

THE SHEFFIELD CO-OPERATOR BULLETIN

Issued by the Sheffield Co-operative Party, 17, Bank Street, Sheffield
Telephone 23982 A. Billard, Secretary

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CHRISTMAS - the common celebration of the common people. All that Christmas means is challenged by the forces of dictatorship. In how many homes will the celebration be saddened by empty places because freedom demands a heavy price. Equality of sacrifice in its payment is almost an impossibility: that we can all play some part is an undoubted fact.

Co-operation for every purpose in life implies the application of the Christmas spirit all the year round, and in every sphere.

Let Christmas 1939 mean for us a new effort, a new inspiration in the faith, a new encouragement to dispel the man-made darkness of these days, for Christmas will be celebrated under the black clouds of war. In this almost World-wide 'black-out' the light within must be kept aglow by all who love truth and justice.

TO ALL THOSE ON DIRECT WAR SERVICE - in air, land, or sea - **GREETING!** You, comrades, are fighting to preserve Christmas in that you are fighting for Democracy, Freedom, and Peace. Christmas that means Peace and Goodwill to men is only possible in a free community.

TO THOSE WITH RELATIVES IN THE SERVICES - **GREETING!** In the faith that the new Peace will be a real peace, a permanent peace, the only worth-while reward for so great an effort.

TO CO-OPERATORS, TRADE UNIONISTS, SOCIALISTS - **GREETING!** In so far as you stand for unity, determination, and a rebirth of faith in Democracy.

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CO-OPERATIVE SOCIAL SERVICE.

War-time conditions have created new social problems. New regulations are being issued with regard to dependants' allowances, hardship committees, appeals for conscientious objectors, payment for the billeting of children and so on.

As ever, the Co-operative Party is willing to help with advice wherever possible. To this end, in addition to the office at 17 Bank Street, a Bureau of Information has been set up at the Southey Guild Room, Southey Avenue, open for interviews on Thursdays from 6-30 to 7-30 p.m., and Sundays from 11 a.m. to noon. Mr. E. Mulligan, 48 Newark Street, has also offered assistance to Co-operators resident in the Attercliffe district.

The Co-operative representatives on the City Council will also advise wherever possible. The following are the names and addresses of Co-operative nominees on the City Council:-
Ald. W. Bancroft, 7 Osgathorpe Road.
Coun. J. H. Bingham, J.P., 10 Woodholm Rd.
Coun. J. Dimberline, J.P., 26 Abbey Cresc.
Coun. P. Dinsley, 32 Abbey Lane.
Coun. R. Fisher, 85 Southey Avenue.
Ald. J. Hawnt, 310 Abbey Lane.
Ald. J. A. Longden, J.P., 135 Blair Athol Rd.
Coun. S. H. Marshall, J.P., 44 Lifford St.
Coun. P. W. R. Stokes, 50 Burton Road.
Coun. H. Slack, 70 Hawksley Avenue.
Ald. T. H. Watkins, J.P., 19 Corker Road.
Coun. J. S. Worrall, 742 Prince of Wales Rd.



CO-OPERATION STILL ADVANCING IN SHEFFIELD

The two Sheffield Societies have issued their first Quarterly Reports under War-time conditions, and both show increases in trade. The Brightside & Carbrook increase amounts to £51,296 and the Sheffield & Ecclesall to £43,485.

Both Societies report upon the difficulty consequent upon the many Government regulations that have been made since the outbreak of the War. The quantities of bacon, butter, and sugar have been seriously affected, and both Committees agree that full rationing of supplies is the only solution. Managers and staff have done their very best to cope with these difficulties, all of which will be overcome when a proper rationing system is applied.

105 B. & C. employees have taken up duties in the various Military Services.

Developments reported.

The Buchanan Road premises on the Parson Cross estate were opened by the Brightside & Carbrook Society on September 29th, the sales fully justifying the Directors' action in extending shopping facilities on this large estate.

