

# THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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Official Organ of the Executive Committee of the Communist International



## PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

The April Plenum of the  
C.P.S.U.

Editorial

Great Britain and Arabia  
A. Shama

The Post-War State  
P. Lapinsky

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## C O N T E N T S

THE APRIL PLENUM OF THE C.P.S.U. Editorial	238	TO THE MASSES!—THE FACTORIES!—THE WORKSHOPS! ... ..	246
A NEW CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN JAPAN ... ..	241	THE POST-WAR STATE P. Lapinsky	251
GREAT BRITAIN AND ARABIA A. Shama ...	243	'CONFESSIONS OF ANGELICA ... ..	255

## The April Plenum of the C.P.S.U.

**T**HE April Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission considered two very important issues arising out of the economic and political life of the U.S.S.R.: the results of the grain collecting campaign and the lessons of the Shakhty case.\* The difficulties met with in carrying through the grain-collection campaign, and also the economic counter-revolution discovered in the Don Basin mining industry have provided the basis for an extraordinarily intense anti-Soviet campaign abroad. We know now that the social-democrats have broken all records for malice and slander against the U.S.S.R. in their endeavour to exploit both these questions in order to discredit the Soviet system and to strengthen their own position against the Communists in the election struggle. But it is doubtful whether their slanderous campaign against the U.S.S.R. has aided the social-democrats in their counter-revolutionary campaign: rather the reverse. Their defence of the counter-revolutionary specialists has only aroused indignation among class-conscious workers, who know that the international bourgeoisie resort to all ways and means for the purpose of struggling with the socialism which is being built up in the U.S.S.R. Nor have the malevolent hopes of the leaders of social-democracy been justified in regard to the grain campaign difficulties, for on the whole the Soviet Government has already overcome those difficulties and will in any case be able to settle them finally.

The decisions made by the Plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C. have very great importance for the further development of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., since in the course of considering these topical questions the Plenum touched upon a number of radical questions of party policy.

**W**HAT is the explanation of the difficulties which have arisen in carrying through the grain campaign? There are a number of reasons. The fundamental one is the disproportion between the pur-

chasing power demand of the villages and the supply of industrial goods. This disproportion was intensified this year owing to a number of errors on the part of the planning direction. The divergence in the cycles of production in the towns and villages is of great importance to the economic life of the country. This divergence finds expression in the fact that the period when the peasants realise their harvest coincides with the very period when industrial production is at its lowest (owing to summer holidays). This circumstance had unusual influence this year owing to the inadequate nature of the goods reserves and the necessity of increasing supplies to the towns during the autumn period. The divergence in the cycles of production is also severe owing to the fact that hitherto the Soviet rouble has not become a means of accumulation to an adequate extent, that the peasantry are still not depositing their currency surplus in the Soviet system of agricultural credit.

**A**N intensification of the disproportion was also induced by the circumstance that this year there was a great increase in the non-agricultural income of the peasantry, and in particular in their receipts from work in connection with the extension of building activities. Despite the general slowness in tempo of the growth of agriculture, the income of the villages generally, and in particular of their affluent, kulak section, has greatly increased. There was also the influence of the rise of prices for agricultural products taken together with a fall in industrial goods prices. Owing to the fall in prices of industrial goods, the increase in the volume of industrial production did not secure an adequate increase in the marketable surplus of grain. All these economic causes, taken in conjunction with the deficiencies and errors of the planning direction, had great influence in the direction of establishing an unfavourable situation during the grain campaign.

The difference in prices for grain, etc., and the products of dairy farming and stock-raising also had great importance. This difference in prices impelled the peasantry to realise on their stock and their produce in the first place, and made the marketing of grain much less

\* The case of economic sabotage in the Don Basin mines. Those accused are now on trial.

**The April Plenum—continued**

advantageous. This factor played all the greater role since grain was placed under worse conditions in regard to taxation. This set up favourable conditions for the kulaks in the sense of enabling them to exploit the particular combination of circumstances. For the kulak section, whose income was growing, and who had great quantities of grain in their hands (although comparatively the quantity was much smaller than that in the hands of the middle peasants) was afforded the possibility of drawing a section of the middle peasants with them in the direction of exerting pressure on the Soviet prices policy, and of speculation on the grain market. They were also aided by the fact that the State grain-collecting organisations were not adequately organised on the grain market, that the grain-collection machinery was inadequately prepared for the campaign, and that insufficient attention had been paid to the last industrial demand made by the villages. The circumstance that the Party organisations, pre-occupied with the Party discussion, did not give sufficient attention to the grain campaign also had its influence, while "certain separate elements of the Party, especially in the villages, proved to be incapable of putting up sufficient opposition to the kulaks and correspondingly to raise the bottom and middle strata of the villages to an active role." The danger which arose on the grain-collecting front threatened extraordinarily serious consequences for the entire economic structure in the U.S.S.R. The resolution adopted by the Plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C. points to the fact that all the above mentioned circumstances "led as a whole to the greatest economic difficulties, which developed on the basis of an enormous growth of productive forces and of their socialist section, difficulties which would never have arisen if there had been a timely, correct balancing of the fundamental elements of economy and an elimination of the shortcomings of the economic and Party machinery."

**A** CAREFUL analysis of the causes of the difficulties in the collection of grain showed that those causes are completely avoidable, that those difficulties do not in the least cast doubt upon the soundness of the Party's general line, that they were of a character arising out of the particular combination of circumstances, which combination in the given case was unsoundly planned, partly because the Party was absorbed in the discussion. All this afforded the kulak the opportunity to exploit a situation advantageous to him.

In order to liquidate the difficulties, the Party C.C. was forced to adopt a number of measures directed on the one hand to a correction of the errors of the Planning Commission, in the sense of supplying the village market with industrial goods, of increasing taxation on the upper strata of the villages, the introduction of a loan, the consolidation of peasant economy, the law for self-assessment with a view to tapping village accumulation in currency form, and for the productive application of a large part of that accumulation in the villages themselves. On the other hand the C.C. had to adopt measures with a view to putting up a stern opposition to the kulak and the private trader, to the isolation of the kulak, to strengthen the unity of Soviet organisa-

tions working on the grain market, the mobilisation of the Party, and cleansing of the Soviet and Party machinery from those elements which were incapable of putting up the necessary resistance to the kulak elements which had lost their class sagacity. Some of these measures are of an extraordinary character, conditioned by the unusual severity of the difficulties. The measures which the Party adopted for the liquidation of the grain-collection difficulties have completely justified their application. This is proved by the fact that the grain-collection plan has been fully carried out during the past quarters: the collection during nine months of this year amounts to 644 million poods as against 617 millions for the preceding year. The results and lessons of the grain collection campaign are of great importance both in themselves and in connection with the necessity for preparing for the campaign of the coming year.

The resolution adopted by the Plenum of the C.C. and the C.C.C. thus formulates the general results of this campaign: "The joint plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C. notes an improvement and freshening of Party work in the villages, a decline in the role and influence of the kulak, a revival of the work among the village poor and a raising of the authority of the Soviet Government among the fundamental mass of peasantry, despite a certain dissatisfaction manifested in the upper section of the middle peasantry, particularly in connection with the perversions of policy which have occurred." This general result of the grain campaign will have great importance for the conduct of Party policy in the villages, if the Party and Soviet organs are able swiftly to eliminate those errors which have occurred during the grain-collection campaign. In fundamentals these errors have amounted to a tendency to return to "war communism," and might "give protracted negative results both politically and economically," since they would worsen relations with the basic mass of the peasantry: the middle peasant. Consequently the Plenum pointed out that this kind of error, which affects not only the kulak but the middle peasant, and which breaks away from the main line of Party policy, radically diverges from that line, and it called for a ruthless struggle with such tendencies.

The decisions reached by the Party's Fifteenth Congress to intensify the collectivisation of agriculture and to intensify the attack on the kulak do not in the least repeal N.E.P., do not exclude individual accumulation on the part of working peasant households, do not annihilate revolutionary legality. It is the consolidation of the alliance with the middle peasant, the intensification of the organisation of the village poor, a growth in might of the strategic points of the proletarian state which have established the possibility of realising the line laid down by the Fifteenth Party Congress. The C.C. and C.C.C. Plenum noted that the realisation of the Congress decision to attack the kulak "must develop by way of a systematic increase in the taxation of the kulak, the restriction of his tendencies towards exploitation . . ." "by affording support in all ways and by all means to the work of bringing the great masses of peasantry into co-operative methods, and to all forms of collective economy, the organisation of the village poor, and the systematic growth of all the forms and methods of State planning influence on the market and on the small peasant husbandry."

## The April Plenum—continued

**T**HE severity of the difficulties connected with the grain campaign is also explained by the circumstance that the U.S.S.R. is forced to build its economic system at an extraordinarily swift tempo in order to strengthen the basis for a new system of agriculture within the country, and also in order to overtake capitalist countries. For this very reason any errors on the part of the planning direction make themselves felt with particular severity. The preparation for the forthcoming grain-collection campaign demands that the Party should consolidate those positive results which the campaign has yielded: the further development of the attack on the kulaks, the strengthening of the organisation of the village poor, the improvement of the grain collecting machinery, and the establishment of greater unity in that machinery. But simultaneously, while taking into account the severity of the difficulties created by the errors of the planning direction, it is necessary to set up such conditions as will avoid fresh difficulties, by carrying out a number of economic measures for the establishing of a greater production among individual sections of the national economy, for extending the production of industry, for establishing an industrial reserve and for ensuring the further extension of areas under cultivation. The inadequate tempo of development of agriculture noted by the Fifteenth Congress demands increased work in the direction of raising the productive forces of agriculture, while directing it constantly in greater degree along the line of collectivisation, along the line of enlarging the planned regulation of agriculture on the part of the Soviet State.

**I**N the struggle against the proletarian dictatorship the international bourgeoisie, which is endeavouring to exploit our economic difficulties in order to intensify the pressure on the U.S.S.R., the international social-democracy, which is taking as its fundamental task the discrediting of the proletarian dictatorship in the eyes of the working class of other countries, and the kulaks, who are endeavouring to weaken the alliance between the working class and the main mass of peasantry by their malicious agitation on the "repeal of N.E.P." etc., are concentrating their forces. The game these class enemies are playing will be beaten, thanks to the sound policy of the Soviet Government, which is directed to strengthening the alliance with the middle peasant, the consolidation of the proletarian basis of the village—the organisation of the village poor—and the consolidation of the industrial basis of the proletarian dictatorship, in the sense of a successful movement towards socialism, which evokes continually growing support among the worker masses throughout the world.

**T**HE Shakhty affair, which has already been adequately dealt with in our press, raised a number of big problems in regard to the economic construction of the U.S.S.R. The most important of those problems is that of drawing the masses into the work of directing production, that of relations with specialists and that of the role of "communist directors." The Shakhty affair shows that the proletarian State has to overcome enormous difficulties in its work of socialist construction. Those difficulties consist not only in the fact that the U.S.S.R. has to manage almost exclusively

with its own internal resources, not only in the fact that socialism has to be built up in an extraordinarily backward country both economically and culturally, but also in the fact that it has to overcome the most expert methods of the struggle carried on by the international counter-revolution against the proletarian dictatorship. Despite all these difficulties, despite all the injury done by the agents of the international bourgeoisie, despite their sabotage, the working class of the U.S.S.R. has succeeded in winning enormous successes in its work of construction. No matter how the enemies of the Soviet system endeavour on the basis of the Shakhty affair to destroy the trust of the working class of other countries in the U.S.S.R., the enormous successes of construction achieved despite all the difficulties set up by the enemies of the U.S.S.R. demonstrate the exceptional stability and the enormous internal strength of the country of proletarian dictatorship.

