

THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

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DOCKERS BEWARE! By Harry Pollitt.

No apology is needed for introducing this subject to trade unionists, as it is so important and serious to every lover of national freedom and liberty, that one can only stand amazed that the British Labour Movement has stood idly by so long, while the Government has proceeded with its policy of Military Intervention in Russia.

The British Government is assisting the intolerable reactionary capitalists and landlords of Russia to revive the old régime of Czardom, which represented the world over all that was the most bloody and tyrannical, "so that there stretched from Moscow to the remote icy regions of Siberia one long damning trail of Red—the blood trail of the exiles upon the snow."

The trail of the pioneers of Russian trade unionism and Socialism, and to-day, after the workers of Russia have overthrown their age-long tyrants, the Government of Britain is sending soldiers, munitions and aeroplanes to defeat the Bolsheviks, who have succeeded in establishing the first Socialist Republic in the world.

That Republic stands in danger of being overthrown because British trade unionists (who are compelled to be in a trade union to fight the English capitalist) are manning the engines and ships that are carrying soldiers and munitions to Russia.

Here in the London Docks, British trade unionists are working every possible hour on barges that are being fitted out to carry bombs, ammunition boxes, and aeroplane parts, that are going to Russia to defeat and kill Russian trade unionists. Aye! and by some ironic circumstance, as if possessed by the bloody imp of capitalist greed, these same staunch trade unionists are working at a speed (and under

atmospheric conditions) that they never endured when it was thought so urgent to have ships to beat the Germans. How the gods of War and Greed must now be smiling in fiendish delight!

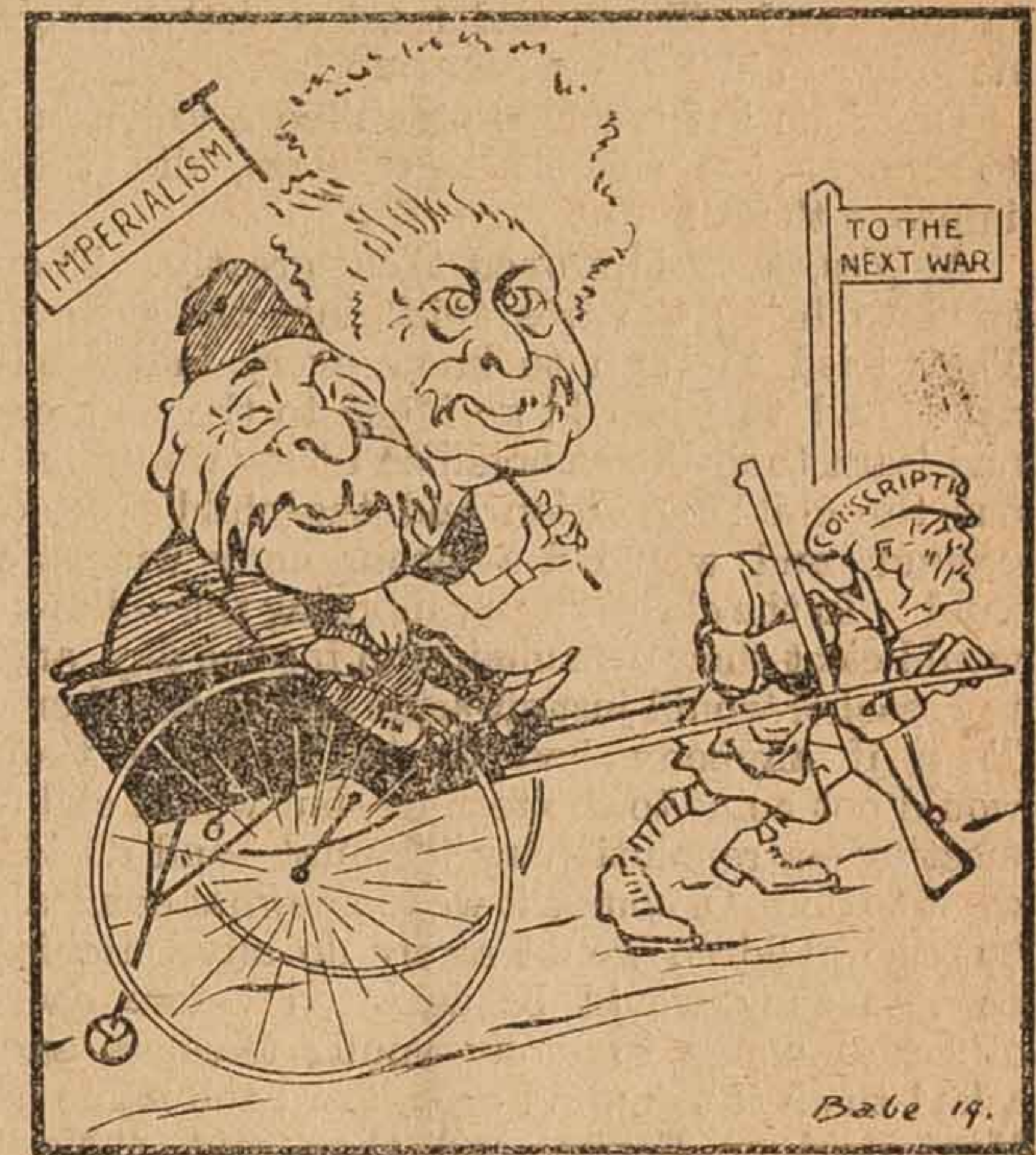
And all this effort, all this loss of comradeship, all this prostitution of idealism and manhood, to assist the capitalists of this country to defeat the proletariat! Bolshevik atrocities! Why, even if they were true (and all independent eye-witnesses from Russia declare that they have never witnessed any of them), they would pale into insignificance besides the ghastly executions and pogroms under the late Tsar, which in one year caused to be executed 26,000 of his subjects, the majority of whom belonged to your own class.

Your Government never intervened then?

Therefore I would appeal to all of you, who still have a heart that beats in sympathy with our comrades abroad, to get busy in your branches and get the members to refuse to touch any ship that is to carry munitions to Russia. Only by such action can the British Labour Movement wipe out the stain that now tarnishes its ideals. If this action means personal sacrifice, what of it? On the Continent men and women are dying every hour to defend working class Russia, shall we fail them in their hour of need, or rather, shall we not exhibit a little of that international solidarity that we love to cheer about, but have now such a magnificent opportunity to demonstrate?

In conclusion, let me quote you the closing passage from Arthur Ransome's 'Truth about Russia'—

"These men who have made the Soviet Government in Russia, if they must fail, will fail with clean shields and clean hearts, having striven for an ideal which will live beyond them. Even if they fail, they will none the less have written



THE RICKSHAW BOY.

a page of history more daring than any other which I can remember in the story of the human race. They are writing amid showers of mud from the meaner spirits in their own country, in yours, and in my own. But when the thing is over, and their enemies have triumphed the mud will vanish like black magic at noon, and that page will be as white as the snows of Russia, and the writing on it as bright as the gold domes that I used to see glittering in the sun when I looked from my windows in Petrograd."