The Sheffield & Ecclesall are erecting premises at the corner of Becking Lane and Greenhill Main Road. Preparations are going forward to transfer the Tailoring workrooms from Abbeydale Road to Cemetery Road, and the Funeral Furnishing workshop to Stalker Walk. The Boot Repairing Factory is now in occupation though transport restrictions will prevent the operation of the full scheme for the collection of repairs from house to house, meantime these will be collected from the Grocery branches. The Arcade extensions have resulted in the opening of two new departments - Pharmacy and Optical, on the Ecclesall Road fronting. Fittings and equipment of these, as well as the Shiprody saloons are of the most modern and efficient type.

Reviewing the whole of the trading departments and the services offered by the two Societies there is no reason why Sheffield Co-operators should not secure everything they require from their own organisation, thus strengthening the workers' own movement during a time of stress and difficulty.

UNFAIR TREATMENT
REASONS FOR SHORTAGES OF SUPPLIES

Co-operative Societies in all parts of Britain have been experiencing great difficulties in obtaining adequate allocations of food supplies. Ample evidence from all over the Movement has been given of erratic supplies and unfair distribution of Government-controlled food-stuffs.

The C.W.S. quoting one example, state that the Government took over stocks of butter in larger cold stores and "large quantities which lay in numerous small cold stores were left in private ownership." The C.W.S. states also that "there was, undoubtedly, a leakage of information which enabled certain traders to remove a considerable quantity of butter from the larger cold stores immediately before the Government took over stocks."

In addition to this the datum system for allocation affected the Movement owing to the continuous growth of membership. The only fair method of distribution so far as the Co-operatives were concerned, and pending full rationing, was to have taken the records of membership from the Societies as a guide to their requirements.

THE DAILY EXPRESS has been carrying on another of its extravagant campaigns against the Co-operative Movement with the usual pretence of championing the small shop-keeper. The Co-operatives have never been afraid of the small trader any more than they are afraid of the big trader - and big Capitalist who is the real instigator of press attacks and who somehow seems to influence Governmental policy.

POLITICAL REPRESENTATION COUNTS

PREMIER RECEIVES CO-OPERATIVE DEPUTATION

During the Great War 1914-18, Co-operators in conference and by correspondence repeatedly pressed for interviews with the Premier, but were refused. It was as a result of the Government's general treatment of the Co-operative Movement that the special Congress was held and Co-operative Political Representation decided upon.

The effect of that Representation has been shown this time in Food Control and other local Committees. But perhaps the most significant change in the Government attitude is shown by our Representation in Parliament; and on November 23rd the Prime Minister received a deputation led by a Co-operative ex-Cabinet Minister (Mr. A.V. Alexander), the Chairman of the Co-operative Party (Mr. A. Barnes, M.P.) and Mr. R. J. Morrison, M.P. - all members of the Co-operative Parliamentary Committee. In short, Co-operators now have the means of direct access to Parliament and Ministries through their own nominees.

Mr. Chamberlain impressed.

The Premier said he was impressed with the case put by the deputation, and here is an extract from a letter he sent following upon the interview:-

"Dear Alexander, - When I received the deputation from the Parliamentary Committee of the Co-operative Congress on Thursday last, I promised to discuss further with the Minister of Food the questions raised by the deputation and, in particular, the arrangements to be made during the interim period before rationing can be introduced.

"On the general question, that it is desirable to introduce rationing in respect of commodities of which there is a shortage, there is no difference of opinion between us. We are agreed that bacon and butter should be rationed, and the Minister of Food will announce in the House to-day the date on which it is intended that the rationing of these commodities should be put into operation.

"The measures to be taken for adjusting supplies to requirements in the interval between now and January 8th are naturally a subject for serious consideration. It cannot be hoped with limited supplies and incomplete data that distributive troubles can be immediately surmounted, but it is confidently expected that with each week the available supplies will be more equitably distributed according to the present location of consumers. Figures have been obtained, giving a rough estimate of recent adjustments in the grouping of population and the earliest possible advance information of the results of registration will be obtained and used to secure that the flow of bacon and butter may be directed through the channels of distribution in a volume more nearly approaching the needs of the public.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) Neville Chamberlain."

