



John Maclean
Condemned from the Dock
Speech from the Dock
High Court, Edinburgh, May 9, 1918

Trial and Sentence of John Maclean

Before the Lord Justice General and a Jury, at Edinburgh,
on Thursday, 9th May, 1918

At Edinburgh on the 9th of May, 1918, John Maclean, M.A., one of the ablest and most courageous fighters for Socialism that this country has produced, was sentenced to five years' penal servitude. The charges were brought under the Defence of the Realm Regulations, for the violation of which Maclean had been previously sentenced to penal servitude, and from which, in July, 1917, in consequence of the efforts of the Socialist comrades in Russia and of the agitation in this country, he was released after serving fifteen months of a three years' sentence. The remaining eleven months of this term have been added to his present sentence.

Maclean's magnificent work for Socialism is well known, and as the founder of the Scottish Labour College, we believe he will be gratefully remembered beyond his own time.

With Karl Liebknecht, John Maclean shares the honour of being one of the first honorary vice-presidents of the Russian Soviet Congress, and he is also the Bolshevik Consul for Glasgow.

The trial of which an account is given in the following pages, aroused tremendous public interest, one of the most piquant incidents being an over-night march from Glasgow to Edinburgh, by a body of enthusiastic supporters.

The speeches on which the various charges are based, were delivered at a time when, from various causes, revolutionary feeling ran high in the Clyde district and all over the country. This feeling was not denied expression by Maclean, who with noble disregard of possible consequences to himself, did not hesitate to say what others silently and safely thought.

WHAT THE INDICTMENT CHARGED.

There were eleven charges in the indictment which accused Maclean of addressing audiences in Glasgow, Shettleston, Cambusland, Lochgelly, and Harthill, consisting in part of the civilian population, and in part of persons engaged in the production, repair, or transport of war material, or in other work necessary for the successful prosecution of the war, and making statements which were likely to prejudice the recruiting, training, discipline of H.M. Forces, and by which he further attempted to cause mutiny, sedition, and disaffection among the civilian population, and to impede, delay, or restrict the production

of war material, etc., contrary to the Defence of the Realm Acts. The first speech was made on 20th January, and the last on 4th April. The statements charged against Maclean, and which the indictment regarded as likely to have the effects above described, were that "tools should be downed," that "a revolution should be created," "that the Clyde district had helped to win the Russian Revolution," and that "the revolutionary spirit on the Clyde was at present ten times as strong as it was two years ago;" that "the workers on the Clyde should take control of the City Chambers and retain hostages and take control of the Post Offices and the banks;" that "the farmers should be compelled to produce food for the workers, and if they refuse their farms should be burned;" that "the movement would be supported by the French Canadians and the workers in New York," and that "other districts would follow the Clyde;" that "the present House of Commons should be superseded by a Soviet, and he did not care whether they met in the usual place or in Buckingham Palace"; and that "the workers in the munition works should be advised to restrict their output." On other occasions it was alleged that he advocated the seizing of newspaper offices, also the food stores on the Clyde and the ships—that he said the soldiers and sailors were with the workers, that "the workers should profit by the experience of their Russian brothers," and that "he was prepared to run any risk if he thought he could bring about a social revolution in Glasgow."

THE WITNESSES.

Maclean, who conducted his own case, refused to plead, and when the Lord Justice General intimated that he could object to any particular jurymen, he replied—"I would object to the whole of them." There were no witnesses for the defence. Twenty-eight witnesses were examined for the prosecution, of whom twenty-three were police witnesses, eight being special constables belonging—with the exception of two warehousemen and a compositor—to the professional classes. Of the remaining five civilian witnesses, two were shorthand writers employed by the police, there was one newspaper reporter, a mining inspector, and a working man who followed the occupation of slater.

Evidence relating to statements made by Maclean at meetings in the Stockwell Street Hall on January 20th and 27th was given by three special constables. In answer to the Lord Advocate, all three concurred in saying that the audiences "appeared to belong to the wage-earning class, and of the kind engaged in munition work." At the first meeting, one of the witnesses "took a full note," the others admitted having taken no notes, although one of them afterwards wrote his report from memory. At

the second meeting, one again took a full note, another "took a few notes," but did not send in a report, while the third "might have taken a word or two on a slip of paper," but went home and immediately started on his report.

Maclean, in cross-examining one of the witnesses (a commercial manager) said:—"Don't you remember it being pointed out quite clearly that the British Government had taken a cheque for £1000 from Kamenoff, who had been sent from Russia to be Ambassador in Britain?"

Witness—Yes; I think it was done in Aberdeen.

Maclean—Quite a moral thing to do from a capitalist point of view, and therefore that the Consul had been left without money, and I had been without support in Glasgow, and hence the collection at the meeting?

Witness—Yes.

In further cross-examination of the same witness, with reference to another lecture, Maclean asked him if he had any idea of what the lecture was about.

Witness—Yes. I remember you referred to a magazine (Beardmore's Works Magazine), generally on the question of production—in relation to that.

Maclean—Don't you remember me making a statement that production had been increased three times?

Witness—Yes.

Maclean—And quoting Government publications to that effect?

Witness—Yes, I should not be surprised.

Maclean—And did you hear me say that the workers were not getting three times the money in return?

Witness—Yes.

Maclean—And therefore that the workers were being robbed the same as they were before the war?

Witness—Yes.

Maclean—And do you remember me saying that we would have to take steps to prevent this robbery?

Witness—I remember you used the word "robbery."

Maclean—And quite frequently too.

MENTAL NOTES.

In the course of the evidence in connection with a meeting held in a football field at Shettleston, a police witness pointed out that he did not consider it wise to take notes at the meeting itself, owing to the attitude of the crowd, but instead went to the police office, in the company with other two officers, and made his notes there. The better part of valour seemed to have been chosen by the other four or five witnesses also, and no notes were taken at that particular meeting but mental notes.

