

I am a German Miner

by
Kurt Gruber

A German
miner in
Britain
looks at
Fascism

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Foreword
by Abe Moffat

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NATIONAL UNION
OF SCOTTISH
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TWOPENCE

I AM A GERMAN MINER

FOREWORD

By

ABE MOFFAT

President, National Union of Scottish Mineworkers

The National Union of Scottish Mineworkers have decided to support the publication of this pamphlet written by an anti-Fascist German miner, Kurt Gruber, now working in a Scottish pit.

Some miners may have been in doubt as to what Fascism really meant to the German miners. Here in this pamphlet is a clear exposition of what it really means in suffering torture and attacks on working class conditions. No one is in a better position to expose Fascism than Kurt Gruber, one who played an active part in the free democratic Trade Unions of Germany prior to the Hitler regime. Following the Hitler regime he was hounded from pillar to post and his whole family suffered in the same way as thousands of other anti-Fascists who carried on the struggle under great peril to their lives. Kurt Gruber still carried on the fight against Fascism confident that democracy and freedom would conquer in the end.

Now he is a working miner in a Scottish pit, playing his full part along with his Scottish mining comrades to produce the coal for the defeat of Fascism.

Having read this pamphlet Scottish miners will no doubt recognise the correctness of the policy of the Miners' Union in doing everything possible for maximum production of coal for the defeat of Fascism and to prevent it from coming to this country. In the final phase of the war let us all unite our forces to bring about a speedy victory so that our sons and daughters can return home and at the same time enabling young anti-Fascist fighters such as Kurt Gruber and many others, to return to their home country and help to restore a free and democratic Trade Union movement in Germany that will finally eradicate all Fascist ideology from the ranks of the German people and ensure world peace and security.

INTRODUCTION

I am a miner from the Ruhr. Born near Hamm (Westphalia), the son of a miner, I had the common "education" of a miner's son—8 years elementary schooling. At the age of 14 I left school to take up an apprenticeship as a clerk, because my mother wanted it.

How did I come to go down the mine? My boss found out that I was a member of the Socialist Youth Organisation—he saw me in a May Day procession—and a few days later he gave me the sack.

For a short period I worked as an unskilled worker in a small unorganised factory. The boss sacked me because of my efforts to organise a union.

I was 16 and able to go down the mine. My mother gave in and so, on a morning in 1928, my father took me to the pit. Naturally, I immediately joined the union. After a short time the Branch Committee asked me to organise the young miners in special youth groups.

I WAS A HUNTED MAN

A strong and influential Youth Group of the Miners Union was soon organised with a delegate body of the young miners to look after the special interests of the youngsters. I was elected chairman of this body. My first strike was in 1929 and I was appointed the representative of the young miners in the Strike Committee. In 1931, in the big miners' strike in Germany, I was a member of the Central Strike Committee of the Ruhr District, representing the young miners. In the same year, at the first conference of the newly formed "United Mineworkers Union," I was elected to the Central Youth Council of this Union. I still held this position in 1933 when fascism came to power.

Faced with the growing danger of Fascism in Germany, we miners fought back with every means possible. They answered with terror and started to hunt down and attack all known anti-Fascists. My young brother, who was in no way connected with any of my activities, was murdered in March 1931. They were after me.

The first night after the Reichstag fire in February 1933, they came hunting for me. By chance I was able to get away and hide in the village.

All my friends were in prison, some of them transported to Concentration Camps. The only one who survived was myself. So I had to carry on the work—the fight against Fascism.

MY FATHER TAKEN HOSTAGE

I fought the Nazis for a year and a half in the underground movement of Germany. Sometimes in 1933 and 1934 I was nearly at the end of my physical strength through hunger, sleepless nights and other hardships. Along with others I carried on. When, in the summer of 1933, the Nazis arrested my father as a hostage for me, I had a hard time.

