

# THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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J. T. Murphy

A. McMANUS

C. E. RUTHENBERG

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## The Chinese Revolution and the Kuomintang

[Special Editorial for English Edition]

**T**HE great Chinese Revolution is developing. It is developing under extremely complicated and difficult conditions. It has now entered the most serious stage of its development, marked generally by a growing acuteness of the situation.

For some time now there has existed in China, not simply the revolutionary movement of a people fighting to overthrow the feudal military machine and against imperialism, but two distinct struggling Governments. The Chinese Revolution is already organised into a Government, with its army, State apparatus, etc.

While the militarists of the North maintain power by violence against the masses, by bribes, intrigues, generosity of the imperialist banks and the assistance of foreign armies, by execution of revolutionary workers, by the suppression of civil rights; while this Government of the reactionary usurpers and puppets of international finance-capital is torn asunder by personal intrigues, by struggle for place and profit; while it is politically degenerating—the power of the Canton Government is being maintained and strengthened by the rise of the masses of the people, is drawing its strength and victory from their powerful revolutionary movement, and is submitting to the pressure of those masses.

At present, the struggle between the Revolution and counter-Revolution, between the State systems of the North and South has assumed a particularly difficult character. The revolutionary soldiers are approaching Shanghai. A struggle is going on for the largest proletarian centre. Now, particularly, the military question is the main political question of the Chinese Revolution.

The situation is becoming most complicated in view of the fact that the Revolution is being compelled to beat out its track in circumstances of actual intervention, when imperialist warships are parading in Chinese waters, when thousands of British soldiers are stationed in Shanghai, when foreign military instructors are super-

vising the "defence" of Shanghai from the Revolution. The military alliance between Chinese reaction and foreign imperialism, hitherto veiled, is now coming out in the open. This circumstance is still further stimulating the movement against imperialism; but at the same time is creating a military-political situation pregnant with threatening surprises.

It would be a great political error, and a childish simplicity entirely foreign to Marxian theory, to assume that contradictions within the revolutionary camp are not inevitable. Various social elements have been drawn into the anti-imperialist and revolutionary movement in China—the proletariat, the town middle class, the peasantry and a part of the Chinese commercial and industrial bourgeoisie. These social groups have both common and differing interests. Their aims vary, their militant energy is not the same, the strength of their revolutionary conviction and the "degree of vacillation" are likewise different.

This varied combination of social aims and interests is reflected, and cannot help being reflected, in the revolutionary organisations, the Government and the parties of the Kuomintang. On the Right flank of the Kuomintang, there are definitely bourgeois elements, who are ready to turn aside from the road and drag the Revolution back, who maintain the ideology of "Tai-Chi-Tao-ism"—for the revolutionary struggle but against the class struggle: for a struggle against the Northern reactionaries, but also for a deal with Imperialism. They are frightened by the intervention which has begun, and the awakening of the proletarian masses, and have no objection to "making eyes" at John Bull.

On the other hand we have a strong Left Wing in the Kuomintang, which reflects the interests of the masses, and which is under the influence of the Chinese Communist Party. The latter is still young; its membership not yet large: but it is rapidly growing, and is already enjoying great influence and, as admitted by the

**The Chinese Revolution**—continued

Right Kuomintang opponents, is already playing the role of a real "Locomotive of the Chinese Revolution."

For quite understandable reasons, the imperialist press is employing all means to exaggerate the strength of the Right Kuomintang, who are alleged to have already turned the Revolution on to "moderate" lines, dispersed the "red workers," and concentrated power in their own hands. The imperialist press has predicted the complete degeneration of the Kuomintang, its split, the paralysis of the Chinese Revolution, and its peculiar "regeneration." The imperialist press hopes to capture this "regenerated" revolution with its bare hands.

**S**OME "specialists" on the Chinese question, who are ready to grumble at every suitable or unsuitable occasion, have reacted in a peculiar manner towards this imperialist theory of regeneration of the Chinese Revolution. If the Right Wing is in power, if the Revolution has degenerated, then it is necessary to play the Funeral March, the Chinese Communists must "resign" and give up "great actions" and great plans—such is the tearful and simple logic of those who are dancing to the bourgeois music about the Right Wing having gained the "upper hand" in the Chinese Revolution. They recommend the Communist Party to withdraw from the Kuomintang—thereby helping the Right Wing. They fail to understand that, without co-operation of the Communist Party with the Kuomintang, the leading role of the proletariat in the Revolution is impossible, and that the Chinese Revolution would thereby be doomed to failure. The liquidators of to-day "don't notice" that their preaching of withdrawal from the Kuomintang means the preaching of liquidation of the Chinese Revolution.

All the bourgeois noise about degeneration of the Chinese Revolution is built on a very old and unsound basis. They pretend to "object" to reaction, yet they do not want to see, or they have no faith in, the strength of the Revolution. They see the Right fraction of the Kuomintang, but they do not see its kernel, and they do not see the masses. They see the situation according to the principle ridiculed by Lenin: "Everything goes well with the bourgeoisie, everything is bad with us."

Yet it is just recently that the mass revolutionary movement has developed enormously. We shall not

speak here of the heroic Chinese workers, who do not spare their lives for the cause of the Revolution. We shall not speak of the splendid conduct of the Shanghai proletariat, the skirmishers of the great revolutionary storm of China. Masses of Chinese working women recently celebrated International Women's Day with great enthusiasm. We will only point out here the impressive success of the recent peasant conferences (particularly in the provinces of Hupei and Honan) which were held under Left revolutionary slogans—against the land-owners and gentry, for agrarian reforms, and against imperialist enslavement. This is a symptom of the greatest significance for the prospects of the workers' and peasants' bloc in China.

Even the Right circles in the Kuomintang, and those who stand near to the Right Wing in the Kuomintang, the Government and the Army, are forced to yield to the pressure of the revolutionary masses—the workers, peasants and artisans. In this respect the declaration of the Commander-in-Chief—Chiang-Kai-Shek—which was published in the Communist press recently, is a very important document. Evidently, the pressure of the revolutionary rank and file is so strong that Chiang-Kai-Shek is compelled, at this stage, to manoeuvre, to swear his devotion to the principles of the Revolution, Sun-Yat-Sen-ism and Socialism, to submit to the leadership of the mass party—the Kuomintang, and to make declarations not at all in the style of those which he made previously. The plan which the extreme Right Wing of the Kuomintang hoped to carry out, and which the imperialist bourgeoisie regarded as its trump card—namely, the plan of isolating the generals and making them independent of the Kuomintang, has thus failed. Now even the American capitalist press has been compelled to recognise the failure of the Right Wing plot.

The road of the Chinese revolutionaries is difficult and thorny. They have to overcome tremendous obstacles. They have to act, struggle for power, struggle for hegemony within the revolutionary movement, in extremely complicated and contradictory conditions. But the revolutionary tension of the Chinese people is vast, the will of the Chinese working class is resolute and invincible and the outlook for the great liberation movement is immeasurable. Let those whose lot it is to doubt, doubt. The Chinese Revolution will go ahead, breaking down all obstacles, and will itself hold down those who wish to hold it down.



# Hindu-Mussulman Strife

Safdar

**H**INDU-MUSSULMAN antagonisms are a great obstacle to the organised struggle of the Indian nationalist movement. This movement has been experiencing a decline since the end of 1922. In 1920 and 1921 it was a serious menace to British imperialism in India. For the first time in the history of the country the movement became a real mass movement. In some places it broke out into open rebellion, in the form of a conflict between the poor peasants and the city workers on the one hand and the authorities on the other. Naturally, at that time neither the government nor the Indian nationalists could devote themselves to stirring up Hindu-Mussulman strife. The movement was so powerful that they were filled with consternation. However, the Liberal leaders of the Indian National Congress got scared at the dimensions and character the movement was assuming and gave the signal for retreat.

The notorious Bardoli resolution says: "(1) The Executive Committee deplors the inhuman conduct of the mob at Chauri-Chara, which brutally killed the police officers and senselessly burned down the police stations. (2) In view of the fact that mass civil disobedience always gives rise to violence, which shows that the country is not yet prepared for the methods of passive resistance, the Executive Committee of the Congress orders that mass civil disobedience shall cease and instructs the local committees of the Congress to advise the farmers to pay the land taxes and all other government taxes and cease all aggressive action. . . . (6) The Executive Committee instructs the Congress and its branches to inform the peasantry that a refusal to pay rent to the landowners is a violation of the decisions of the Congress and causes harm to the vital interests of the country. (7) The Executive assures the landowners that the Congress movement does not in the least threaten their lawful rights, and the committee desires that in all cases where the peasantry put forward any claims a way of settlement may be found through the medium of mutual agreement and arbitration."

## Defending the Landlords

This resolution indicates that the leading body of the national movement at a critical moment considered it its duty to defend the interests, not of the masses whom it was supposed to lead, but of the landlords and the capitalists. Owing to betrayal by the bourgeois leadership, the revolution suffered defeat. Gandhi, the celebrated leader of the Indian national movement, at the time when it was at its height, declared: "Everything is born in order to serve God—the Brahmins by their knowledge, the Kshatri by their strength, the Waisim by their commercial abilities and the Shudra by their physical labour."

A way out from the *cul-de-sac* in which the Indian national revolutionary movement found itself after 1922 was found by organising the Swaraj Party. The decline of the Swaraj Party, however, was strikingly demonstrated at the last Indian National Congress, at which the Swarajists held a dominant position. Through the

mouth of Gandhi it was declared that the aim of the national revolutionary movement was Swaraj—Home Rule on a Dominion basis—and that the Congress and the Swaraj Party did not aim at complete independence of India from the British Empire. Even with regard to its tactics, which distinguished the Party from all avowedly bourgeois parties, the chairman of the Indian National Congress declared that the policy of non-cooperation with the government was not an absolute nor an immutable policy.

## The Calcutta Fighting

This implies that the Indian nationalists are prepared to co-operate with the British in the present Anglo-Indian government, and this practical programme is the inevitable consequence of the economic co-operation between British and Indian capitalists in the exploitation of the Indian masses. Under these conditions, Hindu-Mussulman antagonisms inevitably had to assume extremely acute forms.

The main feature of political life in India during recent years, and particularly during the past year, is the break-up of the Swarajist Party and the growing Hindu-Mussulman strife. From all the large cities in India news comes of men being killed and wounded in riots. These conflicts reached their culminating point in Calcutta, where open war broke out between the Hindus and the Mohammedans. The fighting lasted throughout the whole of April and assumed a very fierce character. The combatants employed all sorts of weapons, including stones, bamboo sticks, rifles, revolvers and even bombs. Over 100 were killed and a thousand seriously wounded in these conflicts.

It is not surprising that the whole of India is closely watching these rivalries between the Hindus and the Mussulmen, who together represent 90 per cent. of the population of the country. The Hindus number 217 millions, or 68 per cent., while the Mohammedans are 63 millions or 22 per cent. of the population. The intensity of the hostility between these two religious denominations can be judged from the reports in the newspapers. At the time of the Calcutta riots a Mohammedan organisation issued a leaflet which contained the following:

## Incitement to Massacre

"Mussulmen beware! Since last evening the Hindus have been attacking Mussulmen. The Hindus have killed hundreds of Mussulmen, their homes have been burned down and their shops plundered. Mussulmen must not stand by idly and peacefully; every single Mussulman life must be paid for with 100 Hindu lives. Wherever a Hindu city dweller or peasant is found he must be killed on the spot. Massacre the Hindus as far as lies in your power!"

The present relations between the Hindus and the Mussulmen is having a serious effect upon the national movement. Owing to the development of this religious antagonism, which is the result of the deliberate policy

**Hindu-Mussulman Strife**—continued

of the British, a special political school of communalism has arisen. Communalism maintains that the Indian people can and should act along the line of common national and religious views. On the basis of this principle special organisations have sprung up both among the Hindus and the Mussulmen. The principal aim of the Mussulman League and the new Indian Mussulman Party is to protect the interests of their co-religionists as against the interests of the Hindus.