With regard to a meeting addressed by Maclean in Flfe, there were some interesting points raised while Maclean was cross-examining the Police Superintendent of the county. This witness had his notes supplied to him by

a Press reporter, whom it transpired was present at Maclean's meeting in the interest of the police and the capitalist Press.

After the witness had read out a resolution that was passed at the meeting, Maclean asked whether he had spoken at some length to it.

Witness—I believe you did.

Maclean—You don't remember.

Witness—I don't remember exactly what you said in regard to the resolution; I did not pay so much attention to that.

Maclean—You paid a good deal of attention to the report which was sent in afterwards?

Witness—I remember it exactly.

Maclean—You remember the report, but you don't remember what I said?

Witness—You spoke about that.

Maclean—I spent a good deal of time on the economic question and the Government's issuing of paper money, and the Government making it difficult for people to live?

Witness—Yes, you did. This resolution was made later.

Maclean—That is what I want to get at. You take wee bits out of my speeches here and there?

Witness—This is your speech.

Maclean—But not the whole of it?

Witness—Not the whole of it.

Maclean—You don't remember me pointing out that the Government were responsible for withholding the food supply?

Witness—Yes.

Maclean—And that the people were out there at Bowhill in the cold, and the women and children were suffering as a consequence. You did not hear me say that?

Witness—I did.

Maclean—You begin to remember now. These were the main parts of the speech. The consequence of any man's speech is always based upon what goes before, but what has been read out comes at the tail end, at the fourteenth page of those sixteen pages.

Witness—These are only a few words of the speech.

Maclean—That is what I was leading up to again. The main parts of the speech, in which my themes are developed, are omitted. I want to expose the trickery of the British Government and the police, and the lawyers and so on.

In answer to the Lord Advocate, a shorthand writer said he remembered Maclean saying he was quite prepared to run any risk if he thought he could bring about a social revolution in Glasgow.

Cross-examined,

Maclean—Do you think it is a correct report of what I said at Harthill to say that I talked about bringing about a social revolution in Glasgow?

Witness—You did.

Maclean—It seems to me a very bad slip because a social revolution cannot be brought about in a city. It is either a slip on your part or a slip on my part?

Witness—It is not a slip on my part. You spoke about seizing the Municipal Buildings in Glasgow, and it seems to me that you meant that the revolution would have its beginning in Glasgow.

Maclean—There is a difference between a social revolution in Glasgow and beginning a social revolution in Glasgow.

A mining inspector in the service of the Fife Coal Company spoke as to a meeting addressed by Maclean at Crossgates, Fife. He considered the speech a deal. Thus one, and made a report of it to his employers.

The Lord Advocate—You took no notes, I think, of the speech?

Witness—No.

The Lord Advocate—Did any of the things that the prisoner said impress you a good deal?

Witness—Undoubtedly.

Maclean (cross-examining witness)—Are you sure that I said "sweep Lloyd George and the others out of existence"?

Witness—Perfectly certain. I have it noted here—"sweeping the whole gang out of existence."

Maclean—Was that taken down at the time?

Witness—No; I wrote it down afterwards. There are certain statements which one does not require to note down.

Maclean—It would be the last thing I would think of—sweeping Lloyd George out of existence. The nation could not get on without him. The working class could not. He is my good friend. I think there must be some mistake there. It might have been "sweeping Lloyd George and his gang out of power."

Witness—Out of "existence" was the word you used.

Maclean—You are not aware that the land in the past has been violently seized from the people by force? You don't object to the present owners of land holding the land even though they got it violently?

Witness—I might object to that, but it is a question of how you take it from them. For instance, in answer to a question as to how these things should be got, the question being "could we get these things by peaceful action?" you said—"I am here to develop a revolution."

Maclean—In what respect?

Witness—These are the words you used.

Maclean—Do you infer that revolution means violence?

Witness—You could not have put any other construction on your words after you had said that revolution here was to be on the same lines as in Russia. I understand that the Russian Revolution was a violent revolution.

Maclean—That is the most peaceful revolution the world has ever seen, and it is the biggest. Don't you know that this war is the most bloody that has ever taken place, and that revolution and bloodshed don't go together?

Witness—No.

Maclean—You said it was a dangerous speech. Dangerous to whom? To the Fife Coal Company.

Witness—I was a servant of the Fife Coal Company, and I was an official, and it was my duty to report to them.

Maclean—To go there and spy for the Fife Coal Company?

Witness—Thank you.

When examined by Mr. Blackburn for the Crown, a slater stated that he attended a meeting at Crossgates addressed by Maclean, that he took no notes, but that he remembered a few of the things said.

Mr. Blackburn—Did he say anything about the revolution in Russia?

Witness—Yes, he was pretty strong in that line.

Mr. Blackburn—Do you remember what he said?

Witness—He advised the working people of this country to follow up the Russian system and have a revolution here.

Mr. Blackburn—Did he say anything about forming miners' committees?

Witness—Yes.

Mr. Blackburn—For what purpose were the miners' committees to be formed?

Witness—To carry out that business, I suppose. The committees were to be something the same as they had in Russia.

Mr. Blackburn—Russia was to be the model again?

Witness—Yes.

Mr. Blackburn—Did he say anything about the banks and the pits?

Witness—He said they were to seize the banks and the pits.

Mr. Blackburn—What did you understand him to mean by saying that they were to seize the banks and seize the pits?

Witness—I don't know what he was going to do with them.

Mr. Blackburn—Did you think he was going to take them quietly or by violence?

Witness—By violence.

Mr. Blackburn—Did you think the speech was a dangerous speech at the time?

Witness—It was likely to lead to unsettledness.

Mr. Blackburn—Likely to unsettle some of his audience?

Witness—Yes.

Maclean—In what respect do you mean that it would unsettle some of the audience?