But my father helped me with this message from the Concentration Camp ; " Never give yourself up, son, no matter what happens to me."

In 1934 I had to leave Germany. I went to Czechoslovakia to recover from a serious breakdown. After a year or so, I took up the fight again.

In 1939, shortly before the occupation of Prague, I came over to England. After a short time of settling down, I got connections with my friends in Germany again. With the outbreak of the war everything was cut off. In spite of this my friends and I tried to do our duty in our own way ; in the army, in factories, in offices—and in the mines.

When I came to Scotland and heard about the situation in the mining industry, I decided to go back to my old job as a miner. It was not easy for me to go back to the pits after ten years, but I could think of no more useful job than giving a hand in bringing up the coal so necessary for making the weapons to finish off Fascism. I look on my work in the pit as a weapon in my fight against Fascism.

MY EXPERIENCES IN SCOTTISH MINES

I do not intend to give you my experiences about mining. What I want to do is to deal with the discussions I have had with my fellow workers. What has impressed me most in these discussions is the realisation that little is actually known about Fascism among the miners. For example a very common argument is :

" We have no freedom or rights here—just have a look at the E.W.O. and you will see that." " It is all the same. We are no better off than the German miners." " Fighting against Hitler? We have plenty of little Hitlers here. . . ." And you may be certain there follows a story about the manager, gaffer, the contractor who said something unpleasant to that man or attacked wages or working conditions. " According to the Duke of Windsor, the German working class is even better off under Hitler." These are some of the main arguments.

Before I deal with these arguments, I think it will be useful to describe in short the position of the German miners before Hitler came to power in 1933.

THE POSITION BEFORE 1933

Before Hitler, the conditions of the working class were similar to those of the people in other democratic countries. They had to fight hard for every penny increase in wages, for every social advance, for every new right and freedom. Big Trade Unions and strong political parties helped the German working class to better its economic and political conditions. We were able to achieve collective agreements and uniform wages and working conditions, and since 1919 the right of an annual holiday from 3 to 12 work days with full pay.

The workers won the right to elect their own representatives in the factories, mines, etc. The workers' representatives were recognised by law, and protected by law against every effort by the owners to victimise them. The miners elected their own representatives to the board of the Miners Social Insurance.

Since 1929, there were special Mine Inspectors who were proposed and appointed by the Miners Union. All workers had the right to organise, the right to strike, the guarantee of every democratic and political freedom. Beside the big Unions there were strong working class parties and important workers' sport and cultural organisations.

The Nazis put an end to all this. The working class parties were declared illegal. Their leaders and officials were arrested, tortured and murdered. Their property was confiscated.

THE NAZI "LABOUR FRONT"

The Trade Unions were transformed into the German Labour Front and their funds confiscated. Nazi officials were appointed, the owners were made part of the Labour Front. Instead of the legally recognised workers' representatives came the Nazi ersatz—the so-called "Conscience Council" for the workers. Of course, only approved Nazis were appointed to them by the "Works Leader," the Nazi word for the Coal Owner or his representative. It was only necessary for the "Works Leader" to get the approval of the State Commissioner—the so-called "Labour Trustee," himself a big employer. The Labour Trustee for the Ruhr was the notorious capitalist, Krupp.

Membership contributions for the Labour Front were taken out of the pay packet in the same way as the many different taxes, social insurance contributions, and the "voluntary donations" for a hundred and one things.

THE GESTAPO DECIDES

Instead of the former Pithead and Union meetings, there were now compulsory "Pithead Parades," to hear the Orders of the

“ Leader ” or of some official of the “ Labour Front.” The right to discussion, to ask questions, or the right to criticise, was a Jewish—bolshevik—democratic—liberal, bad habit and therefore was forbidden. If a worker stayed away he was regarded as “ politically untrustworthy ” and put in a concentration camp without legal trial.

Imagine what Fascism is ; no Trade Unions, no political parties of the working class (the **only** legal Party is the Nazi Party) : no workers’ representatives who are looking after the interests of the workers.