The interests of the latter are protected by a no less powerful and reactionary organisation, the Hindusakaba, and in these organisations even more or less revolutionary nationalists are converted into agents for inflaming the religious prejudices of the masses. A deplorable consequence of this is the split in the national movement in India; even one section of the workers is being hounded against the other.

The British imperialists declare that this strife exists in the country because India does not represent a single nation. Sir John Strachey, the ex-Governor of the United Provinces, once declared that the most important problem that has to be studied in India is that there is not, and never has been, a united nation having, according to European ideas, anything in the nature of physical, political, social and religious unity. There is no Indian nation, no Indian people about which we hear so much. ("India," by Sir John Strachey.) From this the conclusion is drawn that India must have a neutral foreign government which shall restrain the country from automatic collapse. The "Times" frankly declares that the Calcutta riots are one more proof of the practical impossibility of giving India "Swaraj," and that those who demand Home Rule for India do not understand the Hindu-Mussulman problem, although that problem is of first-class importance.

**Economic Causes**

As a matter of fact, the primary cause of the Hindu-Mussulman strife is not that it is impossible to unite all the nationalities populating India into a united and independent State. The real cause of this strife lies in the economic conditions of the Hindus and Mussulmen respectively. The Mussulman bourgeoisie represents the most conservative section of the Indian bourgeoisie. While the Hindu bourgeoisie, added by the National Congress, was fighting British imperialism in defence of its interests from the end of the last century, the Mussulman bourgeoisie, as such, had then not yet arisen. It is not surprising that at that time the Mussulman League was established as a counter-balance to the National Congress. This League was an organisation of Mohammedan landowners, who represented the social bulwark of British rule in India. The whole activity of the League consisted in combating the National Congress, the majority of the members of which were Hindus. Naturally, the Mussulman landlords found it to their advantage to give this struggle a religious character.

At the present time one of the factors in Hindu-Mussulman strife is the competition between Mussulman merchant capitalism and the more developed industrial commercial capital of the Hindus. This is indicated by the fact that the majority of those who took part

in the Calcutta riots were Hindu and Mussulman merchants. The attacks of the Mussulmen were directed largely against the Hindu merchants. The situation becomes more complicated from the fact that in some provinces the peasants are Mohammedans and the landlords are Hindus, while in other provinces the position is just the reverse.

**The Moplah Rising**

The Moplah rising on the Malabar coast was purely peasant in character, both in its aims and those who took part in it. As, however, the landlords in this district are Hindus they described the revolt of the peasants as a Mussulman attack upon the Hindus. This they did in the hope that they would obtain the help of other Hindus, including peasants.

A similar state of affairs prevails in Bengal, the centre of Hindu-Mussulman strife. Here, too, the strife is not religious but social, and is a problem of first-class importance. In Bengal the majority of the Mohammedans are peasants, the landlords are in the main Hindus; the exploitation of the peasants by the landlords has assumed terrible dimensions. If to this is added the exploitation of the peasants by usurers who are also Hindus, it will be clear that the conditions of the peasantry are absolutely intolerable. Nearly 45 per cent. of the peasants are almost constantly in debt to the usurers, who extort interest amounting sometimes to 75 per cent. per annum. Moreover, we must bear in mind the heavy burden of taxation and the extreme shortage of land from which the peasants suffer. The Bengal peasant on the average possesses about three acres of land.

From this it will be clear what measures the Hindu peasant must take in order to emancipate himself from his present slavery. First, the abolition of British imperialism which extorts excessive taxes and fosters Indian feudalism. Secondly, the confiscation of the land from the Hindu feudal landlords. The discontent of the peasantry, however, found expression in quite a different direction. The Mohammedan bourgeoisie of India has taken advantage and continues to take advantage of the discontent of the peasants in order to increase their political and economic influence. The Mohammedans occupy 45 per cent. of the seats in legislative and civil bodies. They preach to the peasantry that they must support them in holding these seats, on the ground that they, the bourgeoisie, will protect the interests of whole Mussulman population of India.

**Divide and Rule**

This brings us to the policy of the British Government which is based on the principle of "divide and rule." Were it not for the system of separate representation for Mussulmen and Hindus in the various legislative bodies, the fight of the Mussulmen to obtain 45 per cent. of the seats would not be so acute. The reactionary Mussulmen leaders would not be tempted by soft jobs, and undoubtedly they would cease to preach the sacred ideas of Islam. The British imperialists, however, foresaw that such a system would be of great advantage to them, and it was on these grounds that they introduced the reforms, which from 1909 to the present day have been directed towards creating a privileged position for the Mohammedans. The British have car-

**Hindu-Mussulman Strife**—continued

ried out this system in the most cunning manner. The privileged position of the Mohammedans inevitably gives rise to strife between the Hindus and the Mohammedans. A definite number of the seats on legislative bodies are allocated to the Mohammedans "in view of their special position." On the surface the British appear to defend the numerically weak Mussulman communities, but as a matter of fact they sow discord and rouse a Hindu-Mussulman conflict.

The British imperialists stick at nothing in order to maintain their rule in India. At the present time when India is advancing by great strides towards industrialisation, and consequently the division of society into various castes is dying out and religious prejudices are disappearing, the British are exerting every effort to set one religious denomination against the other, for this purpose they set up their special electoral systems.

As Lenin wrote in his article, "Progressive Asia and Backward Europe," when speaking of the imperialist bourgeoisie: "The dying bourgeoisie is combining with the obsolete and dying forces in order to preserve tottering wage slavery." It is precisely the obsolete and dying religious and caste divisions in Indian society that the British are trying to preserve by creating a privileged position for the Mohammedans. The British imperialists by their experience in Ireland know how it is possible to utilise national minorities for the purpose of strengthening and prolonging their rule. In India these national minorities are the Mohammedans. It has long been known that the British were most active in the establishment of the Mussulman League, the fundamental purpose of which is to combat Indian nationalism. The present system of creating "special" Mussulman interests is a continuation of the policy of "divide and rule."

**Strengthening the Bureaucrats**

We saw an example of this mutual strife during the elections to the Indian "parliament." The "Bombay Chronicle," of 25/1/26, was quite right when it declared that there is not a single patriotic Hindu who is not pained by the sight of internecine strife carried on under the guise of an election campaign. This strife demoralises and paralyses the forces working for the emancipation of India. This state of affairs is a source of strength and of rejoicing for the bureaucracy.

The policy of setting one denomination against the other is being continued. There is not the slightest doubt that the Calcutta riots were a result of the provocation of the British Government. Immediately after the riots broke out the British Government began to spread the legend that the Hindu-Mussulman strife and the Calcutta riots in particular show that India would not be able to govern herself if the British were to leave. Moreover, the British press asserted that the Calcutta riots were caused by the fact that the masses of the Indians were dismayed by the prospect of the further limitation of British authority in India. The very impatience revealed by the British authorities in proclaiming to the whole world that India was not ready for Home Rule exposed their real desire.

At the time of the Calcutta riots the city, which usually seethes with commercial life, was a scene of

desolation. All the shops were closed. With the exception of a casual vehicle carrying some sower of panic, not a sign of life was seen on the streets, apart of course from the military and police patrols. In the European part of the city, life went on as if nothing were happening. The life of the Europeans represented the very opposite of that of the Hindus and Mussulmen. This the "Times" had to admit when it wrote: "Calcutta always represented a city of contrasts, and these contrasts were never so glaring as during the Hindu-Mussulman riots."

After the provocative role played by the British Government in the Calcutta events had become evident, the latter tried to throw the blame upon alleged agents of Soviet Russia. The editor of an important organ of British imperialism in India wrote: "On April 22, a person of authority asked me in all seriousness whether there was any truth in the story that the rioters had been bribed by Soviet agents in order to discredit the Government. I could not persuade my interlocutor that this was not the case. If indeed Soviet money has been distributed in Calcutta, then who received it? Or perhaps there were Bolshevik agents in both camps? Mussulman and Hindu leaders say that there are heads and organisations which foster the fanaticism of the masses. This is the common opinion concerning the twofold deception of Moscow which supplies both parties with money.—("Capital," April 22, 1926).

**British Action**

Here is another example of how Hindu-Mussulman strife is encouraged, and how the Mussulman community is exploited by the British Government. During the Mussulman festival in Delhi, during which a cow has to be sacrificed, the Hindu Mayor of the city prohibited the Mohammedan procession from passing through the streets in which Hindus lived in order to avoid trouble. But a British official intervened and told the Mohammedans that they could pass through any street they desired. This British official himself solemnly marched at the head of the procession, and thus heroically "defended" the Mussulman faith from attacks of the Hindus.

This British official succeeded in achieving his object. A Mussulman daily, which up till then had been attacking the British Government, came out with a report under screaming headlines to the effect that "The Hindu Mayor had prohibited our procession, but a British official on the contrary permitted the procession to take place and even marched at the head of it." This will make it clear by what methods the British carry out their policy of setting Mohammedans against Hindus and Hindus against Mohammedans.

The last reason, but by no means the least in importance, for Hindu-Mussulman strife is the wrong policy conducted by the Indian Nationalist Movement on this question. The attempts of the nationalists to smooth out these differences produce the very opposite results from those desired. The social revolution alone can bring about a complete solution of the Hindu-Mussulman problem.

As we have pointed out already, the root of these disagreements lies in the present-day social relations of India. This means that only a progressively developed India, i.e., an India freed from all religious prejudices

**Hindu-Mussulman Strife**—continued

and caste privileges, can ensure both communities against a repetition of Hindu-Mussulman strife. Hence in order to remove the disagreement it is necessary that the interests of the combined toiling masses of the Hindu and Mussulman communities should serve as the basis for the national-revolutionary struggle. Instead of doing this the Indian nationalists tried all the time to foster and strengthen religious traditions and prejudices, and on the strength of this bring about a compromise between various groups and call it community.

The Hindu nationalist call: "Back to the old days," and the call of the Indian Mussulmen: "Back to the Khalifat," express this tendency of accentuating religious prejudices. This cannot but foster sectarian moods among Hindus and Mussulmen, and these moods inevitably find expression in increased strife between the two denominations. It is absurd to expect that agreement can be reached on this basis.

Even the most revolutionary organisation in India, the Swaraj Party, failed to solve this problem. Its attempt to reach an agreement by the proposal to share posts between Hindus and Mussulmen in the Nationalist India of the future is an attempt to smooth out antagonisms on the basis of group distinctions. This will not solve the problem; on the contrary, it will make the antagonisms between the two national religious groups in India more acute.

**How Nationalism Grew**

The history of Indian nationalism may be divided into three periods. In the first period, Indian nationalists adopted the Western ideology. All that was Indian was rejected, all that was European was to serve as something worthy of imitation.

The second period of development of Indian nationalism marked a reaction against the capitulation of Indian nationalism to European culture. In order to combat capitalist culture, a high type of proletarian culture was required, but traces of the proletariat in India could only be discovered with the aid of a microscope at that time. In the same way as the Russian Narodniki (Populists), in their fight against Tsarism, based their revolutionary theories on pre-capitalist forms of economy (the "mir" or commune) so the Indian nationalists at that time turned to the feudal and medieval system, its superstitions and prejudices. Out of the decaying relics of religious and metaphysical views, on the ruins of the village communes and out of the relics of the departed glory of a by-gone civilisation they tried to realise the golden dream of an Indian culture, which was to serve as their ideal and guiding star.

The present period of development of the national-revolutionary movement in India brings with it the chance to solve the Hindu-Mussulman problem. The modern Indian big bourgeoisie is allied with British imperialism. The driving forces of the revolution to-day are the proletariat, the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie (the artisans, small traders and the petty bourgeois intelligentsia). The economic conditions of these classes are becoming worse and worse, for the compromise between British and Indian capital is based upon intensified exploitation of these classes. The struggle of the latter against imperialism therefore is an historically

necessary struggle. In this struggle the proletariat will assume the leadership. This means that the basis of a national struggle will become wider. This will lead to the dying out of group and religious distinctions, for common problems will take supreme place above all others. We see therefore that the solution of the Hindu-Mussulman problem is a function of the social struggle of the workers and peasants.

