

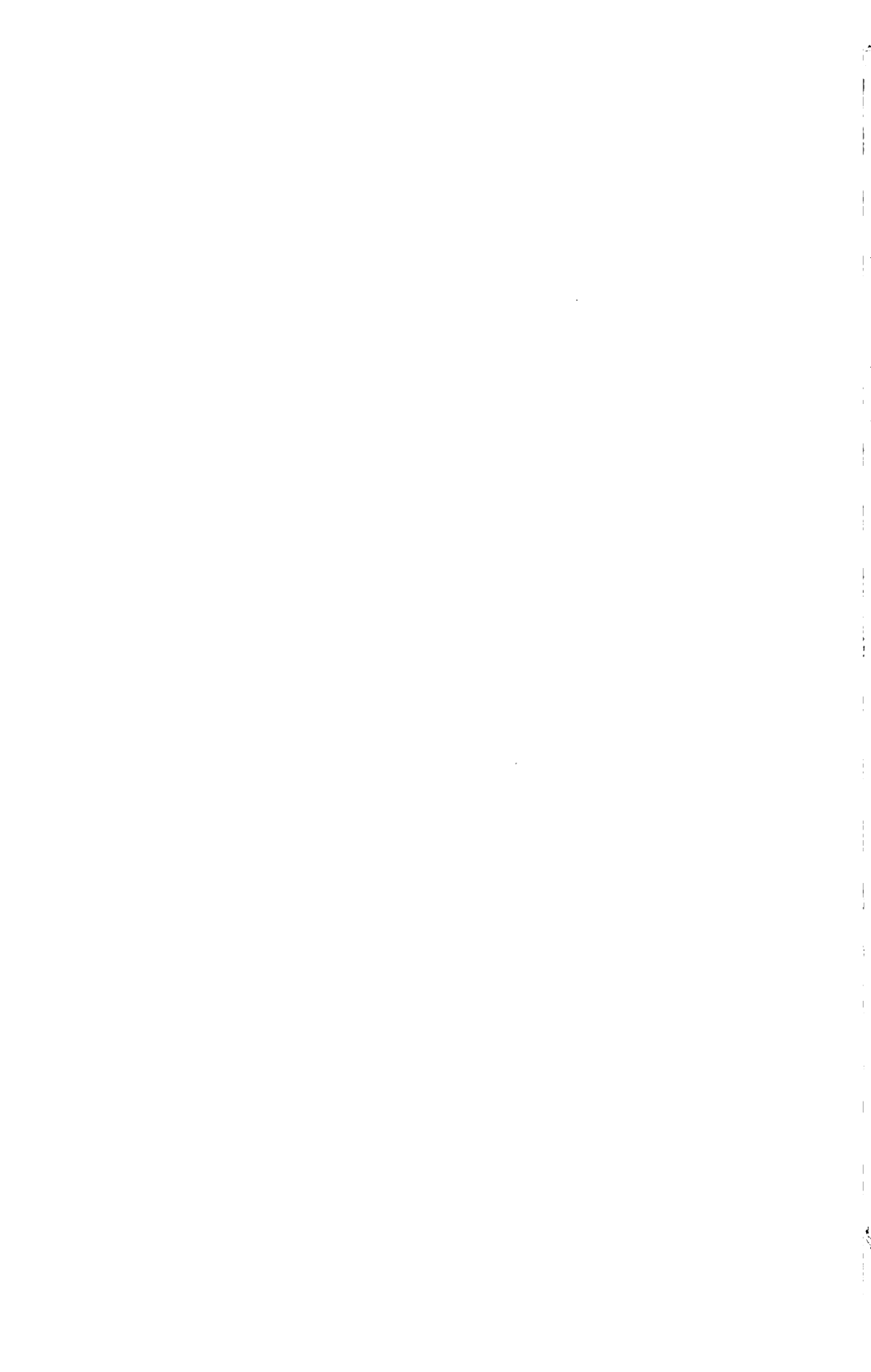


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# LABOUR MONTHLY

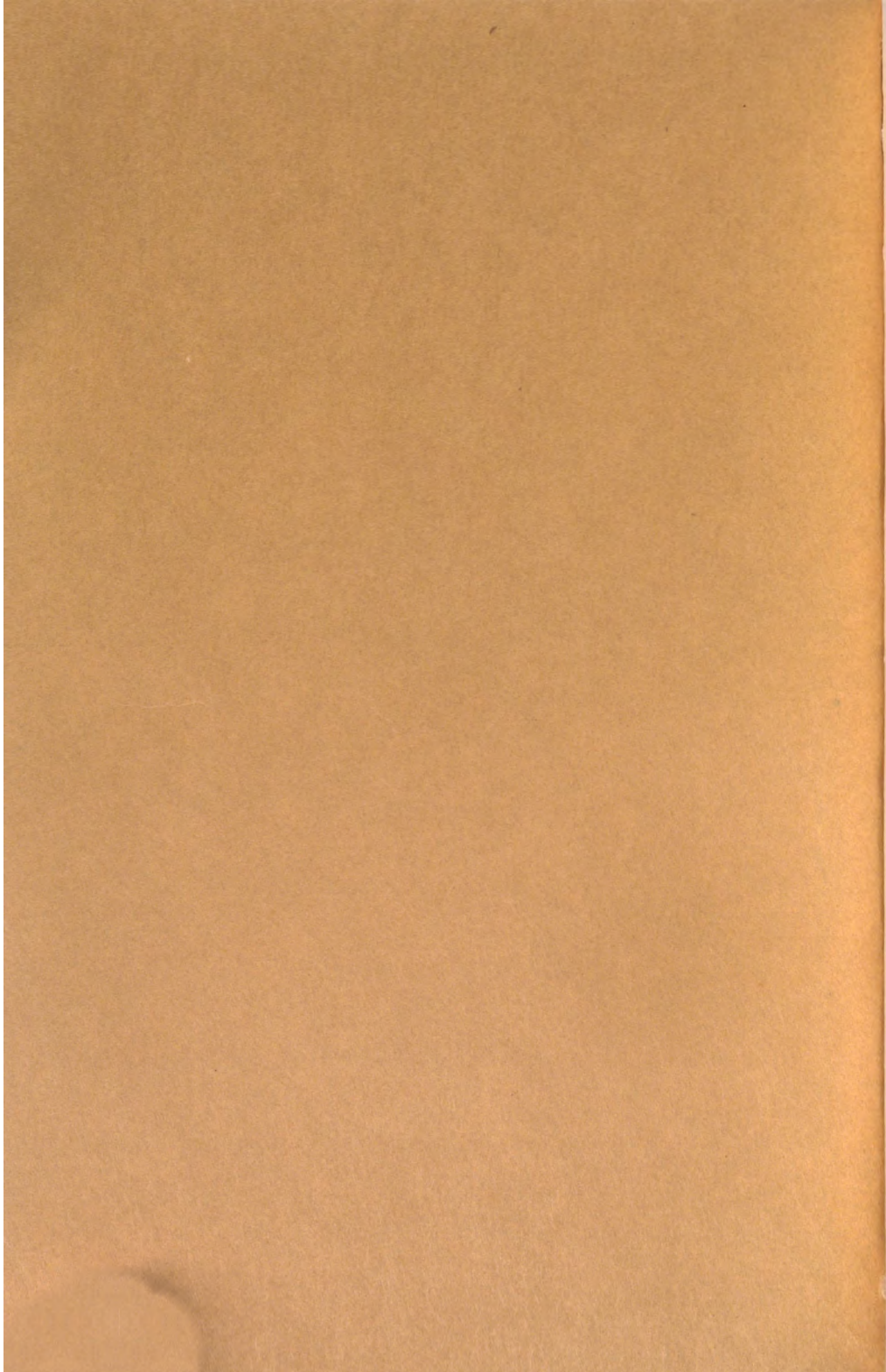
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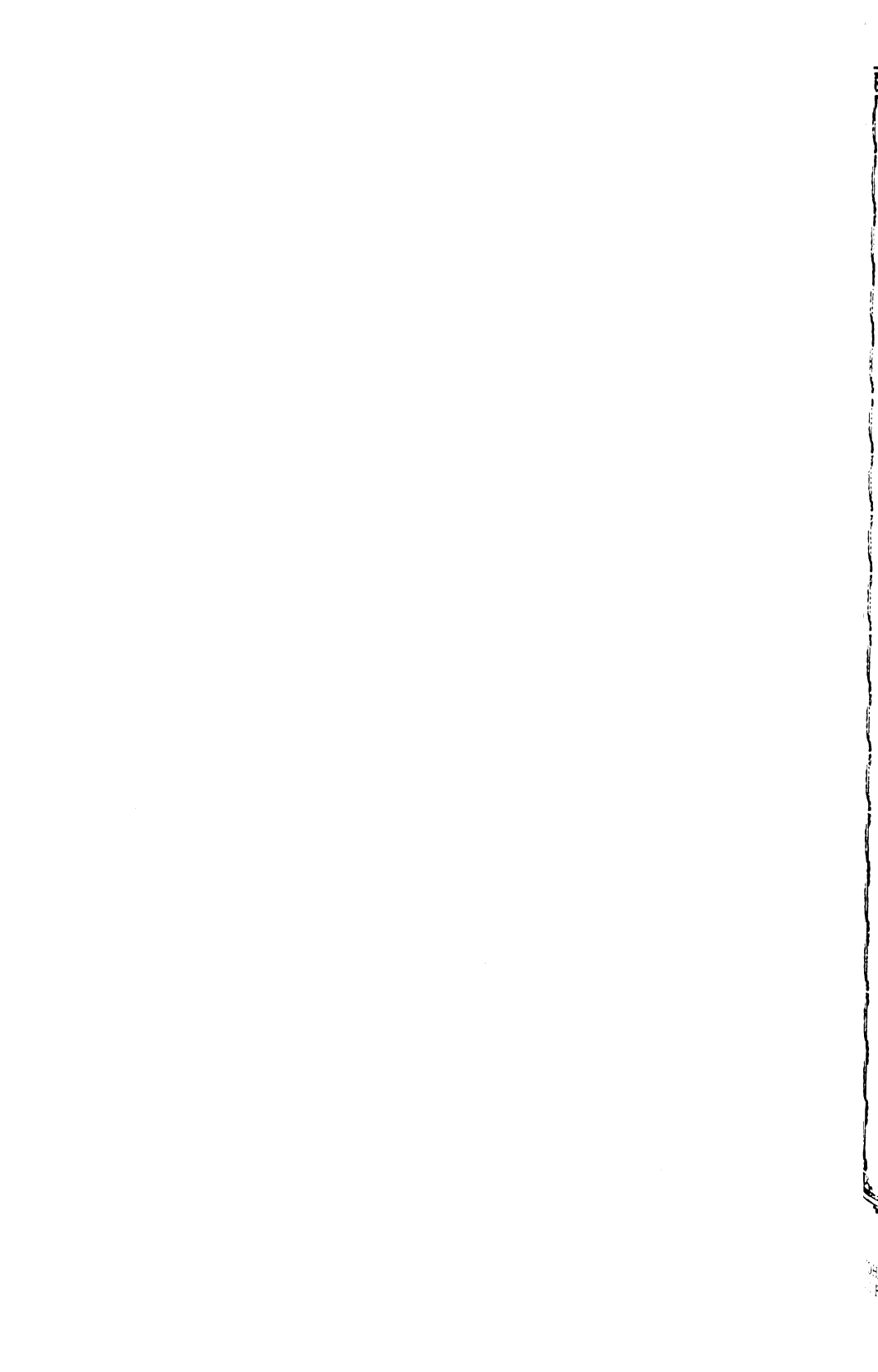
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Volume I  
JULY  
TO  
DECEMBER  
1921





**THE LABOUR MONTHLY**





THE  
LABOUR  
MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

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Volume I  
JULY  
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*A Magazine of International Labour*

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W.C.



# NOTES of the MONTH

*The World-Attack on Labour—The Struggle in Britain—  
The Crisis in French Trade Unionism—Right and  
Left in Germany and Italy—The General  
Strike in Norway—Changes  
in Russian Policy—The  
“Open Shop” in  
America*

THE appearance of the LABOUR MONTHLY calls neither for apology nor for justification. It has been brought into being to meet an evident need, for there has, until now, been no magazine in this country devoted primarily to reporting and explaining to British workers the developments of the Labour movement in other countries: and of the need for such reporting and such explanation the world situation of Labour is the clearest proof. In the first place, the present attack of capital on Labour is international in its character. From every country comes the same story of economic depression, all-round cuts in wages and ineffectual resistance. This is not necessarily to say that the present campaign is internationally planned, although the Secret Report that we publish elsewhere reveals a conscious co-operation of the various capitalist Governments to-day in evoking measures to crush the resistance of Labour. But it does mean that a single set of conditions is operative throughout the world to an extent that had never been reached before even in the complex interdependence of the pre-war world. Victorious America and England are equally affected with defeated Germany; revolutionary Russia is faced with the necessity of temporary concessions. The situation of Labour in any country has become a part of a general international situation and is only comprehensible in relation to it. That is the first lesson of the present crisis. The second lesson is of still more immediate importance. The present time of trial is putting the organisation of Labour in every country to the severest test it has experienced since the beginning of the war. In every country it is being found that the organisation

of Labour is inadequate to the tasks that now confront it. Lack of co-ordination, cumbrous machinery, sectional division, and absence of foresight and strategic policy are again and again leading to disastrous results. The re-organisation of the whole Labour movement on a scale adequate to the problems before it has now become the first practical question in every country.

**I**N Great Britain the world situation is reflected in the series of tremendous conflicts between Labour and capital, which opened with the lock-out of the miners in April, and has since involved practically every other important industry. When the first attack from the employers was made, with the assistance of the Government, Labour turned naturally to its old weapon of the refusal to work. In the isolated industrial conflicts of the past, the strike weapon was effective, and was indeed the only weapon that could be used in isolated disputes. The struggle of the working class, conceived as a struggle to improve the lot of sections of the workers, was inevitably bound up with craft-unionism and the sectional strike. The struggle of the working class, conceived as the struggle to alter the wage system, spreads beyond the old forms, not only of craft-unionism, but even of industrial unionism, and requires a new conception of working-class organisation. The position of Capitalism, bloated and triumphant at the end of five years of war, made it inevitable that Capitalism should challenge the whole basis of the industrial organisation of the workers which had developed so rapidly during the war. When the challenge came it became apparent that Labour had not realised the importance of the changes which the war had created. The struggle was still thought of on the lines of sectional disputes. The failure of the Triple Alliance was only the outcome of the policy of separatism in which British Trade Unionism was steeped. It revealed what had long been becoming clear, that the cry of industrial unionism alone is not enough. A real working-class unity of action is needed to meet the challenge of united capital operating in conjunction with the Government. If this lesson is driven home by the present crisis, the struggle will not have been in vain, whatever may be its immediate outcome. But the lack of prepara-

tion, the lack of a clear realisation of the nature of capital's world-attack on working-class organisation, has resulted in a series of disheartening and exhausting struggles. It will take many years of organisation to recover the ground that has been lost in the first half of this year.

**T**HE attack on the workers' organisations in France came earlier than in Britain, and was more definitely under the control of the Government. The Government's attack on the General Confederation of Labour (the C.G.T.), which followed the events of May, 1920, has not, in fact, led to any material change in the position of that organisation. But the attack came at a critical point in the development of French Trade Unionism, and served as the occasion for the internal crumbling of an organisation which was already rent by opposing tendencies. These tendencies are the familiar opposing views of Right and Left. In France this division in the Trade Unions has a special significance, because of the traditional basis of French Trade Unionism. The opposition to political action, always a feature of Trade Unionism in its early days, was crystallised in France in the constitution of the C.G.T., and in the decisions of the famous Congress of the C.G.T. at Amiens in 1906. Both Right and Left base their contentions on the "Amiens Charter," as the resolution passed at that Congress has come to be called. But although at every step the conflict between Right and Left refers back to the traditional basis of French Trade Unionism, the issues that at present divide the C.G.T. are the issues that have developed in every country since the war and the Russian Revolution. The C.G.T. itself is so paralysed by internal disorganisation, and in consequence unable to face the industrial situation at the present time, that the decision to hold the next Congress in July instead of September must be welcomed. This Congress will be called upon to decide definitely the future direction of French Trade Unionism. Whatever happens, it seems likely that there will be a split. If the Right Wing wins, it has declared its intention of expelling the Communists. If the Left Wing wins, the Right Wing will secede. In either case there seems little hope for unity in the C.G.T.

**N**OWHERE else has the issue reached so sharp and clear-cut a division as in France, but the same type of situation will be found reproduced elsewhere under varying conditions. In Germany the struggle is proceeding in a more dispersed fashion within the various Unions: and a detailed survey of the position will be given in our next number. In Italy the political aspect of the issue between the two wings of Labour is at present dominant, but the real struggle is over the body of the General Confederation of Labour. And in Norway, where the Trade Union Federation is already decidedly to the Left, the calling off of the general strike in support of the seamen has led to an attack upon the older leaders represented by Ole Lian. It is a matter of regret that these divisions should occur at a time when there is so much need of united action; but it is probable that these regrets are vain. The internal divisions are only the inevitable reflection of the present general depression; and they may even be of service if they lead, not to prolonged bickering, but to healthy self-criticism and stronger reorganisation.