Witness—Carried away a bit by your strong speech, and especially the young folks, the enthusiasts.

Maclean—Carried away?

Witness—I doubt very much. It would not last very long.

Maclean—So that there has not been so much harm done?

Witness—No, I don't think so.

Maclean—A canny place, Flfe?

Witness—Yes.

Maclean—I should say the last place in which a revolution would take place would be Flfe?

Witness—It will take some working up for you.

Maclean—Don't you think the war also unsettled the people; that it has had an unsettling influence?

Witness—I don't know. I think there are a lot of folk who should try to get on with the war and get done with it.

A "SPECIAL'S" INSTRUCTIONS

A compositor-special-constable who attended a meeting in the Stockwell Street hall on 13th March said in answer to Mr. Blackburn that he went for the purpose of taking notes of anything seditious that might be said by speakers at the meeting.

Maclean—You were instructed not to take notes openly??

Witness—Yes.

Maclean—Why?

Witness—I don't know. No reason was given.

Maclean—You were not afraid to take notes openly?

Witness—I was not afraid, but I did not think it was judicious.

Maclean—You thought you should go there as a spy and not let people know what you were; that you were a spy?

Witness—Not necessarily.

Maclean—Spies are shot.

THE SAME "CATASTROPHE."

The Lord Advocate in his address to the Jury, said they had heard in the course of the evidence many references to Socialism, to social revolutions and the like. However inappropriate at the moment, there was nothing in this world, in this country, or its laws, even as that law had had to be framed to meet the emergency with which we are faced—to prevent any man getting up on a platform and talking about politics or talking about Socialism. But

there came a point at which discussion of social questions reached the attempt—the deliberate and persistent attempt—to plant the seeds of disunion, disaffection, disloyalty, sedition, and mutiny among our people. They could not afford that. The truth was that no society could afford that at any time. He did not pretend, any more than any of them would pretend, to see into the dark recesses of the human heart. He did not know—they would never know—none of us this side of Time would ever know what are precisely the motives which tempt a man to do what he can at home to destroy the liberty and the safety which we were defending abroad. The range of motive was wide, but just because they could not know what it was, they must judge of men by what they did. If they were going to turn society upside down by means of a general refusal to work, if they were going to turn society upside down by violent efforts devoted to the ruin of the existing structure of society instead of its repair, if they were going to make attempts of that kind, there faced them at once in this country the same catastrophe—the same betrayal—as overtook Russia. They must protect themselves against that kind of thing.

MACLEAN'S ADDRESS TO THE JURY.

It has been said that they cannot fathom my motive. For the full period of my active life I have been a teacher of Economics to the working classes, and my contention has always been that Capitalism is rotten to its foundations, and must give place to a new society. I had a lecture, the principal heading of which was "Thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not kill," and I pointed out that as a consequence of the robbery that goes on in all civilised countries today, our respective countries have had to keep armies, and that inevitably our armies must come clash together. On that and on other grounds, I consider Capitalism the most infamous, bloody and evil system that mankind has ever witnessed. My language is regarded as extravagant language, but the events of the past four years proved my contention.

THE CLASS WAR.

He (the Lord Advocate) accused me of my motives. My motives are clean. My motives are genuine. If my motives were not clean and genuine would I have made my statements while these shorthand reporters were present? I am out for the benefit of society, not for any individual human being, but I realise this that Justice and Freedom can only be obtained when Society is placed on a sound economic basis. That sound economic basis is wanting today, and hence the bloodshed we are having. I have not tried to get young men particularly. The young men came to my meetings as well as the old men. I know

quite well that in the reconstruction of Society, the class interests of those who are on top will resist the change, and the only factor in Society that can make for a clean sweep in Society is the working class. Hence the Class War. The whole history of Society has proved that Society moves forward as a consequence of an under class overcoming the resistance of a class on top of them. So much for that.

I also wish to point out to you this, that when the late King Edward the Seventh died, I took as the subject of one of my lectures "Edward the Peacemaker." I pointed out at the time that his "entente cordiale" with France and his alliance with Russia were for the purpose of encircling Germany as a result of the coming friction between Germany and this country because of commercial rivalry. I then denounced that title "Edward the Peacemaker," and said that it should be "Edward the War-Maker." The events which have ensued prove my contention right up to the hilt. I am only proceeding along the lines upon which I have proceeded for many years. I have pointed out at my Economic classes that, owing to the surplus created by the workers, it was necessary to create a market outside of this country, because of the inability of the workers to purchase the wealth they create. You must have markets abroad, and in order to have these markets you must have empire. I have also pointed out that the capitalist development of Germany since the Franco-Prussian War has forced upon that country the necessity for empire as well as this country, and in its search for empire there must be a clash between these two countries. I have been teaching that and what I have taught is coming perfectly true.

I wish no harm to any human being, but I, as one man am going to exercise my freedom of speech. No human being on the face of the earth, no government is going to take from me my right to speech, my right to protest against wrong, my right to do everything that is for the benefit of mankind. I am not here then, as the accused; I am here as the accuser, of Capitalism dripping with blood from head to foot.

In connection with the "ca' canny" question at Parkhead Forge. I wish to take up some of the particular points first of all before I deal with the revolution. It is quite evident that it was in connection with a report in the "Forward" that reference was made to David Kirkwood. It was there reported that Kirkwood had made a record output. Now David Kirkwood, representing the Parkhead Forge workers, at the end of 1915, when the dilution of labour began, put forward a printed statement for the benefit of Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues, the first sentence of which in big type was—"What you wish is greater output." He said that the Parkhead Forge workers

were then prepared to give a greater output and accept dilution if they, the workers, had some control over the conditions under which the greater output would accrue. That was his contention. Since he has got into position he seems to have boasted that he has got a record output. The question was put to me. Was this consistent with the position and with the attitude of the working class? I said it was not consistent with the attitude and the position of the working class, that his business was to get back right down to the normal, to "ca' canny" as far as the general output was concerned.