10 Downing Street,
Whitehall.

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DEARER MEAT

Food Minister's strange decision

The decision of the Food Minister (Mr. W.S. Morrison) to remove the control on home-killed meat and leave an "open market" has created consternation in the butchering trade, and will, in the opinion of practical and experienced butchers, mean high prices and scarcity.

When he made the announcement, the Food Minister was warned by Mr. A.V. Alexander, M.P. that with present short supplies it would mean skyrocketing prices. The shortage of imported supplies, and consequent increased demand for home-produced meat, was acknowledged by the Ministry

of Food itself two days before the Minister made his announcement. A Press statement admitted that "butchers in some districts are receiving complaints because of their inability to meet all their customers' requirements for imported meat," and that "the amount of imported supplies being released at the present time is 50% of the normal."

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C O O P E R A T I O N A N D T H E E M P I R E

Through its Wholesale Societies, the Co-operative Movement is one of the largest Empire traders. Some years ago, the Movement came to the rescue of New Zealand farmers. In the 1937 West African cocoa scandal the Movement showed its Empire trade policy was not based on exploitation.

Co-operators have depots in most of the Dominions. Natives on the Ceylon tea plantations have their own co-operative trading and education societies. Farmers in many of the Dominions are organised on co-operative lines.

Trade figures recently published showed that the C.W.S. purchases from Empire countries in 1938 amounted to nearly £19,000,000. £4,616,818 imports came from New Zealand; £4,390,777 from Australia; £4,174,624 from India, and £3,865,927 from Canada.

Trade with New Zealand and Australia has nearly doubled since 1932.

I N T E R N A T I O N A L C O O P E R A T I O N

FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS! Sounds grand, doesn't it? Co-operators in the United States closely watch the development of the Movement way back in little old England. They watch the growing British Co-operative trade, membership, wages bill and the goods produced. The success of British Co-operation encourages the members of America's younger Movement. They announce in their journals that the British Movement's retail trade rose by 50 million dollars in 1938, and the total retail trade of societies was 1,316,325,000 dollars!

BRAVE FINLAND. Heartfelt sympathy goes out from British co-operators to invaded Finland. The gallant people of this small but enterprising republic are well known for their co-operative successes. Nearly one-third of Finnish national trade is undertaken by the Movement.

Mr. Vaino Tanner, who has been appointed Foreign Minister and figured so prominently in the Moscow negotiations, is the President of the International Co-operative Alliance. The Co-operative Union Executive recently sent a message of good wishes to Mr. Tanner.

SOVIET'S CHANGING POLICY. "To many co-operators events in Russia and its alliance with the Nazi regime came as a shock. For informed co-operators it was no great shock. In its connection with the Co-operative Movement Russia has been for a long time a mystery. Any hint given by co-operative leaders as to the disappointing state of Russia's co-operative affairs, was looked upon with suspicion, and so often as not, flung nonchalantly back as an indication that they were fastidious and prejudiced statements. The Consumers' Movement in the towns is a department of the State. Societies pay no dividend, and their arrangements regarding capital are fantastic." (R.A. Palmer, General Secretary of the Co-operative Union)

DEATH OF MR. H.J. MAY, O.B.E. General Secretary of the International Co-operative Alliance, is mourned by the whole Co-operative world. Time and again he rallied to the aid of Co-operators in distress. His work in obtaining material assistance for Austrian, Spanish and Czech Co-operators will long be remembered. He ventured to Germany after the Nazi coup to see for himself what was happening to Co-operative Societies. He successfully regained liberty for the Austrian Societies from Dr. Dollfuss, which was lost with the Nazi invasion. Mr. May succeeded in bringing national movements together in the Alliance after the War, in organising international congresses and international co-operative trading.