**T**HE Shakhty affair shows none the less that there are a number of big defects, which must be overcome in order that socialist construction may yield still greater results. The mines affair could occur thanks to the fact that in individual spheres of industry or in individual sections impermissible relations have been established between the "communist directors" and the specialists, thanks to the insufficient attraction of workers into the direction of production, thanks to the severance of the directing organs, the trade union and the Party organisations in these sections, from the working masses, thanks to the feeble direction of the economic construction in these sections by the Party organisations. An inadequate check on the work of specialists, a blunting of class perception, a failure to depend in adequate measure on the better class of specialists, a failure to offer resistance to those elements among the specialists who are injuring the work of construction, a caste spirit among the latter, a failure to establish a rallying base among the workers specially trained and sent out to the enterprises—all this has led to the situation in which counter-revolution could exist so long with impunity in the Don Basin. No less significance has to be attached to the defects in the work of the trade union organisations, which have failed to bring the problem of drawing the workers into the direction of production into sufficient prominence, and have paid astonishingly little attention to production conferences and other methods of drawing the workers into economic construction. On the other hand, not everywhere have the trade union organisations stood adequately to the defence of the every-day interests of the workers either in the sense of improving the conditions of labour, or in that of carrying out those measures for raising the standard of the workers' existence indicated by the Soviet Government.

**T**HE defects in the work of the Party organisations in the Shakhty area and in their direction of the trade unions and the industrialists played a large part in the Shakhty affair. A lack of response to the indications afforded by the workers, the absence of control over the work of the trade unions, a formal approach to the work of the economic organs, and an unhealthy situation inside the Party organisation have all helped to maintain conditions in which the defects of economic work and of trade union work have had a particularly severe effect.

**The April Plenum**—continued

The possibility of such phenomena as the Don Basin affair is the result of the extraordinarily difficult conditions of construction, in which specialists have to be used who have far from outlived their old bourgeois sympathies and habits; and when the persons carrying on the business of construction do not always know how to resist hostile influences. But at the same time the possibilities of struggle with such phenomena are very great in the Soviet system. It has to be borne in mind that the Shakhty affair was discovered by the workers themselves, that as the commission which investigated the affair declared, despite the enormous gaps in the work of the local organisation, the workers of the Shakhty area retained unbounded faith in the Soviet Government and the C.P.S.U., and that finally, despite the prolonged subversive activities of the counter-revolutionaries, the Don coal industry has developed at an extraordinarily swift tempo thanks to the creative will of the workers. And to the creative will, to the vigilance of the workers the Party appeals in order to avoid such phenomena in the future. The C.C. and C.C.C. Plenum indicated a number of measures for living down the consequences of the Shakhty affair and for the avoidance of such incidents in the future.

These measures may be summarised as, first, the setting up of sound conditions for the work of the specialists, the support of those specialists who honestly do their work, a ruthless struggle against the sabotaging elements among the specialists, and the preparation of new ranks of "red specialists"; secondly in establishing sound relations between the "communist directors" and the specialists, the increase in the productional and technical qualifications of the "communist directors," the improvement of their work, and so on; and finally, a number of measures guaranteeing that the masses shall be drawn into the work of direction by

means of informing them of economic plans, by increasing the work of production conferences, the setting up of temporary control commissions of workers in large enterprises, the strict introduction of improvements in the conditions of labour and in the life of the workers. The Plenum recognised the necessity of improving the work of Party organisations as the most important prerequisite of carrying through all these proposals.

**T**HE chief conditions," says the C.C. and C.C.C. Plenum, "for the guarantee of a successful accomplishment of all the measures indicated must be the realisation of the slogan of self-criticism, and also a great improvement in the work of the Party organisations, in the task of achieving internal Party democracy and the intensified day-to-day struggle with defects in the work of the Party, trade union, Soviet and economic organs." Self-criticism, which must consist of the workers and toiling masses openly and more than ever raising questions of the defects and errors of State and communal organisations, and in indicating ways of outliving those errors and defects in the pages of the Soviet press and through their organisations, is a mighty instrument of socialist construction. In future as hitherto, the White Guard and social-democratic hounds will seize on those voices of criticism which come from those masses on whom the system of proletarian dictatorship is based. But the international working class will evaluate that self-criticism as one of the greatest achievements of the Soviet system, which affords the workers and toilers the opportunity of correcting and directing the course of socialist construction. The international working class will be able to distinguish that proletarian self-criticism which reflects the will of the great masses to overcome difficulties, and to construct and achieve socialism, from that "criticism" with which the bourgeois and social-democratic enemies of the U.S.S.R. who are endeavouring to undermine the very basis of the proletarian dictatorship occupy themselves.

## A New Chapter in the History of the Class Struggle in Japan

**T**HE "democratic" elections to the Japanese parliament were carried out under conditions of extreme police and Fascist terror. The results of these elections served as a signal for a new reign of repression. An organised campaign was inaugurated against all workers' and peasants' organisations which were openly in opposition to Japanese imperialism, and especially against the still young Communist Party of Japan. When the results of the elections began to be made generally known, the attacks on Communists and members of the left-wing workers' and peasants' organisations, which had begun during the election campaign, increased. Masses of workers and peasants were thrown into prison; police raids were made on trade union organisations and the Workers' and Peasants' Party. Fascist pogroms completed the picture. The Tanaka Government sent fresh troops to China to continue their counter-revolutionary and hangmen's intervention. In

order to crush any kind of opposition in the country, the Government outlawed not only the Communist Party, which had always been forced to work illegally, but also the legal mass organisations of the workers, peasants and students, whose membership numbered hundreds of thousands.

Tanaka's military-reactionary government mobilised the entire power of the State and the Fascist bands in order to carry the elections through successfully. The most brutal repressions were employed against all electors with left tendencies; the workers and peasants and the organisations in which they were organised. The Government made the utmost use of the "law for the maintenance of peace," the antidote to the workers' electoral rights, in order to suppress and misrepresent the wishes of the working masses in Japan. Tanaka's government made use of all these "super-democratic" measures in order to secure a parliamentary majority

**A New Chapter**—continued

that would leave their hands free to continue their reactionary domestic policy and to strengthen their policy of plunder, disintegration and slaughter in China.

These measures did not meet with success. Tanaka only secured an uncertain majority of two seats over the Liberal opposition, and a minority of the total votes polled, which was a big defeat. Still the real political meaning of the electoral campaign was not to be found in the struggle between the bourgeois parties, but in the fact that the revolutionary workers in Japan were able to establish a broad class-front against reaction, in spite of the Government oppression and the treacherous role of the Japanese social-reformists.

The Japanese workers and toiling peasantry are awakening for the first time to the revolutionary mass struggle against imperialism and are thereby opening up a new epoch in the history of Japan. Rodo Nominto, the Workers' and Peasants' Party, received 112,000 votes at the municipal elections and increased that figure at the parliamentary elections, securing 192,000 votes and two seats in Parliament. The left trade union federation, Hiogikei, which has 10,000 members, gave its full support to the Workers' and Peasants' Party. The mass federation of young workers, which came out openly against the Government military policy and the imperialist plunder of China, was very active during the elections.

The most important event of the electoral campaign was the stand taken by the Japanese Communists, who succeeded, at a time of the worst Fascist and police terror, in re-establishing the Party. Large masses of the workers adopted the Party slogans and at one blow the C.P. of Japan became the rallying centre of all the active revolutionary forces in the ranks of the Japanese workers.

After the results of the elections became known, the Government began a new campaign against revolutionary China and an open Fascist attack on the mass organisations of the workers. Endeavours are being

made to rally all reactionary forces against the Communist Party, the workers and the peasants under the banner of a holy war against the Red danger in Japan and the revolution in China.

The "liberal" opposition lost no time in approving of the dissolution of Rodo Nominto, Hiogikei and the Youth League, although the unbridled Fascist bands had murdered the Liberal opponents of Tanaka. The social-reformist party also followed the example of the Liberals; its leader Professor Abe declared that the "empire was sacred and inviolable." This party refrained even from protesting in parliament against the dissolution of the mass organisations of the Japanese workers and peasants.

In the endeavour to strengthen the united front of the imperialists and the reformists, and to destroy the young revolutionary movement, now just beginning to spread its wings, the Japanese Government and its agents have had recourse to the well-tried methods—rumours of Moscow plots and Soviet gold. What mean and base calumniators! Hundreds and thousands of workers and peasants went to the polling booths, despite the terror, and gave vent to their hatred against imperialist oppression. Half a million workers and peasants voted against the imperialists—this marks the beginning of a new movement, which is not to be deterred in its course by wicked lies and police persecution.

The concocted reports about secret plots and the cruel persecutions did not succeed in intimidating the Japanese workers and peasants. They did not lay down their weapons. They demand the re-establishment of their dissolved organisations; they continue their struggle with increased vigour against the reactionary government and the war-adventurers. This struggle is being continuously strengthened by the influx of new masses of peasants and workers.

This struggle marks the beginning of a mass struggle against Japanese predatory imperialism. It is a fight to defend the interests of the Japanese workers and peasants and to render active help to China, which is being bled to death in its heroic struggle against the imperialist robbers.



# Great Britain and Arabia

A. Shama

**A**LTHOUGH relatively near Europe, Arabia is still what may be called an unknown country in the full sense of the word. There are reports from time to time in the European press about the inroads made by "wild" Bedouins into territory under British protection, wars between various States and the bombs dropped by "cultured" British airmen. Let us endeavour in this article to enquire into these apparent contradictions, created by European civilisers in this enormous peninsula.

At the present time there are only two actual independent States in Arabia: Yemen and the united Hedjaz-Nejd.

Already before the world war Yemen had practically gained independence in the struggle with the Turkish oppressors, and during the war this agricultural territory was of little interest to the imperialist powers. Therefore, during the war Yemen was able to strengthen its independence still further. The Emir, Imam Yekie, was the only Arabian Emir who did not receive a subsidy from Great Britain; he assisted Turkey to a certain extent. Recently this State has come under the influence of Italy, having concluded an agreement in September, 1926 (which was renewed by a treaty in July, 1927) to render mutual support. Italy is to supply Yemen with arms and military instructors. The growing strength of Yemen constitutes a certain danger to British control in Arabia, especially on account of its proximity to the British fortress at Aden. In connection with the reports about the attacks of British airmen on the Nejd tribe, reports have been circulated to the effect that air expeditions are being sent from Aden against the Yemen tribes.