**Through the Class Struggle**

From what has been said it follows that the only way Hindu-Mussulman strife can be abolished in India is through the class struggle and the elimination of the survivals of religious ideals in the country. It is the duty of true revolutionaries to introduce, develop and strengthen the conscious elements in this struggle. The Indian Nationalists however, fail to understand the necessity for such work. More than that even, they look expectantly to the government in the hope that they will take measures to prevent the spread of this strife in India.

In their opinion the British Government represents the only ray of hope amidst the gloom that now overshadows India. The "Indian Review," in a leading article dealing with the Hindu-Mussulman question, points out that the situation is not as gloomy as it may appear at first sight. There are forces which will bring about mutual harmony between Hindus and Mussulmen. These forces are a source of rejoicing for they are invincible. It would be as well to bear that in mind at the present time when the cult of separatism is in its ascendancy. First place among those who are striving to weaken communal differences and restore communal harmony must, in the opinion of the "Indian Review," belong to Lord Irwin!

The character of the "neutrality" of the British with regard to the caste system in India is very well known. The British and Indian manufacturers artificially maintain the existence of the caste system. On the other hand, however, the factory system and capitalist exploitation of the rural districts are destroying the feudal forms of social life. The spectre of the class struggle is beginning to haunt India. Hindu-Mussulman strife is partly an expression of the class struggle.

**Workers and Peasants**

Reports in the newspapers show that in the majority of conflicts in Bengal the Mohammedans were the attacking party. The Indian Nationalists fail to understand why it is that the Mohammedans and not the Hindus are the attacking party. This is due to the fact that in the majority the Mohammedans are subject to the Hindus. In Bengal 90 per cent. of the capitalist employers are Hindus.

This grain of fact is worth more than a bushel of argument. It clearly shows that the Hindu-Mussulman strife is an expression of the spirit of irreconcilable protest on the part of the workers and peasants against their present conditions of life. Our task is to free these masses from the dirty rags of religious and caste distinctions hampering the development of the class struggle. This alone will free India from a recrudescence of Hindu-Mussulman strife.

# The British Working Class and the War on China

J. T. Murphy

**D**URING the last few months two questions have dominated British politics—the war on China and the threat of a rupture of relations with Soviet Russia. Both questions at bottom are one question, but in the incidents of the struggle of imperialism against the workers' revolution and national revolution, the war on China has been to the forefront, and the active war policy of the Government of Britain towards China has been much further developed than that towards the Soviet Union. Hence the pre-eminence of China in current politics.

Of course, ever since the Cantonese forces began to march northward the British Government has been conducting a harassing movement against the national revolution. But the most critical stage was reached when the question of the headquarters of the Cantonese became Hankow instead of Canton. Then it was felt by the British Government and other imperialist powers, but especially the British imperialists, that the decisive moment had arrived, and immediately the Government began to move its warships and troops to China to take the offensive. The Government uttered many fine phrases about peaceful intentions but actually pursued a policy of war. From this moment onwards the British working class movement was compelled to face up to this situation.

Prior to this time, there had been a series of declarations supporting the Cantonese. Indeed, on the initiative of the Communist delegates to the Trades Union Congress at Bournemouth, a resolution was moved on behalf of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain by Arthur Horner, protesting against any action of the imperialist government which might lead to a new war—either in the Far East or in the West. This resolution was passed by the Congress but not without opposition. Indeed, Mr. C. G. Ammon, M.P., member of the Labour Party, suggested that the resolution should be withdrawn. This was not the only symptom that the Trade Union bureaucrats had retreated considerably from their anti-imperialist declarations at the Scarborough Congress, for they came under the fire of the Communist delegates and the delegates of the Minority Movement on account of their failure to carry out the decision of the Scarborough Congress to send a Trade Union Delegation to inquire into the position in the Far East.

## The Test Decision

The situation at the beginning of this year, however, was much more acute than at the time of the Bournemouth Congress. The stage was set more decisively for work, and the actual despatch of troops from English shores demanded some decision as to whether the working class movement was to repeat the calamities of 1914.

I propose to pass under review the line taken by the various political forces within the working class movement. How did the Labour Party leadership face up to the situation? First, Mr. MacDonald, as the leader of the opposition, spoke as follows: "Nothing could justify their action if they simply walked away from settlements which past Chinese Governments have allowed us to control and where our people have taken up their abode under the security which they believed that treaties gave them." Addressing himself to the Cantonese he said: "If the Government uses a mob like the Hankow mob for its own purposes it must not be mealy-mouthed as to the consequences." In the "Daily Herald," of January 22, he amplified this by saying: "I also wish that there may be no misunderstanding as to my view about the presence of armed forces in China. No one should welcome more than Mr. Chen precautions that are no menace to him but that secure tranquillity and prevent his hand being forced by those who would like a fight." Mr. Thomas supported Mr. MacDonald as follows: "If troops have to be sent I would infinitely prefer them to send big armies than a handful of people." This statement of the Right Wing leaders characterised the official policy of the Labour Party for a short time—but only a short time, although sufficient to intimidate the British Labour Council for Chinese Freedom, which had been set up by what were known as the Left Wing elements.

## Council for Freedom Afraid

On this Council was the chairman of the Trades Union Congress, Mr. George Hicks, Mr. George Lansbury, vice-chairman of the Labour Party, Tillett, Swales, Malone, Fenner Brockway, James Maxton, etc. This Council had issued a manifesto calling for (1) the recognition of the full sovereignty and independence of China; (2) recognition of the Canton Government as the national government of China; (3) renunciation of extra-territorial privileges; (4) negotiation of new treaties with the National Government to replace the unequal treaties; (5) withdrawal of armed forces from China and all warships from Chinese waters; (6) establishment of closer co-operation between the British and Chinese Labour and Trade Union Movements. Immediately the Labour Party Executive came out with a statement of policy which condoned the line taken by MacDonald in support of Chamberlain, this Council for Freedom got cold feet, and began issuing statements in the press which could only be regarded as supplementary statements to the official Labour Party policy. The Trade Union General Council identified itself with the Labour Party policy and, but for the campaign of the Communist Party, there appeared to be a complete national alliance from the Tories to the Labour Party.

**British Working Class and War on China**—continued

But the I.L.P. suddenly awakened and declared in a leading article of the "New Leader," on January 14: "The Labour Movement should realise the critical nature of the events which are occurring. War with the nationalist government of China would not end in China, Russia might easily be involved. It is necessary that the organised working class movement should immediately make known its determined opposition to any conflict to defend British imperialism in the East. The workers must be aroused as they were when the Council of Action stopped war with Russia in 1920. They must stop the war with China *now*." In its programme for this campaign the I.L.P. put forward in a manifesto that the British Government should declare publicly that it recognises the full independence and sovereignty of China, etc., on the same lines as the British Labour Council for Chinese Freedom, except that it did not call for the establishment of close co-operation between the British and Chinese Labour and Trade Union Movements. On the basis of this programme they began a campaign, but their anxiety to stop the war on China did not carry them far enough to agree to a United Front campaign with the Communist Party. Their campaign assumed entirely a pacifist character. But, nevertheless, in programme it was somewhat different from that of the Labour Party Executive.

It is interesting to observe here again the strange position of this Party. Out of 150 members of the Parliamentary Labour Party, over 100 are members of the Independent Labour Party. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Mr. Philip Snowden are members of this Party, and yet there was this remarkable cleavage of opinion, and the refusal of the Labour leaders who were members of the I.L.P. to carry out a single slogan of the Independent Labour Party in their actions. For example, in the I.L.P. manifesto there was a call made upon the Labour and Socialist Movement to prepare at once to

act. It reads: "That the Executive of the Labour Party should immediately invite the General Council of the Trades Union Congress to join with it in summoning a National Labour Convention to express the hostility of the working class to war with China, to plan industrial action if need be, and prevent this calamity occurring. British Labour stopped war with Russia in 1920, it can prevent war with China now if it will!" Although a large proportion of the General Council and of the Labour Party Executive are members of the I.L.P., and undoubtedly hold the hegemony in the ranks of the Labour leadership, there is no evidence that the slightest notice has been taken of this demand for a conference of action.

Nevertheless, the agitation extended throughout the ranks of the Labour Movement. But, we were witness to the following peculiar situation—while the I.L.P. Executive formulated its own demands, when it came to the Albert Hall demonstration it surrendered its own meeting and gave the leadership to MacDonald, who certainly had not subscribed to the demands of his Party Executive.

The Co-operative Movement also presented a strange face to the situation. Notoriously pacifist in its conference resolutions, there appears no trace of a recognition of the crisis as calling for anything of a very special character. Indeed on January 1 its leading organ, "The Co-operative News," said that the British Government manifesto "should help to establish the belief that Britain has no malicious intent with regard to China, and the Chinese have the additional advantage of knowing that the policy now disclosed is one that has the support of the masses of the British people." On January 8 there is not a word in its leading organ about the situation and the women's page is headed "1927, a Peace Year." By February it suddenly dawns upon them that there is really a crisis, and the correspondent is permitted to tell a story about the gravity of the situation, but not the slightest attempt is made to arouse the co-

## BUILDING UP SOCIALISM

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**British Working Class and War on China**--continued

operative movement to any form of action. On February 12, it becomes interested in British diplomacy and says: "That the Government's anxiety to secure the co-operation of Italy, or other foreign powers, is evidently due to the belated realisation of the fact that Shanghai is not a British possession but an international concession. This thought was in the mind of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald on Sunday when he questioned whether we had any right to send British troops to Shanghai." But, still, there is no evidence in the paper that the Co-operative Movement has any further responsibilities or obligations to the developing war situation. On February 19 the editorial page says that "the news from China is still a trifle bewildering but nevertheless serious," but still no effort on the part of the leaders to arouse the Co-operative Movement even to protest. Fortunately, a number of Co-operatives have not waited for such leadership, but coming under the influence of local agitation from the various parties, passed resolutions of protest against the war preparations and developments. The same can be said with regard to the Co-operative Guilds.

**Communist Action**

The Communist Party, on the other hand, unhesitatingly seized upon the situation from the beginning and launched a most vigorous campaign in its press and by leaflets and by posters. Indeed, during the first two months of this year the Communist Party has issued about 500,000 leaflets appealing to the workers for united action, exposing the line pursued by the Labour Party leadership, and developing wide mass pressure in every direction. In the columns of "The Workers' Weekly" and "The Workers' Life," this campaign of exposure was conducted week by week. Although it had helped considerably in the creation of the British Council for Chinese Freedom, it unhesitatingly criticised it severely for its inactivity and nervousness. It sent a letter to the Independent Labour Party Executive, requesting a united campaign in view of the points of agreement which were noticeable in the published declarations of the Independent Labour Party. But the I.L.P. Executive refused this offer, and demonstrated at once its lack of sincerity and will to stop the war. This cannot be said of quite a number of local organisations of the I.L.P., who not only participated in the demonstrations jointly with the Communist Party, but actively joined with them in the agitation for "Hands off China" Committees.

**"Hands off China" Committees**

Our Party not only urged the workers to repudiate the sabotage of the "Hands off China" campaign by their official leaders but to create "Hands off China" Committees in every town, to withdraw the armed forces from China and to declare that not a man and not a gun shall go for the war with China. It followed up this agitation by issuing an appeal to the soldiers who were trade unionists and delivered many thousands of manifestoes into the barracks and to the soldiers marching through the streets. The "Morning Post" for the 8th of February writes: "The amount of Communist litera-

ture being poured into the garrisons during the last fortnight has been enormous, and the subject is engaging the attention of the authorities." The "Times" and other newspapers report also of the distribution of great quantities of leaflets to the soldiers on the march, at the railway stations and at the docks. To the dockers of the various ports our Party issued special appeals and sent its leading Executive members down to the docks of London, Portsmouth, Southampton, Liverpool and Glasgow, with a view to creating the widest agitation amongst the dockers as well as amongst the troops. In every centre where local party organisations exist instructions to the Party members demanded that they take the initiative in the calling of conferences of workers for the purpose of setting up "Hands off China" Committees. In the course of a few weeks the party succeeded in getting local Labour organisations in more than seventy different centres to set up "Hands off China" Committees in the teeth of denunciations from the Labour Party leadership.