No rights to call meetings, to speak, to organise—no right to strike. No workers’ sport and cultural organisations—no workers’ papers !

Under such conditions the owner, in fact, pays the worker what he likes, deciding working conditions, hours, etc., automatically getting the approval of the Nazi State Commissioner or the “ Labour Trustee.” That is the life of a German Miner to-day at his working place.

What about his private life ? The Gestapo, Storm Troopers, or some other gang of Nazis break into the worker’s house at any time, day or night. No reasons are necessary. If a protest is made the protester disappears, his relatives may or may not get to know of his death later.

The Gestapo and the Nazi party have their hands everywhere. They decide what kind of books are to be read—forbid listening to any stations except those of the German Broadcasting system. Even the very children are turned into informers on their own parents.

THE UNION FIGHTS WELL

Can you understand my feelings when, knowing of the life of the German miners to-day, I hear such comments as : “ We have no rights nor freedom.” I had a look at the E.W.O. There are weaknesses in the E.W.O. but the guaranteed minimum weekly wage, the guaranteed work, the protection against injustice, etc., are certainly progressive points in the E.W.O. The restriction imposed on you are necessary in the interest of war against Fascism.

Your Unions are able to bring about certain important increases in your wages, bringing the best conditions British miners have ever had. They are able to fight your case—and let me tell you, they fight it well. They are able, and they do it, to mobilise the whole country to support your case. You have the right to elect your men to the Pit Committees. If a Pit Committee is not doing well, it is not the fault of the manager, it is your own fault. There are enough legal ways and means to force the owner to take the Pit Committee seriously.,

WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE GERMAN MINING INDUSTRY

In 1936 the Nazis began with the open economic preparations for the war. Goering's four years plan for economic war preparations was based mainly on coal. But there were not enough miners to get the necessary increase in the coal output. According to official German figures, in the period from 1936 to 1939, the average output fell by $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

The Nazis tried to get extra shifts from the miners. But the majority of the miners did not work extra shifts.

The next step—in 1939, five months before the outbreak of the present war, was the Nazi order to lengthen working hours—from 8 to $8\frac{3}{4}$ hours per shift—an 11 per cent. increase of the working time. The miners were promised that every increase in the output of more than 11 per cent. would be paid 200 per cent. above the basic wage and promised at the same time not to ask any more the extra shifts.

Only in exceptional cases were the miners able to reach their target. The promise to pay 200 per cent. for extra output was only a promise, therefore nothing more.

There are no official figures available about the length of the working day during the war. However, it is not too much to say that the average working day of a German miner is anything between 10 and 12 hours.

The paper of the "German Labour Front," *Der Angriff*, 15 July, 1943, reports Hubert Siebert, head of the D.A.F. (Labour Front) and Trade Group for Mining :

"In addition to the longer working hours brought by the war, miners work two Sunday shifts a month, and also other additional shifts. In spite of this 'Panzer Shifts' have been worked in all countries recently and the wages have been placed at the disposal of the Fuehrer."

At the beginning of 1944 General Director Dr. Wagner said at a rally of the Saargruben, A.G. (2nd January, 1944), "That the miners have worked 26 additional Sunday shifts and one voluntary Panzer Shift, besides their ordinary and extra shifts"—in 1943.

CONCENTRATION CAMP FOR ABSENTEES

The miners have to work every second Sunday, that is "normal." If they have worked 26 additional Sunday shifts and a panzer shift—well you can envisage what it means for a German miner to live and work under a Fascist Dictatorship.

Let's see how the Nazis handle the question of absenteeism. An order of the Reich's Labour Trustee for the Silesia District lays down the following fines for absentees.

For the first idle shift in a month, 1.00 R.M. (Reichs Marks).

For the second idle shift in a month, 2.00 R.M.

For the third idle shift in a month, 4.00 R.M.