THE CA'CANNY POLICY.

The country has been exploited by the Capitalists in every sphere, to get the toilers to work harder to bring victory. I said at the commencement of the war that while this was being done, and while assurances were being given that at the end of the war the people would get back to normal, I said that circumstances would make such a return impossible. Now I have ample evidence to support that belief; I have used it at my meetings at Welr's of Cathcart—that they were asking the workers to toil harder, not only during the war, but after war they wish them to work harder and harder, because there is going to be "the war after the war," the economic war which brought on this war. You see therefore the workers are brought into a position where they are speeded up, and they are never allowed to go back again. They are speeded up again and again. What is the position of the worker? This country is not a free country. The worker is deprived of land or access to the land; he is deprived of workshops or access to the materials and tools of production; the worker has only one thing to do in the market, and that is to sell his labour power. The Capitalist purchases the labour power, and when he gets the worker inside the workshop, his business is to extract as much of that labour power out of him as possible. On the other hand, when it comes to wages, then the employer applies the principle of "ca' canny." "Ca' canny" is quite justifiable when it comes to the employer giving wages to the workers, and we have seen it since the commencement of the war. Prices rose right away from the commencement of the war while the workers' wages were kept at the old normal. Their wages were kept low. The purchasing power of the workers' wages was therefore diminished. They were therefore robbed to that extent. At the same time the workers were asked in the name of the country to work harder, "but," said the employers, "we will not give you any more money, although the money you are getting is purchasing less in the way of food, etc." That is the position.

The employers are changing their opinions now as a result of experience, but in the past they considered it in their economic interest to pay as low a wage as possible. On the other hand the position of the workers is to give as little of their energy as they possibly can and to demand the highest wage possible. If it is right for the employer to get the maximum of energy and pay the minimum of wage, then it is equally right for the worker to give the minimum of his energy and demand the maximum of wage.

What is right for the one is equally right for the other, although the interests of the two classes are diametrically opposed. That is the position, and in view of the fact that many of the workers have overworked themselves and have had to lie off through overstrain, and considering the treatment they get when thrown on the scrap-heap—kicked out like dogs when they are no longer useful—they are compelled to look after their own welfare. The worker has therefore in the past adopted the policy of "ca' canny," and I have in the interests of the working class, advocated the policy of "ca' canny," not because I am against the war, but, knowing that after the war the worker will have the new conditions imposed upon him, I hold still to the principle of "ca' canny." I accede to that.

So far as Parkhead Forge is concerned I also pointed out that none of the great big guns had been made for some time prior to the great offensive. When the offensive came, Gough, the friend of Sir Edward Carson, the man who before the war was going to cut down the Irishmen, he retreated and lost so many guns, and then the Glasgow workers had to give over their Easter holiday in order to make those guns. We have, therefore, Beardmore and others responsible for shortage of certain material, and we know from further disclosures that millions of shells have been useless, and perhaps that has been due to the fact of overspeeding, so that even over-speeding may do nothing for the advancement of the war. Furthermore, if big reserves of material are going to be built up, and the Germans are to be allowed to get them, that is going to be to the advantage of the Germans, and not to the advantage of the British.

"DOWN TOOLS" AND FOOD

With regard to the next point, "down tools," so far as Glasgow is concerned, I do not think I told the workers to "down tools." I am of the opinion that I said—"Now that you are determined to 'down tools,' it is of no use standing idle; you must do something for yourselves." As a matter of fact my statement was based on a resolution that had been passed by the A.S.E. in the Clyde area, the official Engineers' Committee. It met and it deter-

mined to down tools against the introduction of the Man Power Bill.

At the same time that was supplemented by unofficial effort at Geddes' meeting in the City Hall. There a resolution was put up by the workers and carried virtually unanimously, that if the Man Power Bill was put into operation, the Clyde district workers would "down tools." It was unnecessary for me, therefore, in light of these official and unofficial statements, to urge the "down tools" policy.

As a matter of fact, we were told that the Government had dismissed many munition girls just immediately prior to the great offensive, so that if the workers are guilty of stoppage of output of munitions, the Government is likewise responsible in the dismissal of those thousands of girls.

Now then, food and farms. I pointed out to the workers that what was necessary if they stopped work was the getting of food. There had been a shortage; the Government had held up the supplies, for several reasons probably—perhaps to get this rationing passed, in order to have a tight hold on food, and also lest the people get out of hand in reference to this Man Power Bill. I knew that there was plenty of food in stores in Glasgow, and that the farmers had food stored up in their farms. The farmers have used the war in order to make huge profit for themselves, and then the Government assisted them in connection with the potato regulations; and latterly, at the end of last year the Corn Production Act was passed, not in the interests of the farm labourers, but in the interests of the farmers.

When the demand for more food production was made, the farmers said they would do their best, and the Government refused to give the farm labourers a minimum wage of 25/- to 30/- a week—25/- at that time being equivalent to 10/- in normal times. The farmers were going to get extra as a consequence of the Corn Production Act. I therefore pointed out that if the workers went to the farmers and did not get the food stored up in the farms, they should burn the farms. We as Socialists have no interest in destroying any property. We want property to be kept because we want that property to be used for housing accommodation or other reasons, but I specially emphasised about the farmers for the purpose of drawing attention to this particular point.

In the same way, when it came to a question of seizing the Press, I suggested that when the "Daily Record" was seized, the plant should be broken up. I did not say that in connection with the "Glasgow Herald." I said so in connection with the "Record," not that it is a good thing to break up printing plant, but in order to draw

attention to the Harmsworth family and to the Rothermers and so on, and their vile press, which seems to be an index of the culture of Britain. I mention that particularly here, that I said the "Reeord" plant should be broken up, in order to emphasise the disgust of the organised workers with regard to that particular family of newspapers.

THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

So far as Ireland and America are concerned, that was mentioned particularly for the purpose of getting food from the St. Lawrence, food from United States, and food from the Argentine. What was needed was food in order to hold our own, for, as the "Glasgow Herald" pointed out, when the Bolsheviks first came into power, Britain was withholding food from Russia, in the expectation that frost and famine would overthrow the Bolsheviks. That is to say, they were anxious to murder women and children inside Russia, as well as men. The suggestion I made was in order to draw the attention of the workers to the need of having plenty of food stuffs to keep them going.

So far as the Government's responsibility for the murder of women and children is concerned, the reason for my statement is perfectly obvious. They have been accusing the Germans of killing women and children in this country. Perfectly true. Of course bombs dropped in Germany have not killed women and children, marvellous to say! But that apart; we had the Government getting hold of the food supplies immediately prior to, and immediately after the New Year, and creating a shortage. I pointed out that is was an artificial shortage. The Government was therefore responsible for the queues.

Women were standing in queues in the cold, and women had died of what they had contracted during their standing in the queues. The women had died therefore in consequence of the action of the Government, and I threw the responsibility upon the Government—and I do so still.

We know that women and children—human material—have been used up inside the factories, and the housing of the working class in this country has been so bad, and is so bad to-day, that the women and children of the working class die in greater proportion than the women and children of the better-to-do classes. I have always pointed out that the death rate among the working classes has always exceeded that in the better-to-do districts.

I also pointed out that the British Government had sent Russian subjects back to Russia to fight, and had given their wives 12/6 per week and 2/6 for each child. Now when I was functioning as Russian Consul, two deputations of Russian women came to me and they told me

sorrowful tales of depression, disease, and death in consequence of the fact that they had received 12/6 per week and 2/6 for each child. I wrote to the Secretary for Scotland in regard to that and I received no reply. The children ought not to suffer because their fathers have been taken, but those children have suffered. There is not a Lithuanian family in the West of Scotland but has trouble to-day as a consequence of the starving of these people. These women and children of the Russian community have died as a consequence of the meagre supplies given to them by the British Government, and I seize this opportunity for the purpose of making my statement public, in connection with these women, in the hope that the public in general will press the Government to see that these women and children are attended to at least on the same scale as the wives and dependents of British soldiers.

AMERICAN "INDEPENDENCE."

With regard to the Yankees, I said, and I say to-day, that the Yankees are out for themselves. The British Press—the British Capitalist Press—sneered and jeered at the Americans before the Americans came in, and pointed out how Americans were making piles of profit out of the war, but were not participating in this fight for so-called freedom. Those insults were offered to America, and when Mr. Woodrow Wilson said that America was too proud to fight, then that was used venomously. Therefore, if I erred, I erred on the same side as the Capitalist class of this country. I made the statement on American authority, not off my own bat. My authority is Professor Roland G. Usher, Professor of History at Washington University. I think his statement in "Pan-Germanism" is one of the finest, showing the moves throughout the world leading up to this war, and Usher has his bias in favour of Britain.

What I wish to particularly refer to are his two books "Pan-Germanism" and "The Challenge of the Future." In "Pan-Germanism" he surveys North and South and Central America. He takes the Atlantic first, and explains what will be the consequence of the war as regards South and Central America whichever side wins, and then he takes the Pacific. He works it out from a material and economic point of view, his purpose being to get Central and South America to work in with the United States. In his later book he modifies that position—that is to say in "The Challenge of the Future." He points out that America is still to-day economically dependent, that is to say, she has got to pay interest to financiers in French, in Britain, and therefore America cannot afford to carry out the bold schemes referred to in his book "Pan-Germanism."

I may now state that to-day the business men of this country know perfectly well that the Yankees are boasting of their independence. Therefore when you see references to American independence, that means that she no longer needs to pay interest to investors from outside, and that her policy will be modified in consequence of that new phase. This gentleman points out that as a consequence of American dependence she must say which side she will take. This book was printed prior to America entering the war. Woodrow Wilson's policy works in admirably with the suggestions in that book of Professor Usher, "The Challenge of the Future."

ALLIES AND THE BOLSHEVIKS.

We know quite well too that the United States of America prevented Japan in 1915 getting economic and political control over North China. 21 articles were imposed on China after the Japs had released their grip of the Germans there. America, alive to her own interests, getting to know of these 21 points, forced Japan to withdraw. America was there working in her own interests.

Japan has been, I think, incited to land at Vladivostock in consequence of the Russian Revolution, and in order to crush the Bolsheviks. The allies on both sides are united to crush the Bolsheviks. America did not take that course. America, early on, began to back up the Bolsheviks because America was afraid that if Japan got half Siberian Russia that would give her a strategic control of Siberia, and it would mean a closed door to American contract across the Pacific with Russia proper. America therefore has been looking to her own interests, and for that reason I contend that the Yankees, who have been the worshippers of the mighty dollar, are looking after their own interests in the present war; and, as to the great boast they have been making about what they are going to do, and their inadequate returns—that, I think, shows that America has not been over-anxious to plunge right away into this war and make all the sacrifices she has said. I know, of course, that America has had her own troubles at home, racial troubles, and also troubles with the workers. Numerous strikes have taken place in America since the commencement of the war, not only in consequence of the war, but also in connection with the economic position.

SOME BRITISH ATROCITIES.

Now then, I come to the doctors. The doctors I referred to were the prison doctors. When I was in Peterhead it was plain sailing until the middle of December, and then the trouble began. I was fevered up, and being able to combat that, I was then chilled down. Two men came to see me at the end of December, a prominent lec-

turer in this country, and Mr. Sutherland, M.P. and to them I protested that my food was being drugged. I said that there was alcohol in the food lowering my temperature. I know that potassium bromide is given to people in order to lower their temperature. It may have been potassium bromide that was used in order to lower my temperature. I was aware of what was taking place in Peterhead from hints and statements by other prisoners there; that from January to March, the so-called winter period, the doctor is busy getting the people into the hospital, there breaking up their organs and their systems.