**A**LITTLE fuller attention may be given to the general strike in Norway, because it illustrates in a specially valuable way the practical problems which to-day face all wings of the movement. The complete story of the Norwegian general strike has not yet been told in this country, but the main outlines are clear. The wage-reduction campaign in Norway began with the main industry, the seamen, just as, in this country it began with the miners. A reduction of 30 per cent. in wages was demanded, and although the Swedish and Danish seamen had yielded without resistance, the Norwegian seamen stood out. The dispute began in April and covered all seamen by the second week in May. The same problem now faced the Norwegian Trade Unions as had come up in other countries, the problem whether they would be defeated in detail or make a united stand. The Norwegian Trade Union Federation Executive hesitated at first, but on May 9 they called for a general strike on May 26, failing satisfaction of the seamen's demands. On May 26, the seamen's demands not having been satisfied, the general strike took place, involving 150,000 workers (the

total population of Norway is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  millions) and covering all trades except workers in public services. So far, so good. The Norwegian movement had shown itself in advance of other movements. But once the general strike had begun, weakness in its conduct appeared. On June 2 the Federation put forward a programme of demands which seem thoroughly unsatisfactory in relation to the strike. The demands covered (i.) the appointment of a special Conciliator in the shipping strike; (ii.) the control of industry, on which a memorandum was presented couched in vague and general terms (reprinted on page 88); and (iii.) a State grant of 50 million kroner for the relief of unemployment. The Government took the opportunity, and conceded the first and third demands; and on June 8 the general strike was called off. The seamen's strike continued. It is not surprising to learn that the result of the general strike has led to heated controversy within the Norwegian movement.

**I**N its own special form Russia is undergoing no less of a process of self-examination and new direction. Whether the Russian Revolution has "failed," as we are told, is quite another matter. These reports might be more convincing if they did not come with such unanimity from just those journals which have always been wrong about Russia, from Tsarism to Kerensky and from Kerensky to Lenin. It is clear that the "failure" of Communism in Russia exists only in the eyes of those who imagined that Communism had been set up in Russia—a view never held by the Russian Communists themselves, as a cursory inspection of their writings would reveal. In the view of the Russian Communists it would be said that the Soviet Revolution has always represented the setting up of a working-class state or "proletarian dictatorship," and not of a Communist society. The full realisation of a Communist society in Russia depends, not only on further internal economic development, but on the co-operation of the international working-class in other countries. Until then, the maintenance of power must necessarily be at the cost of concessions until the time is ripe for a further advance. But if these concessions leave the maintenance of power intact, then their object is gained. This would appear to be the line of argument behind Lenin's new pamphlet on the Agricultural Tax which we

print in the present number in order that our readers may be in possession of an authoritative statement on the new economic policy.

IT is not only in Europe that Labour is being driven on to the defensive. The real centre of the capitalists' offensive is America. The concerted attack on Trade Union organisation and standards has reached a pitch in the United States of America not yet equalled here. Side by side with the successful wage-reduction campaign of the last three months (signalised in the United States Steel Corporation's cut of twenty per cent. at one stroke for all workers last May, the Standard Oil cut of ten per cent. following on a previous ten per cent. earlier in the year, the Railway Labour Board's decision of June 1 for a twelve per cent. reduction, and a successful forcing of a fifteen per cent. reduction on the seamen), the employers have been delivering a direct attack on Trade Union organisation itself. The great steel companies, not satisfied with smashing Trade Unionism within their own industry, have been, according to their own statements, developing this into a national policy by refusing to supply steel to contractors who work on the Union shop basis. In West Virginia the miners, originally locked out in May, 1920, for attempting to organise, have, after a protracted struggle under terrible conditions, been placed under martial law by President Harding. On every side the law is being invoked in favour of the capitalist offensive. Injunctions have been served on Unions for the most ordinary Trade Union activities. Union officials have been sentenced to imprisonment in Indianapolis for causing by a strike the prevention of an employer from fulfilling a contract. Tramwaymen's Union officials have been sentenced to imprisonment in Denver, Colorado, for refusing to obey a Court order to call off a strike. The United States Supreme Court has declared the refusal to handle non-Union goods illegal. In every district and industry the campaign for the "open shop" (which is only a euphemism for the non-Union shop) is being pushed with all the tremendous political and economic power of American capitalist organisation. It is not too much to say that on the issue of this struggle of the "open shop" in America depends the future of Labour in the Western World.



# “BLACK FRIDAY” AND AFTER

By G. D. H. COLE

“BLACK FRIDAY” will be long remembered in the British Labour movement, not merely as the day on which the big guns of the Triple Alliance failed to go off, but as the day on which with startling clearness the weakness and pitiful inadequacy of the British Labour movement stood suddenly revealed. The Triple Alliance had often failed before—above all, in the railway strike of 1919, throughout the events which followed the Coal Commission, and in the mining dispute of 1920. But, while these failures were discouraging enough, and led men to reflect on the futility of a weapon which those in charge of it lack the courage to use, they caused no such sudden awakening to a sense of the truth as “Black Friday.” If the leaders of the railwaymen and transport workers had, from the first, refused to make common cause with the miners, that would have been bad enough; but it would have proved no more, and probably produced no greater psychological effect, than the failure of the previous year. The really crucial fact about “Black Friday” was not that the railwaymen’s and transport workers’ leaders refused to declare a strike, but that, having repeatedly and most explicitly promised to do so, they climbed down at the last moment and handed the miners over to what seemed certain defeat by the Government and the coalowners.

The reason for this horrible collapse is not difficult to discover. A great deal—probably for the most part justified—has been said about the attitude of certain leaders whose part in causing the collapse is not denied. But these leaders would have been impotent if the main body of the three Executives

concerned had not been in a condition to listen to their advice. These followers—themselves leaders in a secondary sense—share the responsibility of the leaders who advised them to call off the strike. We cannot fall back on the convenient theory that a few leaders alone were wicked, while the hearts and wits of all the others were in the right place. There was present, among the Executive members who made their momentous decision at Unity House, an unaccredited delegate, who cast his vote against the vote of loyalty and good sense. And that delegate's name was Panic.

From the first there were influences working against the strike. There were leaders who were not prepared to take any risks in the cause of Labour, and had even, perhaps, made up their mind that the defeat of the miners was economically unavoidable. And there was a section of the "rank and file," apathetic, without that profound loyalty born of the long experience of union which the miners, more than any other section of Trade Unionists, possess, fearful of the consequences of striking even before the military preparations of the Government became apparent, and still more fearful when the extent of these preparations became known. But it is most improbable that these elements could have carried the day had the question of action come earlier to a positive issue. Each respite, each postponement of the strike ultimatum, helped to strengthen these elements, and made less certain the success of the strike had it been declared.

Nevertheless, although the delays had worsened the position and caused some wavering among the "rank and file" of the Unions, it was not this wavering that caused the strike to be cancelled. After a good deal of inquiry among the men actually affected, I feel fairly sure that, even on that fatal Friday, quite enough men would have come out to paralyse nearly the whole of the vital railway and transport services. The trouble was that the influences which reacted upon the "rank and file" to some extent, reacted far more seriously

upon the chosen leaders who made up the Executives of the three Trade Unions concerned. Every rumour of possible defections here or there was by them magnified a hundred-fold. Panic-stricken themselves at the Government's preparations, and at the impossibility of prophesying at what point a strike such as they had contemplated could be made to stop short, they transferred in imagination to their followers all the fears which they themselves experienced. When their most popular orators addressed them as to the "full sense of responsibility" which they ought to feel, they became convinced that such a burden would be unbearable by their followers. The leaders who deliberately set out, from whatever motive, to get the strike notices cancelled, told their Executives ghost stories, and the Executive members most obligingly "got the creeps."

The result was a panic stampede. If we were to judge the British Labour movement by the last few hours of the Triple Alliance proceedings that Friday, it would not be worth while to go on with the Labour movement at all. The citadel of Capitalism will not fall at a blast of trumpets or the sound of a big voice; it will fall only to sustained and courageous assaults, in which many casualties are bound to occur. As long as Labour is led by men who are determined not to be in the casualty lists, Capitalism is safe from its assaults.

But how far can we judge the Labour movement by the body of men who failed so egregiously at Unity House that day? So far as one knows them from other actions, they were a fair, average sample of the stuff of which the movement is made. The Transport Workers, indeed, who showed up worst, were mainly permanent Trade Union officials; but the Executives of both the National Union of Railwaymen and the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers consisted of men who actually worked at their trades, and had, for the most part, won their way to the front by work done for the Labour movement in their own particular districts. Tested either by intelligence or by actual work done, they

would obviously be above the average of the rank and file. And yet they, as well as the ageing full-time officials of the Transport Workers, failed so signally as to draw upon Labour the triumphant contempt of the capitalist Press.

Everyone knows that the psychology of a conference is a very different thing from that of a mass meeting. The mass meeting is short and sharp, and easily excited by any appropriate stimulus. The conference may at times acquire for an hour or so the temper of a mass meeting; but, if it is prolonged from day to day, it speedily becomes listless, unexcitable, prone to take the course that demands least effort. Even if it has made up its mind, a few persistent men, given time, can wear it down and persuade it to abandon its high resolves, unless a powerful stimulus can be applied again and again. This is what happened to the Triple Alliance. Its resolve, reluctantly made even at the first, was gradually worn down. Postponement after postponement of the hour of action undermined the faith that would have prevailed against difficulties and doubts. The most powerful advocates had made up their minds to prevent the strike; and they knew how to practise upon the tiring conference the arts of enervation. At the earlier sittings, any proposal not to strike would have been certainly defeated by the combined power of shame and solidarity. The advocates of defeat, therefore, waited for their time. They secured postponement, hoping most that they would be able to bluff the Government with a mere threat of action, but hoping too that, if bluff failed, it would be possible at a later stage to cancel the strike order.

Two things could have helped the combined Executives to stand up against the influences which were working to bring the strike threat to nothing; but both these influences were absent, or not present in a sufficient degree. First, close contact between the Executive members and their own rank and file would have been of help; but the leaders were in London, isolated day after day from their members, and getting their reports on the state of feeling throughout the

country largely from the lying tales printed in newspapers intent on causing the defeat of the workers. Mass meetings in the industrial districts would have helped to undo the work of defeatism accomplished at Unity House.

But even more important in its effect would have been the possession, even by a few of these chosen leaders of the workers, of any clear conception of aim or method. The fundamental trouble at Unity House was that even those who knew that they were acting wrongly in cancelling the strike order had very little idea what it was that they were seeking, or how it was to be accomplished. They were, doubtless, most of them, in a sense, Socialists, and had given their votes for Socialist resolutions again and again; but they had never squared up to the problems of method which the Socialist aim really involves, or understood the nature of the struggle to which any real conflict with Capitalism would necessarily lead. They had watched their Unions growing rapidly in membership during the war; and every addition had given them an increased sense of power and importance. But they had never understood that this increased power would be real only in proportion as it brought increased courage and devotion to the cause, and that, without these things, it might well become a positive danger and a source of defeat.

From 1914 to 1920 the Unions were top-dogs, in so far as they chose to use their power. The Union leaders swaggered and bragged a good deal; but during this period of opportunity, even when the war was over, they accomplished little. They did not perceive that, while it was easy enough to be a loyal Trade Unionist when trade was good and labour scarce, it would be hard when the period of artificial prosperity came to an end, and was replaced by a period of depression equally born of war conditions. They made plans for a gradual advance in the industrial and social status of Labour, all unconscious that a change was speedily coming in the material situation to sweep all the gains of the war period away, and to

force the workers back into a more degraded condition than ever. And they failed to understand that their chance of maintaining their position, in face of adverse circumstances, rested mainly on the *morale* of their members.

These leaders, more from lack of foresight and imagination than from any other cause, took things easy, or busied themselves with small affairs, when they should have been straining every nerve to prepare for the coming struggle. The result was that the slump towards the end of 1920 took them altogether unprepared. As they had no policy for taking advantage of favourable conditions, they had none for bearing up against unfavourable conditions. And, conscious of their own helplessness and lack of ideas for dealing with the situation, and of the panic which was laying hold of them, they attributed helplessness and panic to the rank and file in an even higher degree.

Although soldiers or officers who show cowardice in the field are shot or degraded, it is of little use in the Labour movement to waste time in recrimination. We need a new spirit in our movement, and, in order to get it, we shall have to adopt new methods. It is not that most of the men at Unity House were worse than other men, or unfit material even for leadership, but that they were forced by a situation which need not have been, but was, too big for them, because they had never faced, or even realised, the necessity of preparing for it.

Leaders in the political Labour movement have been used, recently, to account for the paucity of the results secured by Labour in Parliament by pointing to the number of nominees of the Federation of British Industries, the "Big Five" of Banking, and other great capitalist interests who sit there, and use their votes to keep the workers down. But what we have to realise is not merely that the capitalist few can outvote the propertyless many, but that these few will stick at nothing in order to preserve their powers and prerogatives. The threatened violence of the Government in face of the miners'

lock-out and the sympathetic strike-threat of the Triple Alliance is only a very faint foreshadowing of what may be expected. For the miners were waging a purely defensive struggle, in which they had already indicated their willingness to make big concessions in the hope of a settlement; and the proposed action of the railwaymen and transport workers was equally defensive. It will be a very different matter when the Trade Unions attempt to use their big potential power for purposes of definite aggression against Capitalism. Then there will be scant chance for those who are scared by the mobilisation of a few Reservists and the formation of a Defence Force.

All the indications seem to point to the conclusion that, for some years, British Labour, having lost its opportunities for successful aggression in 1919 and 1920, will be kept definitely on the defensive. It will need all its skill, during this time, to keep its organisation together, and to prevent a positive collapse. But this adversity is not altogether a bad thing; for it affords an opportunity which can be used, not, indeed, for establishing Socialism, but for conscious preparation for the next time. The collapse of "Black Friday," and the comparative calm with which it has been received, indicate that neither in leadership nor in vigilance among the rank and file is the British Labour movement yet ready for the assumption of power, or for the critical struggle with the forces of Capitalism. The miners have, indeed, shown a magnificent example of rank and file solidarity and power of concerted resistance to greatly superior forces; but how many Unions possess the staying power of the Miners' Federation, or have devised forms of organisation so amenable to effective control by the public opinion of their members? Neither the N.U.R. nor the Transport Workers' Federation could emerge successfully from such an ordeal as the miners have come through, with their resources exhausted indeed, but with their Trade Unionism unimpaired.

We must look forward to a period of preparation; and the

chances of success when the next opportunity presents itself will depend on the use to which this period is put. Our business is to make a sufficiently large proportion of Trade Union members understand fully what they are up against, and what demands are bound to be made upon them in the war against Capitalism. It is essential during the formative period, to keep the Trade Union organisations intact, and for all to work within them, however dissatisfied many may be with their leadership, stamina, class-consciousness, or forms of organisation. We want, not to isolate the few who understand the magnitude of the struggle and of its demands from the many who do not yet understand, but to work upon the many in such a way that understanding will come to them.

This demands real working-class education—not merely classes and lectures, but the turning of every possible Trade Union Branch, Trades Council, Shop Stewards' Committee, or other Labour body, into a centre of Socialist planning and discussion—a place in which the strategy of the next phases of the struggle is being worked out by the rank and file themselves. Not only has "faint heart never won fair wages"; still less can faint heart face the arduous struggle which is necessary if the workers are to win control. Fear and panic arise mainly from contact with the unknown and the unforeseen. It was largely because the Triple Alliance Executive had failed to realise that Triple Alliance action would inevitably provoke a huge conflict with the Government that the Triple Alliance itself failed to act. It is necessary to bring home to the minds of the workers both the magnitude of the resistance which they will encounter, and the strength which their own movement is capable of exercising against that resistance. We must get more men to see the struggle as a conflict of courage, in which faith in the workers will be the deciding factor.

The workers will never destroy Capitalism (though Capitalism may, perhaps, destroy itself) until they realise that success depends on their ability and preparedness to take the place of Capitalism, and to substitute workers' control for



capitalist control throughout the whole sphere of industry and politics. This lesson the great majority of the present leaders have neither taught nor learned. They work without a philosophy, defending here an established right, aiming there at accomplishing a piecemeal change. But, viewed in relation to these sectional issues, the means needed to make success possible seem often too drastic. It seems absurd to paralyse industry over a mere sectional dispute.

And so it is absurd, unless the issues in the sectional dispute bear, in the minds of those who have to bear the struggle, a conscious relation to a larger purpose of fundamental social transformation. It is not worth while to use “revolutionary” means for purely reformist ends, although it is clear that, under present conditions, reforms can only be secured, if at all, by revolutionary means. The moral lies, not in a useless contraction of means to fit the smallness of the aims; for reformist means have already been found wanting. It lies in an expansion of aim which will make the means worth while. That, and the truth about the inevitable severity of the struggle, is the truth that must be learned during the coming period of preparation. And, if “Black Friday” helps to make the lesson easier, it will not, disastrous as it was, have been unmixed evil for British Labour.

# THE MEANING OF THE AGRICULTURAL TAX

By N. LENIN

**T**HE question of the Agricultural Tax at the present moment is attracting considerable attention and is the subject of considerable discussion. This is quite understandable, for it is indeed one of the most important questions of policy under the present conditions.

It will be all the more useful, therefore, to attempt to approach this question, not from its "everyday aspect," but from the point of view of principle; in other words, to examine the background upon which we are sketching the plan of the definite, practical measures of policy of the present day.