**Hedjaz.** The situation in Hedjaz is absolutely different. This State is considered by the Moslems as the most important Arabian State. During the war the Sheriff Hussein received several millions as a subsidy from England, and in consequence dragged Hedjaz into the war. The Arabian army under the leadership of his sons helped the Allies to occupy Palestine, Syria and Iraq. Since that time the Hussein family have been nothing but the hirelings of Great Britain. His sons, Feisal and Abdulla, were made the kings of Iraq and Trans-Jordania, and Hussein himself continued to demand endless subsidies in order to rehabilitate himself before the Arabian national movement, which was directed against England. Great Britain then had no more use for him and permitted Hedjaz to be conquered by Ib'n-Saud in 1924.

**Nejd.** When the world war broke out Emir Ib'n-Saud was one of the weakest rulers in Arabia. Like other Arabian Emirs he received financial aid and arms from the British, and in 1915 he signed an agreement, which, "de facto," put Nejd under the protection of Great Britain. In accordance with this agreement, Ib'n-Saud undertook not to enter into any kind of political relations with other powers without the knowledge of Great Britain, nor to grant them any concessions. Furthermore, he agreed to refrain from attacking any territory under British protection.

Instead of waging war on the Turks, Ib'n-Saud is concentrating on expanding his territory and strengthening his State internally. He has made it possible for the warlike tribes to take up agriculture and settle on the land; he is developing gardening and introducing a number of model administrative measures and reforms. As a result of all this at the close of the world war, Nejd had become one of the strongest emirates. In 1921, Ib'n-Saud subjugated Shammar and in 1924 Hedjaz.

The lightning successes of Ib'n-Saud, who in a short time had united two-thirds of Arabia, raised the hopes of the Arabian nationalists, who visualised Ib'n-Saud as the man to unite all the Arabians throughout the world. On the other hand these successes made it clear to the British what a danger the strength of Ib'n-Saud was, and they concluded that there was no doubt that he intended to march on Iraq, Trans-Jordania and Palestine in order to dethrone Hussein's sons.

A tough struggle between Ib'n-Saud and Great Britain ensued. The armies of the mandate States were increased, and in order to compromise Ib'n-Saud the 1915 agreement was made public. A campaign was organised against pilgrimages\* in an attempt to undermine the economic position of Hedjaz. Throughout the Moslem world "reliable information" was circulated that Ib'n-Saud's armies destroyed the tombs of holy people and burned all the decorations in "sacred places" (it is generally known that the Wahabis—puritan Moslems—fought against all kinds of "idolatry"). The Persian, Egyptian and Indian Governments organised a formidable blockade of Hedjaz and practically forbade pilgrimages. Finally, Great Britain and also Italy worked up an intrigue to bring about war between Ib'n-Saud and the Imam Yekie of Yemen. The basis of the struggle was actually the emirate of Asir, where Anglo-Saxon oil had already secured a petroleum concession.

The situation which ensued compelled Ib'n-Saud to refrain from further conquests for the time being and to concentrate on strengthening his newly-created State.

The European press occasionally calls Ib'n-Saud the Arabian Napoleon. Paradox as it may seem, Ib'n-Saud never adhered to the Arabian nationalist movement, which often serves as a screen for reactionary dreams about the creation of a powerful Arabian empire, governed by some direct descendant of Mahomet, or simply utilises different policies in the service of one or other of the competing imperialist powers. Ib'n-Saud never was a pan-Arabian, he was only intent on the territory immediately surrounding his State and on spreading the doctrines of the Wahabis.

Certain devotees christened the religious movement Wahabism, or "Moslem Puritanism," whereas Wahabism is a movement of extreme interest, not from the point of view of the development of Islam, but in connection with the development of the struggle for the liberation of the Arabian East.

\* The greater part of the income of the population of this "holy land" accrues from the reception of pilgrims. Over and above this, Hedjaz continued to get a subsidy, at one time from Turkey and then from Great Britain.

**Great Britain and Arabia**—continued

Islam has never had a shortage of prophets, who call for a return to the early "pure" form of religion and Wahabism received special support from such. The Wahabi movement began in the second half of the eighteenth century. The supporters of this movement were zealous advocates of the "cleansing" of Islam from heretical rites and the return to the customs of the austere Bedouin life. The objective political consequences of this movement lay in the opposition to the penetration of European power into Arabia. Wahabism went the way of all religious movements; its development was not on the lines of the inner logic of religious teaching, but rather that of economic and political development. Wahabism, without the conscious wish of its leaders, became the weapon for the political centralisation of Arabia.

**The New Conditions in Arabia**

The objective demands of the State which Ib'n-Saud created included the establishment of conditions favourable to the development of agriculture and trade. Caravan trade, which Riyadh and other Nejd settlements carried on with Egypt, Damascus and Bagdad, flourished under the rule of Ib'n-Saud. His envoys began to preach the necessity of the transfer from nomadic life to a settled mode of living and agriculture. The first settlement of former nomads was made in 1914 near Artaria in the territory of the Sheikh Feisal-ed-Dervish, now in the limelight on account of his struggle with Iraq. At the present time the number of settlements is about 70, some of which have a population of about 10,000. The Bedouin settlers and others supported Ib'n-Saud in all his campaigns and helped him to conquer Hedjaz.

The conquest of Hedjaz raised a number of new problems for Ib'n-Saud. Last century the Wahabis conquered the "sacred" towns of Mecca and Medina, where they destroyed all the holy things, hating them as objects of idolatry. But the leader of the Wahabis in our time could not permit such behaviour. He rightly concluded that the preservation of holy objects and the encouragement of pilgrimages might be more profitable than their destruction. Customs, telephone and telegraph were introduced although the Koran makes no mention of these heretical innovations. Ib'n-Saud also introduced automobile traffic. He considered this a means to induce pilgrims to come to Hedjaz; the auto-company recently founded has a sinking fund of £50,000, £20,000 of which belong to Ib'n-Saud himself.

Ib'n-Saud's dominions are quickly becoming modernised. The improvements include: membership of the world postal service, abolition of customs on the importation of machines and agricultural instruments, development of education, special health service, the establishment of five hospitals in Mecca and a factory for the preparation of quinine, and also a bacteriological institute in Jedda. The most important item of modernisation was the arming of the tribes with European arms, which have helped him to extend his territory.

Ib'n-Saud's dominions are entirely surrounded by the British spheres of influence and this fact forces the leader of the Wahabis to be on his guard against a conflict with England. Up to 1923 Ib'n-Saud received

an annual subsidy from Great Britain, which according to the statement of Mr. Amery in the House of Commons, amounted to a total of £542,000. In 1923, Ib'n-Saud on his own initiative declined to accept the subsidy any longer and last year an agreement signed with Great Britain recognised the complete independence of Ib'n-Saud's dominions, which include Hedjaz, Nejd, Asir and certain annexed territory.

Ib'n-Saud through his great power has been able to secure that the 1927 treaty recognised "de jure" the independence of the Wahabis and forced Great Britain to remove the embargo on the import of arms and implements of war into Arabia.

During the negotiations Great Britain demanded of Ib'n-Saud the recognition of the present boundaries of Iraq and Trans-Jordania. This meant agreeing to the loss of Maan, the most important point on the Hedjaz railway, and Akbah, the only port on the northern part of the Red Sea; but Ib'n-Saud did not agree to this demand. He held out for the frontiers in accordance with the status quo and despite all the force brought to bear by Sir Gilbert Clayton, the British representative, the treaty contains only an obscure indication to the effect that "the final decision of the question regarding the boundaries of Hedjaz and Trans-Jordania is considered impossible under conditions prevailing at present."

After this agreement had been signed Ib'n-Saud gave asylum to Sultan Atrash, leader of the insurgent Syrians, who had been driven out of Syria by the French troops and then out of the El-Azrak oasis by the British. Ib'n-Saud is preparing a number of congresses, not satisfied with the all-Moslem Congress held in Mecca in 1926, which was in itself a clear anti-imperialist demonstration. He is recognised as the greatest force in Arabia and relations between him and the leaders of the Arabian nationalist movement have become closer; his supporters are continually increasing amongst the Moslem population both in British India and the Dutch Indies. In self protection, Ib'n-Saud has avoided any conflict with the British, knowing only too well that he would not be the victor in any such encounter and that all the attainments of his 25 years' work for the unification of two-thirds of Arabia would be reduced to nought. Great Britain on her part also preferred to negotiate with Ib'n-Saud, since a treaty to a certain extent binds the leader of the Wahabis, and furthermore, she contemplates using Hedjaz in the struggle against the other Arabian forces.

**An Unstable Peace**

The peace between Great Britain and Ib'n-Saud is a very rotten sort of peace. The fact that England has not already infringed it and declared war simply implies that she expects to attain her ends by some other means. For Great Britain has no intention of giving up the struggle for the control of the Middle East, or of desisting from the usual methods and intrigues; one thing is certain and that is that Great Britain neither wants to nor can live at peace with a powerful and independent Arabian State.

The territory of Ib'n-Saud is surrounded on all sides by the vassals of Great Britain, with one exception, that of Yemen. Of all these countries the most precious for Great Britain is Iraq; the oil-springs there consti-



**Great Britain and Arabia**—continued

tute a strong incentive to hold this mandate territory. Iraq in the hands of the British has become a military basis against Turkey and Persia. It is clear that Iraq feels the burden of its position as a mandate country under King Feisal, who was foisted upon it. The Iraq parliament had the idea of reforming the Iraq army and introducing conscription, and it is also striving for the inclusion of Iraq in the League of Nations as an independent country. England turned down the first demand categorically and postponed the consideration of the second to the far distant future. England prefers to "protect" Iraq herself with the help of her aerodromes. British aeroplanes, which cast bombs on the population are a guarantee not only against any attack on Iraq, but also a guarantee against Iraq's secession from the British Empire.

Trans-Jordania by the very fact of its existence is committed to the British plan to dismember and parcel out Arabia. This State has a population of 300,000 semi-nomadic Bedouins, incapable of self-support, but it weakens the national movement in Palestine. Just now Trans-Jordania has even been offered a constitution, but there is discontent in the ranks of the nationalist party, both with the Emir Abdulla, who was appointed by the British, and with the separation of the country from Palestine.

The extension of Trans-Jordania at the expense of Hedjaz is still contemplated by Great Britain, which continues to cherish the idea of building a port in Akabah and linking this port up by rail with Maan and Basra in Iraq on the Persian Gulf.

**Concentration of British Forces**

British air bases are being constructed both in Koweit and Oman; the Koweit population gravitates towards Nejd and is only kept under British rule by force. The fact of British supremacy over Koweit isolates Nejd from the Persian Gulf and the Koweit traders from Central Arabia. Koweit is an important centre on the Persian Gulf and on the road to India, and at the same time serves as a basis for the development of military preparations against Nejd. These are the reasons why Koweit was annexed in 1926, against which annexation at the time Ib'n-Saud made an unsuccessful protest.

