such a point that workers, compelled to work for the enemy any way, prefer to accept employment at more favourable conditions in Germany.

In Poland the Nazis have unloosed a reign of barbarity without precedent in the written history of the white race. When they need men, women or adolescents, no method is too ruthless. A local authority is given an order to supply a given number of workers. If fines and threats do not produce the desired effect, starvation of the population is resorted to. In spite of such savage methods, the Nazis find themselves more and more often obliged to organize man-hunts and round up their victims themselves, with rifle and whip in hand. Then the word "branka" goes from mouth to mouth, and there is a veritable panic among the population eligible for seizure. The Nazis search the district for fugitives, combing streets and corners of villages, fields and woods. When finally they have finished, a lamentable group of captives is ready to be shipped off to Germany like cattle.

Between August and December, 1940, the number of foreign workers deported to Germany rose from 900,000 to at least 1,300,000. To this figure has to be added an unknown number of Austrians and Danzigers, probably 100,000 or over. And further, some "hundreds of thousands" (to quote Gauleiter Henlein speaking at Reichenberg on 23rd November, 1940) of Sudeten German workers.

### **Prisoners of War**

Another considerable reserve of foreign labour is constituted by the prisoners of war. Hence Hitler's unwillingness to release any appreciable number of the two million French prisoners "as long as the state of war persists between Germany and France." The Polish prisoners, numbering probably 1,000,000, the hundreds of thousands of captive Norwegians, Dutch and Belgians are at the "mercy" of Hitler. Not all the prisoners are in Germany, but :

"Over half a million foreign workers and **some 600,000 to 700,000 prisoners of war**, a total therefore of far over a million additional workers, have been placed in the service of agriculture. **A further increase in this figure may be expected.** About 400,000 foreign workers and **so far some 200,000 prisoners of war**, altogether about 600,000 additional workers, are employed in industry. **This figure will also be increased considerably in the coming weeks and months.**" (*Reichsarbeitsblatt* of 25th August, 1940.)

Hitler "releases" prisoners of war in a way even more cynical than he frees his racial brethren. Thus Belgian prisoners of war have been released on condition that they stayed in or went to Germany as "voluntary" workers. In the same way 650,000 Polish prisoners of war have been "released," thus raising the number of Polish slaves in Germany to nearly a million and a half.

### **A historical achievement**

The conditions of life and work of the foreigners employed in Germany can only be imagined.

It is an established fact that within Germany are employed at least 2,200,000 to 2,500,000 slaves dragged from their countries, from their homes and families. With increases anticipated by the Reich ministry of labour, the number must by the end of 1940 have been nearing the three million mark. The German State further exploits, in a manner even more ruthless and cruel, German opponents of the Nazi regime, those tens, perhaps hundreds, of thousands of political prisoners which the State has undertaken to "re-educate" as citizens in forced labour camps.

It is an established fact also that the countries occupied by Nazi armies are nothing but huge prisons whose inhabitants, if they work, work only for the Hitler State.

The Nazis have a taste for doing things gigantic in style and unprecedented in history. Hitler can boast of having made of Germany the most colossal prison-house in history. If he lives he will witness also the greatest and most violent revolt of slaves in the history of mankind.