In order to make this attempt, I will quote from one of my pamphlets published in 1918.

The polemic is now unnecessary, and I leave it out, but I retain what relates to the discussion of "State Capitalism" and to the basic elements of the economics of the present period of transition from Capitalism to Socialism.

This is what I wrote:

## *The Present Economic Position of Russia*

" . . . State Capitalism would be a step in advance in the present state of affairs of our Soviet Republic. If, for example, State Capitalism could establish itself here during the next six months, it would be an excellent thing and a sure guarantee that within a year Socialism will have established itself and become invincible."

I can imagine the noble indignation with which some will scorn these words. What! The transition to *Capitalism* in

a Soviet Socialist Republic a step in advance? . . . . Is this not a betrayal of Socialism? It is precisely with this point that one must deal in detail.

There is not a single person, it seems to me, who, examining the economics of Russia, would deny their transitional character. There is not a Communist, it seems to me, who would deny that the expression Socialist Soviet Republic means the determination of the Soviet Power to realise the transition to Socialism, and does not by any means signify that the present economic order is regarded as Socialistic. What is the meaning of the word—transition? Does it mean, when applied to economics, that in the present system there are elements “partly capitalist and partly Socialist”? Everybody will realise that this is so, but not everybody who realises this thinks of the numerous kinds of elements, of the various socio-economic strata, which we have in Russia. And this is the very crux of the question.

Let us enumerate these elements :

1. Patriarchal, i.e., to a large degree primitive, peasant production.
2. Small commodity production. (This includes the majority of peasants who sell corn.)
3. Private Capitalism.
4. State Capitalism.
5. Socialism.

Russia is so large and so varied that all these varying types of socio-economic strata are interlayered in it. The peculiarity of the position lies precisely in this fact.

The question is, which is the predominating element? It is clear that in a petty peasant environment nothing but petty bourgeois ideas can prevail. The majority—and the vast majority at that—of the peasants are small-commodity producers. Our outer shell of State Capitalism (corn monopoly, control of manufactures, merchants and bourgeois co-operative societies) is broken, first in one place and then in another, by *speculators*, and the chief article of speculation is *corn*.

The main struggle develops precisely in this sphere. Between whom is this struggle conducted? Is it between the fourth and the fifth elements in the order in which I have enumerated them above? Certainly not. It is not a struggle between State Capitalism and Socialism, but a struggle of the petty bourgeoisie plus private Capitalism fighting against State Capitalism and Socialism. The petty bourgeoisie resists every form of State interference and control, no matter whether it is State Capitalism or State Socialism. This is an absolutely indisputable fact, and the failure to understand it lies at the root of quite a number of economic errors.

The speculator is our chief enemy from within, and works against every form of Soviet economic policy. Even if it was excusable for the French, 125 years ago, to attempt to rid themselves of speculation by executing a small number of notorious individuals, we know only too well that the economic cause of speculation lies in small Capitalism and private industrial enterprise, and that every tiny capitalist is an agent of the latter.

We know that the million tentacles of petty bourgeoisism grasp, in many places, certain sections of the workers themselves.

Those who do not see this reveal by their blindness their servitude to the petty bourgeois prejudices.

State Capitalism is incomparably higher *economically* than our present economic system—that is one point; and secondly, there is nothing in it that is terrible for the Soviet Government, for the Soviet State is a State which guarantees power to the workers and the poor.

In order to make this question clear, I will, first of all, quote a concrete example of State Capitalism. Everybody will know this example: Germany. Here we have “the last word” in modern, large capitalist technique and systematic organisation subordinated to *junker-bourgeois imperialism*. In place of the military, junker, bourgeois imperialist State put another State, a State of another social type, a State with a different class content, a Soviet, i.e., a

proletarian State, and you will get the sum of conditions which gives Socialism.

Socialism is impossible without large capitalist technique constructed according to the last word in science, without systematic State organisation subjecting millions of people to the strict observation of a uniform standard of production and distribution of products. We Marxists have always said this, and it is hardly worth wasting even two seconds in arguing this point with people who do not understand it, like Anarchists and the greater part of the Social Revolutionaries.

Moreover, Socialism is impossible without the domination of the proletariat in the State; this is also pure A B C. History (which nobody except the leading Menshevik dullards expected would smoothly, peacefully, simply and easily produce "complete Socialism") has proceeded in such a peculiar fashion that, in 1918, it gave birth to two separated halves of Socialism, like two chickens born within the same shell of international imperialism. Germany and Russia in 1918 embodied in themselves, on the one hand the most obviously materially realised economic, industrial and social conditions, and on the other hand the political conditions for Socialism.

A victorious proletarian revolution in Germany would immediately and with tremendous ease smash the whole shell of imperialism (unfortunately constructed of the finest steel and therefore unbreakable by any kind of "chicken"), and would for certain bring about a victory of world Socialism without, or with very little, difficulty, granting of course, that "difficult" is understood not in a narrow sense, but from a universal-historical point of view.

If the revolution in Germany is delayed our task becomes clear, to learn State Capitalism from the Germans, and to exert all our efforts to acquire it. We must not spare any dictatorial methods in hastening the Westernisation of barbarous Russia, and stick at no barbarous measures to combat barbarism.

At the present moment in Russia it is precisely petty bourgeois Capitalism that predominates, from which *a single road, through the same intervening stations called national accounting and control* of production and distribution, leads both to State Capitalism and to Socialism. Those who do not understand this commit an unpardonable error, and either do not see facts, cannot look beyond the surface, or limit themselves to the abstract contradictions between Capitalism and Socialism, and do not enter into the concrete forms and stages of the period through which we are now passing.

It is just this theoretical mistake which has led astray the best members of the *Novaja Jéisin* and *Vpered* groups, while the worst and centre have joined the rearguard of the bourgeoisie. Even the best of them did not comprehend what Socialist teachers have again and again pointed out; the "long birth-travail" of the new society, which, in its turn, would at first be only an abstraction, and would only come into the fullness of life after many and various practical attempts to set up this or that form of Socialist Government had been made.

It is precisely because it is impossible to advance from the present economic position of Russia without passing through *what is common* to both State Capitalism and Socialism—national accounting and control—that to frighten others and oneself by talking about "evolving towards State Capitalism" is absolute theoretical stupidity. It means to allow one's mind to stray from the actual path of evolution. In practice this is equal to *dragging us back* to small private Capitalism.

In order to convince the reader that my "high" valuation of State Capitalism is not made here for the first time, but was made by me previous to the Bolsheviks taking power, I will quote the following from my pamphlet *A Threatening Catastrophe and How to Combat It*, which was written in September, 1917:

"In place of a junker capitalist Government, try and put

a revolutionary democratic Government, i.e., a Government that will in a revolutionary manner destroy all privileges and not fear to employ revolutionary methods in order to realise the most complete democracy. You will then see that State Monopolist Capitalism under a really revolutionary Government will inevitably mean a step towards Socialism.

“ . . . For Socialism is nothing else than an immediate step forward from State capitalist monopoly.

“ . . . State Monopolist Capitalism is the most complete material preparation for Socialism, it is the ‘ porch ’ to it; it is one of the steps in the ladder of history between which and the step called Socialism there is no intervening step ” (pp. 27-38).

The reader will observe that this was written in the period of Kerensky, that I speak here *not* of the dictatorship of the proletariat, *not* of a Socialist State, but of “ revolutionary democracy.” Surely it is clear, therefore, that *the higher* we raise ourselves on this political step, *the nearer* do we approach to a Soviet Socialist State and to the dictatorship of the proletariat, and *the less* imperative is it for us to fear “ State Socialism.” Surely it is clear that in the *material*, economic, industrial sense, we have not yet reached the “ porch ” of Socialism, and there is no other way of entering Socialism except through this as yet unreached “ porch.”

There is a great outcry from the Left Social Revolutionaries against the so-called policy of “ compromise ” of the “ Right-Wing Bolsheviki.” These men do not know how to interpret the history and evolution of the revolutionary movement and what it has to teach us in these matters; they do not clearly understand what it is exactly that is prejudicial in any policy of compromise.

Kerensky’s policy of compromise meant handing over the administrative power to the imperialistic bourgeoisie, and the problem of power is the root problem of all revolutions. Now that the Government is firmly in the hands of one party—the Proletarian Party—to speak of compromise, when there can be no question of sharing power or going

back upon the dictatorship of the proletariat in favour of the bourgeoisie, is the mere empty repetition of senseless parrot-cries. To designate our policy as "a compromise with the bourgeoisie" when we, as the Government of the State, are endeavouring to obtain in our employ the most highly educated elements of the capitalist regime, to help us against the threatening chaos of small ownership, shows an entire ignorance of the Socialist policy of reconstruction.

In the above-quoted arguments of 1918, there are a number of errors in connection with periods. Periods prove to be much longer than was then assumed. This is not to be wondered at, but the basic elements of our economic life have remained as they were then. The peasant "poor" (proletariat and semi-proletarians) in large numbers have become converted into middle-class peasants. Out of this the small private ownership and petty bourgeois movements have increased; meanwhile, the civil war of 1919-1920 extremely intensified the ruin of the country and retarded the re-establishment of its productive forces. To this must be added the bad harvest of 1920, the lack of fodder, and the death rate among cattle, which still further retarded the re-establishment of transport and industry in that the transport of our chief kind of fuel, wood, was carried on by the peasants' horses. As a result conditions in the spring of 1921 were such that it was absolutely essential to adopt the most determined exceptional measures for the improvement of the conditions of the peasantry and for raising its productivity.

Why improve the conditions of the peasantry and not those of the workers?

Because for the improvement of the position of the workers it is necessary to have bread and fuel. The "hold-up" which exists at the present moment in national industry in the largest measure is due to this, and there is no other means of increasing productivity, of increasing the stocks of corn and fuel, except by improving the position of the peasantry and increasing its productivity. It is necessary to



commence with the peasantry. He who does not understand this, he who is inclined to regard this as showing preference to the peasantry, and a "departure" of the same kind as a departure on our part from the dictatorship of the proletariat would be, has simply failed to study the subject, and simply gives himself up to phrase-mongering.

Thus, the first thing that is necessary is immediate and serious measures for raising the productive power of the peasantry. This is impossible, without seriously altering our food policy; and the substitution of the food requisitions by an agricultural tax, connected with at least Free local Trade after the tax has been paid, is such an alteration.

What is the essence of the substitution of the requisition by the Agricultural Tax?

The Agricultural Tax is a form of transition from the peculiar "military Communism" made necessary by extreme necessity, ruin and war, for the purpose of a proper Socialistic exchange of products. "Military Communism" in its turn is one of the forms of the transition from Socialism, with peculiarities created by the predominance of a small peasantry in the population, to Communism.

The peculiarity of "military Communism" lay in that we actually took from the peasantry his surplus of produce and sometimes a part of that which was absolutely necessary for himself, for the purpose of maintaining the army and the workers. Mostly we took the produce on loan for paper money. There was no other way by which we could defeat the landlord and capitalist in a ruined small-peasant country. The fact that we came out victorious (in spite of the support given to our exploiters by the most powerful States in the world) proves something more than the wonderful heroism which the workers and peasants are able to reveal for the sake of their emancipation. It proves also what lackeys of the bourgeoisie were the Mensheviks, the Social Revolutionists, the Kautsky and Co., when they *blamed us* for this "military Communism." This indeed should be placed to our credit.

It is not less necessary however to know the real extent of the service which we rendered by establishing "military Communism." "Military Communism" was made necessary by the war and the state of ruin. It did not and could not meet the problems of proletarian policy. It was a temporary measure. The correct policy of the proletariat when carrying out its dictatorship in a small-peasant country is to exchange for corn the products of industry which are necessary to the peasantry. Only such a policy can satisfy the requirements of the proletariat; only such a policy can strengthen the foundation of Communism and lead to its complete victory.

The Agricultural Tax is a transition to this policy. We are still in that state of ruin, still crushed by the burden of war (which raged yesterday and which, owing to the greed and anger of the capitalist, may break out again to-morrow), and we cannot give to the peasant sufficient products of industry in exchange for *all* the corn we need. Knowing this, we introduce the Agricultural Tax, that is, we take the minimum quantity of corn necessary for the arming of the workers, in the form of a tax, and the remainder we will exchange for the products of industry.

In this connection we must also bear in mind that our poverty and ruin is such that we cannot *immediately* establish large State Socialist Factory Production. For this purpose it is necessary to have large stocks of corn and fuel in the great industrial centres, and to replace the worn-out machinery by new machinery. Experience has convinced us that this cannot be done all at once, and we know that after the destruction caused by the imperialist war, even the richest and most advanced countries can solve this problem only during the course of a rather long period of time. This means that it is necessary to a certain extent to assist the re-establishment of *small industry*, which does not require machinery, which does not require large Government stocks of raw material, fuel and food, and which can immediately give certain assistance to agriculture and raise its productivity.

What is the result of all this? Fundamentally, we get a certain amount (if only local) of Free Trade, a revival of the petty bourgeoisie and Capitalism. This is undoubted, and to close one's eyes to it would be ridiculous.

We are asked—Is this necessary? Can this be justified? Is it not dangerous?

These questions are asked by many, and in most cases they only reveal the naïveté (expressing oneself politely) of those who ask them.

Refer to the manner in which in May, 1918, I defined the economic elements (component parts) of the various socio-economic strata. It is impossible to dispute the existence of these five rungs or component parts of these five strata, from the patriarchal and the semi-primitive. It is most evident that in a small-peasant country the small-peasant strata, that is, the partly patriarchal and partly petty bourgeois, will predominate. The development of small industry when we have exchange, means the development of petty-bourgeois capitalist industry. This is an indisputable truth, an elementary truth of political economy, confirmed by the everyday experience and observation of even the ordinary man in the street.

What policy can the Socialist proletariat conduct in the face of such economic circumstances? The most desirable and most "correct" policy would be to give the small peasant *all* the products of industry, of the large Socialist factories, that the peasant requires, in exchange for his corn and raw materials. This is what we have commenced to do, but we are far from being able to give all the necessary products, and we shall not be able to do this for a long time, at least until we have finished the work of electrifying the country.

What, then, is left for us to do? We can either completely prohibit and prevent the development of private non-State exchange, i.e., commerce, i.e., Capitalism, which is inevitable with the existence of millions of small producers. Such a policy would be stupid and suicidal for the party

which attempted to carry it out. It would be stupid because it is economically impossible. It would be suicidal because the party that attempted to carry it out would inevitably collapse. It is useless trying to conceal the sin which some Communists "in thought, in word, and in deed" have fallen into on this policy. We will attempt to rectify this error. It is essential that we rectify this error or else it will go hard with us.

Or (and this is the only *possible* and sensible policy) we can refrain from prohibiting and preventing the development of Capitalism and strive to direct it in the path of *State Capitalism*. This is economically possible, for *State Capitalism* exists in one or another form and to one or another extent everywhere where there are elements of Free Trade and Capitalism in general.

Is it possible to combine and to have side by side a Soviet State, the dictatorship of the proletariat and *State Capitalism*?

The whole question, theoretically and practically, lies in finding the correct means of properly guiding the inevitable (to a certain extent and for a certain time) development of Capitalism along the path of *State Capitalism*, and what conditions to establish and how to secure in the near future the conversion of *State Capitalism* into Socialism.

In order to approach a solution of this question, it is necessary to have as clear an idea as possible as to what *State Capitalism* will represent in practice within our Soviet system, within the framework of our Soviet State.

One of the simplest cases or examples of how the Soviet Government guides the development of Capitalism along the path of *State Capitalism*, of how it "plants" *State Capitalism*, is concessions. Everybody now agrees that concessions are necessary, but not everybody fully appreciates the significance of concessions. What are concessions in a Soviet system from the point of view of socio-economic strata and their inter-relations? They are a treaty, a block and alliance of the Soviet, i.e., the proletarian, State with

State Capitalism, against small private ownership (patriarchal and petty bourgeois). A concessionaire is a capitalist. He conducts capitalist business for the sake of profits. He agrees to make a treaty with a proletarian Government in order to receive extra profits, or for the sake of securing such raw materials as he otherwise would not be able, or would find it very difficult, to secure. The Soviet Government secures the advantage in the form of the development of productive forces, and an increase in the quantity of products available immediately or within a short period. We have, say, hundreds of enterprises, mines, forests, etc.; we cannot develop them all, we have not enough machinery, food, or transport. For the same reasons we will develop badly the remaining sections. As a consequence of the bad or insufficient development of large undertakings we get the strengthening of this small private ownership movement with all its consequences: the deterioration of suburban (and later of all) agriculture, frittering away of its productive forces, decline of confidence in the Soviet Government, speculation, and mass and petty (the most dangerous) speculation. In "planting" State Capitalism in the form of concessions, the Soviet Government strengthens large production against small production, the advanced against the backward, machine production against hand production, it increases the quantity of products of large industry in its hands and strengthens the State regulation of economic relations as a counter-balance to the petty bourgeois anarchic relations. The moderate and cautious introduction of a policy of concessions (to a certain and not very great extent) will rapidly improve the state of industry and the position of the workers and peasants—of course, at the price of a certain sacrifice, the surrender to the capitalists of tens of millions of poods of most valuable products. The definition of the extent and the conditions under which concessions are advantageous to us and not dangerous for us, depends upon the relation of forces, is determined by struggle, for concessions are also a form of struggle, a continuation of a class struggle of another form,

and under no circumstances a substitution of the class war by class peace. Practice will show what the methods of this struggle are to be. State Capitalism in the form of concessions in comparison with other forms of State Capitalism within a Soviet system, is the most simple, the clearest, and the most clear-cut. We have here a direct formal written treaty with the most cultured, most advanced West European countries. We know exactly our losses and our gains, our rights and obligations. We know exactly the date on which we give the concessions and know the conditions of buying out on the expiration of a concession, if there is such a buying-out clause in the treaty. We pay a certain "tribute" to world Capitalism, we as it were "buy out" certain relations and receive immediately a definite measure of consolidation of the position of the Soviet Government, and an improvement in the conditions of our industry. The difficulty in connection with concessions is to think out and weigh up things in concluding a concessions treaty, and later to watch the carrying out of the treaty. No doubt there are many difficulties, and in all probability mistakes will at first be made, but such difficulties are the smallest things in comparison with the other tasks of the social revolution, and particularly in comparison with other forms of development, the introduction, the planting of State Capitalism.