The effect of the criticism of the Party and its vigorous campaigning was noticeable on the movement. Reinforced by the Minority Movement, which was also devoting all its energies to this campaign, along with the Left Wing Movement within the Labour Party, our Party not only pushed forward into the demonstrations called by the I.L.P. and the Labour Party, but played an important part in a number of successful conferences. In London, for example, the London Trades Council convened the conference of February 12, to which responded 587 delegates from the London Trade Union and Labour organisations. This conference demanded an embargo on the manufacture of munitions and other war equipment and the transport of all armed forces.

**A Mass Campaign**

Similar conferences were planned in the large industrial centres, and we can say that by these efforts the whole Labour Movement was aroused, and the columns of the "Daily Herald" day by day, during the last month, show how protests began to pour in from all directions of the Labour Movement, from trade union branches, from "Hands off China" Committees, Co-operative Women's Guilds, I.L.P. branches, local Labour Parties, etc., etc.

The effect of this mass campaign of the Party, the Minority Movement, the Left Wing in the Labour Party and the I.L.P., produced marked changes in the position of the National Labour Party. When the question was discussed in the House of Commons, on February 10, the change became most obvious. Instead of MacDonald speaking to the resolution of the Labour Party, which demanded the withdrawal of the troops from China, Mr. Trevelyan was chosen as the leading spokesman. And the contrast between his position (and

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**British Working Class and War on China**—continued

the resolution of the Labour Party itself), and that taken by MacDonald and Thomas enabled Mr. Chamberlain to say: "Mr. Trevelyan may be speaking for those behind him, but he certainly is not speaking for those beside him," meaning MacDonald and Co.

The change in the front of the Labour Party, due to mass pressure, proves conclusively that the diplomatic language of Mr. MacDonald is not representative of the feeling of the mass of the workers.

But it is here necessary to observe the amount of pacifism and passivity which still dominates the movement. We have not only to face the fact that the I.L.P. could refuse a United Front, but also the fact that the Communist Party was alone in its attempts to get the message to the troops, was alone in its efforts to get the masses into action, and that, in spite of all their efforts, we do not yet see any evidence of a single strike action at any single point. Of course, there may be many explanations for this lack of drastic action. But nevertheless, whatever the explanation, the fact remains that in the midst of a crisis of this character the dead weight of the bureaucracy of the Labour Movement weighed with deadening effect upon every effort to get mass action.

It is necessary to utter still another word of warning. The character of the agitation which has been conducted up to now has been twofold. The Labour Movement has concentrated on the question of negotiation with all other questions to follow, whilst the Left Wing, led by the Communist Party, has concentrated upon the withdrawal of troops and the cessation of military activity as a preliminary to the negotiation of the independence programme. This was inevitable; but the danger now facing us is that the pacifism of the I.L.P.

and the negotiating mania of the MacDonalddites will create an inertia in the working class movement of Britain which will be blind to the oncoming changes in the Chinese revolution itself.

It is necessary now, more than ever before, to explain to the masses the different social forces which are participating in the national revolution, and to anticipate the pressure of class differentiation and internal struggle which is bound to go on within this revolution. The campaign of MacDonald and the I.L.P. has all been in the direction of strengthening the hand of the Right Wing of the Kuomintang, aiming at any compromise that could be arrived at with the British Government without regard to the future of the Chinese revolution. The danger of this situation must be sharply brought before the workers and their attention directed to the effect on the working class and the peasantry of this national revolutionary struggle. Unless this is done we shall be witness to the Chinese revolution being compromised in the name of peaceful negotiations, and instead of helping the working masses of China to their liberation through the National revolutionary struggle, the British Labour Movement will be helping the British imperialists to a compromise in its favour.

This is the greatest danger of the moment; it can only be met by increasingly clear expositions of the class forces operating in the Chinese revolution, and the more active identification of the working class organisations of Britain with the working class and peasant organisations of China. By developing our campaign along these lines our Party in Britain can not only develop itself as the driving force in the "Hands off China" Committees, but also prove itself once more to be the real custodian in Britain of the international revolution.

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# The Second International "Faces Canton"

S.

**T**HE military intervention of world imperialism in China becomes more and more determined in character. The elemental revolutionary outburst of the Chinese proletariat, making a heroic concentrated effort to extract the thorn of Sun-Chuan-Fang from the side of Shanghai has been drowned in blood. It is unnecessary to prove that Sun-Chuan-Fang's executioners would not have dared to execute workers as a punishment for distributing leaflets calling for a peaceful strike, if they had not been sure of the support of the imperialist armies, guaranteed to them by secret agreement. It was not the medieval scimitars of the Chinese executioners but the caterpillar-tracked tanks and the monstrous battle planes that guaranteed the continuation of the counter-revolution, although we are convinced that this position can only be maintained for a few days or weeks, certainly not for years or decades.

The imperialist bourgeoisie have demonstrated in Shanghai how they would act if they could manage to obtain even a temporary victory over revolutionary China. But the Shanghai heroes who fell in this struggle, insufficiently prepared and organised, did not give up their lives in vain. The Shanghai tragedy is not only a grave warning against the horrors of the future, but an imperative call to go to any extreme, to stop at no sacrifices, in order to avert this horror. This appeal is primarily addressed to the workers in the imperialist countries. The heads of the executed men exhibited in the streets of Shanghai speak, demand, command!

They demand first of all that the international proletariat shall understand what cursed power paralyses its will in the struggle for the Chinese revolution. They demand that the international proletariat shall crush the monster that holds it in its clutches and prevents it from fighting.

## Buffers for the Bourgeoisie

The world bourgeoisie would not, in the face of unanimous protests by the workers of all countries dare so arrogantly to attack the Chinese revolution if it were not sure of the unconditional and unlimited support of the entire traitor-Socialist political and trade union apparatus. Just as the dregs of the Russian counter-revolutionary emigrés in China, and the other hangers on of the Chinese counter-revolution, would be swept out of Shanghai if they and the workers of Shanghai were left to themselves, so the world bourgeoisie organising intervention in China would be unable to resist the pressure of the working class if they had to face it alone, without the "reconciliatory" mediation of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals. The path of the professional cut-throats, who are protecting Sun-Chuan-Fang's Shanghai, leads through the international headquarters of the Expeditionary Forces to the traitors sitting in the headquarters of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals.

From this point of view the "minor" war which is going on in Shanghai gains added importance from the fact that it reveals the distribution of class forces and

their role in the forthcoming "great" war; primarily the role which imperialism gives to the reformist leaders.

The menacing manifesto issued by the Second International against war is simply the usual product of the prodigal "Left" Social Democratic pen. It is superfluous to point out that this manifesto was issued for the purpose of concealing the principal causes of war, to screen the principal incendiaries and instigators of the conflagration and to throw the whole blame upon the minor personalities. From this point of view the February "note" issued by the Second International is but a repetition of the pseudo-pacifist tricks which are played from time to time by the reformist leaders, during which each jealously watches the others to see that they do not do anything that would damage their own bourgeoisie. The honourable place given in the February Manifesto to the Chinese revolution denotes an innovation in what one might term super-swindling. It would appear that on February 27th the Second International suddenly discovered that there was such a thing as the Chinese revolution, and became imbued with a belated but nevertheless passionate love for it. In the manifesto special emphasis is laid upon "support for the national democratic movement for freedom among the Chinese people." Bauer in the "Arbeiter Zeitung" and Wels in the "Vorwaerts" (the German and Austrian bourgeoisie have every ground for demonstrating their liberalism in China) describe in very high colours the activities of the Executive Committee of the Second International, and place in the forefront its "revolutionary sweep" on the question of China.

## Not Cruel-hearted

Justice however demands that we should note that even in its attitude towards the minor personalities responsible for the menace of war, the Second International is not nearly as cruel-hearted as may be believed from the manifesto. For example the manifesto selects Hungarian reaction as the "whipping boy," and all those who took part in the conference strove hard to expose it. It turns out, however, that Social Democratic indignation with reaction, even if it is only verbal indignation, does not last very long. Barely had the ink of this fearful when one of the kind-hearted leaders of the Second International began to stroke the poor offended Hungarian executioner's head. "Budapest," declared Albert Thomas at a banquet arranged by the mayor of Budapest, "is a city of equality, liberty, labour and progress." "Social and political antagonisms in Hungary are gradually being smoothed out." This is how the "leaders" are combating the monarchist counter-revolution in Hungary.

One would have thought that Albert Thomas, as the representative of the Right Wing of the Second International, would alone have enjoyed the privilege of committing such counter-revolutionary baseness. It

**Second International "Faces Canton"—continued**

appears, however, that Otto Bauer's "Arbeiterzeitung" does not lag behind this "hostage" given by Social Democracy to the League of Nations.

While Albert Thomas takes the Hungarian monarchists under his high protection, Otto Bauer's paper comes forward as the interpreter and champion of Roumanian reaction—concerning which, by the by, the manifesto of the Second International had something to say that, while not being very clear, was for all that apparently unflattering. An article published in the "Arbeiterzeitung" after the manifesto of the Second International has been issued, entitled "In Prison Because of Russian Diplomacy" is nothing but a revolting denunciation of the Communist Party of Roumania and a justification of the war conducted by the Roumanian boyars against the Soviet Union. "It must not be forgotten," writes the official organ of Austrian Social Democracy, "that an important culprit exists for the persecution of the Roumanian Communist Party, and that is the Communist International. For to argue that the oligarchy has outlawed the Communist Party out of sheer blood-thirstiness would not be serving the truth. The class interest of the bourgeoisie of course facilitates such persecution, but this is insufficient in itself to explain the severity of these repressions. The terror against the Communists is only to a small degree to be explained by social causes. Its real cause is national and has to deal with foreign politics."

**Defending their Possessions**

But who is the attacking side, and who is the victim in this "national" struggle, which in the opinion of the "Arbeiterzeitung" "explains" the frenzied reign of terror that is conducted against the Communists in Roumania? It appears that the Communists are the attackers, and that the Roumanian pirates are the defending side! A plebiscite (in Bessarabia), and not only a plebiscite but also support for the national revolutionary movement which is striving for the separation of Bessarabia from Roumania—these have become the permanent slogans of the Communist Party of Roumania. The Roumanian bourgeoisie which has only just established its national state is resolutely defending its "possessions." Perhaps the slogan which Bauer's newspaper so much censures is the result of the Communists in Roumania quite conscientiously falling into error. But this "Left Wing" Social Democratic newspaper refuses to admit the possibility of such a thing. It cannot agree to "half-hearted explanations" which may not suit the Sigurantza (Roumanian secret police). Consequently it is necessary to represent the Roumanian Communists as the "direct agents" of an alien State. The "Arbeiterzeitung" correspondent is prepared even for that. "Communist tactics," he writes, "have not been cultivated on the local dung-heap, but are dictated from Moscow. The resolutions which are printed and distributed intensify still more the persecution and the hatred of the Communists."

Is it by chance that the "Arbeiterzeitung" places its hospitable columns at the disposal of the warriors of the Sigurantza? Hardly. The article referred to was written on the eve of and in direct connection with a "trial," the actual significance of which was that the

Roumanian bourgeoisie tortured comrade Tusatchenko to death without any trial at all, and is preparing to continue similar torture during the trial of comrade Stephanov. At this very moment the Left Social Democrats become imbued with the desire to serve the truth.

It still remains to be explained, however, why this "truth" so precisely coincides with the "truth" vouched for by the rabid executioners of the Roumanian reaction and of the cunning British provocateurs, who are preparing for a war against the U.S.S.R. No doubt the authors of the solemn manifesto of the Second International "against the dangers of war and reaction" could reveal this secret without any difficulty.

**A Spontaneous Supernumerary**

A supernumerary Chinese, Yang Kan Tao, appeared on the horizon of the Second International only after the other reliable Chinese like Wu-Pei-fu and Sun-Chuan-fang had been thrown by the revolution into the garbage heap, while those who survive have hired themselves out to Japanese imperialism. European and American imperialism is seeking new points of support in China in order to be able to conduct concealed intervention simultaneously with open intervention. They require more perfect methods of deception in order to disarm the indignation of the workers against the armed attack upon the Chinese revolution. Demand creates supply. The Second International is about to establish its own Social Democratic party in China.