The frontiers between Trans-Jordania, Iraq and Hedjaz are not definitely marked out. The British are trying continually to extend these frontiers southwards; on the Iraq-Nejd frontier, there is a neutral zone of about 70 miles on which the inhabitants of Iraq (the British) undertake not to carry on any military operations. Last year the British High Commissioner in Iraq informed Ib'n-Saud that along the whole frontier 23 forts would be erected. Ib'n-Saud protested, but received no reply; the construction of the forts was begun. Feisal-Ed Dervish destroyed one of these forts and thus began the last Iraq-Nejd conflict. The Bedouins from the localities over the borders of Trans-Jordania and Iraq repeatedly crossed the Hedjaz frontiers, driving cattle, killing, and laying waste whole districts. It is quite clear that the marionette kings—Abdulla and Feisal would hardly have permitted this continuous provocation to war had it not been that Great Britain was

behind them. The destruction of Hussein's army is still very fresh in our memory. The inroads into Hedjaz on the part of Trans-Jordania and Iraq have been encouraged by Great Britain and cause confusion in both Hedjaz and Nejd. Great Britain does everything to force on a war between Ib'n-Saud and the Imam Yekie of Yemen. In view of this policy every recognition should be given to the firm resolve of Ib'n-Saud to preserve friendly relations with Yemen.

The question of the Hedjaz railway is a cause of conflict between Great Britain and Ib'n-Saud. The Moslem congress in Mecca in 1926 expressed the wish that this railway, which had been built entirely at the expense of the Moslems to facilitate pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina, be given to Hedjaz. In reply to Ib'n-Saud's request to this effect, Great Britain pointed out that it would be necessary to consult France on this question; this attitude aroused the just criticism of the Arabian press, which said that Great Britain remembers and carries out to the letter only those treaties which serve her own purpose.

Ib'n-Saud's State does not fit in with the plans of the British Colonial Office, and the leaders of British policy in Arabia are trying to provoke war. Great Britain supports Iraq and Trans-Jordania in the conflicts with Ib'n-Saud. British aeroplanes fly over the Nejd territory and throw bombs, killing hundreds of people. New reinforcements are being brought from India to Iraq, and in Koweit the British forces are also being strengthened. Great Britain is forcing Ib'n-Saud to war. When the question was asked in Parliament whether it was not possible to warn Ib'n-Saud, the Colonial Secretary, Amery, replied that it was "difficult to do so with a government with which there was no telegraphic communication." At another session of the House of Commons, Amery stated that in November, 1927, two-and-a-half million cartridges had been sold to the Hedjaz Government and in March two million. In order to reassure the House, he added that this fact merely shows that Ib'n-Saud did not help the Nejd tribes or supply them with arms.

Great Britain is utilising the confusion of the border tribes of Nejd in order to conciliate the Iraq nationalists who are opposing the new Anglo-Iraq treaty. The method is an old one: to rouse the Arabians and incite them against one another. But the strange thing is that the Arabian press shows that the people do not desire war, despite all the machinations of the protectors of Iraq and Trans-Jordania. The Egyptian "Mokatta," for instance, which is somewhat more independent than the press in the mandated countries, writes: "In all Arabian countries the Wahabis are being attacked and represented as highwaymen and robbers; but we ask why was it that the Wahabis were hitherto peaceful people and that only just recently are they considered bandits? Simply because the two brothers (Abdulla and Feisal) are all the time organising and supporting attacks on the Nejd tribes."

During the past few weeks it seems to have become as it were, "peaceful" in Arabia. There are no telegrams about Ib'n-Saud's "holy wars" and the mobilisation of thousands of troops to attack Iraq and Trans-Jordania. But Sir Gilbert Clayton, the best authority on the Near East in the Colonial Office, has been in Jedda negotiating with Ib'n-Saud, and rumours are cir-

**Great Britain and Arabia**—continued

culated about the suspension of military preparations prior to his arrival.

Of course, there is the possibility that Ib'n-Saud may agree to Clayton's requests and return Maan and Akabah in exchange for a loan. In this case Ib'n-Saud becomes one of the many British vassals, and if Great Britain should find him superfluous, as was the case in 1924 with Hussein, she can find a means of removing him. But still it is possible that the pressure brought to bear by the tribes will prevent Ib'n-Saud from falling into this snare. Then he will play for time, assuring Great Britain of his "friendly intentions and goodwill," but war is unavoidable, for new ways of communication must be built through northern Arabia (railways, airways, autos), to India, which means that the Nejd tribes must be driven back further into the desert.

No matter what Ib'n-Saud, who as king of Hedjaz has curtailed the revenue from pilgrimages, does, he cannot avoid a conflict with the strongest "Moslem State," Great Britain. The very fact of the tribes taking up agriculture is an obstacle to the "civilising methods" of the British. And this is the reason why every few months there is some report or other about the attacks of the Nejd tribes on Iraq and the cultural work that Great Britain is directing there. If there is one point in Arabia where the supremacy and power of the Royal Air Force might be demonstrated, even to sceptics, that point is the Iraq-Nejd frontier. The Royal Air Force airmen bomb the Wahabi population, kill women and children, thereby increasing the hatred of

the Nejd population for the British and the strength of their resistance.

Furthermore, in spite of Ib'n-Saud's repeated declarations about his neutral attitude to the struggles of other Arabian countries, his country is being drawn more and more into the orbit of British imperialism and the struggle of his and of other Arabian countries for independence is being linked up with the struggle of the masses. As the only independent State, except Yemen, his State becomes one of the most important centres for the Arabian national revolutionary movement.

Great Britain had caused a network of contradictions in Arabia: the antagonism between her mandate territories and Ib'n-Saud, between Ib'n-Saud and Yemen, between Yemen and the British possession of Aden. Italian and British interests are at cross-purposes in Arabia, and now American capital is turning its attention to Arabia.

Great Britain first armed Arabia and made it acquainted with the technique of European warfare. The policy of London has forced Arabia to turn these arms against Great Britain herself. The general disturbances in the Arabian countries and the incitement to fratricidal struggles by the British are already beginning to find expression. The Arabian national revolutionary movement is striving towards the liberation of these countries from the tutelage of Great Britain and France. This movement will attract all the best elements from amongst the many millions of Arabians, and also all the revolutionary elements from amongst the west European workers, even from amongst the British.

## “To the Masses! —The Factories! —The Workshops!”

**T**HIS was the basic slogan of the Fourth Congress of the Profintern (R.I.L.U.). If we are to ask ourselves what is the chief content of Communist work in the trade union movement, we must reply with still greater emphasis than ever before, that the work consists in mobilising the masses, winning over the most important sections of the workers, gaining control over the main branches of industry and big centralised factories. This work must be carried out under the able leadership of the revolutionary vanguard in the everyday struggle of the working class and through the correct utilisation of the growing political influence of the Communist Parties and of the revolutionary trade unions. The Fourth Congress of the Profintern was attended by representatives from 50 different countries, from the most remote continents, from countries which for the first time participated in International Congresses, such as the Philippines and several States in Latin America. This congress gave ample proof of what an enormous political force the Red Profintern is in the international Labour movement. It was a world Labour Congress in the real sense of the word, especially if we compare it with the Paris Congress of the

I.F.T.U. (the Amsterdam International) in August, 1927.

But in addition to all this the Congress demonstrated the considerable political growth of the leading bodies in the revolutionary trade union movement. Despite this growth, or perhaps because of this political growth, the Congress was marked by the most merciless self-criticism and the examination of the mistakes which had been made and the defeats that had been experienced. During the four years since the Third Congress was held, there has been marked progress in the political influence of the revolutionary trade union movement and the political development of the leading bodies, but this political influence has not been organised or strengthened amongst the masses, or in the factories as it ought to have been. This has had its reflection in the stabilised growth of the revolutionary trade unions during the past few years (which may find a certain explanation, though by no means a complete one, in the partial stabilisation of capitalism), in the extremely slow development of the lower cadres of the revolutionary trade union movement and in the weakness of the general organisation of revolutionary trade unions.

“To the Masses!”—continued

### The Attack on the Communists

The increased attack on the Communist vanguard by international capital and the reformist bureaucracy, is the outstanding feature of the present epoch. The more apparent the social contradictions within capitalist stabilisation, which owes its existence to the depression of the standard of living of the working class, the nearer the dawn of the growing class struggle, the more bitter becomes the attack on Communism and the revolutionary trade union movement. This is a war of precaution against the coming storm, and for this reason our opponents utilise the self-criticism in our ranks in their struggle against Communism.

A short article in “Trud,” the official organ of the trade union federation in Russia, deals with the mistakes made in the European Parties in connection with strikes. The Amsterdam Bulletin uses this article as a basis of attack and as a proof of the bankruptcy of the Red Profintern. The “Sozialistichesky Vestnik,” and the organ of the Communist renegade, the “left” social-democrat, Paul Levy, make insinuations against Communist trade union policy with no other object than to increase the repressions of trade union bureaucrats against the active elements in the revolutionary movement. The frenzy of the trade union bureaucrats in Germany has risen to such a pitch that they expelled the Communist, comrade Hollman from the trade union simply because he carried a banner with the inscription “Liberate Max Hoeltz” during a demonstration. Therefore, the courage of the Profintern Congress in dealing with all shortcomings in the work of revolutionary trade unions in respect to the conduct of strikes and organisational work is all the more important, for only by such criticism will it be possible to assist the tremendous tasks which face the revolutionary trade unions.

Almost four years have elapsed since the last Profintern Congress. It is, therefore, only natural to ask oneself what successes the revolutionary trade union movement has had, and in whose favour the correlation of forces tends in the international trade union movement. The question at issue is, of course, not only that of the quantitative correlation of forces, but mainly that of the political position. Since the Amsterdam Federation points out that the revolutionary trade union movement has remained stationary, there can be no objection to reminding them that the membership of the I.F.T.U. has dropped from 24 millions in 1922 to 12.8 millions in 1928. But this is not the crux of the matter. The “consolidation” about which the reformist leaders talk is nothing but an offshoot of capitalist stabilisation. The social-political source of this “consolidation” is to be found in the contact between the social-democratic and reformist trade unions and the State apparatus of trust capital. In those countries where Fascist terror rages, the Amsterdam organisations exist almost exclusively because of the illegal position of the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade unions. Such a state of affairs exists in the Balkan countries, the Baltic States, Italy, Spain and a number of other countries. But even in those countries where the revolutionary trade union movement is not illegal, for instance, Germany, France and Great Britain, the anti-strike laws, the arbitration laws and “industrial peace” with the

bourgeois trusts, serve as the main means of support for this reformist “consolidation.” The Amsterdam International actually does not exist as an international Labour movement, and this makes national reformism all the more dangerous for the workers in those countries where the reformist trade unions have openly gone over into the camp of monopolist capital.

This new situation of the monstrous growth of the concentration of capital and its militant tendencies and also the new role of the social-democrats and the trade union bureaucrats has raised new tactical problems for the international revolutionary trade union movement. The Fourth Profintern Congress and also the Ninth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. approved the general policy laid down by comrade Bukharin at the Fifteenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party; it decided that the main work to be accomplished was the revision of tactics and strategy for the approaching class struggles. The tremendous strike wave that spread throughout Europe in 1927 and in the beginning of 1928 cannot be attributed to mere chance. This struggle is spreading more and more, from one industrial region to another, because its root cause is to be found in the present capitalist situation. The immediate future of the Communist Parties and of the revolutionary trade unions depends on the correct conduct of these struggles. As a general rule in the workers’ protest against the dictatorship of trust magnates, the initiative is nearly always taken in factories and workshops by Communists and members of the revolutionary trade union movement. But neither the one nor the other has learned the correct manner of getting control of this struggle.