The most important task of all party and Soviet workers in connection with the introduction of the agricultural tax is to adapt the principle that is at the basis of "concessions," to apply a policy similar to the concession or State capitalist policy, to the remaining form of Capitalism—local Free Trade.

Take the co-operative societies. It was not for nothing that the decree on the Agricultural Tax immediately led to a revision of the laws on co-operatives and a certain extension of their "freedom" and their rights. Co-operation is also a form of State Capitalism, but less simple and clear cut, more complicated and therefore creating many practical difficulties

for our Government. The co-operation of small commodity producers (it is of these and of workers' co-operatives, as the predominant and typical form in a small peasant country, that we speak) will inevitably generate petty bourgeois capitalist relations, facilitate their development, and will bring the greatest advantage to the capitalist. Things cannot be otherwise in the face of the predominance of small producers, and the possibility as well as the necessity for exchange. The freedom and right of co-operation under the present conditions in Russia, means the freedom and rights of Capitalism. To close one's eyes to this obvious truth will be stupid or criminal.

But "co-operative" Capitalism in distinction from private Capitalism under a Soviet Government is another aspect of State Capitalism, and in that capacity it is, of course, to a certain extent, useful and advantageous to us. In so far as the Agricultural Tax signifies the freedom to sell the remainder of produce (not taken as tax), it is necessary to exert all our efforts to direct this development of Capitalism—for freedom of trade is the development of Capitalism—along the path of co-operative Capitalism. Co-operative Capitalism is like State Capitalism in that it simplifies control, observation, and the maintenance of treaty relations between the State (the Soviet in this instance) and the capitalists. Co-operation as a form of trade is more advantageous and useful than private trade, not only for the reasons already indicated, but also because it facilitates the organisation of millions of the population and later the whole of the population. This in its turn is a tremendous gain from the point of view of a further transition from State Capitalism to Socialism.

Let us compare concessions with co-operation as a form of State Capitalism. Concessions are based on large machine industry, whereas co-operation is based on small and partly even patriarchal industry. A concession is granted to a single capitalist or a single firm, a syndicate, a cartel or a trust. A co-operative society embraces many thousands, even millions, of small masters. A concession permits of and even

pre-supposes a definite treaty for a definite term, whereas a co-operative society does not permit of definite agreements or definite terms. It is easier to repeal a law on co-operative societies than to break a concession agreement; for the breaking of a concession agreement immediately means the breaking off of economic relations, of the alliance or economic "cohabitation" with Capitalism; whereas the repeal of a law on co-operation, or the repeal of any law for that matter, not only does not break off the actual "cohabitation" of the Soviet Government with the small capitalists, but cannot affect economic relations in general. It is easy to "keep an eye on" the concessionaire, but it is difficult to do so on the co-operator. The transition from concessions to Socialism is the transition from one form of large production to another. The transition from the co-operation of small masters to Socialism is a transition from small production to large production, i.e., to a more complicated form of production. The latter has this compensating feature, however, that in the event of a successful transition, it is capable of tearing out a far deeper and more vital root of the old pre-Socialist and even pre-capitalist relations, of that which puts up the most stubborn resistance to all kinds of "innovations." The policy of concessions in the event of success will give us a few exemplary—in comparison with our own—large undertakings, standing on a level with modern advanced Capitalism; in a few decades these undertakings will come entirely into our possession. The policy of co-operation in the event of success will raise small industry and facilitate, in an indefinite period, its transition to large production on the basis of voluntary combination.

Let us take a third form of State Capitalism. The State invites the capitalist as a merchant and pays him a definite commission for selling State products and for buying the products of small industry. There is a fourth form: the State leases a factory or an industry or a section of forest or land to a capitalist; in this case, the lease agreement is more like a concession agreement. The question is whether we can recognise these types of Capitalism? In order to answer the



question we must remember the component parts of all, without exception, of those various strata of society which I enumerated in my article of May 5, 1918. "We," the vanguard, the advanced detachment of the proletariat, are passing directly to Socialism, but the forward detachments are only a small section of the proletariat, which, in its turn, is only a small section of the whole mass of the population. In order that "we" may successfully solve the problem of our direct transition to Socialism, we must understand what *indirect* paths and methods we must adopt for the transition of *pre-capitalist* relations to Socialism. This is the crux of the question.

Is it possible to realise the direct transition of this state of pre-capitalist relations prevailing in Russia to Socialism? Yes, it is possible to a certain degree, but only on one condition, which we know, thanks to the completion of a tremendous scientific labour. That condition is: electrification. But we know very well that this "one" condition demands at least tens of years of work, and we can only reduce this period by a victory of the proletarian revolution in such countries as England, Germany, and America.

For the years immediately ahead of us, we shall have to think of indirect links capable of facilitating the transition of patriarchy and small industry to Socialism. "We" are still too fond of saying "Capitalism is an evil, Socialism is a blessing," but such an argument is incorrect, because it leaves out of consideration all the existing social economic strata, and takes in only two of them.

Capitalism is an evil in comparison with Socialism, but Capitalism is a blessing in comparison with mediævalism, with small industry, with fettered small producers thrown to the mercy of bureaucracy. To the extent that we are as yet unable to realise the direct transition from small production to Socialism, to that extent is Capitalism to a certain extent inevitable as an elemental product of small production and exchange, and to that extent must we make use of Capitalism (particularly in directing it along the path of State Capitalism)

as an indirect link between small production and Socialism, as a means, a path, a method of raising the productive forces of the country.

Facts have clearly demonstrated that we shall have to defer the reconstruction of large-scale industry, and that it is impossible to carry on industry in separation from agriculture. Therefore we must first tackle the easier problem of re-establishing crafts and small-scale industry, which have been destroyed by the war and blockade.

It must be the main aim of all true workers to get local industry thoroughly going in the country districts, hamlets and villages; no matter on how small a scale. The economic policy of the State must concentrate on this. Any development in local industry is a firm foundation, and a sure step, in the building up of large-scale industry.

Formerly it was an inspector's duty simply to collect the full requisition duties; while the aim of the new Decree is to collect the Agricultural Tax as quickly as possible, and then as much of the surplus commodities as possible by means of barter. The man who collects 75 per cent. of the Agricultural Tax and then 75 per cent. of surplus is doing a better work for the State than a man who collects 100 per cent. of the tax and then only 55 per cent. of surplus commodities.

We shall compare the practical results obtained in various districts, in some of which private capital will be functioning, in others, co-operative societies, and in a few, pure Communist undertakings. The profits obtained by the capitalists will be their payment for instructing us.

This will mean unrestricted trade, in fact Capitalism. The latter will prove beneficial to us, in proportion to the extent that it aids us to combat the dispersion of small-scale industry and to some measure even bureaucracy. Practical experimentation will teach us the best method to adopt. There is nothing really dangerous in this policy for a Proletarian Government, so long as the proletariat fully retains the administrative power, the means of transport and large-scale industry.

# FRANCE AND THE FUTURE

By HENRI BARBUSSE

I AM delighted to take the opportunity given me by the LABOUR MONTHLY to address an English audience. I have often had occasion to meet representatives of the Socialist movement in Britain, and I have always been struck, even where there has been some difference of opinion between us, by the seriousness and sincerity which has characterised their social faith and their practice of that faith. The more I go on, and the more I mingle with that movement—so chaotic still, yet so full of power and promise—which at the present moment is stirring up the old ideas and infusing into them a new and deeper meaning, the more I am convinced that sincerity is the most important civic quality for innovators and for fighters.

Indeed, the Communist movement is nothing else but a manifestation of intellectual and moral sincerity. There are at the present moment 150,000 acknowledged conscious Communists in France. This is not much if one considers that it means only one Communist in 250 Frenchmen; but this minority has on its side a solid body of positive and scientific strength of doctrine and of faith which will insensibly win for it the minds, and thus also the wills, of men. Even supposing the Russian Revolution, that central event of the history of our day, had never come to hasten in an almost miraculous way the upward march of ideas, and to unite theories with reality on one portion of the earth's surface, it was inevitable that the Communist doctrine should take root on every side, for the germ of it is contained in all the Republican and Socialist doctrines which have preceded it. This evident fact has never been sufficiently emphasised. Communism is not an aspect of Socialism; it is its very essence, it is an expression of it more adequate

than all those that have been attempted hitherto, those great truths to which one used to accord a more or less vague adoration without complete knowledge, and which one caught glimpses of rather than saw. Nothing is more mistaken than to present Communism as a doctrine produced by circumstances in the minds of the Germans and the Russians—in the one case, by a sort of abstract mathematics; in the other, as a response to the compulsion of events which they were claiming to guide. It cannot too often be repeated that the coming of the Communist idea is a logical and necessary outcome of the evolution of the revolutionary theory of those who have thrown themselves against the established order. It is the thought-out and orderly alternative to that existing system which only imposes itself by means of violence in the material world and of lies and imposture in the moral world. It is for this reason that the split at the Congress of Tours was as logical as it was necessary. The fact was that the Party was paralysed by a large number of elements which never grasped the full gravity and the wider implications of the cause they were representing. They refused to give to words their real meaning, and scarcely differed from the adherents of those old Republican, Radical or Radical-Socialist parties which had—or, at any rate, once had—the merit of disentangling the noble ideal of opposition from a setting that was almost entirely conservative.

The subsequent attitude of the dissident Socialists in France, after the split had purged the Party of them, has only confirmed the advantage gained by the casting off of these inconsistent and superficial comrades of yesterday. They now range themselves against Communism on the most orthodox capitalist lines. They attack it with the weapons employed by those who have always been the open enemies of working-class emancipation. They are doing the work of reformists; and this means the work of conservatives and (despite all their words and professions) of reactionaries.

There is at the present moment no greater or more imminent danger for the cause of humanity than that with which the reformists beset the path of the sincere champions of change; for this danger takes on every shape and form. We shall doubtless see little by little, by a sort of deceptive evolution, the bourgeoisie developing a liberal character and setting themselves up as the disinterested friends and enlightened defenders of the masses of the people in proportion as the Governments of the old world come to realise that they will never make an end of a just idea by open violence, and that in trying, as they are doing, to destroy in this way a revolutionary movement based on reason, they are only causing a momentary and insignificant inconvenience to its propaganda and development, while at the same time they are helping enormously to spread its propaganda in the ranks of those outside the political parties. The new Governmental Socialism or neo-Capitalism which will undoubtedly come next in historical succession to the present regime, will exhaust all its moral force (the need of a moral *façade* is the one real evidence of the general progress of ideas) in upholding the following principle: that every improvement desired in the condition of the working class can be realised by the democratic machinery which rules us to-day.

The extreme and intransigent attitude of the Communist Party is pure wisdom and shows deep knowledge of practical realities. The workers and their leaders have too long been misled by the bog of Unity. Unity is nothing but an empty word if it consists in collecting and holding together, by means of obscure and half-expressed terms, parties fundamentally opposed to each other and who, as soon as they are faced with the need for action, come out in their true colours and break away, only to end by joining the obstinate and strangely heterogeneous ranks of the enemies of true progress.

All those who are working to save humanity from exploitation and ill-treatment by the old forces of privilege are beginning to perceive this danger. Half-reforms and

specious concessions which serve so well as a basis for fine speeches and are just bold enough to offer an excuse for high-sounding words, do our cause more harm than good. The Moscow militant party were right in fighting the reformist tendency with a determination that some thought exaggerated, and in removing the evil by a surgical operation; and the organisation of the Communist Party will not reach its full logical proportions until one can remove from the popular mind the sophism according to which a new order worthy of the name, capable of restoring sovereignty to all the workers, of destroying the unhealthy religion of nationalism and of establishing the suppression of classes and the equality of all citizens in regard to work, education and the management of public affairs, could ever grow out of the system by which we are still governed.

The Confédération Générale du Travail is still obsessed with this dangerous and fatal idea. It comes chiefly from the influence on the Confédération of certain leaders of whom the best one can say is that their principles were vague and confused, and who preserved a tendency which would be fatal to the liberation of the working classes if it continued; I mean the idea that workers grouped in Trade Unions can do nothing better with their vast united strength than to seek in turn a few immediate advantages, while disregarding the great political conquests which nevertheless would obtain for them at one blow the maximum of advantage that the community can give each of its members. The workers are thus thrown off the track and kept in ignorance of their real practical interests; although they would be invincible at any moment when they so willed it, they run the risk of some day losing the few slight professional advantages they have gained hitherto. It is still frequently said in proletarian circles that the general strike is a *disinterested* manifestation of the workers' solidarity. The expression would only be true if it were understood to apply to a far-reaching struggle for distant aims; but the aims in question are more positive even than those of

immediate advantage. The general strike by which the proletariat would really impose its will is much more useful and much more effective than a professional strike for limited objects. Until the workers realise this, they will be but marking time.

However, this state of mind of the Trade Unions and Trade Unionists is being strongly attacked to-day. A magnificent campaign in the very heart of the C.G.T. has produced a ferment among the theories in which it has been blissfully reposing. I do not know whether the Lille Congress will give a majority to the revolutionary Trade Unions whose valiant minority has attacked the passivity of the conservatives. But what can be foretold with certainty is that the triumph of the revolutionary Trade Union Committees is at hand and cannot be delayed; it is foreshadowed in the future as clearly as was for us the triumph of the Communist idea in the midst of the tottering Socialist Party.

Communism in France has not yet won a majority among the intellectual masses. The intellectuals are a force that it is rather difficult to deal with, because almost all of them bear the blemish of an intensely individualist tendency; and the sudden awakening which will disperse that out-of-date idea in favour of the larger ideas of collective organisation is as yet only in course of preparation in our country. But in this regard we may cherish the strongest hopes on account of the very clear bond between the sincerely revolutionary parties and that revolution in men's minds of which the intellectuals are the willing or unwilling representatives. We have said often and in many different ways that the revolutionary cause is idealistic, because it is not realised, and because it attacks what is realised around it; it is, indeed, thought itself at war with material things. The revolution is, whether one likes it or not, intellectual and moral in origin and spirit. Of course, the intellectuals have not now the monopoly of an idea which exists henceforth by reason of its own powerful life and takes its stand on the hope and

healthy determination of working men. Nevertheless, what is logical is always accepted in the end by persons of unbiassed and right-thinking minds.

It is two years since we founded the International group, "Clarté," which, without being affiliated to the Communist Party, arrived, by means of a free examination of ideas and of things as they are, at a doctrine exactly similar to that of the Communist Party—reason and thought can only arrive at a single doctrine. The mission it has assigned to itself is to fight effectively for the good cause by spreading among the ignorant and misinformed masses the irrefutable facts of social history and the clear statement of conflicting doctrines. In response to our appeal, magnificent and active goodwill has revealed itself in all parts of the world; and we are already in a position, thanks to this world collaboration of loyal minds, to increase and co-ordinate our work of preparation and of the spread of ideas.

"Clarté" has made a point of trying to dissolve the antagonism between manual and intellectual workers. This antagonism exists everywhere and is everywhere justified. If the manual workers are sometimes excessively and brutally distrustful of the brainworkers, this attitude is explained by the aristocratic, or what is even worse, incurably individualist tendencies of many intellectuals, and what is even more frequent and serious, by the lack of general intelligence which has too often been shown by the brainworkers. I have said that thought is not the monopoly of the intellectuals; the word intellectual must not be confused with intelligent.

The great efforts that my comrades and I have made during and after the war to group together the ex-soldiers have not, perhaps, from the point of view of numbers, resulted in the fulfilment of our expectations. Of all the associations of French ex-soldiers, those with the largest membership are the groups based on professional interest aiming solely at improving the condition of war victims and modifying in their favour the legislative and administrative provi-



sions made on their account. Besides these associations, which can hardly be counted as making any notable opposition to the systems which have provoked, and will again provoke, wars, there is the Republican Association of Ex-Combatants, of which I have the honour of being General Secretary, and which has quite a different conception of the civic duty imposed on those who have suffered from the catastrophe and are unwilling that others should suffer from it after them. They do not agree that the misery and horrors of slaughter should be forgotten; they give a deep and magnificent meaning to the memory that they aim at preserving, and they believe that war will not disappear through the incomplete methods urged at so many semi-diplomatic meetings by pacifists who are reformers. They consider that wars will only disappear with the system which makes their recurrence inevitable, and which is of such a nature that the persons interested have no means of controlling the causes and pretexts of public disasters or of preventing them from occurring, but are forced to undergo them as slaves and victims. It was natural under these circumstances that the militant members of the Republican Association of Ex-Combatants, with which should also be mentioned the Labour and Peasant Federation of Maimed Soldiers, should be more and more closely drawn towards the one sincere and integral Socialist party, that is to say, the Communist Party. The 50,000 members of the Republican Association of Ex-Combatants have been carrying on in France for some years an intensive and untiring propaganda which has certainly helped greatly in setting our cause free from fatally obstructionist elements. The agitation thus roused has grown from year to year, and even to-day, whenever it has been necessary to draw up a useful—that is to say, an active—protest against mobilisation and the reactionary manifestations of the French Government, the Republican Association of Ex-Combatants has played an all-important part in the Committee of Action against the War, which included representatives of the Committee of the Third International, the revolutionary Trade Unions and the Young Communists.