The February manifesto of the Second International contains a large dose of excellent words about the independence of China. But in appraising these words it is necessary to take the following into consideration. First, a considerable portion of them have already been shouted from the house-tops by such champions of the rights of oppressed nations as Chamberlain and Coolidge. Secondly, the "overweight" which the Second International gives the "liberal" concessions of the imperialists is so belated that at the present stage of the struggle it can no longer be effective in hampering the plans of the imperialists. For example, the demand for the withdrawal of the troops from Shanghai appeared only after the pressure of the workers compelled even the Parliamentary group of the Labour Party to move an amendment to the reply to the King's speech, and after the arrival of the troops in Hong Kong and Shanghai has made this demand inadequate. When Fenner Brockway proposed that the conduct of war be hampered by the declaration of a strike in the munition factories and in the transport of war materials and troops, the Second International sends this proposal along the long road of "to be examined by the respective countries." The "leaders" of the Second International of course are convinced that this proposal will emerge from the various Party headquarters only after the imperialists have managed to bury the liberties of the Chinese people.

**Heading to Behead**

But why did the representative of the Independent Labour Party insist upon introducing a proposal the fulfilment of which would imply support to the Chinese revolution? Why did not the leaders of the Second International bluntly reject this proposal as they would have done a year ago on the pretext that it had not yet examined the social character of the national revolution-

## Second International "Faces Canton"—continued

ary movement? In a word, why have the Second and Amsterdam Internationals now adopted the policy of attaching themselves to the national revolutionary movement, of mixing with the friends of this revolution and of inserting their tentacles into the leading organs of the national revolutionary struggle—instead of their former tactics of direct opposition to the struggle of the colonial and oppressed nations? The answer is clear: For the very same reason that Ebert in January, 1918, forced his way into the committee which led the strike in the munition factories, for the very reason that J. H. Thomas got himself on to the strike committee which led the General Strike in 1926.

### Where Reformists are Needed

The Second and Amsterdam Internationals are trying to establish contact with the national revolutionary movement in China because they believe this to be the best way to suppress that movement. They are beginning to apply the same tactics with regard to the national revolutionary movement in other countries, and primarily in India. The Second and Amsterdam Internationals have moved to the East. Is this not the best proof that it is precisely on this sector of the war that the world bourgeois stands in greatest need of the defence of their reformist agents and servants?

What is the plan for saving the bourgeoisie which the Second International is now about to carry out? It was sufficiently clearly outlined by Yang Kan Tao, the representative of the Chinese Social Democratic Party which "spontaneously arose" in Paris, whose "profound Marxian analysis" so roused the enthusiasm of Otto Bauer. "The Kuomintang," he said, "really consists of three groups: (1) the nationalist groups of the Right Wing of the Kuomintang; (2) the democratic groups—the Left Wing of the Kuomintang, which enjoys the greatest influence at the present time, because it is the centre of all the demands directed against both Peking government and foreign imperialism; (3) the Bolshevik group which cannot enjoy the confidence of the Chinese people because the Russians are not only foreigners but represent numerically the most powerful group of foreigners in the territory of China." Hence Yang Kan Tao's programme is to liberate the Kuomintang from the Bolshevik groups (which following the recipe of Chamberlain he identifies with the Russians). As soon as this operation is performed and the national revolutionary movement has been cut up, it will be easy for the Second International to crush the Kuomintang in its embrace—but without the Bolsheviks. The Chinese revolution, secure against pernicious influences—such is the formula of the Second International, developed by the Chinese Menshevik Yang Kan Tao and made more profound by the Russian Menshevik, Abramovitch.

### "Kuomintang Without Reds"

But this is the very formula which Chang Tso Lin has inscribed on his banner and which has been adopted by all the imperialist groups, in spite of the fact that they have already concentrated a monstrous apparatus for destruction in Shanghai. The Kuomintang without the Bolsheviks is the universal slogan of the counter-revolution, just as "Soviets without Communists" was

the slogan in the days of the Kronstadt mutiny. It proceeds from Abramovitch to Chang Tso Lin and then further to Chamberlain.

The British Press and the newspapers published with the aid of British money are full of news concerning the pending split in the Kuomintang, about the formation of a reliable Right Wing Kuomintang, about secret negotiations that are alleged to be taking place between the Kuomintang and Chang Tso Lin, of declarations made by intermediaries who are supposed to be taking part in these negotiations, and who invariably give utterance to the Abramovitch formula directly adapted to the conditions in China. It goes without saying that there is much in these communications that is deliberately false and provocative. But there is not the slightest doubt also that they reflect the whole system of tactics of external scare and internal penetration for the purpose of breaking the backbone of the Chinese revolution.

### The Reformists' Job

But the imperialists cannot themselves directly carry out the tactics of disarming the Chinese revolution, just as they failed in 1919 to persuade the workers and peasants at the front to give up their arms and to place themselves at the tender mercies of the bourgeoisie with their promises that "your sacrifices will never be forgotten." To-day also the predatory imperialists stand in need of the mediation of Social Democracy, which by adopting a camouflage must penetrate into the camp of the revolution and carry on its treacherous work from within.

The international proletariat, and above all the proletariat of China, must clearly realise this new danger. More than at any previous time is it necessary for the Chinese proletariat to secure the unity, steadfastness and stamina of the anti-imperialist revolutionary front, by systematic, conscious and organised struggle and leadership which takes into consideration all the complexities of the situation.



# The Polish-German Negotiations

G. V.

**I**N October last a pamphlet was published in Poland by the "Publishing Office of the President of the Cabinet" entitled "A Review of the Economic Life of Poland from the Second Half of May to September, 1926." In the preface of this pamphlet, written by Bartels, the Premier at that time and now vice-Premier, we read the following: "Although it was called a moral coup the May coup was not only confined to the sphere of political relationships but also exercised considerable influence upon economic life . . . It must not be forgotten that this favourable result was facilitated also (!) by external conditions favourable to Poland." In short the Fascist government hastened to enter into its "moral assets account," which it had opened in the middle of May the undoubted improvement in the economic and financial state of the country, which was really the result of favourable conditions abroad and primarily the result of the British coal lock-out.

The data now in our possession covering the whole of 1926 and also part of January, 1927, enables us to make a more sober estimate of the economic state of Poland and its future prospects. We will say immediately that in spite of a number of favourable achievements, this data does not in the least justify the rosy optimism which runs through all the speeches of the government representatives and the leading articles in the government press. On the contrary, the situation, instead of improving as was expected has become worse during the last few months, and is revealing symptoms of the severe organic crisis from which the whole economic fabric of Poland is suffering.

## Poland's Recovery

The favourable sides of the economic balance-sheet for 1926 may be enumerated as follows: the favourable trade balance, growth of output in the principal branches of industry, diminution of unemployment, a surplus in the State finances, and stabilisation of the currency. Let us analyse these facts.

The total imports and exports of the past two years are as follows, expressed in millions of gold francs:

	1926	1925
Import	896.2	1,602.8
Export	1,306.0	1,272.1

Thus 1926 ended with a favourable trade balance of 409,800,000 gold francs, whereas 1925 showed an unfavourable balance of 33,000,000 francs. This result, however, was achieved by reducing imports by almost one half and only slightly increasing exports. The total foreign trade (imports and exports) declined from 2,874,900,000 francs in 1925 to 2,202,200,000 francs in 1926 (per capita according to the population this figure represents 65 gold francs for Poland as compared with 210 for Czecho-Slovakia, 380 for Austria, 410 francs for France, etc.).

The analysis of the exports of each item separately shows that the increase in exports was due principally to the increase in the export of coal as a result of the British miners' lock-out (252.1 million gold francs instead of

144.4 millions in 1925) and the forced exportation of rye (in spite of only an average harvest) and other agricultural produce. On the other hand the export of cotton fabrics declined sharply (from 51.9 million francs to 24.5 millions). Imports declined in almost every item, and special note should be taken in the decline of the importation of machinery (machinery for use in the metal industry declined from 10.1 million to 2.3 millions, textile machinery from 20.4 to 6.9 millions, automobile machinery from 26.2 to 9.8 millions).

The figures recently published for January, 1927, show that the favourable trade balance is changing and threatens to become unfavourable: imports for January were 107.7 million francs, while exports were 114.8 million francs. The favourable balance for this month was 7.1 million francs, whereas for December, 1926, it amounted to 27.8 millions and for June last 55.1 millions. It is characteristic that during January the imports of food products increased most of all, while the export of coal and food products declined.

## Due to Coal Lock-out

All the above-mentioned facts indicate to what extent the whole balance of trade of 1926 was the result of transient conditions determined by the British coal lock-out and they also reveal the unstable character of the whole structure of the foreign trade of Poland.

The revival which took place in a number of branches of industry in Poland, particularly in heavy industry, was due, to a much greater degree than was the case in other countries on the Continent to these transient conditions. This is to be seen most clearly from the following table indicating the relative increase in the output of coal, iron and steel in Germany and Poland in 1926.

Coal	April	June	August
Germany	100	117	127
Poland	100	159	173
Iron			
Germany	100	108	127
Poland	100	95	140
Steel			
Germany	100	112	132
Poland	100	117	172

According to official returns the number of unemployed in February, 1926, was 346,000; this gradually declined to 196,000 by the beginning of November, only to rise again steadily until over 260,000 was reached. Owing to reduction of output of coal in March and April a further increase in the unemployed figures is expected.

High prices were a constant phenomenon throughout all last year, especially high prices of agricultural produce. Wages showed only a slight increase, obtained after very severe struggles. The salaries of clerks employed in private and government offices were slightly increased only once within this period and on the whole considerably lag behind the general rise in prices.

**The Polish-German Negotiations** --continued

Poverty is increasing and the purchasing power of the masses is on the decrease.

The fact that the budget was not only balanced in 1926 but even showed a slight surplus is regarded as a great achievement, for in the previous years there had been considerable deficits in the budget. The estimates for 1927 submitted to the Sejm also represent a balanced budget. A whole series of factors indicate, however, that these estimates for a balanced budget reveal excessive optimism. The estimates for the revenues in the new budget are based upon the revenues obtained last year, but last year's revenues exceeded the estimates for 1926 by 24 per cent. This was due entirely to accidental circumstances. Not only were increased revenues obtained from indirect and particularly from direct taxes, but railways, which hitherto have been run at a loss, produced a profit, largely because the freight rates for coal were doubled; now it will be necessary to reduce these rates again. On the other hand the rising prices threaten to upset the estimates for expenditures.

The surplus obtained from the favourable balance of trade as well as from the budget made it possible to stabilise the currency, increase its gold backing and at the same time issue a larger amount of currency notes. The money in circulation in Poland in 1926 amounts to 20 gold francs per head-- in the U.S.S.R. 31, in Czechoslovakia 81, in Latvia 36, etc. We have seen that the factors supporting the stabilisation of the currency are likely to be modified and consequently the stability of the currency is in danger.

In view of all these defects in absolutely all the elements of the economic life of the country, the possibility of avoiding an immediate economic collapse in this semi-agrarian country depends upon the coming harvest.

Under these conditions all hopes are becoming more and more concentrated upon the possibility of obtaining a large loan from America. At the present time two representatives of the Polish Government are carrying on negotiations in New York for floating a loan for 150 million dollars. It is characteristic that one of the delegates is Professor Krizhanovsky, who has more than once expressed publicly the necessity for Poland to agree to financial control by her creditors as a security for loans. Precisely at the moment when this quest for dollars is taking place--and no doubt in some connection with it--the German Government has broken off negotiations with Poland in respect to a commercial treaty, which had been dragging on for more than a year.

Apart from the more remote political aims pursued by the Right Wing Nationalist German Government, in roughly breaking off negotiations with Poland on a very insignificant pretext, it undoubtedly obeyed the direct interests of that part of the German bourgeoisie which it mainly represents. Manufacturing industry is mostly interested in the commercial treaty with Poland from the point of view of exports. From the point of view of imports (of agricultural produce) the masses of the consumers are interested in such a treaty. The manufacturers and the big landowners gain considerably from high customs duties.