Very grave consequences threaten the Communist movement and the revolutionary trade unions from the possible isolation of the revolutionary vanguard from the leadership of the present economic struggles. Isolation from the mass of the workers is the greatest danger.

In a number of Communist Parties and revolutionary trade union organisations, Communists have become scared at the difficulties that beset strikes under conditions of monopolist capital, since every serious revolt of the workers on any single front calls forth an immediate joint attack from the entire employers’ front and the bourgeois State machine. Such difficulties increase with the further growth of concentration. Two equally dangerous tendencies have prevailed in the ranks of the revolutionary trade union movement in respect to strike strategy; on the one hand an over-estimation of the strength of the enemy and an under-estimation of the possibilities of partial strikes under conditions of capitalist concentration; and on the other hand an under-estimation of the strength of our class opponents and a too frivolous attitude towards strikes and a consequent lack of preparation for them. Both of these tendencies are the result of a certain pessimism in estimating the nature of the stabilisation of capitalism. And both of these tendencies have caused an opportunist attitude to the question of the leadership of strikes. The classic tactics of the reformists consist in refraining from strikes because of lack of funds; but when the funds are forthcoming they argue that it is foolhardy to risk the funds that have been amassed with such difficulty. Last year in the ranks of the revolutionary trade unions practically similar instances took place (Czecho-Slovakia). In France, in the Unitary trade unions strikes have failed

**"To the Masses!"—continued**

(Unitary Miners' Union) due to the opinion that under monopoly capitalism there can only be a general strike and that all partial strikes are doomed to failure from the beginning. This attitude is responsible for the extreme opportunist theory, which met with the immediate opposition of the Party and the E.C.C.I., on what is termed "active reformism" and "active defence." Many comrades were taken by surprise by the new strike wave. They were hypnotised to a certain extent by the successes of concentration and rationalisation and, therefore, thought that the first signs of the strike wave were mere chance. They took time before they realised the cause of these strikes or understood that they were the beginning of a prolonged and serious strike wave. The Fourth Profintern Congress decided on a definite policy in this respect.

**Where Trade Unions are Not Split**

In countries where the trade union movement is not split this tendency takes a somewhat different form; there the tactic of the united front is misinterpreted and transition slogans misunderstood. The strength of the trade union bureaucracy, the power of the reformist apparatus, which oppresses the revolutionary spirits in the trade union movement in those countries, has brought about a certain reverence for the apparatus and even caused a few liquidatory tendencies in our ranks. Hence, instead of the mobilisation of the masses being the main task of the Communists in the trade union movement, some of our comrades advocate trying to drive the trade union bureaucrats. These comrades argue that, since we are fighting for unity, under no condition should we take the initiative in an independent strike, even when conditions are particularly favourable and the reformists are playing the part of strike-breakers. A certain comrade Johann Effel writes in an article intended for publication in the "Communist International": "There can be no doubt whatsoever that a decisive struggle is absolutely impossible until the trade unions have been conquered ideologically." With the prevailing tendency of the trade union apparatus to join issue with the government and its failure to serve even the most elementary class interests of the workers, there can be no doubt that the possibility of conquering this apparatus is very far off indeed. The bureaucrats will not relinquish it, even faced by the opposition of the majority of the trade union membership, since they can fall back on the support of the bourgeois government. There might be a chance of winning over the rank and file of the trade union membership, but to conquer the apparatus under the existing conditions in the trade unions is quite a different matter altogether.

**Tendency to Liquidation**

Another comrade, Melcher, a member of the trade union section of the C.C. of the German Communist Party openly expresses liquidatory tendencies in a letter, addressed to the C.C. of the C.P.G. He states: "I venture to maintain that the fighting capacity of the international trade union movement would be greatly increased if the Russians and others, who now enter the Profintern national trade union bodies, were to join the Amsterdam International. . . . If it is true that national

unity is necessary to increase the fighting capacity of the workers in the struggle for higher wages and against the prolongation of the working day, then it is also true that the fighting capacity of the workers would be increased in an international sense if, unconditionally, and under suitable circumstances international unity was established."

Comrade Walcher writes in the same strain: "If the Russian trade unions, after the adoption of the Stenhuis resolution, had declared their readiness to enter the Amsterdam International . . . this would have increased the split in the Amsterdam International and assisted us in our struggle for the conquest of the masses." It is quite clear that such theories cannot help to win the independence of the revolutionary Communist vanguard of the German trade union movement. These various tendencies greatly hamper the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union movement in their leadership of the growing class struggle. Still there has been a great increase in the strength of the mass struggle in Germany during the past year, and the initiative of the rank and file Communist workers has been tremendous and generally speaking, on the correct lines mapped out by the Central Committee of the Party.

There is little doubt that one of the reasons of this tendency is the existence of the so-called "left" wing of the social-democrats. There are hundreds of thousands of workers in Germany under the influence of the social-democrats who see the treachery of their leaders, who do not want "economic democracy" and "industrial peace," but at the same time have not decided to adopt Communist precepts. The task of winning over these workers is one of the most important for the revolutionary trade union movement, but this does not mean that the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union movement should deviate from their policy in order to conciliate them. In this is to be found the key to the opportunist tendency as regards the united front in Germany.

The same argument applies to transition slogans. After the Fifteenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, after the Ninth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., after the widespread discussion which took place in the "Communist International" and in the German Communist press, no doubt remained that the slogan "workers' control" and "nationalisation," without an immediate revolutionary situation and the struggle for political power, is an opportunist slogan. This slogan might be playing into the hands of the social-democrats in their policy of resistance to strikes. And yet even at the Profintern Congress certain German comrades continued to advance these slogans stubbornly. Even the bard of "workers' control," comrade Brandler, made a lengthy declaration at the Congress, which it is true marked a retreat from the diehard attitude he adopted in his article in the "Communist International." He declared that he "was not quite" in agreement with comrade Walcher, but still insisted on the "propaganda" value in a programme of action of the slogans of workers' control and nationalisation. Comrade Brandler is afraid that the workers in overthrowing the bourgeoisie and seizing political power might "forget" about workers' control and nationalisation. But for the information of comrade Brandler let us tell him that there is no lack of such

**"To the Masses!"**—continued

propaganda slogans in the everyday Party agitation; the slogan of socialism, too, continues to be a propaganda one. But comrade Brandler loves clearness. . . .

**The Trotskyist View**

Comrade Nin, the representative of the Trotsky opposition, made a characteristic sally at the Congress. He rode the favourite steed of the opposition: "the disavowal" of the Russian workers' movement. We had Walcher on the one hand accusing the Russian trade unions of lack of consistency in respect to joining the Amsterdam International, but Nin also does this by "taking off the veil" from the Soviet trade union movement and showing its "real face," which in his opinion is worthy of taking its place beside Leipart and Jouhaux. But on the whole this was a poor specimen of an illegal and cowardly opposition speech, interspersed with nods and insinuations which did not produce the desired effect on the delegates.

The question arose for some comrades in view of these mistakes in connection with the united front, whether it would not be better to scrap the tactic of the united front altogether. But we must admit that the tactic of unity has had considerable success during the past five years. Those disappointed comrades do not understand that from the very first this tactic of unity was not intended for trade union leaders, but for the working masses. Unity is not an aim in itself, but a means to strengthen the class struggle of the workers. In the process of the class struggle we must fight with Bolshevik determination against Communists who interpret unity as meaning complying with the tutelage of the trade union bureaucrats, glossing over the struggle against the expulsion of revolutionaries from the reformist trade unions so as not to irritate the trade union bureaucrats. The tactic of unity has met with great success and continues to be the leading tactic of both the Comintern and the Profintern in relation to the large non-Party and social-democratic masses. In this connection the Profintern Congress condemned as a "left" error the action of the trade union section of the Polish Party, which scrapped the proposal to appeal both to the revolutionary trade unions and to Amsterdam for material help during the strike of 130,000 textile workers in Lodz. This appeal would have served as a splendid opportunity to expose the leaders of the Polish textile union, who are not even members of the international strike fund of the textile unions affiliated to Amsterdam.

These questions of class strategy raised the whole question of our organisational strategy in the revolutionary trade union movement. First of all the basic question of the historical weakness of the trade union movement in the main branches of industry and in concentrated enterprises. A recent registration of the German Communist Party showed that the big factories and important industries have the weakest revolutionary trade union movement. There are 19.3 per cent. of the German Party members working in factories employing up to 50 workers, 11.9 per cent. in those employing from 100 to 500, 7.1 per cent. in those employing from 1,000 to 5,000, and only 1.4 per cent. in those enterprises where over 5,000 workers are employed. To win over

big factories means to win over the mass of unqualified workers; hence the organisation of the workers in big factories is equivalent to organising the worst organised workers. Only 50 per cent. of the 200,000 metal workers in the Ruhr district are organised, and of 300,000 metal workers in Paris, only 4,000 to 5,000 are organised. Practically all the steel, chemical and automobile workers in America who are about 1,000,000 strong, are unorganised. For this reason the first task of the revolutionary workers is to gain a footing in the basic industries and organise the unorganised. For this purpose opportunist tendencies must be overcome. The fear of independent organisations for the unorganised, outside the American Federation of Labour, has created such a situation in America that immense branches of industry are left unorganised with the result that 90 per cent. of the workers are not organised in trade unions. This situation results in great political influence of the revolutionary trade union movement and an absolutely inadequate organisation of this influence amongst the masses of the workers and what is more important still the strength of the revolutionary trade unions remains stable. Unless there is a continuous influx into the revolutionary trade unions there can be no increase in their strength.

**The Question of Organisation**

The weakest point in the work of the revolutionary trade union movement is the organisational side. An inquiry into the social-political reasons of this inadequate organisation always brings us face to face with the problem of mobilising the masses. These shortcomings consist in being unable to conduct the everyday struggle of the workers, lack of adequate contact with factories and the masses, in the great shortage of experienced revolutionary trade unionists and last of all in the survivals of reformist and anarchist tendencies in the methods employed in revolutionary trade union work. This latter weakness is especially glaring when we examine the organisational methods and organisational structure of two of the strongest independent revolutionary trade union bodies in Europe, those of Czecho-Slovakia and France. The bureaucratic centralisation of the One Big Union in Czecho-Slovakia has a bad effect on the initiative of the sections and greatly hampers the growth of the active elements amongst the rank and file members. The federation is ruled by paid officials and the elected workers' representatives meet only to listen to reports. On this account the question of workers' democracy in the revolutionary trade unions in Czecho-Slovakia and the decentralisation of the productive sections is a vital question of organisation for the Czecho-Slovakian workers' movement.

In France on the other hand the survivals of anarchic syndicalism still to be found in the Unitary trade unions, result in splitting up the revolutionary workers. In this respect the Fourth Congress recommended the reverse type of organisational procedure, namely, the liquidation of superfluous decentralisation, which is a survival of federalism. This over-decentralisation is responsible for individual federations deciding serious problems on their own without the advice and leadership of the central organs of the Unitary Federation.