CO-OPERATIVE PARTY

NOTES



BRIGHTSIDE Divisional Party have arranged a DANCE on Thursday, January 11th, 7 p.m. in the Institute, Bellhouse Road. Music by Royston's Band. Admission 9d. Tickets from the Secretary: Mrs. F. Ward, 58 Sacey Avenue. THE ANNUAL MEETING will be held Saturday, January 20th, 6-30 p.m.

BURNGREAVE Women's Section continue their meetings every alternate Wednesday in the Burngreave Vestry Hall, 2-30 p.m. Since the A.R.P. lectures which were very well attended, a talk on "Old Sheffield" by Councillor Fisher was greatly appreciated. THE ANNUAL MEETING on January 10th will re-open the new session. THE ANNUAL TEA will take place during the last week in January.

HILLSBOROUGH Party have run a series of successful monthly Sunday morning meetings. Ald. T.H. Watkins, J.P. will speak at the next meeting, December 17th, 11 a.m. (in the large Institute) subject: "A Co-operative Christmas." Carol singing will form part of the musical programme. The Rt. Hon. A.V. Alexander, M.P. paid a special visit on Dec. 10th, when there was a large gathering. THE ANNUAL SOCIAL & DANCE will be held Thursday Dec. 28th, Admission 1/-.

THE WOMEN'S SECTION Meetings held Mondays, 2-45 p.m. Programme for January: 8th, Nominations; 15th, Election of Officers; 22nd, Counc. P. Dinsley; 29th, Counc. R. Fisher. The Jumble Sale on December 9th raised nearly £5. for the Comforts for Soldiers fund. The members are taking part in the Knitting scheme arranged by the Guilds.

WISEWOOD Section reopen after Christmas with a Concert by the "Elite" Entertainers, on January 10th, admission 6d. THE ANNUAL MEETING will be held on January 24th, nominations to be received by Jany. 17th.

NEEPSSEND Women's Section continue their meetings at the Institute, Manners Street, on Monday afternoons. Mrs. E. Watson having removed from the district has found it necessary to resign her position as Secretary, and Mrs. Hall, 36 Haywood Road, has been appointed to the position. The Central Executive have sent their hearty appreciation to Mrs. Watson for her long years of active service in the Neapsend area. Meetings re-open Jany. 8th when the election of officers will take place.

SHEFFIELD & ECCLESALL Party have had good Meetings in December, having had addresses from Mary Searon on "Workers in Germany," and Counc. J.H. Bingham J.P. on "How to Pay for the War." The Party's Peace Policy has been discussed and the Film Show on Dec. 11th drew a large attendance, Mr. A. Ballard (Party Organiser) and Mr. G.W. Evison (Secretary) spoke in the intervals. Programme for January: 8th, ANNUAL MEETING; 15th, Mr. C.S. Darvill; 22nd, Ald. J.A. Longden J.P. (Lord Mayor); 29th, Mr. F.G.B. Hutchings (Deputy City Librarian).

THE WOMEN'S SECTION which meets in Room 2, Napier Street Institute, on Thursday afternoons, held a Whist Drive on Dec. 7th, proceeds devoted to the Comforts for Soldiers fund. Programme for January: 11th, ANNUAL MEETING; 18th Mr. G. Craddock on "The Co-operative Movement in changing World conditions; 25th, Mr. A. Ballard on "The Co-operative Contribution to Democracy."

SOUTHHEY, NORWOOD, & SHIRECLIFFE. Mr. J.S. Worrall, the newly-elected Councillor for Neepsend Ward will give the City Council report on Dec. 21st. Meetings will re-open January 11th when nominations for officials and committee will be received. THE ANNUAL MEETING will take place January 25th. The Section has been especially active this month, having circulated 8,000 envelopes containing a letter to the electors from Councillor Worrall, and an announcement of the Film Shows on the estates which were very well attended and at which new members were obtained. The petition for a 'bus shelter at Southey Green terminus is being considered by the Transport Department.

EDUCATION NOTES

BRIGHTSIDE & CARBROOK Education Committee, in collaboration with the Co-operative Party, ran a series of TALKIE FILM SHOWS, December 11th to 16th. The light comedy "Princess Charming" was the main feature of the programme, which also included two comic films and a C.W.S. trade film. At each of the Shows speakers from the Board of Management, Co-operative Party, and Education Committee dealt with the advantages of Co-operation.