For the fourth idle shift in a month, 8.00 R.M.

For idle shifts on pay-days and the day after, the fine will be 50 per cent. higher. That is only the first step. The factory paper of the "Bochumer Verein" in the Ruhr district had an article which declared that in addition to losing the shift's pay the fine would be a shift's wage for every idle shift. Hard cases of individuals "who are not even cured through protective custody, or concentration camp 'will be brought to the newly installed 'Special Forced Labour Camp.' " Jailing is the rule when fines fail.

To make a short picture complete, I will quote from the "N.S.Z. Westmark," Saarbrücken, on the 1st September, 1943, which reported the case of absentee workers who had been warned repeatedly by the Commissioner for Labour. The Court sentenced the first to six months imprisonment. The same sentence was passed on a man, the second, aged 38, despite the fact that he had twice been interned in a Labour Camp. The third, a girl, was sentenced to four months imprisonment.

I think there is no need to compare this position of the German Miners with our position here.

Just let me say one thing. All the talking about "we have no rights; the Germans are better off, etc." is sheer nonsense.

How merciless they are is shown by the following. *Fascism* of the 4th of November, 1942, states this:

"The Cologne Labour Trustee on 2nd March last gave employers power to deduct cash fines from wages also in cases where such was hitherto not permitted under provisions of law, works agreements, or employment contracts. Employers have apparently complained that they are unable to avail themselves sufficiently of these powers because in many cases workers' wages are below the limit where wages are exempt from distraintment. They have now been informed by the Labour Trustee that this exemption limit need no longer be observed. The Supreme Labour Court of the Reich is reported to have ruled that cash fines may henceforth also be deducted from the so far exempt part of wages.

"Any other conception," states the ruling, "namely the conception that in making deductions a management may not go beyond the exemption limit would lead to the result that in very many cases infliction of the fines becomes impossible." Only a subsistence minimum should be left to the workers and "is of course substantially less than the margin which has to be left to the debtor under the wage distraintment order."—(*Kölnische Zeitung* of 2nd September, 1942) (Ruling of the Reich Labour Court, N. 167/41).

WAGES IN THE MINING INDUSTRY

In 1942 payment for extra output in the mines was cancelled. The standard shift wage for coal hewers (in the Ruhr district) was raised from 8.64 to 9.42 marks, the minimum wage being 7.52 marks for a shift.

The Nazi press claims this a substantial wage increase. It conceals the fact, however, that underground shift wages and the wages for surface working have not been increased—that the newly introduced category of “semi-skilled piece workers” are paid 9 per cent. below the full rate, and that the Commissioner for Mines has directed the managements to pay hewers engaged on work other than at the coal face, only 90 per cent. of the full rate, so that their wage is only 8.47 marks for a shift. The *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1st October, 1942, reckons that hewers will, “on balance,” (!) increase their income under the new agreement. Apparently it is not certain about it.

Before the Nazis gave in to the wage demands of the miners, there was a considerable decline in the coal-output. The miners demanded higher wages, but the owners declared they could not give it because of Hitler’s “Wage Stop Order.”

“LABOUR TRUSTEES” DECIDE WAGES

The “Labour Trustees” alone were entitled to increase wages—and only in extraordinary cases. There were so many “extraordinary” applications by the workers that the Labour Trustee for the District of Middle Germany ordered that in future only the “works leaders” are entitled to make such applications for the workers.—(*Deutsche Bergwerkszeitung*, 30th November, 1941).

The effect of this order was that the Labour Trustee got more and more “collective” applications, so many that his next step was to order that “only once a year such collective applications could be sent to him.”

The Labour Trustee for the Ruhr District even declared that he would not deal with wage applications for the period from 15th September till 15th October, 1941.

There is nothing like a “basic wage” or “national minimum” for the young worker. The company pays them what they like. In the “Ruhr District” for instance, the boy of 14 gets for his 2 years’ work on the surface, 0.63 marks per day. Every week he has to attend a class at the pit—without pay.