I call that period the eye-squinting period, because the treatment then given puts the eyes out of view. Through numerous expedients I was able to hold my own. I saw these men round about me in a horrible plight. I have stated in public since that I would rather be immediately put to death than condemned to a life sentence in Peterhead. Attacks were made upon the organs of these men and also upon their nervous systems, and we know from the conscientious objectors that the Government have taken their percentage of these men—some have died, some have committed suicide, others have been knocked off their heads, and in this way got into asylums. The very same process has gone on there. Mrs. Hobhouse has done a good service to mankind in registering the facts, but, unfortunately for Mrs. Hobhouse, she does not know how the result has been obtained. I experienced part of the process, and I wish to emphasise the fact that this callous and cold system of destroying people is going on inside prisons now.

Whatever is done to me now, I give notice that I take no food inside your prisons, absolutely no food; because of the treatment that was meted out to me. If food is forced upon me, and if I am forcibly fed, then my friends have got to bear in mind that if any evil happens to me, I am not responsible for the consequences, but the British Government. If anything had happened to me when I was last in prison, it would have been attributed to John Maclean, not to those who are working in the interests of the Government. I have been able to lay down my principle and policy, not from mere internal and personal experience, but from objective experience. I studied the matter carefully, I combated the evils that were to be perpetrated by the Government by reducing my food to the minimum, and the present Secretary for Scotland knows that when I was in Perth I wrote to him asking more food because of my reduced weight. I was about eight stones in weight at the time, and the doctor after weighing me, had to grant me more food. The food, however, was of no use to me. I threw it into the pot. My position is, therefore, that I take no more Government food, that I will not allow any

food to be forced in upon me, and if any food is forced in upon me I am not responsible for it, but when the Government can launch millions of men into the field of battle, then perhaps the mere disposal of one man is a mere bagatelle and a trifle.

RUSSIA'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM.

So far as Russian freedom and British slavery are concerned, I wish to draw attention to the fact that an article appeared in the "Scotsman" the other day about Bolshevism, and I have a feeling that that article was written especially for this trial to create a feeling against Bolshevism. The statements in that article are a travesty. Inside Russia, since Lenin and Trotsky and the Bolsheviks came into power, there have been fewer deaths than for the same period under any Czar for 300 years. Capitalists have been killed perhaps, officers have been killed perhaps, because they have not submitted to those who have come to the top—the majority of the people—in the name of Bolshevism. Some may have been put to death.

When there was a shortage and disorganisation of the food supplies before the Bolsheviks came into power, there may have been individuals who, in their scramble for food for themselves, have gone to excess, but the crimes of individuals cannot be charged to Governments. No person would hold the Government responsible for the action of those individuals. The Bolshevik Government has not given orders to kill men. They have to imprison men until a complete reconstruction of Society has come about. It may be news to some of you that the Co-operative movement in Russia has grown more rapidly than in any other part of the world, and since the Bolsheviks have come into power, co-operation has been growing more and more rapidly. The universities have been used during the day, and in the evenings, to train the working classes in order that they may manage the affairs of their country in an intelligent manner. The schools have also been used in the evenings, the music halls have been used, and the theatres, and the picture houses, all have been used, not for the trivial trash which is given to the people of this country—but all for the purpose of organising the production of food and the work inside the workshops and factories.

We saw that prior to our comrades in Russia signing their treaty, when the Germans made their advance into Estonia, Lithuania, and so on—the border countries between Germany and Russia—the Capitalist class in the respective towns had lists of men who were members of the Soviets, and those members of the Soviets were taken and put against a wall, and shot at the instigation of the propertied class of Russia. They have been responsible for more death than the Soviets. Our Finnish comrades,

the Red Guards, have pointed out that the ordinary procedure of war has not been acceded to them, that as soon as the White Guards, the capitalist class, take any of them prisoners, they immediately put them to death. It has been said that our comrades over there in Russia were working hand in hand with the Germans, and the proof of this was that the Germans allowed Lenin to pass through Austrian territory. Our comrades have stood up against Germany as best they could, and the capitalists—the so-called patriots of Russia—have been working hand in hand with Germany in order to crush the people of Russia. That has been done in the Ukraine. It has been done in the various States stolen by Germany from Russia.

FACE TO FACE.

The Lord Advocate pointed out here that I probably was a more dangerous enemy that you had got to face than in the Germans. THE working class, when they rise for their own, are more dangerous to capitalists than even the German enemies at your gates. That has been repeatedly indicated in the Press, and I have stated it as well. I am glad that you have made this statement at this the most historic trial that has ever been held in Scotland, when the working class and the capitalist class meet face to face. The Bolsheviks got into power in October, and the people wished peace, and they were doing their best to get peace. The Bolsheviks wished peace throughout the world. They wished the war to cease in order that they might settle down to the real business of life, the economic reorganisation of the whole of Russia. They therefore got into negotiation with the Germans and they and the Germans met at Brest Litovsk.

Towards the end of December there was a pause in negotiations for ten days. In order to allow the British and their Allies to go to Brest Litovsk. An opportunity, therefore, was given to Great Britain to go to Brest Litovsk. Ten days were given. The last day was January 4 of this year. Great Britain paid no attention to this opportunity, but on January 5 Lloyd George, in one of his insidious speeches, seemed to climb down as it were. He was followed by Mr. Woodrow Wilson. But a speech by Mr. Lloyd George on the 5th was of no use. It was mere talk. It was mere camouflage, or, a better word still, bluff, pure bluff. Why did the Government not accept the opportunity and go to Brest Litovsk? If conditions absolutely favourable to Germany were proposed, then Britain could have stopped the negotiations and plunged once more into the war, and I am confident of this, if Germany had not toed the line and come up square so far as peace negotiations were concerned, that the Russian workers would have taken the side of Britain, and I am

confident of this, that the Socialists in all the Allied countries would have backed up their Governments in order to absolutely crush Germany, and we would at the same time have appealed to the Socialists of Germany to overthrow their Government.