In addition, the Republican Association of Ex-Combatants has led to the formation of the International of Ex-Combatants, which unites at present over a million ex-soldiers of all the former belligerent countries with the object of binding together in common action all the various national associations of ex-soldiers that understand the true meaning of the cry: "War against War!"

It is necessary to face unflinchingly the difficulties which threaten our present and future power. I have already pointed out the greatest of these difficulties—the hydra-headed temptations of reformism, the menace of which made our comrades of Turin say recently, "Socialism cannot be killed, but it can commit suicide by making compromises."

There is another very real obstacle against which we shall have to struggle some day—and that is, anarchism. I render homage, as I have never lost an opportunity of doing, to the noble morality of the anarchist idea. I have many anarchist comrades, and I recognise that they prove by their whole life and their every act the truth of the idea that: "The truly good man has no need of the yoke of the laws." But we cannot base our calculations on the example of the chosen few; and the question we have to answer is this: Is it reasonable, is it possible, to expect that this individual morality which would make laws unnecessary could spread itself universally enough to secure us a peaceful and just state of society? While we may not consider this impossible some day, can it be treated as realisable at a moment not too remote, having regard to the present stage of evolution of human morality? There is, unfortunately, no doubt of the only possible answer to this question. In consequence, there is marked between the anarchists and ourselves the prospects of a division which may become extremely serious. True, at the moment we work together, united by common indignation against the barbarous yoke of Capitalism; but we are guided in this parallel action by motives whose divergence will appear so soon as the barrier of present institutions is overturned. We, on our side, stand for collective organisation, for the con-

sidered and calculated building-up of institutions which will cover the whole body of citizens and will give to each according to his need and to the dictates of the general interest. The anarchist propaganda of liberty, accordingly, appears to us as a future danger which we must not lose sight of, despite the advantage of a temporary alliance. In addition, one may add that the element of utopianism, and, so to speak, unfinished thinking in anarchist theory, will do us all the more harm with a whole section of public opinion, the more our present activities are mixed up with those of the anarchists.

This account of the Communist movement in France would not be complete without a mention of an important development taking place among us at present, chiefly in the ranks of the young—Christian Socialism. This title covers groups and programmes of very varying character and tendency. There are the Christian Social Democrats, of whom I shall only say that they fall under the criticism already made against reformism of which they are the mystical champions. But there are also the Christian Communists. These have a certain relation to the anarchists in the sense that they conceive of the establishment of the “City of God” by the deepening and perfecting of the individual. Nevertheless, they have also very definite resemblances to the Rationalist Communists because they are bound by a common intangible rule which sets itself above the individual will of each. The young Catholics and Protestants who detest as much as ourselves clericalism and the hateful and inhuman abuses of the official church, and go back to the pure springs of the original faith, have a claim to be honoured for their courageous loyalty. They have a claim also to be received into our ranks; but on condition that they do not endeavour to bring into our scientific and strictly rational system an element of mysticism. We put before them, in some sort, a minimum programme to which it is quite natural that they should adhere without reserve. The converse is not true. In this case, as in that of the anarchists,

we ought not to allow ourselves to be dazzled by the quality of certain of the choicer hearts and minds. We ought to guard against introducing anything other than reason into the organisation of the new order. Reason is common to all, but it is not the same with faith. In addition, the terrible experience of past history shows us the great evil which may be done by the introduction of supernatural power, of which no criterion exists which can be definitely expressed in each mind and conscience. The first Christians themselves were also pure and impeccable, and they were clearly even communist. Who can say that there may not arise again among those of to-day, when their numbers are grown, the same reasons for degeneration, and, above all, for social ill-doing, which has caused religious force to deviate from its path when it has been directly mixed up with temporal affairs.

These—together with the Young Communists who have energetically taken up the tentative and ineffectual work of the Young Socialists, and of those Young Republicans who are gradually disappearing and becoming either Communists or supporters of officialism—are the elements grouped to-day round the Communist cause or following a parallel course without direct affiliation and tending simply by the normal development of their ideas and their propaganda towards the same revolutionary result. This agitation cannot fail to progress in depth and in the number of adherents. France, as we all know, is a country in which the middle classes are strongly imbued with the bourgeois spirit with which Lenin found himself confronted even in mystic Russia. The parcelling-out of landed property easily inflames the peasant class with capitalist greed; but latterly there have been evident changes which should be hailed with joy. Those of our members who have concerned themselves especially with propaganda in rural districts have convinced a great number of peasants, hitherto debarred from Socialist ideas by the careful forethought of our enemies, and have shown them that they have just as much interest as the

workers in replacing the system of ruin and death which we now suffer (a system, moreover, which is manifestly being undermined by its own excesses) by a fair and just order.

At the present moment official reaction is loosed upon us with unprecedented force. The whole of the police and judicial machinery has been requisitioned by our rulers to find some pretext or other for impeding our action. Rumours of plots flourish more than ever, and we are carried back to the time of the denunciations and black lists that we endured during the war when the cry of "defeatism" was fashionable. The Government is preparing a scheme for a law against anti-militarism which will end in nothing less than the complete stifling—as in the time of the summary judgment of the War Councils—of liberty of speech—that is to say, of liberty of thought. We are threatened with public correction if we dare to state certain truths in speeches, in articles, or in books; and this is to be behind closed doors without any means of defence—one could almost say without trial. These regulations are not merely in order to frighten us. They mark, on the contrary, a kind of mad fury on the part of our enemies indicative of their approaching breakdown. Our strength is that we have reason on our side, and therefore we are supported by something stronger than men, however rich and well-armed they may be.

Our strength is the daily-growing minority which we are building up throughout the world, a minority inspired by a common hope and one day to act with a single and irresistible might.

# A SECRET REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL COUNTER-STRIKE ORGANISATION

**T**HE *Christiania Social-Demokraten* of June 1 states that it has obtained possession of documents which it asserts have been compiled by the Norwegian authorities for the information of other Governments, in return for which reports have been obtained from these as to methods of suppression of strikes. It is possible that the publication of this document may be connected with the prosecution of *Social-Demokraten*. The report opens with the statement that unrest has prevailed for some time in the various Norwegian transport services, for which reason very early steps were taken to draw up schemes for maintaining essential public services in the event of open labour conflict. Such schemes have been drawn up both by the State and by private organisations. The latter led to the formation of Norges Samgundshjælpen, or Voluntary Civic Aid Society, of whose programme an account appears in the organ of the Employers' Association, *Arbeidsgiveren*, No. 21, 1920. Preparations on the part of the State began with the appointment of a Transport Committee in the autumn of 1919. The reports of the committee were private, but access has been had to them, and the following statement is quoted:—

The Department of Labour appointed on November 5, 1919, a committee whose duty it was—in the event of a stoppage on the railways—to examine what measures should be adopted in order to limit as far as possible the difficulties that would arise and the most suitable steps for overcoming them. The terms of reference of the committee were also extended to include the determination of the necessary steps to be taken should there be a stoppage of steamship services.

The committee was composed of representatives of the Railway Board, the Food Control Board, the Post Office, the Department of Justice, and the Army (the chief of the Motor Corps). The State Steamship Adviser was also a member. Its meetings were secret; two reports were issued, a provisional one in December, 1919, a final one on May 31, 1920. The latter opens with a brief account of similar measures previously adopted in Norway and elsewhere.

Thus the threatened general strike in Norway in 1915 led to a scheme being drafted for military railway service. In view of the deterioration in military discipline this scheme was abandoned for one in which a limited railway service would be maintained by means of the administrative and other loyal staffs, the military only to be used for protective purposes.

As regards England reference is made to the creation of the Road Transport Board in 1918, originally for the purpose of guaranteeing the most economical use and distribution of road traffic in connection with the transport of munitions of war and important articles for the trade and industry of the country. Its organisation is described in the "Handbook on Road Transport." The Board was originally a military organisation, but has been retained and was used in the railway strike of September 27-October 8, of 1919.

With regard to Germany the report gives an account of the formation of the Technische Nothilfe, and for Denmark an account of the voluntary organisation, Samgundshjælpen.

In Holland very complete schemes were drafted in 1919 for transferring railway traffic to canal and road transport. In this connection the Minister for Agriculture was given authority to requisition all vessels adapted to inland water transport. The plans for the diversion of traffic were worked out in detail.

As regards Sweden, it was stated that the maintenance of the services on the private railways at the time of the engine-drivers' dispute in 1919, followed plans previously laid down in detail. Other proposed measures, both on the State and private railways, were strictly confidential.

The survey concludes with short notes on France and the United States.

To serve as a groundwork for its report the committee attempted to discover the extent of the demand for the chief necessities in the largest centres of consumption, but the information obtained from local authorities was of little value. On the other hand an account was obtained from railway statistics, showing in detail the quantities of the following commodities carried to important centres daily, based on returns for the year ending June 30, 1918:

- Hay, straw and concentrated fodder.
- Meat and bacon.
- Corn and flour.
- Potatoes and vegetables.
- Herring and fish.
- Butter, cheese and margarine.
- Milk.
- Livestock.

The proposed measures were classified by the committee under five heads :

- A. Railway traffic.
- B. Auxiliary transport, managed by Railway Board.
- C. Other auxiliary road transport.
- D. Sea transport.
- E. Air transport.

*A. Railway Traffic.*

A minimum service was drawn up, reproduced by *Social-Demokraten* in detail. Recommendations were made that :

Certain higher officials, e.g., locomotive and train inspectors, should be appointed in relatively large numbers.

Engineers should immediately on appointment undergo practical training in engine-driving.

Motor locomotives, e.g., Diesel electric locomotives, should be introduced wherever possible, as easier to manage and requiring fewer men.

Attempts should be made to use lorries for railway traffic. The Railway Board should itself arrange for the transport of goods on its own motors.

Negotiations should be entered into between the railway district inspectors and the local police with regard to preparations for protection.

Preference should be given to the transport of foodstuffs, particularly milk, butter, fish, meat, bacon, potatoes and vegetables; mails come next in accordance with a special plan, and passenger traffic as far as circumstances permit.

As a general rule the railways should cater for long-distance traffic, short-distance traffic being dealt with by other methods.

*B. Auxiliary Transport coming under Railway Administration.*

The Committee is of the opinion that the additional transport facilities to be obtained by instituting motor-lorry services should be placed under the direction of the railway administration. On the other hand, horse traffic is rejected for long distances, even where the nature of the roads is unsuitable for motor lorries, because the insignificant quantities that could be carried would not be worth the trouble of arranging for lodgings for the drivers, stabling for the horses, etc.

In order to obtain possession of the requisite number of motors with accessories, garages, etc., recourse may be had to the law of May 14, 1917, with respect to ensuring the country's supply of necessities. Voluntary assistants should, however, be drawn on as far as possible. Naturally, the acquisition of motors must be reduced to a minimum. Only unavoidable goods traffic should be organised by the State, passenger traffic being left to private initiative. It is further maintained that lorries of more than two and a half tons capacity generally cannot be used over country bridges, while those of less than one ton would be uneconomical; electric motors, again, have too small a radius of activity (50 km.).

The supply of motors, subject to those limitations, was determined by the Committee, and it was estimated that 400 could be counted on in Christiania, 80 in Bergen, 70 in Trondhjem, and 50 in Stavanger. In



certain of the medium-sized towns a small number could be obtained, but probably there would not be much need of them.

Voluntary aid or requisitioning should be resorted to for obtaining, in addition to motors and accessories :

Spare parts, tyres.

Garages.

Repairing shops, with or without staff.

Petrol and other oils, if necessary, with storage accommodation and other accessories.

Motor stopping-places (halts).

Lodging for chauffeurs and other staff.

Buildings or land for reception and delivery of goods.

As regards *personnel*, it was recommended as desirable that relations should be entered into with the motor and flying corps of the Army, in order to obtain volunteer chauffeurs and officers and, finally also, as soon as secrecy could be given up, with the Automobile Club. The importance of appointing officers before the outbreak of a conflict was vigorously emphasised. Further, *personnel* would have to be obtained for opening recruiting offices, examining and valuing motors, material, etc.

### C. Other Auxiliary Road Transport.

It was assumed that most of the suitable motors would be requisitioned by the State. Mere local transport would therefore be almost solely by horse-drawn vehicles. Extra motors would, however, be disposed of by local authorities to meet local requirements. Immediately after the outbreak of a strike, the farmers should be urged to satisfy the needs of the towns for foodstuffs, etc., as far as possible by horse traffic. In order to make this possible, it would be necessary to arrange for lodging and stabling in the towns. It was to be expected that in the smaller towns this traffic would fully replace the railway traffic.

### D. Sea Transport.

The Committee was, of course, of the opinion that the coast traffic—already of such importance to Norway—should be used as a substitute for the railways, all the more so as the chief steamship lines are subsidised by the State. As well as heavier goods, the greater part of the mails can be transported by sea, supposing there is not a stoppage of those services, too. If only temporary measures are needed, their direction should be in the hands of the railway administration; if not, the Department of Trade would have to appoint a special Board to deal with this transport.

In the event of a conflict in the coastal trade, the Committee worked out a very detailed proposal for measures to counteract this; but as these conditions are specifically Norwegian, a full account is not considered. The idea is, however, that local traffic is to be maintained—largely under local administration—by the help of motor boats, fishing vessels, etc., and that as regards long distance traffic expropriation of ships must be resorted to as far as may be required. The difficulties in the way are recognised, but such measures are considered essential, especially for North Norway.

*E. Aerial Transport.*

It is stated that the nation's flying resources are insufficiently developed to be of any importance for goods transport. On the other hand, it may be of value to use military aeroplanes in special emergencies, when it is important to convey a person or a mail rapidly from one place to another.

Finally, emphasis is laid on the importance (in most cases finally decisive) of public opinion being in favour of the measures proposed by the authorities. It is therefore questionable whether it is desirable to continue to keep the preparations secret. In any case, if a conflict threatens to become acute, relations should be entered into with the Press, and a special Press department for this purpose is to be organised, under the direction of an experienced journalist.

The Transport Committee having submitted its report, the railway administration—in accordance with the Committee's proposals—began to work out detailed plans for supplementing such railway services as it was expected could continue to be maintained. The traffic on the individual railways was carefully examined, and motor services planned accordingly. When the strike broke out, their plans were said to be ready; but the question of obtaining staff was still open, as the proposed schemes were kept strictly secret. The last Government would undoubtedly have turned to the Civic Aid Society created by various industrial organisations, and the necessary staff would no doubt have been obtained with ease. The present Government, however, found this method less useful. Its principle was that the State should fight the strike unaided to the best of its power, and not seek the help of voluntary organisations.

In another respect of prime importance from the point of view of organisation, the plans worked out were less serviceable than expected. While the Transport Committee placed the direction of the country's whole transport system in the hands of the railway administration—in the event of a railway strike—the Government (in agreement with that administration) thought it wiser, from the point of view of tactics, to appoint an independent provisional authority, the Transport Commission, which assumed the management of the transport services—and *officially* possessed the initiative. By this means, the railway administration escaped from the organisation of blackleg labour, and the workers lost one important point of attack and subject for agitation.

# ECONOMIC IMPERIALISM AND THE "SACRED TRUST"

By LEONARD WOOLF

THE economic exploitation of one human being by another has probably always existed since that unfortunate episode when the Almighty in His wrath altered the whole course of history because a man and woman ate an apple at the instigation of a snake. But it seems to be generally agreed that exploitation never became a fine art, never reached such perfection in quantity and degree, as in the nineteenth century. Despite the assurances of His Majesty the King and his Ministers, of the Church, University professors, and public school masters, of employers, financiers, and editors, that we are all one family within the nation, and that the reward for our labour is pretty equal, the conviction is spreading and deepening among the manual workers that in industrialised European nations there are two great classes of which one is exploited in the economic interests of the other. The worker argues that if A, B, C, D, &c., employ a, b, c, d, &c., and A, B, C, D, &c., earn an average of £1,000 a year for comparatively pleasant work, and a, b, c, d, &c., earn an average of £100 a year for comparatively unpleasant work, then, though they may all be members of one family, the less fortunate brethren are being exploited in the economic interests of the more fortunate.