A further series is to be given in the New Year. Special Talkie Film Shows for children are being arranged for the Circle Christmas parties, etc. in the various districts.

Six classes have been started in the S. & E. Features Council School for the B. & C. employees, the enrolment figures are most encouraging. Thanks to the Board of Management the boys will be released to enable them to attend at 5 p.m.

COMFORTS FOR SOLDIERS



The Sheffield Guildswomen have made a splendid response to the Women's Voluntary Services appeal in knitting comforts for soldiers.

The S. & E. Guilds have sent two consignments totalling: 15 blankets, 11 doz. scarves, 80 pairs of socks, 10 prs. bed socks, 4 prs. hospital sock, 10 prs. mittens, 17 helmets, 3 prs. cuffs.

A third consignment is now in course of preparation.

The Brightside & Carbrook Guilds have dispatched: - 93 prs. socks, 70 prs. mittens, 30 mufflers, 7 helmets, 1 pr. operation stocking, 2 prs. bed socks, 2 ear protectors.

In addition, the Wisewood Guild have sent 6 pullovers, 11 scarves, 5 helmets, 15 prs. socks, and 7 prs. mittens.

SHEFFIELD & ECCLESALL Education Committee have arranged TECHNICAL CLASSES under the auspices of the Local Authority to commence January 8th at the Sharrow Lane Council School. The Board of Management have agreed to the release of students in time to attend the Classes at 6-30 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays. Two members of the S. & E. staff have been appointed as teachers by the Local Authority.

THE GUILDS FEDERATION have resumed the Saturday Night Whist Drive & Dance in the Napier Street Institute. THE ANNUAL CHILDREN'S PARTY will be held on January 4th.

THE WOODCRAFT SUPPORTERS COUNCIL will hold their Annual Treat on January 3rd at Napier Street Institute.

GLEADLESS ROAD GUILD ROOM is now 'blacked out' and the usual Meetings are to be resumed at an early date.

THE PARK WOMEN'S GUILD have now secured accommodation at the Gleadless Congregational Church, Wednesdays, 2-30 to 4-30 p.m. New members welcomed.

THE SOUTH YORKSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL of the Co-operative Men's Guild carried a resolution dealing with the rising cost of living and its effect on the poorer section of the community. The resolution asked the Minister of Labour to revise the Unemployment Assistance scales to meet these new conditions.

NATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE AUTHORITY

War-time policy confirmed

The National Co-operative Authority at its meeting on December 7th considered the War emergency policy of the Authority issued on September 19th. The Authority believed that this statement leaves no doubts as to the policy of the Movement towards the War, and decided to reaffirm that policy, which is as follows:-

"The issues of the present War are clear and distinct. It is a clear attack made by the Nazi aggressors on the democratic nations and the Co-operative principle in World affairs. Hitler has challenged the democratic states until we can no longer ignore his designs. We are faced with the issue Nazism versus continued Democratic Progress.

"In such circumstances the Co-operative Movement, like all other democratic movements, must be prepared to use to the full its resources to assist in bringing the conflict to a successful issue for the democratic cause. The National Co-operative Authority - representing all sections of the Co-operative Movement - is unanimously of opinion, therefore, that the whole strength of co-operative societies should be mobilised to assist the nation in its defence of Co-operative ideals, justice, and free democracy."

CO-OPERATIVE PARTY WAR AIMS

As promised in our last BULLETIN, we publish the main features of the Co-operative Party's Manifesto on "War Aims."

After demonstrating that Herr Hitler's word could not be accepted because of his many betrayals, and following upon an outline of the Co-operative Movement's peace policy as shown by decisions made at National Conferences, the Party then proceeds to state the conditions under which it would press for a cessation of hostilities; namely, that it would negotiate with a German Government which is prepared:-

- (a) To restore to Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland their rights as independent nations.
- (b) To give effective guarantees that force will not be used as an instrument of national policy for aggression against other States.
- (c) To co-operate with all other nations in the building up of a reconstructed League or Federation of Nations to join with them in the guaranteed security of the peoples of the World.