The “Reich Works Community Leader,” Padberg, ordered a 7 years apprenticeship for young miners. That means, that no young miner will get the full hewer’s wages before his 24th year.

As I said before, there is nothing and nobody to prevent the owners from doing what they like—especially to the young miners.

THE POSITION OF FOREIGN MINERS IN GERMANY

There are about 12 million foreign workers in Germany. They play a very important part in Hitler's war machine. If it were not for the British people, your gallant army and marvellous R.A.F.—you might have had the doubtful pleasure of being one of these important foreign workers in Germany. The Nazis claim the German people to be the "Herrenvolk," the master race, and treat the foreign workers accordingly. Worst off are the peoples of Poland and Russia.

The Nazi State sells these workers to private people for a certain price. For 15-100 Reich Marks you are able to buy an "East-worker" as you buy a packet of fags, or a horse or a cow.

The story of a Donbas miner who was in a camp for foreign miners in the Ruhr district was published in an article in *Soviet Ukraine*, the organ of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, and reprinted in the *Daily Worker* for 3rd February, 1943.

"Seven months ago, together with thousands of others, I was forcibly transported from Gorlovka to work in Germany.

ERSATZ BREAD AND MUDDY WATER

"We lived in a camp surrounded by barbed wire. Our clothes were taken away to make it harder to escape and we were given overalls.

"Our food was : Breakfast, 12 oz. of ersatz bread and a cup of muddy water. Dinner : some mush without a trace of fat.

"Ten to twelve hours of work a day in the mine, malnutrition, congestion and filth in the barracks, led to mass disease. Hardly any of the sick recover.

"One day in the barracks where 100 Donbas miners lived, one fell asleep in his overalls. A policeman began to beat him. Other miners protested. Matters came to a clash and the policeman was hanged.

"As a reprisal the police squad shot 25 of the miners. Another 75 were taken away and never seen again.

"Six months of this horrible Forced Labour Camp reduced me, a young man, into a complete invalid."

I think comment is superfluous.

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN YOU

The Nazis need workers badly, very badly. The heavy losses of the German Army during the war compelled the Nazis again and again to comb out their own industry to fill up the losses at the front. They try to fill the gaps by bringing in workers press ganged from all over Europe. According to the *Deutsche Kohlenzeitung* of 8th February, 1944 :

"The largest number of (foreign) workers in Germany come

from the General Government (Poland). The coal trade has received most of its workers from there as these people are suitable for this heavy work. . . . In the course of time that great reservoir of human beings has been exhausted by the great demands made on it, and at the same time their physical qualities have deteriorated, and this was felt particularly in the efforts of the coal trade to acquire more workers."

The *Deutsche Kohlenzeitung* blames the partisan movement, and demands more understanding for the Polish workers. Interesting, isn't it, for the paper of the coal owners to find suddenly that the Polish workers have "a well developed sense of justice and when they are working abroad, this is particularly well developed. Except for a few social chauvinists the foreign workers who are treated fairly, will under normal conditions show the greatest tendency to work willingly and faithfully."

After "exhausting the reservoir of human beings"—after "deteriorating their physical qualities"—these robbers and slave-drivers find out that they have to treat the foreign workers fairly—that even the Polish workers have a sense of justice.

In every country they are robbing the wealth of the people—taking everything. In Belgium the miners had to work one Sunday a month—in Holland two Sundays, in France every miner who worked more than 50 hours a week had the right to buy additional food rations. In certain districts of France, the miners worked 54 hours a week throughout the occupation.

It might have happened to you, British miner.

THE OPPOSITION MOVEMENT

There are some signs of opposition to the Hitler Regime amongst the German miners, but this opposition is too weak to hinder Hitler's war machine effectively. That is the meaning of the following report of a conference of Ruhr miners, broadcast by the "German People's Radio" (published by the Allies Inside Germany Council on 14th March, 1944).

