

EDITORIAL: I am overjoyed to be able to announce that the unfortunate misunderstanding between Dave Mellwain and myself has now been cleared up. This follows on a final explanatory letter from Dave this morning, from which the following extract is taken:-

"By the way - the pacifist argument had nothing to do with the matter whatsoever. As a matter of fact, though I disagreed with your views at first, and felt disposed to counter-attack (after having done some necessary research - an expenditure of energy & time I could ill afford with Vera on my mind) yet a few weeks later I found myself growing sceptical of the pacifist doctrine. Within a month of receiving your letter I was already in favour of war - provided it was a war for socialism - the elimination of class distinction and the substitution of state control for private capitalist monopoly - etc. In fact I am now a bloodthirsty "red". I think it was a deep consideration of the Spanish War which finally changed my mind for me. What pacifist - given that he is intelligent enough to be a socialist - could stand by and watch the elected Republican Govt. - the finest Govt. Spain ever had - gradually succumb beneath the merciless battering of the Nazi-Fascist-Phalangist-Moroccan & Papal mailed fist that Franco wielded. I came to the conclusion that I would have fought. \* \* \* I am now following in thine footsteps in that I accept the use of force if reason sanctions it, and reason would only sanction it in my case if it were to be used in the defence of the ideology which I support - i.e. Revolutionary Socialism. My stars are Bernard Shaw & Lenin, for the present at least." Congratulations, Dave, on joining the ranks of progress at last! Not that I would advise too close adherence to anything Bernard Shaw should happen to say. His utterances - like GKC's - are more unreliable the cleverer they are. At their cleverest they reach a height of absurdity that challenges even Goebbel-gabble. Once again I advise everyone with any political consciousness to read the socialist weekly - TRIBUNE. This periodical which is not, of course, favoured by the capitalist advertising rackets, is making an effort to increase its circulation (at present 18,100 - A.B.C.) and deserves every success. Here each week you will find pertinent comment on and criticism of the war effort. You will find, in fact, an honest journal, and wonder accordingly.

FROM MAURICE HANSON: "It seems to me that you are passing through the socialist stage that most of us pass through at one time or another. (Read the Tribune. And truth!) So far as I'm concerned, though, the official organisations of socialism in this country have no permanent attractions, even though I used to live below the Labour League of Youth & their clattering typewriters. I was once awed by a female Marxist that Dennis Jacques escorted on a half-day trip to London & who lucidly & enthusiastically preached (that is the word) Marxism from tea at Lyons at 4 p.m. until leaving the flat at 1 a.m. But I was much more impressed by Jack London's "The Iron Hoel" which to this day leaves me no doubt that I should be five hundred times more enthusiastic fighting in a revolutionary army than in His Majesty's present austere forces. I fancy I wouldn't mind fighting in those circumstances but as things are I'm profoundly thankful that I've such an innocuous job as (at the moment) running a petrol pump, with the prospect of shortly becoming an even more innocuous clerk. \* \* \* I have just been reading Donald Webster's "Astounding"s containing "Final Blackout". When I read the outline of the story that you gave in the last Warble but one I thought I should probably be bored stiff with such pessimistic dope. Instead of which I find myself paying it the high compliment of saying that it seems entirely foreign to the pages of "Astounding". While the majority of Campbell's choices are at least readable, far too many are of a hard, metallic calibre, almost hysterically forceful. Few of the characters speak; they either bark or rap. A man doesn't get shot in the head; the top of his skull is lifted off by a bullet. And much of the dialogue is manifestly Hollywood-inspired."

FROM JEBURKE: "I think I've already said that Dave is a ditherer between the two camps, being rather apprehensive of flaunting his pacifism too openly. I hope that you are glad to have such a hero on your side - I'd sooner have the out-and-out militarist than the faint-hearted pacifist without the courage of his convictions. \* \* \* Your pathetic belief in socialism as the cure-all has always amused me. I don't doubt the ability of the

people to oust Toryism after the war - I just doubt that they'll even think of doing it. It's not lack of ability - it's lack of will that worries me."