A few months ago a book was published by Ferdinand Zweig, entitled: "The Economic Problem of

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**The Polish-German Negotiations**—continued

Poland," which secured a prize offered by the Bank of Regional Economy. In this book Zweig describes Poland's prospects of economic rapprochement to Germany. He says:

"By co-operating with Germany Poland would be able to develop only the production of raw materials and of the lowest qualities of semi-manufactures—the timber industry in its lowest stages, the coal industry, metallurgical industry and oil industry. All other branches of industry, and particularly metal, chemical, smelting, clothing, hosiery, leather, paper and cement industries must remain undeveloped. Even the food industries, flour milling, beet sugar, distilling, etc., would suffer considerably. On the other hand the cultivation of cereals and cattle breeding would develop rapidly. The classes most interested in co-operating with Germany are the farmers, the mine owners, timber dealers and also the merchants and the banks.

"A tariff treaty with Germany in the present stage of Polish production, in which agriculture, mining and commerce represent 85 per cent. of the economic life of the country, would undoubtedly be of great economic advantage to Poland. It would be fatal, however, for the development of industry and would become an obstacle to the industrialisation of the country, and would relegate Poland to the role of supplier of minerals, timber and agricultural produce for German industry."

The light industries in Poland, which fear the competition of German imports, are the most irreconcilably hostile; the landlords, big farmers and the representatives of the heavy industries are most favourably inclined towards finding a *modus vivendi* with Germany.

Prior to the tariff war, in the middle of 1925, Germany occupied first place in the foreign trade of Poland both as to imports and exports. Imports from Germany represented from 30 to 40 per cent. of the total imports of Poland and exports to Germany represented 50 per

cent. of the total exports. In the eighteen months during which the tariff war has been going on the exchange of certain commodities, against which prohibitive tariffs have been set up, has almost ceased. Imports from Germany declined by more than half. The export of oil products, suffered most and it has been difficult to find other markets for them. In 1924 the export of coal to Germany represented nearly 60 per cent. of the total coal exports to Poland. This has now dropped to zero.

There is not the slightest doubt that the breakdown of the negotiations and the fresh outbreak of a tariff war is a severe blow to Poland, particularly at the present difficult situation in the economic life of the country. Nor is there any doubt that Fascist Poland will be obliged to agree to even more severe conditions later on, after another interval of tariff war, when the financial treaty with Germany is finally concluded. Finally, there is no doubt that the American bankers will not regard the present moment as the most suitable for investing hundreds of millions of dollars in Poland.

The present Fascist Government of Poland has no definite programme of capitalist "improvement" of the economics of Poland. Nor has any other important bourgeois group; neither the agrarian, heavy industry or light industry, which support the Pilsudsky dictatorship as representing their interest as a whole any such programme. They have no such programme because they have not the ways and means for carrying out such a programme.

The fatal cancer which is eating away at the vitals of the capitalist regime in Poland was mitigated by a combination of circumstances in 1926. But, in 1927, it has again become active.

The crusade begun by Pilsudsky against the peasants and the workers shows that in spite of the assumed optimism he and his men realise the fatal danger that is menacing their rule, and hope by placing the gravedigger in irons to kill death.

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# Charles Emil Ruthenberg

Robert Minor

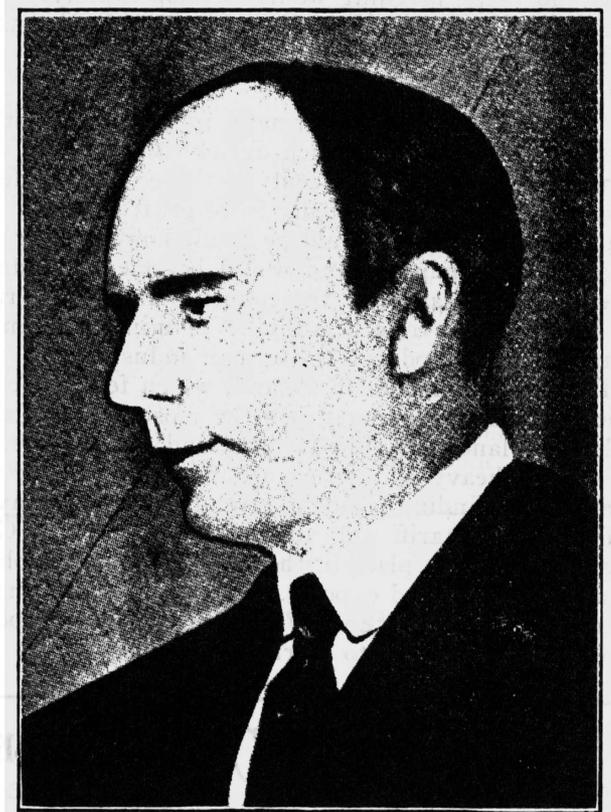
**I**N the sudden death of Charles E. Ruthenberg the Presidium of the Communist International has lost one of its most talented members; the Workers' Communist Party in America has lost its chief.

Traditions of the proletarian revolutionary movement are not so many, nor so old, nor so deeply imbedded in the American working class as in the working class of some of the European countries. Comrade Ruthenberg when he died was comparatively a young leader, but in him were embodied more of the traditions of the development of revolutionary Socialism and, finally, of the struggle for the creation of the revolutionary party of Marx and Lenin, in America, than in any other man. Ruthenberg was young, but in the history of the young Communist Party of America and of its revolutionary antecedents of opposition in the Socialist Party, Ruthenberg takes the part of seniority.

The Socialist Party of the United States (distinguished from the preceding Socialist Labour Party) was formed only after the American capitalist society had burst into the epoch of imperialism with the cannon in the Spanish-American war of 1898. Born within the period of imperialism's influence upon the Labour movement, the party was from the beginning loaded with the diseases of the time and place—opportunistic trade unionism, petty-bourgeois parliamentarism on the one hand, and petty-bourgeois anarchist individualism on the other, without a revolutionary proletarian tradition, or the slightest concept of revolutionary discipline. Rapidly this situation resulted in the formation of two currents, the more revolutionary current springing out of the unskilled labour stratum which was left out of the scheme of the official trade union movement. The effect of this new current was party felt in the organisation of the I.W.W. (Industrial Workers of the World) in 1905, and the raising of the questions of "direct action," "mass action," "sabotage," with a disturbing effect upon the proletarian elements in the Socialist Party. The arrest and trial of William D. Haywood, leader of the I.W.W. and member of the Socialist Party, charged with causing the violent death of a governor of Idaho; and the terrific agitation in the Socialist Party in his defence, brought into the Socialist Party a flood of proletarian elements which were considered an unhealthy element by the reformist leaders. Haywood, leader in many violent struggles of metal mine workers in strikes, became a symbol of trend away from parliamentary action as the main reliance of the working class. The question of the nature of the political struggle was sharply raised in the party against the reformist leaders—although altogether too often from the anarcho-syndicalist point of view, which had begun to dominate the I.W.W.

A crisis developed within the Socialist Party. The reformist leaders proposed in 1912 to adopt an amendment to the party constitution requiring the expulsion from the party of any member who might publicly advocate "direct action" or "sabotage," and on this fuel the fires of factional struggle burst forth.

Charles Emil Ruthenberg, son of a longshoreman, formerly a factory worker, later an expert employee of a large industrial concern, had joined the Socialist party some years previously, was a city organiser in 1909, and was in 1911-12 editor of a party organ in Cleveland, Ohio, his native city. Rapidly he became prominent as a leader of the opposition to the proposed amendment. After the amendment had been carried, and when the attempt was made to expel Haywood from the national executive committee of the Socialist party, young



C. E. Ruthenberg

Ruthenberg became a national leader of a Left Wing which formed around this issue. When the Left Wing was defeated and in large masses stepped out of the party, mostly going over to anarcho-syndicalism, Ruthenberg remained within the party, still fighting bitterly against the reformist leaders. Becoming the beloved leader of the proletarian membership in Ohio, he was elected to be a member of the national executive committee of the party in 1915.

When the United States Government entered the world war in 1917, the Left Wing in the Socialist party was strong enough to compel the calling of a special convention of the party to consider the attitude toward the war, and at this convention which met at St. Louis in the summer of 1917, the leadership of the Left Wing fell into the hands of the fiery young leader, Ruthenberg. Winning a majority of the convention for a set of resolutions, which although weakened by amendments,

**Charles Emil Ruthenberg**—continued

still presented a revolutionary trend, Ruthenberg and a group of leaders which had crystallised with him, went to the party membership and to public mass meetings with a vigorous revolutionary propaganda against the Government and the imperialist war. Ruthenberg was soon arrested and sent to prison for one year in Ohio. When he was liberated, the party was already seething with revolt against the reformist leaders and in response to the echoes of the Russian proletarian revolution. It was clear that the struggle for the control of the Socialist party was about to be fought to a finish, and Ruthenberg was again found in the lead in the organisation of a Left Wing within the party. The Left Wing began publication of an organ, "The Revolutionary Age," in Boston. A "Left Wing Council" was formed by Ruthenberg, John Reed, Ben Gitlow, Bert Wolfe, Jim Larkin, Nikolai Hourvitch and others, and this council organised the "Left Wing Section of the Socialist Party."

Ruthenberg in the meantime kept up his mass agitation and his active leadership of the local organisation of the Socialist party in Cleveland, Ohio. On May 1st, 1919, the agitation of the local organisation under the direction of Ruthenberg and the response of the workers to it, reached mass proportions in a demonstration at Cleveland in which for the first time in history the trade unions of the American Federation of Labour of that city entered en masse and consciously into a revolutionary demonstration. Forty-thousand workers, including the membership of 50 trade unions of the A.F. of L., carrying their trade union banners, marched in a giant procession following the red flag of revolution. The procession was attacked by the police and military with fire-arms and army tanks; street fighting lasted many hours, and two policemen were killed. Reprisals took the form of wrecking the offices of the party, but the morale of the workers for the time being held firm. The party grew by leaps and bounds. The leadership of Ruthenberg had introduced something new into the party.

Shortly after this the "Left Wing Council" issued its declaration of programme and principles—the famous "Left Wing Manifesto," calling upon the proletarian membership of the Socialist party to rally to the revolutionary principles of Marxian Socialism as exemplified in the October Revolution in Russia. For their responsibility in publishing this manifesto, the members of the "Left Wing Council" were indicted and most of them arrested. Ruthenberg, Gitlow and Larkin were condemned to several years of imprisonment in New York State.

Before being sent to prison, Ruthenberg, Gitlow, Wolfe and others, together with similar groups in other sections of the country, continued to organise for the capture of the Socialist party for immediate and unconditional affiliation to the Communist International. In the days which preceded the Socialist party convention at the end of 1919, a division became sharp within the Left Wing. One tendency was represented dominantly by Russian and other Slavic immigrant workers, who felt that the superior revolutionary experience of the Russian immigrants justified their taking the leadership of the Left Wing into their hands. To Ruthenberg fell the main leadership of the other current, which held that the revolutionary party in the United States must be

imbedded in the American proletarian masses. Questions of the best tactical moment to make the split also entered into the division of the Left Wing forces. Ruthenberg again showed his instinct for mass leadership, insisting that the Left Wing must struggle for the majority of the party. The Hillquit bureaucracy of the party, seeing the majority of the party membership in the act of voting that bureaucracy out of office, in the midst of the party elections took action expelling the largest "foreign language federations" from the party, and also expelling the whole section of the party in the State of Michigan. Thus the party bureaucracy kept control of the Socialist party; and the Left Wing, because of its own divisions, formed two separate Communist parties at the end of 1919, both of which together had many more than were left to the Socialist party.