Great Britain did not do so. On the other hand, they came on with their Man Power Bill, and also with their factor of short food. All these things must be considered in their ensemble before you can understand the position taken up by myself. When this universal peace meeting was held at Brest Litovsk, then Trotsky played a very, very bold game. He knew the risks he ran. He and the Bolsheviks spread millions of leaflets amongst the workers of Germany in the trenches—the German Soldiers—urging them to stop fighting and to overthrow the Kaiser, the junkers, and the capitalist classes of Germany. They made a bold bid by trying to get the German workers on to their side. Great Britain has been doing the very same since the commencement of the war. Great Britain has been trying to bring about, and hoping and urging for a revolution in Germany, in the hope that the working class would overthrow the autocratic class there and give up peace.

From a British point of view, revolution inside Germany is good; revolution inside Britain is bad. So says this learned gentleman. He can square it if he can. I cannot square it. The conditions of Germany economically are the conditions of Britain, and there is only a very slight difference between the political structure of Germany and that of this country at the best. And so far as we workers are concerned, we are not concerned with the political super-structure; we are concerned with the economic foundation of society, and that determines our point of view in politics and industrial action. Our Russian comrades, therefore, did the very same as the British have been doing; they appealed to the German soldiers and workers to overthrow their Government.

Strikes broke forth in Italy. The strikes in January passed into Germany, more menacing strikes than have taken place inside the British Isles. An appeal was made from comrades to comrades. Many soldiers in Germany mutinied; many sailors of Germany mutinied, and these men are being shot down by their Government. All hail to those working men of Germany who refused at the bidding of the capitalist to go on with this war. Their names will go down bright and shining where those of the capitalist of to-day and of the past will have been forgotten.

It would be a very bad thing for the workers of the world if a revolution were developed and carried through to success in Germany, and no similar effort were made

In this country. The German workers' enemy is the same as our enemy in this country—the landlords and the capitalists are our mutual enemy—and if it was their business and their right and their duty to overthrow their autocratic government, then it will be a duty on us not to allow these men to overthrow their Government, and then to allow France, Britain, and Italy to march over them and make these German workers slaves at the dictates of the capitalists of the other parts of the world. There was the situation from their point of view and from our point of view, too.

• THE CAPITALISTS ABOLISH THE CONSTITUTION.

It has been pointed out that if we developed a revolution the Germans would come over and, instead of having liberty, we would be under the iron heel of the Kaiser. If I grant that that is true, it is equally true in the other case that the Allies would do in Germany what the German Kaiser with the capitalist class of Germany would do in this country. There can only be a revolution, when the workers of all countries stand united and capitalism is crushed, and until then the war must go on incessantly and incessantly. It is not because I am against my own people. My own people are the workers here, and the workers in Germany and elsewhere.

It was not the workers who instigated the war. The workers have no economic interest to serve as a consequence of the war, and because of that, it is my appeal to my class that makes me a patriot so far as my class is concerned, and when I stand true to my class, the working class, in which I was born, it is because my people were swept out of the Highlands, and it was only because of my own ability that I remained. I have remained true to my class, the working class, and whatever I do I think I am doing in the interests of my class of my country. I am no traitor to my country. I stand loyal to my country because I stand loyal to the class which creates the wealth throughout the whole of the world.

We are out for life and all that life can give us. I therefore took what action I did in the light of what was transpiring inside Russia, inside Austria, and inside Germany. You have got to bear that in mind when you wish to understand my remarks. I therefore urged the workers in this country that if they were going to strike, mere striking was useless, because they would be starved back into work again, and that if they were going to be against the Man Power Bill, it meant that they were out for peace. And as there was no signs on either side of coming to an amicable constitutional conclusion, then it was the business of the workers to take the whole matter in hand themselves.

War was declared! no matter the motive, no matter the cause, all constitution and order was thrown aside, and in the prosecution of the war the British Government found it necessary to throw aside every law in this country and to bring in the Defence of the Realm Act, which means the negation of all law in the country. I have repeatedly pointed out that if the Government wishes to get a grip of any individual, they do so under the Defence of the Realm Act. The Government have power to do anything they desire. That may be right, or it may be wrong, but the position is this, that the bringing in of the Defence of the Realm Act has thrown aside all law and order as we know it during normal periods.

In the plunge into the war we have the abolition of constitutional methods, and therefore I contended, and I contend today, that if it is right and proper on the part of the Government to throw aside law and order—constitutional methods—and to adopt methods that mankind has never seen before, then it is equally right that the members of the working class, if the war is not going to cease in a reasonable time, should bring about a reasonable settlement, and a reasonable settlement to the workers is no victory to either side.

PROBLEMS AHEAD

If one side or the other wins, then the revenge will come, as France to-day is seeking revenge after the drubbing she got in 1871. Realising that, we, as representatives of the workers of the world, do not wish one side or the other to be the victors. We wish the status quo prior to the war to be re-established. If the workers are going to do that, then it means that they have to adopt methods and tactics entirely different from the methods which would be adopted, or could be adopted under normal circumstances. Abnormal lines of action must be taken, and I urge abnormal lines of action to be taken, such as our comrades in Russia took. The very circumstances of the war forced in upon the Russian workers' committees, and their national Soviets the line of the action which they adopted, and the only way we could do it would be to adopt methods peculiar to the working class organisation in this country in the interests of the workers themselves.