The inability to gain adequate contact with the masses is also seen in the struggle with Fascism. Fas-

**"To the Masses!"—continued**

cism is not merely terror, nor is every kind of Fascism reaction. In recent years Fascism operates not only through terror, but also by corrupting the workers, especially young workers. Certain successes of Fascist organisations in Germany in big centralised enterprises give sufficient proof of this. No matter whether Fascism take on the form of terror or powerful workers' organisations in enterprises where the employers harry the workers, the method of procedure should simply be to penetrate into these organisations and fight against corruption. The Fourth Congress declared that the immediate tactical policy should be to overcome the tendency to boycott such Fascist trade union organisations.

The last important question before the Congress was that of the trade union movement in the colonies and semi-colonial countries. The Profintern is firmly established in the workers' movement in the East and in Latin America. For the first time in the history of the international Labour movement there were present at the Congress delegates from Latin America, China and other countries on the Pacific.

The revolutionary trade unions affiliated to the Profintern act as the vanguard in the struggle against imperialism. But the Amsterdam International since the time of the Shanghai strike in 1925 acts as the ally of European imperialism. Everyone remembers the reply of the Amsterdam International to the Chinese delegates to the effect that "the trade union movement is interested in building up the movement only in those countries where there is political peace. At present this peace does not exist in China and, therefore, the Amsterdam International does not contemplate sending a delegation there." But on the other hand the Amsterdamers are doing all in their power to penetrate into India. The T.U.C. in London is especially active in this respect and acts as a sort of outpost of the Baldwin Government there. During the past two or three years various individuals and delegations have visited India, including the delegation headed by Shaw and lastly that under the leadership of Purcell. In the Near East a similar role is played by the French trade unions. For example, when a revolutionary conference is being convened in Tunis all the scorpions of the French colonial police are let loose to break it up. Leon Jouhaux, who never founded a trade union in the French colonies, hastens off there to organise a section of the French reformist unions to crush the native labour movement.

The Fourth Profintern Congress mapped out the immediate tasks of the revolutionary trade union movement in the East. These tasks vary in the various countries, but everywhere there is the one basic idea: the mobilisation of the masses for the class struggle.

This is especially the case in China, where the recent defeat of the workers has caused a certain depression in their ranks and brought about the development of Fascist trade unions, supported by the declassed elements amongst the workers, traders' employees and small tradesmen. There has also been a return to the old craft or guild organisations, whilst there exists a certain passivity in respect to the everyday class struggle as a result of the fierce terror. It is the task of Communists to prevent the return to primitive Communism, to mobilise the masses against the corruption of the Fascist trade unions and for the struggle for concrete class demands. As regards India and the Far East the task there is to organise the great mass of the workers and to liberate the trade unions from the influence and leadership of those elements outside the working class.

Since the Third Profintern Congress the revolutionary trade union movement in the East and in South America has made tremendous progress. British imperialism has created a colonial centre in the Singapore base, American imperialism is strengthening its position on the Panama Canal and during this same period the Pacific Ocean Trade Union Secretariat and the Latin American Secretariat have been created and constitute a kind of Singapore base for the revolutionary trade union movement.

These are the conclusions reached by the Fourth Profintern Congress. From one congress to another we see a powerful growth of the Red Trade Union International. At the Amsterdam Congress in 1921, pacifist, radical phrases were still to be heard, which had their effect on millions of European workers, but since the beginning of the bourgeois attack the Amsterdam International has adopted the role of simply registering the defeats of the workers. There are millions of workers who adhere to the reformist leaders, but the real strength of present day reformism lies in the pacifism of the workers after their defeats and the alliance of the reformists and the bourgeois State apparatus. With the growth of the class struggle the falseness of the slogans of industrial peace and economic democracy is being exposed and the ground taken from under the feet of the reformists. Consequently, the reformist attack on the revolutionary workers becomes intensified and for this reason the Fourth Profintern Congress gave much prominence to the struggle against reformism.

Competent leadership is wanted, which understands the course of the class struggle, and is not content with mobilising the masses, but which will also win over from the bourgeoisie and the Amsterdam trade union bureaucrats their last stronghold in the ranks of the workers; this was the historical meaning of the Fourth Profintern Congress.

To the Masses! The workshops and the factories!



# The Post War State

P. Lapinsky

THE DESTINIES OF THE POST-WAR STATE: THE REGENERATION OF THE BOURGEOIS STATE: THE DEGENERATION OF BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY.\*

**A**N absence of "stagnation" (in the sense of those periods of reaction which in preceding historical epochs have followed half-hearted revolutions) a "shifting of the ground," is to be observed not only in the material, in other words the economic basis of modern capitalist societies, not only in the entire system of their international relations, but also in the whole State superstructure—a sphere which perhaps has not attracted the attention it deserves. And yet in this sphere of capitalist existence also (if one ignores such clear, violent and theatrical phenomena as were the Fascist coups d'état which have been carried out in various countries) there is going on no less profound, no less instructive a process, which is gradually, yet certainly changing the structure of the modern capitalist State, and without the realisation and study of which it is difficult adequately to elucidate both the lines of development and decline of the capitalism of our day, and also certain more essential sources of modern reformist super-adaptability. Only to the superficial, philistine imagination of the reformists can it appear that the establishment of an extensive formal democracy, together with a simultaneous restoration of capitalist economy and "normal" international connections, with the addition of a certain liberalism (enforced or voluntary) in the sphere of social legislation and wages, can wholly and entirely set up a stable unshakable foundation and historical framework, around which all further historical development will be built. These gentlemen have not

observed that the very foundation on which apparently it is intended to build the edifice of the future has become a shifting one in great degree, and that together with the whole capitalist world it is passing through a profound and manifold evolution, gradually establishing a situation with which neither the proletariat, nor in a certain sense the bourgeoisie, can reconcile itself.

The development of which we speak—the regeneration of the modern "democratic" State—is a profoundly dialectical manifestation, intrinsically contradictory throughout. The central fact in this sphere—to come straight to the fundamental point—is that the importance, the specific weight of State machinery is growing with every day, while on the other hand "democracy" is becoming more and more atrophied, is ossifying and evaporating, is in any case degenerating. In the one case we can speak of transformation, of regeneration, in the other of degeneration. In a sense the State is in the ascendant, democracy in the descendant. The machinery of the capitalist State is developing steadily more strongly, is becoming interlinked, fused more and more indissolubly with all the fundamental and the secondary organs of the economic organism: (so that it is impossible to distinguish which is the "base" and which the "superstructure"); now swallowing up whole spheres, whole sections of capitalist economy and being transformed into an enormous basic "regulating" organ of capitalism; and then, on the other hand, submitting as never before to the pressure of the more highly organised private-capitalist elements (a development also profoundly inconsistent). But meanwhile the democratic integument of this state is either simply and miserably

\* This article is the draft of a chapter from a book now being prepared by P. Lapinsky and is translated from the Russian original.

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**The Post-War State—continued**

dropping away (Fascist coups d'état for example) or is degenerating both figuratively and even literally (the decline of parliamentarism). And in this process separate sections, separate cells of that integument (the selective element) can even still continue to develop, to extend; their importance may even grow by comparison with the importance of other sections, other cells of the democratic integument ("people's representatives"), but these processes which are taking place within the integument itself, these further isolated successes of formal democracy also are no longer in a condition to hold up the process of degeneration of the entire mechanism of the "democratic" State. And, as we shall see, they even in part merely conduce to the evolution of that State—i.e., of the entire modern bourgeois "democracy"—in the direction of a peculiar "conventionality" on the ground-work of a more highly developed capitalism, yet a capitalism which beats itself against unconquerable obstacles.

We shall first consider the phenomenon of the regeneration of the State. Then we shall pass to the question of the destinies of its democratic integument.

### I. THE GROWTH IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MIGHT OF THE MODERN CAPITALIST STATE

Even in 1917, Lenin characterised the epoch of imperialism in its general form as "the epoch of the development of monopolist capitalism into State-monopolist capitalism." ("The State and Revolution.") And in application to the present time these words have become profoundly true.

The influence of the modern State machine on the entire economic life, and directly and indirectly on the entire existence level of the masses, has grown to a degree of which pre-war bourgeois philosophers simply never dreamt. When during the war the State was forced willy-nilly to gather everything into its hands, it might have seemed that this elephantiasis of State functions was a purely transient phenomenon; and as we know, after the close of the war the moment quickly arrived when the slogan: "Back to private initiative, back to 'normal' capitalism," was proclaimed with no little energy. But history knows no pure "return"; the return to "normal" capitalism of the pre-war type proved to be reactionary, Manchester utopianism. Much, very much that had entered into the composition of war-time State-capitalism was eliminated. But in various forms there was more left of it than was desired and expected by the advocates of "pure" capitalism. The influence of the State machinery on the entire economy was established firmly and more generally and laid down complex and new paths for itself. It would be difficult in this short sketch to investigate all the ramifications of those paths. Perhaps in another place we shall be able to consider this aspect in more detail; here we only note the most important. At the heart of all the phenomena is the extraordinary and manifold growth in the economic might of the State. That growth manifests itself both directly and indirectly. We shall briefly consider the main points of this process.

### (a) The Growth of the Share of National Income Falling to the State

One has only to compare pre-war with post-war budgets to realise that an incomparably greater share of the national income passes through the hands of the State to-day than before the war. The enormous growth in the receipts and expenditures of the post-war State is a well-known fact. Before the war the budget for Great Britain did not amount to two hundred millions sterling, to-day it is practically 800 millions; the United States budget in 1913 was 734 million dollars in round figures, to-day it is 3,772 million dollars. The Swedish budget was 261 million kronen, to-day it is 697 million kronen, and so on. The receipts of Germany, (including Federal States, municipalities, etc.), in 1913 amounted to four milliard marks. At the present time the receipts amount to ten milliards. Even if one makes the customary adjustment for the decline in the value of gold, the growth, although unequal in the various countries, is none the less enormous and is at its maximum in Anglo-Saxon countries.

In highly authoritative sources we can find the declaration that in Britain the budget swallows up more than 20 per cent. (whereas in pre-war days it took a little more than 10 per cent.)\* Thus in this oldest and mightiest of the capitalist countries, we see that merely through the channel of taxation and other forms of receipts an entire fifth part of the national income passes through the hands of the State every year.

More or less analogical figures are cited for other countries also: about 20 per cent. for France, over 19 per cent. for Italy, 17 per cent. for Belgium, and so on.†

The programme memorandum of the German industrialists mentions a figure as high as 25 to 30 per cent. for Germany (which, of course, has to be regarded as somewhat exaggerated).‡

With this is, of course, connected the growth of that proportion of receipts which the State extracts in one form or another from the taxed sections of the population. The union of German industry has estimated that an entire 63 per cent. of the profits of industry goes in payment of all kinds of taxation. One can hardly doubt that this figure is an exaggerated one for propagandist purposes, but the fact of the colossal growth of taxation charges of all kinds (State and local) is not open to question. But this fact also connotes an extraordinary growth and a great change in the machinery for distribution of the "national income"; and the role and importance of the State in that machinery has increased essentially.

### (b) State Capitalism (in the Narrow Sense of the Word).

But the taxation pump is only one of the sources of the growth in the economic might of the State. Simultaneously there has been a great growth, albeit not to a proportionate extent, in the role and importance of the State as an entrepreneur.