But it is not so generally realised that this kind of economic exploitation has been extended in the last 100 years with great intensity and efficiency to the world of races, and that nowhere has the process been applied with greater success than in Africa. Consider the following hypothetical case. A white trader or explorer arrives in the territory of an African

chief or king and induces him to sign a treaty which he does not understand, but which in fact transfers the sovereignty of the land from the chief or king to the European State to which the trader or explorer belongs. Subsequently European troops arrive, and by hanging or shooting the chief or king—on the grounds that he is a sodomite or has too many wives or is a bloody cannibal—and by shooting a considerable number of his subjects, make the sovereignty of the European State “effective.” Next there arrives a European civil administration which proceeds to sell or lease the land, previously occupied by several hundred thousand natives, to a few European planters, traders, and joint stock companies. The natives are not only expropriated; they are either penned in “native reserves” consisting of land not coveted by the white settlers or they are left as interlopers without any legal rights upon the land which now belongs to the new comers. Then the civil administration proceeds to compel the natives, either by direct legal compulsion or by administrative pressure or by heavy taxation, to work for the white settlers. Sometimes the native is not paid at all, but his right hand is cut off if he does not work (in order to prove that he either has worked or suffered a merited punishment); in other more favourable cases he may be paid twopence or threepence a day. No case has yet been recorded of a white settler or joint stock company being satisfied with a salary or profit of threepence per day.

I have said that this is a hypothetical case, but, as a matter of fact, it is a pretty accurate description of what has taken place during the last fifty years over the greater part of Africa. It certainly took place in the Belgian Congo, the French West Coast possessions, Portuguese Africa, German East and West Africa, British East Africa and Nyasaland. The process may have varied in different countries; the Germans may have shot and hanged a few more chiefs, kings, and private persons than the British, and the Belgians may have committed more “atrocities” than other Europeans; but the result was much the same, and the result is the exploitation

of millions of Africans in the economic interests of a few Europeans.

The process which is here described is imperialism, or, as I prefer to call it more accurately, economic imperialism. It consists in the seizure of African territory by a European State, the expropriation of the Africans from all legal rights in their land, the alienation of that land to white settlers and companies, and compulsion upon the native to work for wages for the white man. This system is defended by those who put it into practice on the ground that the African is an inferior race which cannot make the economic use of African soil that the world requires, cannot, in other words, produce rubber and oil and minerals, and that therefore European States are justified in seizing the land and administering it and its inhabitants in the economic interests of their white subjects.

But there is another and totally different theory as to the way in which European States should deal with their African possessions. It has recently been briefly and clearly defined as the practical policy of all the great imperialist Powers in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. According to that article the African territory that belonged to Germany is inhabited "by peoples not yet able to stand alone under the strenuous conditions of the modern world," and this territory should be administered by a European State "on the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilisation."

Here then are two diametrically opposed principles or systems of colonial administration; first, the system of economic imperialism under which the main purpose of the administration is the economic interests of a few thousand white men who exploit the land and its black population; second, the "sacred trust," the system which makes the well-being and development of the natives the main purpose of administration. Now it is not true that this last system has been created or invented by the League and the mandate system; it has been proclaimed and professed spasmodically

ever since the first native dropped to a bullet from a modern rifle. For instance, up to ten or fifteen years ago the official policy of the British Empire in Africa was the policy of the "sacred trust"; in those days even Liberal Cabinet Ministers still paid lip-service to the principles of Liberalism and Philosophic Radicalism, and no Secretary of State for the Colonies would have dared to rise in the House of Commons and admit that the British Government was administering tropical African territory otherwise than on the principle that the well-being and development of the native inhabitants were a sacred trust of the Colonial Office. Liberal Ministers of those days were not entirely destitute of that quality of statesmanship which allows a Liberal Minister of Education to support and defend to-day the present policy in Ireland, the legal persecution of opinion, and a protective tariff, but the war and war propaganda had not yet completely convinced the world that you could make black white by calling it white. The Colonial or the Foreign Office not only professed to administer African territory in the interests of the inhabitants, but they actually did so occasionally. It may seem almost incredible to persons of this generation that less than twenty years ago, when the local administration in British East Africa attempted to bring pressure to bear upon the natives in order to make them work for the white settlers, a Secretary of State promptly ordered the practice to be stopped and saw that his orders were obeyed.

Twenty years ago, in fact, the principle of the "sacred trust" was accepted officially as the principle of colonial administration within the British Empire. But as a nation we went further even than this. We demanded, and we enforced our demand, that other nations in Africa should not too flagrantly violate this principle. That is the only explanation of the agitation with regard to the "Congo atrocities." In the Belgian Congo King Leopold only carried the principles of economic imperialism to their logical conclusion and applied them with drastic efficiency. All the features of this policy which have been described above appear under

his régime. The land of the Congo was handed over to white men or companies for economic exploitation; the native was compelled to work for these exploiters. That the system was enforced with appalling cruelties in many cases may have been the reason for much of the agitation in this country, but it is not the atrocities which accompany economic imperialism, but economic imperialism itself which is the really important point. A system which hands over African natives to isolated white settlers and allows those settlers to compel the natives to work, however unwillingly, for the white man's economic interests, is bound to breed cruelty and atrocities. And the agitation against the Congo régime and the official intervention of the British Government were eventually successful, because they were based on the demand that the Belgian Congo should be administered on the principle that the well-being and development of the natives were a sacred trust of civilisation.

In the previous paragraphs I have purposely referred to British East Africa and the Belgian Congo in sketching the past history of the two opposed systems of African administration. There is evidence that by one of those curious permutations in the psychology and ideals of nations, the principle of economic imperialism which was enforced in the Congo and repudiated in British East Africa twenty years ago, is to-day accepted in Kenya Colony (formerly British East Africa) and rejected on the Belgian Congo, while the system of the "sacred trust," which the British Empire less than twenty years ago compelled the Congo administration to accept, is still accepted on the Congo, but is now rejected in Kenya. I propose to prove this statement by examining the policy of the administration of British East Africa in recent years in the light of two Governmental Reports, and to contrast this with the policy recommended in a report to the Belgian Government on the native policy of the Congo administration. The East African documents consist of two reports, not easily obtainable in this country—first, the report of a Government Commission which inquired into the

shortage of native labour in 1912-13; and, second, a report made in 1919 by an Economic Commission which was appointed by the East African Government to frame "a commercial and industrial policy." The recommendations of both these Commissions are based frankly upon economic imperialism, and many of them have been accepted already by the local administration and the Colonial Office. The Belgian document is the report, also made in 1919, to the King by "la Commission instituée pour la Protection des indigènes"; its recommendations are based upon the principle of the "sacred trust."

The two opposed systems of African administration are to be distinguished, as I have indicated, mainly by the way they deal with two questions, the land and native labour. If the economic interests of the white settlers are the "sacred trust" of the administration, then it is necessary to give the land to the white settler and force the native to work for him on low wages; but if the "well-being and development of the natives" are to form the "sacred trust" of the administration, then the native must be given secure tenure of the land, and, instead of being forced to go and work for low wages on the white man's land or in the white man's mine, he must be encouraged and educated to develop and make an economic use of his own land. Let us see how the Briton in East Africa and the Belgian in the Congo ask their Governments to deal with these two questions.

In East Africa during the last 15 years continual pressure has been exerted upon the Government by the settlers to appropriate native tribes and alienate their land to white men. In early days the local Government, under direct orders from the Secretary of State, in some cases resisted this pressure, but in recent years there have been cases in which whole tribes have been removed from particularly fertile land in order that it might be sold to settlers. To-day the tribes are segregated in Reserves; the native has no secure legal tenure in this land, but theoretically it is not to be alienated by the Government to white men. But the system of



Reserves complicates the question of obtaining labour for the white settler. The native will not, unless compelled, leave his Reserve and come and work for a few pence per day on the white man's land. The settler therefore argues that if you cut down the Reserves so that the natives have not got sufficient land to support them, they will be forced out of the Reserves and come and work for him. The settler not only argues thus, but demands that the administration shall apply the argument in practice. Witness after witness before the Native Labour Commission of 1912-13 demanded that the cutting down of the Reserves should be adopted as a solution of the labour problem, and, while the Commission itself did not adopt the solution in theory, it did so in practice by recommending that the Reserves be "demarcated with a view to reserving sufficient land for the population only." The Economic Commission has gone a step further. They recommend that a Special Commission "should be appointed to delimit the Reserves and devise a scheme for concentrating the natives in a number of areas distributed as widely as possible throughout the Reserves, sufficient, but not more than sufficient, for their requirements, leaving the interspersed tracts not needed for native occupation as available for white settlement." What the Commission means by this policy they make quite clear. Under a régime "of universal peasant proprietorship," they argue, "the natives can only stagnate"; "the theory that provision should be made by the State not merely for the eldest but for every son in a family becoming a landowner would be regarded as absurd in Europe." The only way of preventing the stagnation of the native is to make him work for wages on a white man's farm; he must also be educated, but it turns out that in the opinion of the East African settler "education" for the native means "industrial education"—*i.e.*, a system of apprenticeship to industrial undertakings or farmers with State grants, and schools are to be staffed and equipped simply with the object of turning the African into a wage-earner for the white man. The Commission points out that the reason why their policy has not been previously adopted

appears to be "the unreasonable dread of 'exploitation' of black by white"; but the dread is quite unreasonable, because, "as a matter of fact, the wages in this country are . . . disproportionately high." (The Commission does not state the fact that the rate of wages is between 3d. and 4d. a day, and that there is an agitation among the settlers to reduce native wages throughout the country by one-third.) Finally, the Commission recommends that the policy of Government "encouraging" (the usual euphemism in Africa for compulsion) the natives to leave the Reserves and work for the white settler should be "accepted and carried into effect far more thoroughly and unequivocally than hitherto." On the other hand, the Government should reverse the policy which "has lately taken shape in the publicly-made official statement of the Chief Native Commissioner that 'he did not see why a native should turn out to work for Europeans, if he wanted to develop his own land.'"

But the British settler in East Africa and the Government of Kenya have already taken other steps to prevent the native from developing his own land and to force him to work for the white man's "disproportionately high wage" of 3d. a day. The white witnesses before the Native Labour Commission asked the Government to find them cheap labour either by compelling the native to work for the settlers or by taxing the native more heavily, or by both methods. The Government has complied with both demands. A little while ago it applied for authority from the Secretary of State to raise the native hut tax; the Secretary of State authorised the proposal, but on condition that an income-tax was imposed. (The white man in Kenya is probably the lightest-taxed white man in the world; he pays practically no direct taxation.) The attitude of the settler to taxation is shown in the report of the Economic Commission, which holds that an income-tax, which would fall on the white man, "does not appear to be a method presently suitable to conditions of East Africa." "It is of capital importance that taxation should fall not upon production" (*i.e.*, the settlers), "but upon consumption" (*i.e.*, the natives), "and this object can

be attained by judicious imposition of customs duties." However, the Government decided to raise the hut tax and impose an income-tax, and a month or so ago the first payment of income-tax became due. Then a proposal was made in the Legislative Council that the payment of this income-tax, amounting to £80,000, should be waived; nine members of the Council voted for and nine against the proposal, and the Governor gave his casting vote in favour of it! But the hut-tax on the native remains raised.

As for forced labour, the Government has recently enacted legislation which gives the administration power to exact compulsory labour from natives up to a maximum of 60 days a year. The law theoretically exempts natives who have worked for three months in the preceding twelve months, but the Chief Native Commissioner has practically admitted that no native will be able to prove that he has done three months' work unless it was for a white man. Theoretically, too, the native can only be called out to labour on public works, but the law is so worded that public work can cover almost anything; for instance, in Zanzibar, where a similar law has been introduced, it has already been held that the picking of cloves for a private employer came under the head of "public work."

To turn straight from the reports of the two British East African Commissions and the recent legislation of the British East African Government to the report of the Belgian Royal Commission on the Congo is to enter an atmosphere of completely different ideas and ideals. The aim of the British Commissioners and Government is to expropriate the native from his land, sell the land to the white settlers, and make the natives work for the settlers on a wage of 3d. or less per day. That, according to the Economic Commission, is the only way to civilise the African, and "authorities" on education support their view that the African should be educated only in order that he may become an employee of some joint stock company on 3d. a day. But apparently on the Congo and the West Coast of Africa civilisation means something

quite different from what it does on the East Coast and in British East Africa. Instead of aiming, as the Commission does in East Africa, at breaking up the Reserves and forcing the native to leave his land and village, the Belgian Commissioners recommend that the Government shall take every step possible to "keep the native in his customary environment" and to encourage him to develop his own land. So clearly does this seem to be the duty of the administration on the West Coast of Africa, and to a Belgian Commission with a Congo official at its head, that the Commissioners do not even give any arguments for it; "no proof is necessary," they merely say in passing, because "the whole world is convinced of the good results of this policy." As the aims of the Belgians are the opposite of the British, so, too, are their concrete recommendations. Where the British Commission proposes that the Government shall carry into effect "far more thoroughly and unequivocally than hitherto" the policy of "encouraging" the natives to emigrate from the Reserves and work for wages, the Belgian Commission recommends that the Government shall carry into effect more thoroughly and unequivocally the policy of preventing the native from leaving his land and village. "It is with reason," write the Commissioners, "that the legislator has required every native who leaves his tribe to obtain an administrative permit, and has made illegal emigration subject to legal penalties. But the existing regulations appear to be insufficient. The native leaves his village too readily. Numerous illegal emigrations take place at the instigation of Europeans. . . ." The Commission, however, is not content with trying to keep the native on his own land and in his tribe. It recommends, first, that the Government shall encourage the native to develop his own land by providing him with agricultural implements. Secondly, it recommends that the Government shall take steps to compel an increased attendance at the ordinary schools. But still more significant is the way in which it proposes to deal with the large number of natives who, at the instigation of Europeans and companies, have left their land and have become detribalised in "cités indigènes." The Com-

mission holds that the first requisite is to "stabilise society" in these "native cities," and that the only way to do this is for the Government to allot to these communities land. Thus where the British Commission proposes to take land away from and break up native society, the Belgian Commission proposes to reform the detribalised natives into native communities by giving them land.

The antithesis between the British and Belgian points of view is just as remarkable on the subject of native labour. Twelve months ago the East African administration and the British Colonial Office introduced compulsory labour for sixty days in the year. A similar law had been passed in the Congo in 1917. The Belgian Commission reviewed the whole question of this compulsory labour, and were unanimously of opinion that the term of sixty days for which the Government could call out labour was excessive, as it "caused profound disturbance to native economic life, necessarily interrupted the natives' regular occupations, kept them in some cases for months away from their villages, and entailed neglect of their agriculture and homes." The Commission, therefore, recommended that the term of sixty days should be reduced to thirty and that every native should be permitted to make a payment in money, equal in value to the work demanded of him, in lieu of labour.

It is unnecessary to insist further upon the difference in spirit in which the Belgian and the British reports are conceived. But it is a curious instance of the rise and fall in national moralities. If you want to find to-day the spirit of economic imperialism of Leopold II. of Belgium and the exploiters who twenty years ago converted the Belgian Congo into a desert, you must go to Kenya and Downing Street, and if you want to find a remnant of that spirit of fairplay and, decent administration which most people twenty years ago considered one of the glories of British Colonial Government, you must go to the Belgian Congo.

# THE CONFLICT IN FRENCH TRADE UNIONISM

**T**HE conflict between the Left and the Right has become acute in the Confédération Générale du Travail (the C.G.T.). The divergence of views which showed itself after the conclusion of hostilities has now become defined in two opposing conceptions—a Right-Wing policy which favours association with the International Federation of Trade Unions and the International Labour Office of the League of Nations, and a Revolutionary policy which favours co-operation with the Red Trade Union International.

Formally, each side bases its arguments on the “Amiens Charter”—the resolution of the C.G.T. Congress at Amiens in 1906, which defined the relations between the C.G.T. and political parties.

Merrheim, writing on the conflict last September (*l'Information Sociale*, September 26, 1920) argued that:—

It was inevitable that the discussion concerning the relations between political parties and the C.G.T., provoked by the efforts of the Third Communist International to seize upon international Trade Unionism, should go back to that resolution of the Congress of Amiens, the “charter” of Trade Unionism, which defined these relations with precision.

Majority and Minority sections of the C.G.T. both entrench themselves behind this resolution; the first, as we have seen from the discussions of the last National Council of the C.G.T., and by the polemics which have been printed, affirm that they are opposed to any subordination to Socialist or Communist parties, a subordination inevitably involved by adhesion to the Third International. The others maintain that the Amiens resolution was intended to combat only the Parliamentary and reformist Socialist Party, which was at that time using the Trade Unions as electoral instruments; but they admit absolutely that these same Trade Unions are to be the instruments of insurrection.

The Amiens resolution is such an important factor in the present controversy that we reproduce it below :—

THE "AMIENS CHARTER": RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT  
THE CONGRESS OF THE C.G.T. AT AMIENS,  
SEPTEMBER, 1906

The Congress of Amiens confirms Article 2, which forms the basis for the constitution of the C.G.T. :—

"The C.G.T. groups together, independently of all political schools, all workers who are conscious of the struggle to be carried on for the abolition of the wage system. . . ."

The Congress considers that this declaration is a recognition of the class-struggle, which, on an economic basis, places the workers in revolt against all forms of exploitation and oppression, material and moral, put into operation by the capitalist class against the working class.

The Congress makes this theoretic affirmation more precise by adding the following points :

In the sphere of everyday demands, Trade Unionism aims at co-ordinating the efforts of the workers and improving their conditions through the realisation of immediate ameliorations, such as the shortening of hours, increase of wages, etc.

