

All together for the last battle

For the final chapter in the destruction of the Nazi plague employers and employees should co-operate as never before, and take their costs off together, sacrificing everything for victory.



(Continued from page 2)

AT the same time, the W.A.E.C.'s should be encouraged to set up Production Committees at which their officials and employees can get together on an equal footing to thrash out ways and means of increasing production.

Such committees exist in only two counties, Hertfordshire and Surrey. They have done useful work; but they cannot function properly unless proper facilities for time and travel are provided.

It is within the power of the Government to see that such committees are set up in all counties.

The more difficult problem of Production Committees on farms can be approached from the Farming or Agricultural Clubs which are being set up in a number of counties, sometimes spontaneously, sometimes by the W.A.E.C.'s.

If these are really formed on a basis of equality between farmers and workers, and if they resolutely set out to discuss local practical matters, instead of merely arranging lectures on dark nights when there is nothing better to do, they can have a big effect for good throughout the industry.

Here, again, vigorous encouragement is what is necessary; and it has not been forthcoming.

With regard to the County War Agricultural Committees themselves, these have all along been over-weighted with representatives of the landowning and large farmer class. Each is supposed to include one workers' representative, which is quite insufficient in view of the importance of labour in the industry.

The small farmers, also, who have special problems in the fight for production, are quite inadequately represented. The present committees should be strengthened by the inclusion of a number of elected representatives of farm workers and farmers, including small farmers.

★

NO campaign to increase food production can leave out of account the improvement of farm workers' wages and conditions, which are still in every way inferior to those of other workers of comparable skill and importance in the war effort.

The farm workers have won a national minimum wage of £3 a week, compared with 30s. to 35s. a week before the war; but in that time it must be remembered:

1. That the cost of living has gone up.
2. The output per man in the industry has increased by no less than 60 per cent., though the total number employed in the industry, including the Women's Land Army, is only slightly more than before the war.
3. The farmers have received guaranteed and increased prices.

The farm workers' share has, therefore, increased little, if at all, and the application for an increased national minimum of £4 per week made in June is absolutely justified, and will receive 100 per cent. support of all workers, industrial as well as agricultural.

Wartime conditions prevent the immediate carrying out of improvements such as drainage and piped water supplies, the need for which has been a crying scandal for years; but much could be done to help the farm worker and his wife by the extension of British Restaurant and pie schemes, and the granting of supplementary rations.

(Continued in column 3)

Do you know?

- 1.—Who was Joseph Arch?
- 2.—Where and when did the biggest farm strike occur in Britain?
- 3.—What did Chamberlain say in his famous Kettering speech?
- 4.—Who is the Editor of "The Land Worker"?
- 5.—Who are the Joint Parliamentary Secretaries to the Ministry of Agriculture?
- 6.—Who was Minister of Agriculture before Mr. Robert Hudson?
- 7.—What is the Trade Union Movement's memorial to the Tolpuddle martyrs?
- 8.—Why the sickle in the Red Flag of the Soviet Union?
- 9.—What was the minimum wage of the agricultural worker in 1920 and 1924?

(Answers on page 7)

£4 demand is justified

(Continued from column 2)

On the urgent question of housing, the Government has neither planned enough houses nor given any evidence that it is capable of getting built even the miserable 8,000 that it has promised.

An increase in the housing programme and a speed-up of its execution is a matter of urgent wartime necessity.

All these measures will help the war effort at the same time as benefiting the farm workers.

★

THERE is much talk at the present moment around various post-war plans for the industry.

This is natural; but it must not divert us from the supreme effort that the fight for victory demands from agriculture, no less than from other industries and the armed forces.

What will happen after the war will depend on what the industry has done in the war.

Many of the wartime changes, especially Machinery Pooling and Production Committees, will leave their mark for all time, and will help the workers and small farmers in the difficult times that may be ahead.

But in the last resort, the future of the industry depends on those who work and produce in it. They themselves have the power to see, by organisation and vigilance, that it provides them with a future of real prosperity and happiness.

MASTER RACE!

Ilya Ehrenburg, famous Russian author of "The Fall of Paris," saw the conquering Hun at the end of his glory. This is what Ehrenburg wrote:

It happened on Friday, June 14, 1940. I saw the Germans enter Paris.

First, in open cars, came the officers, insolent eyes half-closed, clicking cameras, demonstrating their superiority with their chains, boots and forage caps. Their cars were loaded with swag-sacks, pigskin valises, pictures, barrels.

The ancient houses trembled when the tanks passed. To me it seemed that the treads still steamed with the blood of children.

The soldiers marched by from morning till night—tall, mean-looking, with square, thick skulls and eyes like clouded glass. With much stamping of feet and guffawing marched the brewers, clerks, duellers, pimps, metaphysicians, money-makers, hangmen, hen-eaters, supermen, sausage-makers, baboats.

From Prussia, Saxony, and Bavaria they came, the S.S. men with skulls on their sleeves and stolen watches and spoons in their pockets, self-satisfied and greedy, wading sausages, and bananas, sweets and cutlets, spitting, whistling, relieving themselves by the side of monuments.

So they marched—these rats with long incisors, these hogs, these German women like hungry hyenas, these grey-green locusts. So they crawled—these reptiles, these snakes from the "Adolf Hitler" Division, these lecturers with faces like toads, these croaking, grunting hangmen.