The suggestions I made were intended only to develop revolutionary thought inside the minds of the workers. I pointed out at the meeting on the 20th that representatives of the police were present, and therefore if the workers were going to take action themselves, it would be absolutely foolish and stupid for them to adopt the suggestions I had given them. I only gave out these suggestions so that they might work out plans of their own if they thought fit to take action to bring about peace. I was convinced, and I am still convinced, that the working class,

if they are going to take action, must not only go for peace but for revolution. I pointed out to the workers that, in order to solve all the problems of capitalism, they would have to get the land and the means of production.

I pointed out to them that if capitalism lasted after the war, with the growing size of the trusts, with the great aggregations that were taking place, with the improved machinery inside the works, with the improved methods of speeding up the workers, with the development of research and experiment, that we were going to have the workers turning out three, four and five times as much wealth as they had done in pre-war times, and a great problem would arise—a greater problem than ever before—would arise before this country of disposing of its surplus goods on the markets of the world, not only of getting markets for these surplus goods, but of getting the raw materials. We see to-day in the committees appointed by the Government that they are anxious to get control of the markets of the world in order to exclude the Germans.

THE RUSH FOR EMPIRE

Our Government has already appointed a Land Organisation of the Board of Trade and of the Foreign Office whereby it is going to plant agents here and there throughout the world, so that in a scientific method British products may be thrown on to the markets of the world. This is scientific methods, applied to commerce internationally as well as nationally. These preparations are being made, it is being said, for the purpose of carrying on the war after the war. Nobody denies that there is going to be a war after the war, an economic war between the Germans and her friends, and the British and the Americans and their friends, and there is going to be a war between the nations, and the respective Governments will take care that, as far as they can, their capital will be planted in areas over which they have control.

You have, then, the rush for empire. We see that the Americans already have got one or two of the islands in the West Indies, and I understand that America has also got hold of Dutch Guiana. It has also been suggested that Mexico be brought into the American States. Britain herself is looking after her own interests. She has taken the German Colonies, she is also in Mesopotamia and in Palestine, going there for strategic reasons, but when Britain gets hold of Mesopotamia, Palestine and Arabia, she will use them for her own ends, and I do not blame Britain for that. Britain has got many troubles.

We see Japan also on the outlook. Japan, has been trying repeatedly to get control of Northern China. She would also like to get a great big chunk of Siberia. Even to-day we see then tentacles being sent out, all anxious to grab more and more power. We know the secret treaties

and disclosures made by our Bolshevik comrades. We know that these nations have been building up their plans so that when the Germans have been crushed they will get this territory, or that territory. They are all out for Empire. That was absolutely necessary for the commercial prosperity of the nations.

All the property destroyed during the war will be replaced. In the next five years there is going to be a great world trade depression and the respective Governments, to stave off trouble, must rush more and more into the markets of the world to get rid of their produce, and in fifteen years' time from the close of this war—I have pointed this out at all my meetings—we are into the next war if Capitalism lasts; we cannot escape it.

Britain had the wealth. Britain did everything she could to hold back the war. That necessarily had to be the attitude of Great Britain, but in spite of all Great Britain's skill or cunning, there has been war. I have heard it said that the Western civilisations are destroying themselves as the Eastern civilisations destroyed themselves. In fifteen years' time we may have the first great war bursting out in the Pacific—America v. Japan, or even Japan and China v. America. We have then the possibilities of another war, far greater and far more serious in its consequences than the present war. I have pointed that out to my audiences.

“NOTHING TO RETRACT”

In view of the fact that the great powers are not prepared to stop the war until the one side or the other is broken down, it is our business as members of the working class to see that this war ceases to-day, not only to save the lives of the young men of the present, but also to stave off the next great war. That has been my attitude and justifies my conduct in recent times. I am out for an absolute reconstruction of Society, on a Co-operative basis, throughout all the world; when we stop the need for armies and navies, we stop the need for wars.

I have taken up unconstitutional action at this time because of the abnormal circumstances, and because precedent has been given by the British Government. I am a Socialist, and have been fighting and will fight for an absolute reconstruction of Society for the benefit of all. I am proud of my conduct. I have squared my conduct with my intellect, and if everyone had done so this war would not have taken place. I act square and clean for my principles. I have nothing to retract. I have nothing to be ashamed of. Your class position is against my class position. There are two classes of morality. There is the working class morality and there is the Capitalist class morality. There is this antagonism as there is the antagonism between Germany and Britain. A victory for

Germany is a defeat for Britain; a victory for Britain is a defeat for Germany. And it is exactly the same so far as our classes are concerned. What is moral for the one class is absolutely immoral for the other, and vice versa. No matter what your accusations against me may be; no matter what reservations you keep at the back of your head, my appeal is to the working class. I appeal exclusively to them because they and they only can bring about the time when the whole world will be in one brotherhood, on a sound economic foundation. That, and that alone, can be the means of bringing about a reorganisation of Society. That can only be obtained when the people of the world get the world, and retain the world.

FIVE YEARS PENAL SERVITUDE

The Lord Justice General, having charged the jury, the latter without retiring, intimated through their foreman, a verdict of guilty on all charges.

The Lord Justice General—Have you anything to say, John Maclean?

Maclean—No; I think I have said enough for one day.

The Lord Justice General — John Maclean, It would be idle for me to dwell upon the gravity of the offence of which you have been found guilty, by a jury of your fellow-countrymen after a very patient trial and after the clearest possible evidence, and because you are obviously a highly educated and intelligent man, and realise the thorough seriousness of the offence you have committed. This is not the first time that you have been convicted of an offence against the Regulations under the Defence of the Realm Act, and in pronouncing sentence to-day, I have taken into account the fact that you have still, so far as I could judge, over a year to serve of your former sentence. To-day the sentence of the Court is that you be sent to penal servitude for a period of five years.

Maclean (turning to comrades in the Court)—Keep it going, boys; keep it going.