But this is only one aspect of its work; Trade Unionism is preparing the integral emancipation, which can be realised only by the expropriation of the capitalist class; it commends, as a means to this end, the general strike, and considers that the Trade Union, now a grouping for the purpose of resistance, will be in the future the basis of social organisation, as the group for production and distribution.

The Congress declares that this double task of everyday life and of the future follows from the very situation of the wage-earners, which exerts its pressure upon the working class, and which makes it a duty for all workers, whatever their opinions or their political and philosophical tendencies, to belong to the essential group, which is the Trade Union; consequently, so far as individuals are concerned the Congress maintains entire liberty for every Trade Unionist to participate, outside of the trade organisation, in any forms of struggle which correspond to his philosophical or political ideas; but asks of him only one thing in return—that he shall not introduce into the Union the opinions which he professes outside of it.

In so far as organisations are concerned, the Congress decides that, in order that Syndicalism may attain its maximum effectiveness, economic action should be exercised directly against the class of employers, and the Confederal organisations must not, as Trade Union groups, pay any attention to parties and sects which, outside of them and by their side, are at full liberty to work for the transformation of society.

The controversy, which was based, at any rate formally, on the application of this resolution to (1) relations with the International Labour Office of the League of Nations; (2) relations with the Communist International, divided the

C.G.T. at Lyons in 1919 and at Orleans in 1920. The division at the latter Congress was of special importance because of a Conference of the Left elements which preceded the Congress and which decided to set up the Comité Syndicaliste Révolutionnaire (the C.S.R.) to organise and develop their following within the C.G.T. At the same time they prepared a resolution for submission to the Congress which, in conjunction with the official resolution, defines the divergence in views, and explains the subsequent developments towards the scission of the C.G.T.

C.G.T. CONGRESS AT ORLEANS, SEPTEMBER, 1920:  
RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY M. JOUHAUX ON BEHALF OF  
THE OFFICIAL MAJORITY, AND CARRIED BY 1,479 VOTES  
TO 602

The extraordinary Congress of Orleans, which has been called on to determine the policy of Trade Unionism and the future action of the General Confederation of Labour, maintains the continuity of Labour activity and its allegiance to the methods and theories independently evolved by the organisation.

It recalls that the Amiens resolution, born of experience and developed in the successive congresses of Limoges, Rennes, Paris, Montpellier and Bourges, is of an irrevocable and not of an incidental or provisional nature. As at Lyons the Congress repeats that the Amiens resolution remains the fundamental charter of French Trade Unionism.

It reiterates without reserve that the revolutionary aims defined by this resolution, which should be pursued with all the vigour and courage demanded by circumstances and social events, both foreseen and unforeseen, is more than ever incompatible with existing institutions, with Capitalism and its political expression.

Confirming the resolution of Lyons, it emphasises the revolutionary value of the daily victories obtained, which improve the conditions of life of the worker and partially free him from the insecurity of bondage; it declares that French Trade Unionism has given precedence to the control by the workers of industry and commerce. In this way, through the direct action of the workers, a part of their power is wrested from the employers, a part of their authority is wrested from the Government. This procedure will eventually lead them to profound and absolute change by increasing their numbers and by developing their power and their means for revolutionary action.

Renewing the Declaration of Lyons, the Congress proclaims the urgency of nationalisation, on industrial principles, of the essential industries and means of exchange, and demands the co-operation of all Trade Union organisations in carrying on an intensive campaign for strengthening the General Confederation of Labour.

Recognising that this is the general wish of the workers in all countries, the Congress requests the International Federation of Trade Unions, in



## The Conflict in French Trade Unionism 65

which the Congress has the fullest confidence, to promote common action for the immediate attainment of this social change, and points out that the present revolutionary period through which the labour world is passing is a most propitious one for similar action and discussion.

The Congress has entrusted the International Labour Office with the essential task of introducing to the colonies and smaller nations the legislation for the protection of labour, imposed by the Trade Union organisations in countries with a greater industrial development, and to devote itself to the vital problem of the equitable distribution of raw materials. For this purpose only and in consideration of the fact that the International Labour Office is mainly an intelligence office, the General Confederation of Labour is represented in this institution, where it is determined to claim respect for the fundamental principles of international Trade Unionism. In case of any deviations from the above aims, or in the absence of the necessary initiative, the General Confederation of Labour would have to reconsider the question of the continuance of its representation, which up to the present has been granted with that independence and dignity of Trade Unionism which the organised workers are entitled to expect.

The Congress expresses its absolute sympathy with the workers of other nations. . . .

The Congress is convinced that the union of the proletariat, the defeat of universal reaction and the total emancipation of the wage earners, irrespective of their doctrines, creeds, race and nationality, can only be accomplished by their complete independence, by mutual respect for their individual principles in accordance with their organisations, for their traditions, their ideas and their particular spirit.

For these reasons the Congress proclaims that the constitutive basis of the General Confederation of Labour, the principles of self-government, which it has proclaimed up to to-day its methods of action and realisation, are in absolute agreement with the present exigencies of the struggle. The General Confederation of Labour proclaims once again, in the face of the whole world, its ideal of economic freedom attainable by the suppression of wage-slavery.

### C.G.T. CONGRESS AT ORLEANS, SEPTEMBER, 1920: RESOLUTION PUT FORWARD ON BEHALF OF THE LEFT (DEFEATED, 602 VOTES TO 1,479)

The Congress of Orleans declares that it would be disastrous if the present sessions should result in the same disillusionment as those at Paris (1918) and Lyons (1919).

At these two Congresses formal and solemn pledges were given by the Confederation Executive that the political "union sacrée" inaugurated during the war, i.e., submission to employers and the bourgeois, would be definitely repudiated; that a sharp turn to the left would be taken; that, in short, the Charter of Amiens would once more regain its position as the beacon-light of the French Trade Union movement.

But, on the contrary, immediately after the Congress, the resolution of Amiens was deliberately trampled under foot, and has since been constantly violated.

A month after the close of the Lyons Congress, a Confederal delegation, without any mandate from the Congress, left for Washington to take part in the International Labour Conference, organised according to the terms of the iniquitous Treaty of Versailles by the League of Nations, that new Holy Alliance of Capitalist States. The delegation participated in its labours, despite the fact that before the war the C.G.T. had made it an inflexible rule to combat relentlessly all working-class participation in organisations, such as the Supreme Council of Labour, or the International Association for Labour Legislation, by which Governments sought in the past to corrupt the workers' organisations and turn them aside from the class-struggle. Moreover, it not only participated in the labours of the Conference, but was directly responsible, in collaboration with the French employers' delegation, for the choice of the former French Minister of War, Albert Thomas, as Director of the International Labour Bureau.

Proceeding in the same spirit as that which took them to Washington, in violation of both the spirit and the letter of the Amiens resolution, which commands us to prepare for the complete emancipation of the workers, the Confederal Executive gave a place of first importance to the rationalisation of essential services, projects involving the maintenance and the guarantee of the interests of the present exploiters, and the retention of control of labour in the hands of the former directors, or others of a like stamp.

From past experience, reinforced by the great May strike, we declare to the workers that on the day of the triumph of nationalisation they will still be very far from integral emancipation. Nationalisation cannot constitute a step toward the revolution unless it is accompanied by expropriation. In France, as elsewhere, Capitalism will oppose savage resistance to our efforts, as the May strike showed us.

For another year, the C.G.T., which should have taken a decisive step to the left, has navigated in the waters of the right, totally abandoning direct action, its methods and principles.

The Congress calls upon all affiliated organisations, realising the grave danger of twice-broken pledges, to prevent it from happening a third time. The Confederal Executive have for the last twelve months acted contrary to the debates and resolutions of Lyons. They have not hesitated to nullify the Lyons decision, which conceded to the Revolutionary Minority representation on both the Administrative and Confederal Committees in accordance with the strength shown at that Congress.

The Congress of Orleans must force the C.G.T. to return to the path it followed before the war; to break with the Government office known as the International Labour Bureau; to draw its inspiration, both for daily action and for preparation for the future, from the revolutionary principles enunciated in the Amiens resolution.

The Confederal Congress of Orleans, believing that the place of a Trade Union movement based on the class-struggle cannot be in the nationalist International of Amsterdam, of which the President, Appleton, and the Vice-Presidents, Jouhaux and Mertens, were, throughout the war, the champions of *jusqu'aboutisme* and the sending of the workers to slaughter one another, and that their presence at the head of

an International cannot but signify the survival of national hatreds, decides in favour of the adhesion of the C.G.T. to the revolutionary Trade Union International of Moscow.

The Amsterdam International, by looking for support and by taking pride in an intimate alliance with the International Labour Office of the capitalist Governments, makes it clear that it has repudiated the class-struggle, and is only a caricature of a workers' International.

Far from adherence to the Trade Union International of Moscow constituting a violation of the Charter of Amiens, the Congress declares that this course is the obvious duty of the C.G.T.

It is to-day incumbent upon the C.G.T. to go to Moscow, as in 1915 it should have gone to Zimmerwald. There exists but one International of the revolution, the Third, the International of Moscow. The C.G.T., faithful to the revolutionary tradition, must adhere to that International, and declares that, while maintaining its complete autonomy, it is prepared to collaborate with this political organisation which will act upon revolutionary lines, not in words but deeds.

Immediately after the Orleans Congress, the formation of the Comité Syndicaliste Révolutionnaire was announced, and the affiliation of Unions to the C.S.R. was invited. At the meeting of the National Confederal Council (the C.C.N.) of the C.G.T. on November 8, 1920, the official intention of expelling the Unions which affiliated to the C.S.R. was indicated in the following resolution, adopted by 72 votes to 25, with 23 abstentions:—

### RESOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL CONFEDERAL COMMITTEE OF THE C.G.T., NOVEMBER 8, 1920

The C.C.N., reaffirming the decisions of the Congress of Orleans, declares that the Trade Unions which have given their allegiance to the C.S.R. have placed themselves in a position which involves hostility, moral division, and disorganisation of the forces of Trade Unionism and of the unity of the established Trade Union International.

It declares that the position thus chosen places these organisations under the obligation of applying the methods of division indicated by the International of Moscow, among which the process of forming nuclei is one of the methods contemplated and already employed.

The C.C. cannot refrain from warning the organisations of the inevitable consequences of their adhesion, which may provoke on the part of the Federations and Departmental Unions measures of expulsion against them in which the C.G.T. will not be able to intervene.

Following on the publication of this resolution, the controversy between the official elements of the C.G.T. and the C.S.R. became more bitter, and the charge of disruption of the C.G.T. was freely made on both sides. The decision to expel the Unions affiliated to the C.S.R. was made more

definite in a resolution adopted by the National Confederal Council of the C.G.T. in February, 1921, which is given below, together with a manifesto issued in reply by the Seine Federation of Trade Unions, which had identified itself with the C.S.R. since September, 1920.

RESOLUTION OF TRADE UNION DISCIPLINE, ADOPTED BY THE NATIONAL CONFEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE C.G.T., FEBRUARY 8, 1921, BY 82 VOTES TO 31, WITH 12 ABSTENTIONS

The C.C.N. declares that it cannot profitably examine the economic programme of the C.G.T. until it has taken all available measures to put an end to the disease which is causing the paralysis and impotence of the Trade Union movement.

Whatever may be the question before the C.G.T.—whether it be workers' control in the factories, the nationalisation of important public services, the right to organise, or social insurance—it is only too evident that none of these aims can be realised or seriously undertaken so long as the Confederation has no real discipline and so long as it continues to be weakened by an opposition and a systematic campaign of detraction carried on by a part of its own elements.

This malady is the result of the efforts of a political party which is seeking, by the means of orders and an unprecedented campaign of calumny, to impose its doctrines and its methods on the Trade Union movement.

Drawing its inspiration from the will of 1,600 Trade Unions which, at the Congress of Orleans, pronounced against the adhesion of the C.G.T. to the political International of Moscow, thus confirming anew the principles underlying the Charter of Amiens, the Committee considers that it is its first duty to require the absolute observance of this policy from all its organisations and members.

Having just condemned, by a formal resolution, the offensive terms which the directors of the Third International employ, as well as the humiliating and arbitrary methods which they are applying and seeking to render general, the Confederal Committee explicitly states that this condemnation implies the absolute impossibility for any organisation to adhere to the Trade Union International, which is a section of the political International of Moscow, without violating the letter and the spirit of the decisions of the Confederal Congresses.

That, moreover, the setting up of Revolutionary Trade Union Committees (Comités Syndicalistes Révolutionnaires—C.S.R.) inspired and directed by the Moscow Government, to organise the formation of a revolutionary nucleus in each union in order to disable the militants and to discredit their action, is tantamount to the erection of organs of disruption which arrest the recruiting of Trade Union membership, imperil all united action, and result in general discouragement; that it is false and disloyal to pretend that these groupings have a harmonising, educative, and propagandist character; that their local, regional and national sections constitute, as was foreseen, a supererogatory organisation which seeks to

## *The Conflict in French Trade Unionism* 69

set itself up in opposition to the Confederation, in order to violate its principles and to place obstacles in the way of its means of action.

That, therefore, it is important to state explicitly also that adhesion, collective or individual, to the Committees constitutes an act of open hostility to the C.G.T.

The Confederal Committee declares that, above all tendencies and all divisions, liberty of opinion must remain complete for all the members of the C.G.T.; that this liberty is for it a condition of life necessary to its development and is in conformity with its aspirations. Persecution on account of opinions must be banished from the thought of the Confederation.

But it cannot be guilty of the weakness of permitting to shelter behind this liberty, which is legally accorded to all, organisations whose sole purpose is the weakening of the Trade Union movement, in order that they may then impose on it in its powerlessness methods of authority and domination repudiated by every Congress.

In consequence, the C.C.N., armed with the decision of the Congress of Orleans, confirms its decision of November last in regard to cases of breach of discipline which the confederated organisations were called upon to deal with. In fulfilment of this decision, the Confederal Committee declares that organisations which give their adhesion to the Trade Union International section of the Communist International will by their own action place themselves outside of the C.G.T., and thus forfeit any right to participate in the Confederal Congresses and the National Committees.

### MANIFESTO OF THE SEINE FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS, ISSUED APRIL 12, 1921

The Seine Federation of Trade Unions, desirous of taking up a definite stand once and for all on the question of working-class action, decides, in the face of the expulsions which have been pronounced, to affirm itself to be more than ever in accord with the Constituent Charter of Amiens, laying down the traditional basis of Trade Unionism.

The Seine Federation of T.U., speaking and acting as the interpreter of Revolutionary Trade Unionism, records the fact that the constant aim of the C.G.T. has been to promote the establishment of a Trade Union International taking its stand on the principle of evolution.

At the Stuttgart meeting of the International in 1902, the opposition became manifest between reformist Trade Unionism—the expression of a tendency subversive of the working-class movement and subordinated to political Social-Democratic leadership, restrained within the limits of bourgeois legality—and revolutionary Trade Unionism, rising above individual self-interest to establish itself as the foe of Parliamentary limitations, and of the Capitalist State which established them.

This dual conception of Trade Unionism persisted throughout its various phases, and throughout the war, which left it weakened and impaired.

Since then the Trade Union International has only achieved formal unity by means of a phrasology, superficially revolutionary, but empty and fruitless in action; its homogeneity finds expression in the International

Labour Bureau, with its seat at Geneva, created by the Congress of Governments at Versailles.

It has been proved that the Amsterdam International pursues its course in the wake of the Bureau of Labour; that the result of this, despite the best intentions, is a subordination to it, not official but real, against which subordination Revolutionary Trade Unionists can but revolt.

Recording with satisfaction the project of a Trade Union International whose revolutionary activity will draw strength for its extension and realisation from the powers of Russian Sovietism, the Seine Federation declares that, despite all differences of environment and circumstances, Sovietism and Revolutionary Trade Unionism emanate from the same spirit, and tend toward the same goal: power and supremacy to the producers, and the fitting of every human element into the framework of social production.

From this ultimate identity, it follows that the Russian Soviet Revolution is sister to the Revolutionary Trade Unionism of the West; that there it has entered upon full realisation, while here it is continuing to elaborate, amidst tremendous difficulties, a working-class movement influenced to its depths by every development in Russia.

In consequence, the Seine Federation of Trade Unions ardently desires that from the International Trade Union Congress, about to be held at Moscow, there shall arise an International of producers, an emanation of the economic power of Labour in full ascendance.

That that International, destined to bring together the proletariats of the various countries, shall tend to radiate beyond frontiers, to eliminate all nationalism; that it shall take its stand clearly on the ground of the class-struggle; that it shall affirm in unmistakable terms the necessary supremacy of the producer; that it shall proclaim the essential duty, for the latter, of bringing to his economic labours, the foundation of the whole social system, a constant and sustained effort; that it shall have as its objective the precipitative development of revolutionary activity formulated in accordance with the nature of the working-class movements of the various countries; and that it shall not forget, above all, that the producer, the brain or factory worker alone, holds in his hands the conditions of human enfranchisement.

The Seine Federation calls to the attention of the new International that, especially in France, a revolution, whatever its determining motive force may be, will evolve, and come to realisation along the lines of Revolutionary Trade Unionism, and by means of its organs: the C.G.T., the Departmental Federations, and the Trade Unions and Federations.

The Seine Federation intends to combine the task of detaching the Proletariat from the Amsterdam International in order to unite it to that of Moscow, with the task of preparing the Revolution which is now already in sight.