In the first place - to both Maurice and Johnny - I would stress that I am a member of no political party, not even the socialist party. My attitude towards the socialist party, as my correspondents should know by now, is that while not perfect it offers the best solution so far put forward to cope with contemporary world chaos. At present I am watching with interest the activities of Halton's WORLD REVIEW, which set off to the tune of a New Age philosophy, and which seems to be attempting a regeneration of the Conservative Party to meet the obvious social and international requirements. Halton himself, in a personal letter, remarks:- "In an article under my nom de guerre of Cadmus in the September WORLD REVIEW I set out some kind of a programme for the future, in which I mention the necessity for collectivism. I am rapidly coming to the conclusion that our present troubles are caused by the disintegration of laissez-faire which was itself a disintegration. I am afraid that the capitalist system in its present form will have to go, and profit motive be supplanted by the idea of service." Which, of course, is what prominent socialists have been baying to the moon these many years.

To Johnny alone, I would say that I am not only glad but positively overjoyed to have such a hero as Dave on the progressive side. What you do not seem to realise, Johnny, is that if one has been going backwards there must inevitably be a period of wavering before the volte-face is effected and the forward march begun. Dave's time of what you call "dithering" is now over, as he himself says. Your own has not begun, which is nothing to boast about. Some day you will get weary of your Ivory Tower of defeatism. We are waiting.

SAYS DOUGGIE - sorry Dougie - I mean DOUG, WEBSTER: "To my mind a pacifist, whether C.O. tor or not, is one who strives for peace at all costs &, in time of peace, however troubled, refuses to regard war as a logical or humane way out. A C.O. tor is probably pacifist as well, but his trouble is that regardless of whether he's fierce or timid, he is too squeamish to kill people. The pacifist arrives at his conclusions from a purely intellectual point of view, & his conclusions are that the whole damn thing is so utterly ridiculous that he must to the best of his ability strive to bring about a state where a rather more sensible method of argument is in general favour. \* \* \* Suppose we're a pacifist then, & despite our most frenzied efforts we find gents on all sides with bombs & machine-guns waiting to blow us apart. It seems quite logical and pacifistic to me that we should reluctantly & with much grumbling don a uniform & retaliate, help to bring the whole wretched business to a stop as quickly & advantageously as possible, and afterwards continue working our fingers to the bone in the cause of eternal peace. Such a policy, I think, is quite in accordance with "pacifism". Its sincerity is undoubted & you have no cause whatsoever to get so uppish about choosing it - other people of my acquaintance, less intelligent than you, had taken such a path quite a while before I heard of you doing so. \* \* \* But with a C.O. tor it is different. Surely, if sincere, he can no more bring himself to run bayonets through people during war than in peace-time. And that such a sentiment - mental quirk I admit it to be - is come to be appreciated to a certain extent is only one more reason for my optimism; it shows obviously that at our stage of civilisation people as a whole are becoming more pacifistically-minded, even though they are able to revert to barbarism at the slightest provocation & lack much of the restraint necessary for a peaceful & logical solution of difficulties. \* \* \* Now in answer to you: You deliberately gave me the impression months & months ago that you were both C.O. tor & pacifist. I say that if you have somehow managed to change the C.O. tor bit you were undoubtedly insincere about it before. Indubitably, sah!"

To those of our readers who have come to regard the venerable Douglas as one of the brighter lights of the community the above will be a rude shock. In the first place, the nomenclature is disgustingly slipshod - both "pacifist" & "C.O. tor" being inadequate to the use he has for them. For instance, Doug interprets "pacifist" as "Chamberlainist", for surely it is simply appeasement to look at the blind side of war until it hits you in the eye, and then to "reluctantly take up arms". I must pointedly refuse to be regarded as a pacifist of this type. And "insincere" - oh Douglas! Sincerity, comrade, is a purely contemporary affair. I have been, I will be, and I am. \* \* \* \* \* CSY