Seeing the Communist organisations rapidly expanding at the expense of the reformist party, the United States Government organised a series of simultaneous raids in all parts of the country upon both Communist parties. Many thousands of workers were arrested, and the two party organisations of Communists were annihilated. Then, upon a plan worked out by comrade Ruthenberg, the Communists began again to organise the illegal Communist movement. A network of nuclei was built up throughout the country composed of the firmest remnants of the shattered legal parties. There were still two parties, and their activities consisted chiefly of internal party propaganda, quarrels between the two parties, and the discussion of more or less abstract theoretical points. Gradually the approach to the masses was slightly developed, but the chief characteristic was driest sectarianism. Ruthenberg had begun the development of plans to draw the young Communist Party into open contact with the masses, when, his condemnation having been sustained by the Supreme Court, he was locked into the New York State prison at Sing Sing. While he sat in prison the two Communist Parties were united. Establishing connections with comrades outside, Ruthenberg worked in prison on a plan for the legalisation of the Communist Party. These efforts found their fruit in the establishment of the "Workers' Party" at the end of 1921. Shortly after the establishment of the legal party, Ruthenberg was released from prison and became its Executive Secretary.

The emergence of the legal party was not without difficulties and the severest factional struggles. Against the sectarian views of those comrades who thought that the Communist Party must necessarily be underground under the capitalist State, Ruthenberg consistently and unceasingly led the struggle. The view of the opposition was that the formation of the legal party meant the formation of an opportunist party conforming to the requirements of bourgeois legality, and the liquidation of the Communist Party—and hence the opposition raised the battle-cry against "the liquidators," and attempted another split in the party, with little success. The "Workers' Party" gained strength and at least some measure of access to the masses. The underground party was abolished. The "Workers' Party" became the Workers' Communist Party, Section of the Communist International, openly established on the basis of legality in the United States. As the Communist Party had once been saved from extinction by a plan of illegal organisation drawn up by Ruthenberg, so now, under changing conditions, the Communist Party was again established

**Charles Emil Ruthenberg**—continued

on a legal basis by a plan in the forming of which Ruthenberg was again the leader.

But the question still remained of putting the young Communist Party actually into the life of the masses of American workers. Such problems were faced with equal consistency by the genius of Ruthenberg. The Labour Party policy—the policy of entering into a campaign for the formation of a Labour Party based upon the trade unions — became the key to the American situation in which the working class still remained in the framework of the capitalist parties, never having formed a mass party of workers such as had become the general rule in European countries. Ruthenberg, among the first to understand this, consistently and with astonishingly unflinching judgment, led the Party on this course

In dealing with the problems of the unions his leadership was always valuable. Where close judgment on delicate questions of organisation of trade unions among sections of unorganised workers who had been deserted by the trade union bureaucracy, and when an over-estimation of the “legality” of the trade union bureaucracy caused some hesitation to take such initia-

tive in the organisation of the unorganised, then his twenty years of revolutionary work in the Labour movement gave Ruthenberg the necessary clarity for correct leadership. Then came a series of rapid advances of the Communists and of the Left Wing in the trade unions, followed by the present savage counter-offensive of the A.F. of L. bureaucracy for the complete annihilation of the Left Wing and for the breaking of several strikes in which Communist and Left Wing leadership was seen—and in this unprecedented and all-important struggle, comrade Ruthenberg's steady hand was on the rudder of the Party almost up to within a few minutes before he was taken to his death-bed.

Ruthenberg is dead. To be without him is a bitter sorrow, and it is a great handicap to the Party. He was of the rare and priceless type of leader who absorbs himself completely in his revolutionary party, having no life, no existence, that is not given to the Party. (An exception, perhaps, was an inordinate love of classic music.) In him burned red-hot hatred for the American bourgeoisie which kept him incessantly at his task, and in him a devotion to the proletarian cause so complete as to command the absolute faith and love of every member of the Party which he led from its birth to its present adolescence.

## Arthur McManus

J. T. Murphy

**T**HE death of Arthur McManus has come as a great shock to every member of our Party and to every comrade who has known him in the ranks of the Communist International. He was a lovable comrade and had won his way into the affections, not only of our Party, but also to a large number of workers outside its ranks. That his death is a loss to our Party and to the whole working class is beyond question.

Born of working class parents in Belfast some thirty-eight years ago, from his early days he was nurtured amidst all the appalling conditions attendant upon the slums of the great industrial towns. In his early years his parents moved from Belfast to Glasgow, another city with indescribable conditions in its working class areas. How well I remember visiting his home in the East End of Glasgow! I am acquainted with working class quarters of many of the industrial towns in Britain, but I know of none so appalling in its harshness and grim poverty as the East End of Glasgow. I saw more bootless, rickety children inside twenty-four hours in this region of Glasgow than I have seen anywhere else in Britain.

The tenement system prevails in housing accommodation, and the overcrowding is terrible. The black smoke of the factories pours through the streets and adds to the abounding misery of the population. It was in the midst of these conditions that comrade McManus grew from boyhood to manhood. He was a child of the working class, he grew with it, shared to the full all its hardships, and died in its service. The working class have thus lost a son, a comrade and a fighter.

He had hardly become a youth ere he shed his religious associations, derived from his Irish Catholic parentage, and had become acquainted with the revolu-

tionary socialist movement through the Marxian Educational Classes pioneered by the Socialist Labour Party. He joined this Party and rapidly became known as an agitator, a tutor of Marxian classes and an able exponent of the party policy. He carried this work into the factories with great energy, and in the days when the Socialist Labour Party attempted to build an industrial union known as the “Industrial Workers of Great Britain” no one played a more energetic and faithful part in the efforts to swell its ranks as a revolutionary organisation.

It was in this life of Socialist activity that McManus became a friend of James Connolly, to whom he was undoubtedly indebted for much of his training and for his appreciation of the role of the national struggle in the revolution. Being of Irish parentage, he was naturally interested in the Irish struggle for independence and no doubt this played an important part in his long attachment to Connolly and in his repeated efforts to assist in building an Irish Socialist Party along with Connolly. He therefore followed keenly all the phases of the Irish struggle and was one of the few Socialists in Britain who appreciated the role of Connolly in British Socialist history.

His main work however did not lie in Ireland but in Britain. He was best known to the workers as a pioneer of the Shop Steward and Workers' Committee movement and as the first Chairman of the Communist Party. In his workshop activities he was one of the first men in the Socialist Labour Party to appreciate the limitations of the Party policy in relation to industrial unionism. The necessity for the workers to find a new outlet for the ventilation of their grievances, and a new means of struggle in view of the fettering of the trade union machine to



Arthur McManus

the apparatus of the State for the duration of the war, was the historical explanation of the sudden rise of the Shop Stewards to prominence in the early days of the war. It was this new situation which produced such a dynamic mass movement that convinced McManus and others of the need to depart from the sectarianism which had dominated the Socialist Labour Party. He became a member of its Executive and later, in the growth of the Shop Stewards Movement into a national organisation, he became its first chairman.

After his arrest and deportation, along with a number of others in 1915, he became widely known throughout England as well as Scotland. He participated in many strikes during the war period, and after being arrested again in 1917 during the great engineers' dispute which served to popularise him amongst the mass of engineering workers, his work during the whole of this period consisted of a fight against the sectarianism in the Socialist Labour Party, of pioneering new ways of fighting the trade union bureaucracy, of applying the principles of industrial unionism to the immediate struggle, and at the same time utilising the apparatus of the old trade unions.

His next important piece of work was his activity on behalf of the creation of a Communist Party. He was profoundly influenced, as many more of us were, by the Russian Revolution. It threw such a great light upon our own experiences that we could not help seeing that our conception of a party was mainly that of a propagandist body, enunciating principles, exposing capitalism and the class war, but not understanding how to lead it.

I remember that it was comrade McManus who first persuaded me to join a political party. We met in the midst of industrial struggles in 1916 and were amazed to find how we had been pioneering similar ideas without contact with each other. But still neither of us appreciated the role of the Party at that time, as we

were brought to understand it by the experiences of the Russian Revolution. Nevertheless once we were convinced of this we set to work towards the fusion of the Socialist Parties into a Communist Party.

Comrade McManus, comrade Bell, comrade Paul, comrade Stoker and myself became a Unity Committee of the Socialist Labour Party in 1918. In all the negotiations which took place, in all the internal Party fights for the purpose of getting a united Communist Party, McManus played a leading role. He was exceedingly capable as a negotiator and could be counted upon to eliminate the personal friction in the negotiations and secure a discussion of principle.

Indeed, we can say that from 1918 to 1923, when the Communist Party decided to do without a chairman, comrade McManus played the leading role in bringing together and consolidating the Socialist forces into a Communist Party. He was the first chairman of the Communist Party and his first task in the first two years was to complete what had been begun in the negotiations with the British Socialist Party and the other groups which had come together in the United Conference. It was no mean achievement to have succeeded in leading these elements into a united party, and history accords to him the honour therefore of two important achievements—the leading role in a mass movement of workers during the war and the leading of the revolutionary forces which laid the foundations of the Communist Party.

He was not a writer nor an organiser, but he was an able agitator and a good tactician and, although after the Party reorganised in 1923 it ceased to have a chairman, he was a member of the Political Bureau from that time onwards and for a period the representative of the Party on the Executive Committee of the Communist International. In all the outstanding moments of Party experiences and struggles, he has been well to the front and played his part. His first serious breakdown in health was in 1923. From that time onward he has never been really a healthy man. His experiences in prison by no means helped him to recover, but immediately he came out he resumed his activity as a leader of the Party, plunged into the activities of the General Strike and the miners' struggle, and upon his shoulders fell a good deal of the responsibility for the conduct of the Party's agita-

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Arthur McManus—continued

tion in its "Hands off China" campaign. He attended the Anti-Imperialist Conference at Brussels, having come straight from mass agitation at the docks in various ports. Within a few days after the Brussels Conference comes the news of his death. He thus died in harness, a good comrade, an energetic fighter—living, working and fighting under the banner of the Communist International. He will not be forgotten, nor will his work cease, for it was a part of the struggle of the working class for freedom.



## Thieves in China

BRITISH IMPERIALISM IN CHINA, Elinor Burns. Labour Research Department, 1s.

THE AWAKENING OF CHINA, J. A. Dolsen. Daily Worker Publishing Company, Chicago.

"I must begin by congratulating the noble and learned lord on the fact that neither he in this House, nor the Leader of the Opposition in the other House (Mr. MacDonald) has given the least encouragement to the preposterous notion that our despatch of troops to the Far East, whether wise or unwise, had anything to do with imperialistic policy or territorial conquest."  
—Lord Balfour, House of Lords, Feb. 9th, 1927.

**T**HERE is an old English adage which says "Liars require good memories." It would have been well to the point for Balfour, and his colleagues of both Houses including MacDonald, to have remembered the old saying before proceeding to lie in so brazen-faced a manner. It would also be well for liars in such complete accord to remember each others statements on the same question, especially when they are conducting jointly a single policy.

Austen Chamberlain, the British Foreign Secretary, has assured the world at large that 20,000 troops, eighty aeroplanes and scores of warships are in the region of Shanghai explicitly for the purpose of "defending British lives" and lives **only**. Mr. MacDonald said "Hear, Hear" and lent support to this statement. But neither referred to the fact that these British lives were and are attached to "British property" which they had and have no intention of leaving and which the British Government had no intention of asking them to leave. Balfour was more explicit on the occasion already quoted. He said: "The sending of troops is for the purpose of simply preserving the **lives, rights and property** of our fellow-subjects."

This at once explodes all the cant and hypocrisy about the presence of the forces of war in Shanghai, Hong-Kong, etc. The troops are not an ambulance corps. The ships are not hospital ships. The guns are not toys. They are weapons of slaughter and sent for the purpose of applying the MacDonald-Baldwin policy of "continuity in foreign affairs," which consists in the furtherance of the policy of British Imperialism. To say that this action of the British Government can be treated as something separate and apart from the politics of British Imperialism is humbug of the most shallow kind, and none knew this better than the lying

"statesmen" who, like MacDonald, say they would like "everyone to forget the past and begin with a clean slate to face the future."

