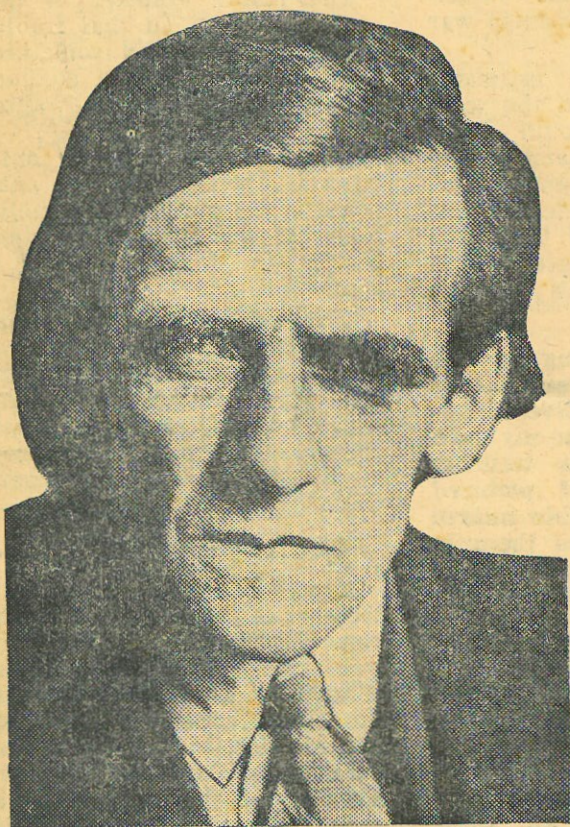


MAXTON'S GREAT ANTI-WAR SPEECH

THE speech of James Maxton, M.P., in the House of Commons on October 4th, has been widely quoted and commented on in the press but no paper has published the speech in full. Below



we give a verbatim report of the speech as reported in Hansard.

"I rise to say a few words on the matters before the House. I and those who sit with me made, more than a week ago, an unequivocal announcement to the country that if war took place we would be in opposition to that war and would take every step that lay within our power to bring it to a speedy end.

We did that with much heart-searching, knowing exactly what

such a step meant, knowing how we should be derided and chased from pillar to post and misrepresented.

We did it because we believe that war is the one great overriding evil that humanity has to face. We have every sympathy with Czechoslovakia as much as other people have. We have as much sympathy particularly for the working-class Czechs as other people.

We have the same sympathy for them as we had for the people of Belgium in 1914, but we did not see that as the issue.

We saw that the war in 1914 was fought for 4½ years as a war to end war; and it did not do that. It was fought as a war to make this land fit for heroes, and it did not do that. It was a war fought for democracy, and it did not do that, because to-day the big

menace with which we are confronted arises from the fact that the aftermath of the last War was not the spread of democracy in Europe but the creation of more dictators.

10 MILLION LIVES LOST.

We saw our own country enter into that war as a democracy, and within a short time turned into a military dictatorship—of a necessity. An hon. Member opposite—I am not sure

TD 956/6/12.3