\* Bowley and Stamp: "The National Income." Oxford, 1927, page 53. Britain's Industrial Future (report of the Liberal Commission), page 486.

† "The Inter-Allied Debts and the United States." National Industrial Conference Board. N.Y., 1925. Page 275.

‡ "Deutsche Wirtschaft und Finanz Politik Veröffentl. d. Reichsverbands d. Deutschen Industrie." 1925.



## The Post-War State—continued

While even before the war in a number of countries the capitalist State had been transformed into a gigantic and even the most gigantic entrepreneur, and while, as we know, the war gave an extraordinary impetus to this development, after the war there was by no means a halt in the process. Without doubt we here have a manifestation of the great and enduring development of a distinctive State-capitalism type. And so this phenomenon is evaluated and referred to in private-capitalist circles also, where in the majority of cases an extremely hostile attitude is adopted to this new form of capitalism. Although in their hostility to these new economic forms they are disposed to consider and represent them as a thoughtless and injurious realisation of socialism from above, and in sections (in this sense they speak of "cold socialisation," or as we would say in Russian "dry socialisation," i.e., socialisation without revolution, without bloodshed and violence), none the less these circles clearly realise that here they are dealing with a high development of a specific form of State-capitalism. In a profoundly capitalist, "heavy industry" economic year-book, which reflects the views and desires of the upper groups of trustified capital in the purest form, unstrained through any professorial filter, we read: "The State has taken on new functions and has entered into a new relationship with economy. Even if one ignores the extension of its regulative activities in regard to economy, it is necessary to realise that apart from this it has itself become a capitalist entrepreneur with the aid of social resources, in order to do its work, in order to capture economic functions also from private elements, to act as competitor in relation to those elements, or else under the pretext of the accomplishment of urgent tasks. Here we have to do not with socialism in the Marxist sense of direct socialisation, expropriation, but with a new form of State capitalism."\*

And this extensive development both of the regulative role of the State and of its direct functions as entrepreneur† is by no means transient, a fortuitously historical product of war necessity, but is profoundly and indissolubly connected with the everlasting condition of absence of equilibrium and of chronic crisis into which the capitalist system has irrevocably entered, with its growing inability to deal with the accumulating economic and social difficulties "off its own bat," and is also connected with all those enormous contradictions which have been driven into the entire economic and the entire political organism of contemporary capitalism with unprecedented force by the world war and the succeeding revolutionary and semi-revolutionary development. This also explains why the symptoms of development of these State-capitalist tendencies are most to be found in the countries in which the capitalist system has passed through comparatively serious disturbances (Germany and, in part, Britain), while on the other hand we note a weaker development of those tendencies in countries in which the entire system came out less shaken by the war and the revolutionary period which succeeded it

\* "Wirtschafts Jahrbuch für das Niederrheinische-Westfälische Industrie, 1927." Page 177.

† The isolation of separate enterprises in pseudo-independent economic units working "on an economic basis" of course does not essentially alter the position.

(France and the United States). The historical inevitability of the process (with all its geographical disproportion, with all its zigzags, contradictions and direct relapses into the past) is perhaps most clearly illustrated by the fact that in the classic country of individualism, Britain, its latest "simple Manchesterism" is proclaimed by the descendants of the Whigs—the Liberals. And by a true irony of fate the latest clamorous document of Liberal creation, the memorandum on "Britain's Industrial Future," painstakingly drawn up with the participation of all the Liberal luminaries—the editor of the Free Trade "Economist," Layton, Keynes, Philip Carr, Sir Herbert Samuel, Lloyd George and others, which has caused some alarm both in the Conservative and in the Labour Party's ranks, in fundamentals amounts to a programme for the more extensive and widely distributed intensification of State interference in economic life.\*

We shall deal with the growth in the regulative functions of the State later. For the moment what interests us are the facts of the direct economic might of the State, of the State as entrepreneur and banker. Undoubtedly in this sphere we have present a tremendous disproportion in development. At the present time the classic country of development of the entrepreneur functions of public bodies (the State and the municipality) is Germany (which even before the war was in advance of other States in this regard). A number of profound historical causes have been at the bottom of the fact that both formerly and now this manifestation (in its new and in its old forms) is comparatively weak in other countries. But we must not forget that Germany is not only the country which has lived through the maximum of disturbances, but is simultaneously the country with the most advanced capitalism in Europe, and that we observe related phenomena to a greater or less degree in other countries also.

Possibly least of all in the United States: but a growth of the same "danger" in that country also is witnessed to by the strength of the capitalist propaganda against the whole system of ideas of "nationalisation," "paternalism," etc. The relevant American literature has even provided its original "standard work" on the subject: the book by Mark L. Requee on the "Relation of Government to Industry," (N.Y., 1925). In distinction from German or British literature, in the American brand all State capitalism is still benevolently simply confused with socialism and even with "Bolshevism," the economic bankruptcy of which is necessarily cited as the classic argument against all direct economic activity on the part of the State.

But ignoring the fact that in separate spheres (first and foremost in the question of the commercial fleet, where the most contemporary interests of American imperialism are being revealed)† after all kinds of experi-

\* The authors of the Liberal memorandum perhaps did not notice that the pre-requisite of the realisation of so extensive (and in its own way "revolutionary") a programme was in British conditions bound to be the rise of some super-powerful, super-resolute government, some Fascist or semi-Fascist government, which, saving capitalism by force against its own impotence, distintegration and routine, would simultaneously give this process of "social salvation" a social-Cæsarist tinge; consequently we here have before us Liberalism's unavowed dream—of Fascism.

† The "Merchant Marine Act" of 1920 provides for a subvention of 125 million dollars for the construction of a

**The Post-War State**—continued

ments and vacillations the idea of direct initiative and activity on the part of the State has not ceased to trouble the minds of the ruling Republicans; ignoring this we note that in the first place never has the "fusion" of trustified capital with the State machinery achieved such dimensions as in those same United States, which is only another form of essentially the same process ("economy" is swallowing up and enveloping the "State" more than it is being swallowed by the State). We note secondly that in no other country do we find such colossal schemes for the direct interference of the State in economic life as in America (as for example, the well-known proposed legislation of Mac-Neary-Hogan, defended by the representatives of agrarian interests), never has the regulation of economic life so swiftly reached enormous dimensions; although in accordance with all the conventional American economic and State doctrine it has mainly developed in the form that in the external political practice of the States has obtained the high-sounding title of "binding suggestions." All these facts compensate in great degree for the absence of forms of highly developed State-capitalism in the narrow meaning of the words.

We can observe another type of "compensation" in Britain: a manifestation impossible in countries without colonies, such as Germany. This form is the very direct regulation of the more important spheres of colonial raw-goods production and the direct participation of the State in the larger colonial enterprises. As an example of the first we may mention the rationing of rubber production, as an example of the second the decisive participation of the State in such colonial oil enterprises as the "Anglo-Persian." In answer to a question in Parliament in March, 1920, according to the official report, it was stated that the "State is the dominant interest in the Anglo-Persian company, holding two-thirds of the shares in addition to bonds." Of course, "the State does not interfere in the commercial arrangements of the company, and will not interfere unless, which, of course, will never occur, those arrangements were to come into conflict with the interests of the British Empire." This generally known fact (although for some reason unmentioned by the Liberal memorandum) of the closest fusion of the State with the most militant of oil capital undoubtedly presents a model of the most genuine type of "State capitalism."

The authors of the Liberal memorandum, in endeavouring to compile an exact estimate of all "public concerns" (in which the memorandum includes not only enterprises and all forms of State property and that of municipalities, but all forms of enterprises with a restricted private-economic initiative: thus lumping together with enterprises run by the War Department, the docks, port institutions, the land and water transport systems and similar concerns, all forms of co-

commercial fleet. In 1924 a law was passed which gave the Shipping Board powers to expend up to 25 million dollars specially on the installation of Diesel engines in already existing vessels and so on. But these measures have so far not justified their expectations, and according to our information governmental circles are considering the establishment of a State commercial fleet specially for routes between the U.S.A. and India, with the obvious object of commercial rivalry with Britain in this wealthy British colony).

operative societies, societies holding concessions by Act of Parliament for water, gas and electricity supply, railways, the property of universities, schools, charity enterprises, etc., also) are themselves startled at the results thus obtained.

**A Liberal Catalogue**

In presenting the catalogue of "various types of socialised, semi-socialised and other State-regulated enterprises," the authors of the memorandum sound the warning that: "We think that most readers will be astonished by their magnitude and their importance and the large proportion of the total capital of the nation which they already control." (p. 66.) The memorandum estimates the total amount of this proportion at four thousand million pounds, and comes to the conclusion that this figure "comprises at least two-thirds of what could be called the large-scale enterprises of the country." (pp. 74-5.)

As we see, the Liberal catalogue is put together very liberally; it is only too evident that the property of schools, universities, charitable institutions and similar undertakings does not play the same role in the general system of national economy as do the large-scale industrial factory enterprises, and that too heterogeneous an assortment has been dropped into the one stockpot; and it is also clear that the terms "socialisation" and "semi-socialisation" are here used somewhat more freely than is permissible. The memorandum brings all the enumerated manifestations of the development of public-right property and regulative control under the one heading of "State Socialism," and with the development of this phenomenon in a different form (both in the form of growth in the assumption of directly entrepreneur functions by the State and in the interlinking of the most variegated methods of regulation and control, joint administration, etc.), we are undoubtedly concerned here. Certain of the "socialised enterprises" (in the exact meaning of the words) represent colossal economic units in Britain also. Out of the total number of 177 port administrations, directed by independent organs, but not on the basis of profit-making, twenty alone represent a capital of approximately one hundred million pounds. Out of its receipts the Metropolitan Water Board wipes out a capital of 53 million pounds, and so on.

In this sphere the construction of houses with the financial participation of the State and municipal governments is in a special category. This form of building activity has reached unprecedented dimensions not only in Germany, but in Britain also. During the last few years about one million new houses have been built in Britain, of which approximately half the number have been erected with State aid. In the last year alone according to the official figures more than a quarter of a million houses (272,000) were built, of which 153,779 were State-aided\* But building activity in Germany has passed into the hands of public-right bodies in far greater degree than in Britain. The significance of this one fact alone is simply enormous. "The annual turnover of the German building industry," writes G.

\* The exact figures of houses built with State aid (in round numbers) are in 1919 (building) year 715; 1920, 28,000; 1922, 101,000; 1923, 67,000; 1924, 18,000; 1925, 67,000; 1926, 106,000; 1927, 153,000. ("Times," November 10th, 1927.)

### The Post-War State—continued

Stolpert "before the war amounted to six milliard marks, of which almost half went for the building of houses. And a preponderant proportion of industrial edifices now certainly come within the sphere of activity of public-supply bodies (electricity, gas and similar enterprises). This will give some idea of what it means to subject building activity to social-economic influence. This item alone connotes the administration of one-eighth of the national income."

† "Das Deutsche Wirtschafts-Problem." 1918. pp. 20/21. According to the Liberal Memorandum British "Building Societies," working on the basis of old, pre-war laws, handle ten per cent. of the total sum of national savings.