### Charming Unrealities

Such charming detachedness can be put on paper for gullible fools to swallow but real life has nothing to do with it. MacDonald knows this as well as Baldwin, Chamberlain and we. Nor can it be the basis of the "continuity" of which they prate so much. It is too ethereal, fit only for the charming circles of a Christian brotherhood meeting on a pleasant Sunday afternoon. Grim reality sounds a deeper note. It tells of hypocrisy, plunder, bullying and murder most foul, and lays at the door of British Imperialism such a record of infamy that every decent Britisher must feel ashamed of his stock. Perhaps this is why MacDonald is so anxious to forget, just at the moment when hundreds of millions of Chinese are being compelled to remember afresh, the long record which lies behind the present appearance of the navy and army of Britain in Chinese waters and on Chinese territory. Fortunately there have been "statesmen" and writers much more frank than the present leaders of the fortunes of British Imperialism. Austen Chamberlain's father, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, who formerly held the post which his son now holds, said in 1897:

"All great officers of State are occupied with commercial affairs. The Foreign Office and the Colonial Office are chiefly engaged in finding new markets and in defending the old ones. The War Office and Admiralty are mostly occupied in preparation of the protection of our commerce. The Board of Agriculture and of Trade are entirely concerned with these two great branches of industry. It is not too much to say that commerce is the greatest of all political interests, and that that government deserves most which does most to increase our trade and to settle it on a firm foundation."

This is language which the average man and woman can understand. It is plain talk. The modern version of the same thing is: "We are entrusted by God to 'uplift the native,' to 'train them for self-government,' 'to bring civilisation and all its advantage to the backward people,' to 'convert them to Christianity.'" Comrades Burns and Dolsen reveal most vividly, in their two books under review, how the old and new school have conducted themselves in the "uplift" policy during the last hundred years. "British Imperialism in China" gives an interesting account of the economics of the policy. "The Awakening of China" also gives much information of a similar character, but adds graphic descriptions of the social conditions which prevail in China and ample evidence from the statements of leading writers and leaders of American and British Imperialism to damn for ever the hypocritical statements of the Chamberlains and MacDonalds.

### The Brigands' Progress

The analysis which Mrs. Burns gives of the changing forms of Imperialism in the East, along with detailed information of the "interests" which are now being "defended," gives the lie complete to Chamberlain and Balfour and shows MacDonald and Thomas as the bootlickers of the modern financial thieves centred in the Bank of England.

The first attacks upon China were made by the East India Company, which is also famous for its brigandage in India. Opium formed a large part of the East India Company's imports into China. This importation, which the Chinese Imperial Government opposed, rose from 200 chests in 1729 to 20,000 in 1848. The opposition of the Chinese to this trade brought about the first opium war of 1839. It was on this occasion that Britain seized the Island of Hong Kong, which formed a most important link in the Far Eastern trade route and a superb strategic base for the furtherance of Christian operations in China. Besides this capture of an avenue for the "spirit of peace" Britain imposed an indemnity of 21 million dollars, forced open four more ports to foreign trade and secured a base for the opium smugglers to operate under the protection of the British flag. Thus her citizens pushed forward with a guarantee of "life protection." The late H. M. Jyndman, the anti-Bolshevist, describes this business as follows:

**Thieves in China**—continued

"In 1840 began a series of attacks, bombardments, sacks of cities, and massacres of the Chinese, commencing at 'Chu-Shan and spreading to other ports, which has never been surpassed for infamous ferocity by any other race of savages in the world . . ."

"It was not a war, indeed, but a succession of butcheries and massacres, in which British soldiers and sailors ran little risk and covered themselves with infamy. They fought for the right to poison the Chinese people, in defiance of the prohibition (of opium) by the Chinese government; all solely in the interests of the opium smuggling profiteers." ("The Awakening of Asia," quoted by Dolsen.)

**Christianity and Conquest**

In 1856 the second opium war began, due to the attempt of the Chinese to stop opium smuggling. This time the British were supported by the French. Britain secured by the "war" territory opposite to Hong Kong, a £1,200,000 indemnity, a British Inspector-General of Customs, the opening of nine new ports to foreign trade, the legalising of the opium trade and privileges for the "propagation and practice of Christianity." (See "British Imperialism in China," p. 5.) The importance of the latter, J. A. Hobson, the British Liberal Economist, has already explained for the benefit of the English. So far back as in 1902 he wrote: "All the power and more elevated adjuncts of Imperialism are kept to the fore by religious and philanthropic agencies; patriotism appeals to the general lust of power within a people by suggesting nobler uses, adopting the forms of self-sacrifice to cover domination and the love of adventure. So Christianity becomes "imperialist": to the Archbishop of Canterbury a "going out to all the world to preach the gospel"; trade becomes imperialist in the eyes of merchants seeking a world market." Quoting a Chinaman he says "It must be very difficult for the mandarin to dissociate the missionaries from the secular power, whose gun boats seem ever ready to appear on behalf of their respective governments . . . The Chinese have watched with much concern the sequence of events—first the missionary, then the Consul, and at last the invading army." The invading army of course, goes to defend the lives of the "defenceless" Christians, and again, of course, as Mr. MacDonald would say "The Chinese must not be squeamish" if the guns go off.

So with opium importation and Christianity legalised by a few blood baths, trade "followed the flag." But our two

writers, Burns and Dolsen, shows that this was not the end but only the beginning of the plunder. Wars followed in quick succession and the character of the war on each occasion is fundamentally the same though the incidence changes.

This change of incidence is shown most clearly in Burns' book where she reveals statistically the changes within the ranks of the Imperialists as the dominating interests about the year 1885."

**BRITISH TRADE WITH CHINA, 1851-1895**

Yearly average for five-year periods

Period	U.K. exports to China (mil. £)	U.K. imports from China (mil. £)	Surplus of imports from China (mil. £)	Surplus of British exports to China
1851-55	1.7	8.7	7.0	—
1856-60	3.6	9.3	5.7	—
1861-65	4.5	12.3	7.8	—
1866-70	8.6	10.5	1.9	—
1871-75	9.2	13.3	4.1	—
1876-80	8.2	14.4	6.2	—
1881-85	8.6	11.0	2.4	—
1886-90	8.7	7.8	—	—
1891-95	7.4	4.1	—	3.3
1896-00	8.5	3.4	—	5.1
1901-05	17.1	2.7	—	14.4
1906-10	13.1	6.1	—	7.0
1911-13	19.5	5.3	—	14.2
1914-19	25.9	25.3	—	.6
1920	57.3	29.3	—	28.0
1921	33.3	12.2	—	21.1
1922	29.4	10.3	—	19.1
1923	25.5	13.0	—	12.5
1924	29.2	14.6	—	14.6
1925	19.7	14.4	—	5.3

"Throughout the trading period of British capitalism, trade with China meant the exchange of British manufactures, mainly cotton, for Chinese produce. But with the rise of the iron and steel industry in Britain and the close connections between that industry and the banks, a new need developed. The financial groups which directed the banks required to find investments abroad, while the iron and steel firms with which they were associated needed markets for their products. The Chinese were not in a position to pay for railroads, bridges, and other large-scale enterprises, but they could be forced to assume the responsibility for loans, and the banks in making the loans would insist upon contracts being placed with their associated concerns. Thus, in the nineties, the British trading policy (although still continuing in a submerged form) gave place to a policy of the export of capital, the securing of concessions, and the beginning of the industrial development of China." (British Imperialism in China, p. 11.)

**New Forces at Work**

With many facts and figures Comrade Burns proceeds to reveal the new forces at work, the beginning of the industrialisation of China which even now can only be said to be in its infancy. Most interesting is the information concerning the loans and indemnities which have been negotiated and imposed. The total public loans made in the period from 1895 to 1911 amounted to over £880,000,000 apart from the Boxer indemnity of £67,000,000. Of course, Britain was not alone in the new form of brigandage. Japan imposed an indemnity of £34½ millions in 1895 and the other robbers hastened to lend £48,000,000 to the Chinese to pay off the indemnity.

Among the list of banks that have advanced loans is the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Bank, which has been interested in the advance of at least £40,000,000 of the loans enumerated. The chairman of the London Committee of this bank is now Sir Charles Addis, who is a director of the Bank of England. This gentleman is also a director of the British and Chinese Corporation formed in 1898 to carry on in China or elsewhere the business of contractors for public works. It has participated "fruitfully" in most of the railway concessions. Addis is also a director of the P. and O. line of shipping, at the head of which is Lord

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**Thieves in China**—continued

Inchcape, and of the British India Steam Navigation Company. The significance of this lies in the fact that 30 per cent. of the imports and exports from China is carried in British ships, whilst 50 per cent. of the river and coastal traffic is carried on by British owned ships. (See "British Imperialism in China," page 35.)

**Potential Interests**

It is difficult to give exact information concerning the extent of British capital in China because "most of the British concerns are private companies, not registered in London and publishing no information about their financial position." But the "Times" Trade Supplement of December 4, 1926, estimated British capital in Shanghai at £63 millions. Nevertheless, sufficient information is given in these two books to show clearly other reasons than the "sacred" lives of Britishers in China, for the presence of the British fleet in Chinese waters. The actual immediate financial interests with their centre in the "fraternal institution" of the British Government, viz., the Bank of England, are sufficiently large to justify anybody's scepticism of the "uplift motives" of the leading politicians.

But if the immediate interests are great, what of the potential interests? Let the imperialists speak for themselves. Dolsen quotes from a speech of J. Selwin Tait, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Washington and Southern Bank, of Washington, D.C., as follows:

"... China presents the greatest industrial and commercial opportunity not only of the world to-day, but the greatest which the world has ever seen. With a population of four hundred and fifty millions of people, according to the latest estimate of the Maritime Customs, it has a national debt amounting in round numbers to one dollar per head of its population, or less than one-twentieth proportionately of the debt of her neighbour, Japan. Were China to borrow up to the same figure as Japan, that is, over \$20 per capita, she could add to her debt the unimaginable sum of \$8,550,000,000 (gold), the total of which would suffice to build 170,000 miles of railway at the liberal estimate of \$50,000 gold per mile.

"Some few years ago an investigation of the effect which Chinese railroad development had upon the commercial growth of China showed that between the years 1900 and 1907 an increase of 45 per cent. in Chinese railway mileage had brought about an increase in the net imports and exports amounting to 156 per cent. during the same period. Suppose we were to extend these figures and estimate the future business of China on the basis of an expenditure on her railways equal to \$20 per capita of her population. Can you form any idea of what volume her business would then be? The result would, it must be confessed, be unintelligible to the ordinary mind if placed in plain figures.

We may, however, put it in another form and say that with a per capita debt equal to Japan's, China could build 100,000 miles of railway, cover the country with permanent roadways, improve her canals so as to bring the products of her enormous population to her own markets at the lowest rates, and could still have enough left to build up a merchant marine such as would have no superior on the face of the earth."

**Imperialism's Battlefield**

China is thus, obviously, the battle ground of world imperialism. Upon the fate of the Chinese revolution depends the future course of the world revolution, and these two books under review render a distinct service to the workers by presenting in readable form a mass of well-sifted information, showing both the ramifications and purposes of the imperialists in their struggle. But they do not stop there. They also provide us with an analysis and description of the social forces struggling for supremacy in China itself. We are given a picture of the Chinese industrial revolution in action which provides the basis for the great social revolution now proceeding. The struggle of the war lords of China gives place to the mighty popular uprising of the workers and peasants and rising bourgeoisie against these feudal chiefs in the pay of the rival imperialist powers. Instead of new lords there arises a party of the people, a mass organisation harnessing their aspirations and leading them en masse against the foes, internal and external, which seek to hold back the revolution.

Instead of a mass resentment against oppression which knows not the reason of the oppression and how to combat it, we are shown the process of class differentiation proceeding apace under the swiftly changing conditions, the rise of a trade union movement among the young proletariat and the rise of the Communist Party of China—the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat, steadily assuming an ever more important role in the national uprising. These things the writers have also brought forward. Both appreciate the Chinese revolution as "an episode in the world revolution." Both have indicated the relationship of the Chinese revolution of the Soviet Union. And neither of the writers has attempted to play the part of a political prophet as to the immediate course of the revolution. They have been content to explain the reasons why there is a Chinese revolution, to describe the forces that are making the revolution, the forces that are fighting against the revolution, and more than all, to expose the ramifications and policy and methods of the imperialist powers who are seeking to bludgeon the revolution and especially to prevent the Chinese workers and peasants carrying this revolution forward to their October. This service they have done well, and both books deserve the widest possible publicity on the part of our Parties.

J. T. M.