"One of the speakers," says the report, "admonished the conference that the opposition movement among Ruhr miners had by no means kept pace with the demands of the situation in Germany, which was all the more regrettable because, in the case of the miners, the old working force had been kept relatively intact and because effective opposition on the part of the miners was of greatest strategic importance."

The "demands of the situation in Germany" as our Ruhr comrades put it, means that the present forms of opposition by the miners as expressed in isolated fights for purely local demands, go-slow action on a small scale, chalking of slogans against the Nazi

war, against Hitler and other Nazi leaders, are not enough. What is needed is a developing and strengthening of the miners' opposition movement and the joining of their fight with the struggles of all other anti-Nazi forces in Germany . . . the National Peace and Freedom Movement . . . in order that they might bring about the overthrow of the Hitler regime !

This means the mobilisation of all honest men and women in Germany for the fight against Hitler and his plan to carry on his criminal imperialist war of robbery to the last moment with the last German. It is Hitler's plan to transform every German house into a fortress, every roof window into a loophole and every front garden into a tank-trap in order to drag out the war !

HITLER WILL DESTROY GERMANY

This would mean a further reduction of the national substance of Germany—of lives and material and the cultural degeneration of the surviving population. In short, if the German people do not prevent Hitler from carrying out his plan it could mean the total destruction of Germany. Only the German people can stop this.

There is only one way out for the German people ! To start now a national uprising against the Hitler regime ! To start now to clear out the Nazi gang and their hangmen !

Such a fight put up by the German people would not only mean the saving of Germany from destruction—which is certainly in the interests of the German people—but would also have the effect of considerably shortening the war with a resultant decrease in the number of sacrifices the Allied Nations must necessarily make in order to smash Hitler Fascism.

The events of the 20th July, 1944, made clear to the whole world the extent of the internal crisis in Germany. On that date officers and generals of the German Army together with civil servants and leaders of German big business, tried to get rid of the Hitler Government. They acted from the conviction that the war is lost for Germany and that every day that Hitler is allowed to carry on hastens the destruction of Germany. They made an attempt to overthrow the Nazis—and they failed !

They failed, and paid with their lives for their revolt against the Hitler Government, because of the unbelievable apathy and passivity of the German people, who did not grasp the opportunity given them of bringing about the downfall of the Hitler Government in order to set up a Government capable of ending the war.

GERMAN PEOPLE'S RESPONSIBILITY

It is the bitter and painful truth for us Germans that the main problem for the Gestapo is not that created by an active wide-

spread opposition to the Hitler regime, but this dull apathetic acceptance by the German people of everything, no matter how it comes.

It is clear that under such conditions the attempt to save Germany from certain disaster as a result of Nazi leadership was bound to fail.

The German people carry a heavy share of responsibility for the fact that Germany has become a criminal menace to the world. They carry an equal share of responsibility for following Hitler when he started the present war. For the destruction of the wealth of free peoples, for the terrible atrocities committed by Germans in occupied countries, for the transformation of free peoples into slaves and serfs—for all those crimes the German people will have to answer !

Not even the overthrow of Hitler by a revolutionary uprising of the German people can immediately remove this responsibility. It will take many democratic deeds to convince the freedom loving world that Germany has ceased to be a danger to world progress and peace.

But, so long as the ideology of the "Herrenvolk," the master race, persists in German minds, so long as there are Hitler followers in the political and economical life of Germany, so long as the German war criminals are not brought to justice—so long will Germany remain a danger to world progress and peace ! The United Nations are fighting against the attacks of Hitler Germany, and to prevent German Imperialism from rising again—once and for all. **The destruction of German Fascism is the main issue of the whole of the war. To prevent their rising again will be the main issue in the coming peace.** The blows now being struck from the East and from the West have brought about the last phase of the war : the military destruction of the power of Hitler Fascism.