## Confessions of Angelica

ANGELICA BALABANOFF: Reminiscences and Experiences. Berlin, 1927; pp. 300.

MADAME BALABANOFF'S memoirs, in which she represents herself as a kind of private Communist, have been given a very warm reception both by the social-democratic and the bourgeois press. The author has been glorified as a pure soul, an idealistic dreamer, who revolted against the grim reality of militant Communism and had the courage to come out openly in revolt against it.

The book teems with more or less authentic anecdotes, but we shall waste no time discussing their value or otherwise for anti-Bolshevik propaganda. What interests us most is whether Madame Balabanoff's book is of any special value as a contribution to the history of the fairly extensive period covered by her "Reminiscences and Experiences." We must admit that the answer to this is in the negative.

An extremely pretentious chapter entitled "By Way of an Autobiography," serves as an introduction to the book. Here the author gives us a hymn of praise to her modesty and timidity, and compares her method of writing her memoirs with that of Bebel, Kropotkin and Jean Jacques Rousseau. It is true that there is a certain similarity between Balabanoff's memoirs and those of Rousseau's confessions. As is generally known, Jean Jacques confesses to being addicted to a bad practice, which took the place of the normal human functions. Angelica's public life as described by her resembles political onanism. Ego-centric (a word which she uses very often in reference to others), in love with herself like Narcissus, she continually comes in contact with people and things, philosophises and makes psychological deductions without understanding in the least what these all mean.

We get a typical example of her mentality in her remarks about Mussolini, to whom she devotes several chapters. She was editorial secretary of the "Avanti" at the time when Mussolini was editor in chief. She relates that, "my joint work with Mussolini gave me continual proofs of his weaknesses. He never wrote an article, or came to a decision without asking for advice, and I do not recall one instance

In distinction from Germany, the public-supply bodies have in Britain penetrated into the spheres of banking activity least of all. But it is all the more characteristic that it was only necessary for the activities of the bank founded in Birmingham in 1919 to be successful for it to arouse pronounced hostility on the part of interested circles towards municipal banks. As one was bound to expect, the Committee for investigation of the question set up in 1926 by the Treasury, with Lord Bradbury at its head, decisively pronounced against municipal banks, as presenting a certain danger to the national credit.

(To be continued.)

in which he did not take my point of view." (p. 80.) "Often later, I reproached myself for this decision (to resign the position on the "Avanti"), because I know how external circumstances affect weak people, and how chance causes, prevents, or destroys, as the case may be. In view of the fact that I have since that time ascertained that Mussolini greatly feared his own weakness, and that, without ever saying so much in words, he had handed over to me the control and responsibility for himself, I feel that things might have been different had I listened to the persuasions of comrades in the Party executive and continued to work on the "Avanti." . . . As long as I was on the "Avanti" Mussolini was never alone in any sense of the word." (p. 88.) And then again she says: "Perhaps things would have been different if at that time there had been some one near him, whom he knew observed and saw through him, and whose irony and responsibility he feared." (p. 89.)

It is generally known that the length of Cleopatra's nose played a decisive part in Roman history. Therefore, had the strong Angelica (who in every second line talks about her Marxist outlook) decided to remain somewhat longer at the side of the weak Mussolini, who knows but Italy would have been spared Fascism, or at least another Duce would have had to be found.

This "Marxist" Cleopatra sums up her opinion on the role of Mussolini as follows: He differs from the other leaders of reaction by the fact that he does not represent the interests of a class or of any ideology, he simply wants to drown in blood all that recalls Socialism. (pp. 266-7.)

Another example of the "Marxism" of this writer of memoirs is to be found in her estimation of Italy before the war: "It was undoubtedly the freest and most democratic country . . . because the bourgeoisie did not yet possess any class-consciousness." (p. 27.)

Madame Balabanoff goes into great details about the utterances of great men who are now dead, such as Bebel, Jaures, Lenin, especially as regards herself. Bebel said to her in Basle in 1912: "When I hear you comrade, I think I can visualise the entire International." (p. 53.) Lenin referred to her as "the most illustrious member of the Communist International." (p. 263.) Professor Antonio Labriola, the famous philosopher, said to her shortly before he died: "In Italy I am the executor of Marx; when I die, you will be mine." (p. 39.) Her relations with Georg Plekhanov are described in great detail and in conclusion she adds: "Although it may sound strange, still I am sure that external conditions influenced Plekhanov's attitude (to the war): he was in Paris just as this town was threatened with invasion by the German troops." (p. 65.)

Madame Balabanoff "is sure." Her conjectures as to the possible attitude of Bebel are no less profound than her explanation of Plekhanov's attitude to the world war. She writes: "People often discuss what Bebel's attitude to the war would have been. One thing I am certain of, and that is that he could not have survived the breakdown of the International, the complete impotence of the German Party, and the discord within the Labour movement." In this pompous manner she makes the stupid statement, which is

## Confessions of Angelica—continued

impossible of confirmation that, if Bebel had not died before August 4th, 1914, he would have died immediately after this date as a victim of the first days of the war. "She is certain"—how interesting and instructive!

Madame Balabanoff flaunts her "intransigent" and unbending attitude during the struggles before the war, especially in the ranks of the Italian Labour movement. Her psychological elucidations of the conduct of her opponents, the Italian revisionists, are typical. She refers to them with such warmth; she was charmed with the "refined idealism of the collective soul of the Italians" (p. 20), with the "tolerance which both the Italian masses and their leaders always displayed." (p. 32.)

The reader may easily guess what Italian leader is meant when she writes: "He may well be considered one of the most passionate accusers of the bourgeois order. No single contradiction, no shady side, no hypocrisy within the capitalist system escapes his penetrating glance, the sharp irony of his eloquence or of his masterly pen. He was able as no other has done to formulate his irreconcilable protest against the bourgeois order, and to express his inexhaustible belief in Socialism." "Every work he has written is imbued with deep social pathos, which only one can possess who lives for his 'Weltanschauung' (world-vision) and that a Socialist one." (p. 32-33.)

These empty hymns of praise refer to no other than the leader of the Italian revisionists and reformists, the theoretician of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, the old adherent of Bernstein, Filippo Turati. "Intransigent" Angelica explains his reformism on the basis of this characterisation, as "petty human errors, easily understood." "That same critical attitude and love of truth, which caused him to accept Socialist ideology and to break with his bourgeois past as no other had done; this critical faculty made him, like many of his countrymen, resort to acts and statements absolutely contrary to his activities and which he would recall with equal candour on the following day. His hatred for demagogy often made him use words which he would not have used under different circumstances. He has always been anxious that the workers should have a feeling of responsibility, especially when there was any question of strikes and such like, and that they should see every episode of the class struggle in the light of the general point of view of revolutionary training and practice. His virtues—hatred of demagogy; indifference to public opinion, contempt for popularity—often become vices for these very reasons." (p. 33.) The crowning point in this psychological-dialectic twaddle is the following conclusion: "It may seem a paradox—but Turati was not meant for politics, especially not for an active part in a democratic revolutionary party, which imposes discipline as one of the most important duties." Surely the good soul was thinking of herself when she was writing all this?

But the angelic Angelica also finds words of approval for Bissolati, the most objectionable type of renegade, who in 1912 was expelled from the Socialist Party because of his open support of the Tripoli annexation. She writes: "This unselfish, brave and courteous man, who had devoted his knowledge and his great capacity to the services of the awakening Labour movement (p. 39.), then changed his point of view, but not so as to make a career or as a traitor." This "unselfish, brave and courteous" heroine discovers a piece of herself in every traitor and renegade. In the words of Goethe: "He who would understand the poet, must go to the poet's country."

The elementary truth and honesty of our garrulous cousin—she points out on each of the 300 pages of this book her unbounded love of truth and exceptional honesty as her basic qualities—is put to the most glaring test by her statements about Serrati. Madame Balabanoff deserted Russia and Communism because she was not in agreement with the split in the Italian Socialist Party, which took place in 1921. The leadership of the Communist International was of opinion that in accordance with the 21 conditions, adopted

at the Second World Congress, the definitely reformist wing of the Italian Socialist Party, under the leadership of Turati, should be expelled from the International. This was all the more necessary in view of the fact that there was a revolutionary situation in Italy, where the party was encumbered with a group which not only preached class collaboration, but also practised it and therefore could not possibly fulfil the role of the vanguard of the proletariat. Serrati was against the split at that time. In October, 1921, when given the choice at the Milan Party Congress: with or against Turati, he decided for Turati. But in September, 1922, he saw his mistake and seceded from the reformists. He and his group joined the Communist Party of Italy. When a few years later he died, he died as a faithful soldier of the C.I. and of the revolution in Fascist Italy.

Balabanoff, that great lover of truth, is excessive in her praise of Serrati during his period of vacillation, 1920-21, but she is absolutely silent as to all that happened later, and does not refer to the fact that he himself admitted that his attitude at that time was a mistake and condemned it as such. She makes no mention in a book published in 1927 of his activities during his later years. At the time when Serrati joined the Party, at the most difficult moment and when triumphant Fascism was bombarding the Party, Madame Balabanoff continued on her path into the maze of the deserters.

Madame Balabanoff gives other reasons beside the Italian question, for her desertion to the ranks of the renegades. She admits that she was in agreement with the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but the method of dealing with it in Russia was not to her taste; she recognised the revolutionary terror, but she would have preferred a kind of Angelica at the head of the Tcheka to Felix Dzerjinsky. Whilst other Commissars enjoyed privileges during the Civil War and famine, she, Angelica starved in secret; and even now she finds it hard to write about this. The entire work of the leadership of the C.I. from 1919-20 centred around Zinoviev's intrigues against Balabanoff; they were all jealous of her fame, the glory of her name and her prestige; altogether the whole revolution was spoiled by bad characters; that is the "tragedy"—to use this actress' favourite word—of the whole thing. But what pains her most is that Lenin, who often realised the truth and understood how to value Angelica Balabanoff, suffered it all, even joined the others, and once on behalf of Zinoviev commissioned her to do something objectionable.

The only one, with reservations, for whom she could have any respect, was Trotsky.

What could a person with the name of Angelica Balabanoff do under such circumstances?

"For anyone to whom the future, the honour of the working class is no empty phrase, who will not commit a crime against her own revolutionary honour, such a one must leave the ranks of the Communist International, in order to make a stand for the principles of Communism and win the masses for its final aim." (p. 233.)

And the path to the final aim?

"The events of the past few years have strengthened me in my belief that there is only one way that leads to Socialism and that is the path of truth." (p. 277.)

"Future generations will find this way."

Perchance some one may remark: Is that the Angelica Balabanoff, the secretary of Zimmerwald, the first secretary of the Third International, as she repeatedly refers to herself? She played such a great historical role only to expose herself now as a ridiculous, bourgeois, not even clever, garrulous aunt, in love with herself.

But we should not go to her for the truth about the role which she played. Since she knew a half-dozen languages perfectly and was a tolerable orator, she was able to be of use in the ranks of a movement and a Party as translator and temperamental agitator, and even "play a role." But she wanted to make herself independent. This was not a brilliant idea. And now what the narrow family circle knew about her, the whole world knows.

H. W.