The Co-operative Party declares that if a German Government will negotiate peace upon this basis, the Party will work at all times to secure full justice for the German as for all other peoples, and the right of free association. To this end it would seek by a World Conference and by Peace Pacts the peaceful solution of political, economic, territorial, and racial problems; and finally with the establishment of collective security, general and progressive disarmament, releasing the economic forces of the nations for the raising of the standards of life of all the peoples of the World of whatever race or clime.

FACING THE FACTS. Mr. Alexander met his constituents at a well-attended meeting at the Hillsborough Co-operative Institute, on December 10th, when he explained the attitude of the Opposition to the Government during the War. His own personal attitude consistent with the decisions of the Co-operative Movement was in opposition to Hitlerism. Mr. Alexander believed that we had to defeat this menace to our freedom and to our Movement before we could construct the new system which was our goal. Paying tribute to the gallantry of the British Fighting Forces he asked for the hearty support of every worker to bring the present conflict to a successful issue.

A number of questions were asked and satisfactorily answered, after which a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Alexander.

THE STRENGTH OF A FREE PARLIAMENT
Contrast between Democracy and Dictatorship

"All the secrecy and speed and craft that lie at the hand of the autocrat are not as powerful a weapon as the sinewy strength which comes from the debates of a free people," declared Mr. Wedgwood Benn in the House of Commons on November 21st.

"Some people say," Mr. Benn continued, "that when we speak of fighting the war for freedom, we use words of hypocrisy, and they point to the Defence Regulations for an example. But the assertions in this regard show that whatever the Regulations may be, there exists here an overriding authority. If we are to have a Hitler, he has got to sit in this House and be subject to questions, he has got to meet Members of the House of Commons, and he cannot - and this is most important - be insulated by bureaucrats. A man who has made a mistake cannot take cover behind a Minister, for the Minister must come in contact with people who will point out the mistake."

Stressing the value of a free Parliament from the point of view of the appeal to the World, the equipment of the troops, and the morale of the people, Mr. Benn said propaganda was of no value unless it could be trusted. "Mein Kampf" defined propaganda as "a systematically one-sided attitude towards every problem." But in a free Parliament statements were subject to cross-examination.

Pointing out that constructive criticism in Parliament made a contribution to the effective supply of equipment, both in the last war and in this war, and that debates in the House on the various matters relating to the conduct of the war had steadied the morale of the people, Mr. Benn declared: "A debate in a free Parliament clears the air more effectively than a bomb in a beer cellar."

WAR-TIME POLITICAL TRUCE. The following agreement to avoid Parliamentary-elections has been signed by the chief Whips of the three major political parties:-

"We jointly agree, as representing the Conservative, Labour, and Liberal Parties, as follows:-

- (i) Not to nominate candidates for Parliamentary vacancies that now exist, or may occur, against the candidate nominated by the Party holding the seat at the time of the vacancy.
- (ii) The agreement shall hold good during the War, or until determined on notice given by any one of the three parties signatories hereto."

It will be noted that any party to the agreement can give notice to cancel it at any time, either for the purpose of amending it, or to enable by-elections to be contested.

A PROTEST MEETING held under the auspices of the Trades & Labour Council at the City Hall on December 9th, demanded that Shop Stewards, Field Co-operators and Trade Unionists should receive a fair deal of allocation of Government Food Supplies. Mr. C.S. Darvill presided. Councillor J.H. Bingham, J.P., the Right Hon. A.V. Alexander, M.P., Mr. Cecil Wilson, M.P., and Mr. Geo. Lathan, M.P. were the speakers.

"Now that the Russian Revolution has rotted and lost its soul because it has been unable to combine collectivism with personal freedom, it rests with the liberal thought of the Atlantic World to take over the task."

- H.G. WELLS.