

Anti-Conscription Campaign (Canterbury)

You are invited to attend a

Public Meeting

In The CHORAL HALL, Latimer Square

Wednesday, 14th February

At 8 pm.

PROMINENT SPEAKERS

Watch for Newspaper Advertisements

This Leaflet and Organisation for the Meeting Cost Money

Please send your Donation and offers of help to—

The ORGANISER, P.O. BOX 192.

Mr. Fraser Speaks, 1916.

When in December 1916, the second great Anti-Conscription Conference, representing 50,000 workers, was sitting, detectives appeared with orders to demand admittance—a demand which was, however, not complied with. Mr. Peter Fraser (now M.P. for Wellington Central), secretary of the Conference, was arrested while Conference was sitting; and the arrests of Messrs. Brindle, Armstrong and a number of others followed in rapid succession. Messrs. Semple and Cooke had been arrested a few days earlier.—From "Armageddon or Calvary," by H. E. Holland, M.P. (late leader of the Labour Party).

THE CHARGE

On Thursday morning, along with Mr. Brindle, Mr. Fraser was formally charged before two local J'sP., Messrs. W. Ellison and W. J. Hannah.

The charge against Mr. Fraser was that he did, on December 10th, publish words which were seditious in that they had a tendency to excite disaffection against the Government of New Zealand and to interfere with the recruiting of His Majesty's forces, and with the effective preparations of His Majesty, and to discourage the prosecution of the present war to a victorious conclusion, and to encourage opposition to the enforcement and administration of the laws in force in New Zealand relating to compulsory military service during the war, and to excite disloyalty in respect of the war, contrary to clause 1 of the Regulations made on December 4th, 1916, under the War Regulations Act, 1914.

THE ALLEGED SEDITION

The particular portions of Mr. Fraser's speech which were alleged to be seditious were extracted as follows:

"For the past two years and a half we have been looking at the ruling classes of Europe spreading woe, want and murder over the Continent, and it is time that the working classes of the different nations were rising up in protest against them. He (to wit, Lloyd George) wants to continue He'll, and to compel the young life of the Dominions into a sweltering Hell. And so far only one country has said—only one part of the world has said, 'We think this has gone far enough; we will submit to it no more. We find there is a general settling down, and a crystallising of public opinion in favour of peace, or at least peace negotiations, for no country knows what they are fighting for. There is nobody in this country who knows, or in Britain, Germany, Russia, or France. But they have come forward and said, 'We will send you, whether you want or not, to fight,' and you know not what, no more than the sheep which are branded in the Ngahauranga slaughterhouse. It rests with the people to say how long they will stand it. We are told that we were fighting to secure a lasting peace; first it was to relieve Belgium, and the majority of men who went honestly believed that they were going to fight for the rights of the smaller nations and liberty; afterwards, before the incident of Greece came along, before they realised that militarism respected no nationality—if it was necessary to trample underfoot any nation, then any brand of militarism would do. They realise that today. Socialists realise it. Afterwards we were told that we must fight for a lasting peace. The only peace that is going to last, for millions of men, is the peace they will get in the sleep of death. In spite of his awful description of war, Lloyd George said that 'this war must go on. We do not know how long. The war against Napoleon went on for twenty years. We do not believe this war will go on for long, but we must face it, however long.' Are the people going to stand that sort of thing? I do not believe they will. I believe they are gradually waking up and they will till they say: 'No longer will we be the dupes of crowned heads of Europe or their diplomats.'"

This is the fine tradition of the LABOUR PARTY
MAINTAIN IT!

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[P.T.O.]