WHERE WE FREE GERMANS STAND

In this decisive hour we free Germans here in Britain make it clear—in this battle we are on the side of Britain and her Allies ! We see in the cause of the destruction of Hitler fascism the just and necessary defence of freedom and humanity. In the extermination of this horrible pest infesting our fatherland we see a necessary purification and the beginning of a regeneration of our people !

Therefore, the aim of our fight as free Germans in Britain, in co-operation with the National Committee of Free Germans in Russia, and with the active fight of the free Germans in Hitler's army and Germany herself is to make our people attain the position of a freedom loving nation. Because of that we try to do everything possible to help to develop the fight against Hitler.

Only thus will the German people be able to open up the long and difficult road towards a new, truly democratic and peace-loving Germany !

TO MY FELLOW MINERS

After showing you the life and fight of the German miners, allow me to say a few words to my British comrades with whom I am going down the pits to produce the coal so necessary for the fight against Fascism. Yes, against Fascism—against this evil of humanity.

Be very clear what we are up against. Fascism means the total destruction of all the rights and freedoms which people have won for themselves in decades of struggle. The destruction of our working-class organisation, of the family : murder and terror against all who stand in the way of Hitler and the German monopoly capitalists. Fascism means the return to barbarism and slavery.

When I think of my country—and how could I ever forget it ?—I see before my eyes my mates in the Ruhr with whom I fought so many battles in the past. I hear their screams and groans in the “Steinwache” in Dortmund, in that ill-famed Nazi torture chamber.

I see one of the best of the Ruhr miners, Albert Funk, lying in front of the police station in Rechlinghausen with his limbs broken. He had been thrown out of a six-storey window because he refused to betray his mates.

I see Fritz Husemann, the President of the German Miners' Union and President of the International Miners' Federation, lying on a stretcher, murdered in a concentration camp after months of ill-treatment and torture. I think of the little Czech village, Lidice—its fate is well known to you. There are hundreds of Lidices in the mining districts around Moscow and the Donbas.

I think of the sacrifices that the French, Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourg miners have made and are making every day in the fight for freedom. Do you understand me when I say I feel like a deserter who runs away from the middle of a battle when I am on strike ? And I had quite a few strikes during the time I am working here in the pits. Every ton of coal we are losing through strikes is a help for Hitler. In not producing the coal we are capable of producing we are endangering the war effort of this country and dragging out the war.

MAKE OUR UNION STRONGER

You will say, we miners have a case to fight. Yes, that's true. We miners have a case, a good case. But our case can not be fought with strikes. The machinery to settle grievances is in existence

and well able to deal with them. We have our Trade Unions—and I think we should see to it to make them stronger and stronger. Our Unions represent our interests—and do it well. They are able to rally the whole of the Labour Movement behind our just case—and they are doing it.

You will say that a lot of trouble in the mines is made by the coal owners who think of nothing but their profits. That is true. There are lots of pig-headed coal owners who think that now's the time to push their profit interests into the foreground.

But you and I are not fighting in the coal owners' interests, but in our own interests. German Fascism is **our** worst enemy. The destruction of German Fascism will break the back of all the other reactionary forces wherever they may be. But we—you and I and our comrades, the Russian, Czech, Polish, French, Dutch, Luxembourg and Belgian miners—we have to make sacrifices in order to destroy Fascism. In this fight to destroy Fascism we have to give up things that are near and dear to us.

I am certain that after the war we will have every chance of building up a world in which life will be worth living, even for us miners. But we have to fight for this world ourselves. Nobody will hand it to us on a plate. It's only if we do everything we can to win the fight against Fascism that we will have not only the right, but even the possibility to have our say in the making of this world.

I know you hate Fascism as much as I do, and I know you want nothing more than to destroy it and bring this war to an end. All right, let's go on with the job.

But for this the country needs coal, more coal, and then more coal !