In the meanwhile, a parallel controversy was raging within the Unions and local Federations; and the decision of the C.C.N. to expel the Unions affiliating to the C.S.R. proved impossible to carry out. The situation was so indefinite in

May that the official elements of the C.G.T., at a special meeting of the National Confederal Council, secured the adoption of a resolution authorising the holding of a general Congress of the C.G.T. in July, with the object of clearing the air. This was opposed by the Left elements, who urged that there was no justification for holding the next Congress earlier than September, the date fixed by the Orleans Congress. The full Congress of the C.G.T. was accordingly fixed for July, when the present strength of the opposing tendencies will be revealed.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE NATIONAL CONFEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE C.G.T., MAY 12, 1921, BY 80 VOTES to 33

The C.C.N. records the first painful results attendant upon the campaign of calumny and division which has been pursued for many months, despite the various resolutions adopted by the C.C.N.

Recent events, the military measures, and the calling-up of the Class of '19, which are preparing the way for new and protracted sanguinary conflicts; the whole attitude of the Government, guided exclusively by the reactionary forces of the country—these have made clear, in the present grave situation, to what extent the C.G.T. has been rendered incapable of action.

That, on the other hand, the campaign of intolerance and obstruction organised by the opposition prevents it from the dignified and useful fulfilment of the mission with which it is entrusted, as well as from any hope, under existing conditions, of working constructively and forcefully.

That it is highly important to find a remedy, for which end the assemblage of all the confederal organisations is indispensable; that a direct consultation of the Trade Unions will be able to call forth decisive results.

That the next Confederal Congress must not only lay down once more the position and the orientation of the Trade Union movement, but must also determine practical and efficacious means of imposing, upon all, loyal respect for its decisions by such disciplinary measures as are required in order to preserve unity of action.

RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY MONMOUSSEAU, ON BEHALF OF THE LEFT, AT THE NATIONAL CONFEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE C.G.T., MAY 12, 1921, AND DEFEATED (33 VOTES AGAINST 80)

By participating in the war-policy known as national defence; by abandoning the principles of the Charter of Amiens, in propaganda and in deeds, from 1914 up to the present day, in relation to all the social problems confronting the proletariat; by subordinating our interests as a class to so-called general interests; by doing nothing to co-ordinate the efforts of Unions struggling, alone and one after the other, against the employers' bloc, formed under the pretext of the "union sacrée" during

the war; the directors of the C.G.T. have lost contact with the labouring masses, whose confidence they no longer possess.

The denial of the fundamental principles of French Trade Unionism—the class-struggle and internationalism—has determined the opposition of a minority which has developed in the degree that the central organism turned aside from its goal.

It is in order to fetter and destroy this new corrective force, which has conquered the sympathies of the workers, that they have adopted a policy of expelling the revolutionary elements.

The resolutions of the Confederal Bureau provoking expulsions, forced through previous National Confederal Councils, have met with such hostility throughout the country that it is impossible to put them into force, and even to present them again for the acceptance of the present C.C.N.

This situation leads the Confederal Bureau to-day to rush the holding of the Congress of Lille, in the hope of finding again a majority to take the responsibility for the expulsions and for the scission of the C.G.T.

The Confederal Committee, formally condemning this policy of disorganising the forces of Trade Unionism, and believing that the freedom of expression of tendencies must be guaranteed within the C.G.T., declares that there are no grounds for changing the date of the Congress, fixed according to statute for September, 1921, by the Congress of Orleans.



# THE NEW UNIONISM IN AMERICA

## The Story of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America

By JACOB S. POTOFSKY,  
*Assistant General Secretary, A.C.W. of A.*

**T**HE Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America is one of the leading militant organisations in America. Its history is a long chain of successful struggles which have made that organisation known and admired, not only in America but also in Continental Europe.

The Amalgamated is credited :—

1 With having abolished the sweatshop system, for many years the curse of the needle trades.

2 With having raised wages of the clothing workers from a starvation level to an American standard, making it an industry worth while working in.

3 With having introduced the forty-four hours week for the entire needle industry, benefiting about 400,000 workers.

4 With having introduced democracy in the industry, giving workers a voice in determining the conditions under which they shall work and developing a collective bargaining adjustment machinery.

5 With being the first, and perhaps the only, Labour organisation in the world to contribute the sum of 100,000 dollars to another Labour Union whose members were on strike. This contribution was made to the steel strikers in their 1919 general strike.

The Amalgamated is a comparatively young organisation, having been officially organised under the name in December, 1914. Though less than seven years old, it has a fascinating history, which reads like a novel. The great difficulty in an article of this kind is to be brief and at the same time convey an understanding of this type of union, for in America it is a unique type. This Union has now a membership of nearly 200,000. It is not affiliated to the American Federation of Labour. We shall deal with the reasons for its non-affiliation later, but a word must be said

on the question of secession, for it is claimed that the Amalgamated is a secessionist movement.

The problems of secession and jurisdiction have given the American Labour movement more trouble than any other problem within the movement. The A.F. of L. has endeavoured to maintain a fixed policy on the subject, but no such thing is possible. Labour must not maintain one fixed attitude towards secession, for there are certain secession movements which do not deserve that name. The duty of the Labour movement is to differentiate between one secessionist movement and another. But the attitude of the A.F. of L. is "right or wrong, we stand by the officials." Though they usurp power, though they violate the rights of their constituency, it does not matter; the attitude is all the same. The Amalgamated is a case in point. Its leaders had never intended to lead a secessionist movement. They were, as a matter of fact, opposed to it, but when the majority of the accredited delegates were debarred from participation in their own convention by the officials, who feared that they would not be re-elected, and all efforts to get them seated failed, naturally there was no other course open but to declare that the officials had usurped the power, and go before the membership. This is what the debarred delegates had done, and this is what led to the formation of the Amalgamated.

And now for a brief historical background. In 1891 an organisation known as the United Garment Workers of America was founded. Nominally the organisation is still in existence, but it is no longer a factor either in the industry or in the Labour movement. It has failed to organise the clothing workers of the country, or to hold the confidence of those clothing workers who happened to be in the organisation. The only bond between the officers and the members was mutual antagonism.

The strikes in 1913 served as a turning point in the history of the clothing workers' organisation. The workers began to build strong local Unions against the wishes of the general

officers. The fear of the increasing membership, which was aggressive and militant, made the reactionary officers so blind with madness that they excluded as already referred to, without warrant, almost all the clothing workers' delegates from the biennial convention of the organisation held in October, 1914, in Nashville, Tennessee, disfranchising at least 70 per cent. of the membership. The delegates who were allowed to take their seats were almost entirely from the locals of overall workers, whom the general officers had then and still have at their mercy by means of the Union label.

The delegates who were barred from the convention by the general officers, and also some of the delegates who had been seated, held their own convention in the same city. They elected Sidney Hillman as their General President, Joseph Schlossberg as their General Secretary, and a General Executive Board, and established a complete machinery for the work of organisation.

When the convention of the American Federation of Labour in Philadelphia, in 1914, was appealed to by the clothing workers, the convention refused to listen to the appeal. The disfranchised members were pronounced secessionists. The deposed officers thought that that term of anathema from the lexicon of Trade Union officialdom would be sufficient to annihilate the spirit of self-consciousness among the workers.

Immediately upon its assuming office the new administration was confronted by a serious industrial conflict in Baltimore. Without a treasury, without effective machinery, because of the lack of time to establish it, and against terrible odds, the General Executive Board took up the fight. The situation was particularly complicated and aggravated by the fact that a section of the locked-out workers, the cutters, adhered to the deposed officers, while the tailors pledged allegiance to the new administration. The cutters' refusal to work in harmony with their fellow-workers in the other branches of the industry was mainly due to the fact that for about a quarter of a century the general officers had inten-

tionally and deliberately cultivated feelings of antagonism between the cutters and the tailors. Until the advent of the A.C.W. of A., the cutters had been taught to consider themselves the Labour aristocracy in the clothing industry as against the tailors, and whatever little efforts were made by the general officers to organise the clothing industry were mostly confined to the cutters' branch. As a result the cutters would remain at work when the other branches were striking, and vice versa.

The magnitude of the new administration's task in Baltimore will be better understood if cognisance is taken of the fact that, while the new administration had no funds at all to take care of the tailors, numbering about 2,500, the deposed officers had in their possession a large treasury with which to take care of the small number of cutters involved. Such was the spirit of enthusiasm among the locked-out tailors in Baltimore for the rejuvenated organisation that, though penniless, they rejected with scorn all offers of financial assistance made to them by representatives of the former administration if they would agree to stand by it. The cutters were actually led to betray the tailors and returned to work while the tailors were still out. In spite of that treachery, and in spite of the poverty of the locked-out workers, they won the fight gloriously. Thus, the first struggle led by the new organisation was also its first victory.

It needs no stretch of imagination to realise how greatly that victory strengthened the spirit of the "secessionists," for it has for the first time brought to the clothing workers a realisation of confidence in their own strength, irrespective of what the so-called official Labour movement may do.

Having passed through their first baptism of fire, the new administration, which still went under the name of U.G.W. of A., brought its house in order—brought order out of chaos and called the organisation to a special convention, held December 26-28, 1914, in New York. At that convention the new name was adopted, the name of the Amalgamated Cloth-

ing Workers of America. The change of name became necessary because of litigation begun by the deposed officers.

The career of the A.C.W. of A. begins with the New York convention. Some of the acts of the New York convention were the laying down of the principle of reducing unemployment by shortening the working week, emphasising the necessity of organising the various crafts in the industry along industrial lines, and making May 1, the international Labour holiday, a legal holiday of the organisation. An organisation campaign was undertaken on a large scale. Until that time all organisation work had been sporadic, carried on at irregular intervals, always of a local character, never with any system, or under central direction. The A.C.W. of A. undertook a systematic organisation campaign under the direction of the International Office.

At the second biennial convention, May, 1916, in Rochester, the organised clothing workers became conscious for the first time of the fact that their convention constituted the parliament of the clothing industry, and that the convention had it in its power to legislate for the industry. It was that convention that passed a resolution giving expression of the dream of many years of clothing workers—the establishment of the 48-hours week.

In order to realise fully the great significance of that act it must be remembered that but a few years ago the workers in the clothing industry had no limit to their working week. The employers opposed all efforts to inaugurate the 48-hours week. A number of real fights were necessary to carry that out. We succeeded all along the line, and it was made clear to the employers that the legislation of the amalgamated conventions was no mere pious wish, but acts that the industry must recognise.

When we met in convention in May, 1918, in Baltimore, the General Executive Board reported the complete victory of the 48-hours week. That convention enacted the 44-hours law for the clothing industry. It seemed a rather unusually hasty way of making progress. A number of our friends

thought that our judgment was affected by our success; our enemies had hoped that we had undertaken more than was in our power, and that we would break under the burden. Those who had judged us that way only showed that they did not know the Amalgamated. However aggressive we may be in our actions, the tremendous responsibilities resting on us have taught us to be deliberate and cautious in our judgment and decision.

On the day that the Armistice was signed the employers in New York opened fire by locking us out from the factories on the 44-hours issue. Their challenge to us was such that we were compelled to fight lest we lose all we had gained. The employers undertook the tremendous task of destroying our organisation, choosing the most propitious time for such a purpose. A struggle involving 60,000 people, representing a population of perhaps a quarter of a million souls, and lasting about three months, determined the issue. We won the 44-hours week. Most of the other clothing centres agreed to give us a shorter week without a test of strength.

This is now the official and legal working week in the clothing industry, and will so continue until the Amalgamated will legislate a shorter week. It will not be amiss to note that while that great struggle cost the organisation a half-million dollars, all of that money with the exception of 11,000 dollars given to us by friendly organisations as an expression of solidarity and without our solicitation, was raised by the membership throughout the country.

Since the 44-hours victory in New York, the Amalgamated has made giant strides in organising the clothing industry throughout North America.

Recently the Amalgamated has been put to the test of a fight for its life. Its growing influence was more than the enemies of Labour could endure, and so they seized upon the first opportunity to crush the Union which was the most aggressive. The attack upon the Amalgamated was part of the open-shop movement backed by the Steel Trust, chambers of commerce and other financial interests. It must be

borne in mind that since May, 1920, there was little work, particularly in the industry in New York. This depression was on for several months when the employers announced their demands. Those demands were: for piece work, right to hire and fire, right to change contractors, reduction in wages and others.

The Amalgamated sought every possible effort to avoid a break. It was willing to submit the entire matter to an impartial investigation. It was willing to concede production standards and make wage adjustments, but the enemy was bent on fighting, and a final break took place on December 6, 1920, when the employers announced that the impartial chairman ceased functioning, and that they would put through their own programme: the lock-out began.

The strategy of the Union was to localise the fight as far as possible. The employers made efforts to make the fight general. They appealed to the employers of the other clothing centres for help, but most of the employers in the other cities had agreements with the Union and realised that the Amalgamated is invincible. The only employers' association that joined as a whole was that of Boston, involving about 5,000 members. Six small employers in Baltimore also declared a lock-out involving 2,500 members more. Chicago, Rochester, Philadelphia, Montreal, Toronto and the rest of the clothing centres remained at work.

Having succeeded in checking the employers in the first move, the Union now turned its efforts to raise a fund and be prepared for a long struggle. It called an extraordinary meeting of its General Executive Board and invited also the various managers in the different cities. This special meeting voted in favour of calling upon the working membership for a voluntary assessment. Ten per cent. of the earnings was the basis, and each city decided for itself the best method of collecting its quota. A million dollars was set as the goal.

A bugle call for a million dollars fund was sent out to

the membership and within ten weeks that amount was over-subscribed. At the time the call was issued the employers thought it mere bravado on the part of the officials to call for such a large fund. They were keenly hurt to note in the Press that each week more than 100,000 dollars was received in the Union's General Office.

The assessment continued even though the quota was raised. Money was needed to prosecute the lock-out to a successful finish, and the members continued their support till the very end without stint. Before the lock-out ended nearly 2,000,000 dollars had been turned into the Union's treasury. All of this excepting 80,000 dollars, which amount was voluntarily contributed by the International Ladies' Garment Workers, the New York daily, *Forward*, the Millinery Workers, the Leather-Goods Workers and a couple of the smaller Unions, came from the pockets of the Amalgamated members.

Such was the spirit of the organisation that in the 15th week of the lock-out the organisation was fearless enough to undertake an offensive move. The Philadelphia employers were reported to be assisting the New York employers. The Amalgamated promptly declared a general strike, and within one week all had returned and there was no more scab work in the city.

As already noted, conditions have been poor in New York since May. Thousands of people had been idle for months. The Union, therefore, gave the problem of relief immediate attention. It considered that the fight would be a prolonged one and the money collected should be made to go as far as possible. Commissariat stores were decided upon to distribute food among those in need. Seven stores were opened and maintained all through the lock-out, giving members the benefit of wholesale prices. In addition there were what was called emergency cases whose rent, gas and other bills were paid. Arrangements had also been made for medical assistance with the Joint Board of Sanitary Control. The service was paid for by the Union.



The leaders of the organisation have hoped that the commissariat stores may be continued as a co-operative enterprise after the lock-out, but unfortunately co-operation has not reached that stage in America. The ending of the lock-out also marks the end of the commissariat stores.

The regular American method of injunctions was invoked to a degree that has not been heard of in an industrial struggle before. About twenty injunctions have been applied for by individual firms and half that number granted. Each firm asked for damages in various amounts which totalled up to nearly 4,000,000 dollars. Besides, two firms have petitioned the Court for dissolution of the Union because it is a conspiracy against the present social order and naturally against the Government. This was the first case of its kind in America.

The opinion of one judge on the bench was that the United States Government can take care of itself. It does not need the help of the New York clothing manufacturers. Another judge from the same branch of the Superior Court issued an *ex-parte* order, prohibiting picketing, &c. The injunctions, however, failed to produce any clothing. Neither did it have the effect of any members returning to work. On the contrary, the injunctions served to strengthen the morale of the locked-out members. The employers, realising that it was next to impossible to subdue the Amalgamated, sued for peace.

The Amalgamated scored a complete victory, inasmuch as it was instrumental in dethroning those responsible for the lock-out, the injunctions and the entire war machinery. The impartial machinery which was scrapped by the employers in December, 1920, was again restored, and an agreement was entered upon on June 3, 1921. Thus the conflict ended after a struggle of six months.

Minor compromises were made by the Union, namely, an allowance of fifteen per cent. reduction in wages for tailors, and the establishment of production standards. But these concessions the Union was quite willing to make before

the lock-out had taken place. The employers then turned it down. They know better now.

We come now to the structure of the Amalgamated.

Built upon the principle of industrial unionism, the Amalgamated has in its midst not only those directly engaged in the making of clothing, but also those indirectly involved, as, for instance, spongers, those who sponge the cloth before it is cut; drivers, who haul the cut work to the shops; machinists, who repair the machines when out of order; and shipping clerks, who pack and ship the goods when ready.

The Amalgamated is also an international Union in spirit and composition. It is a conglomeration of races. The European reader will be surprised to learn that there are no less than thirty-one different nationalities, each speaking its own language, but all imbued with the same spirit—the spirit of solidarity. The different languages are no hindrance to a complete understanding of the problems confronting the organisation. Indeed, one of the reasons for the cohesion and unity of purpose is the different language papers published by the General Office of the A.C.W. of A. In all, eight publications in the following principal languages are published:—English, Yiddish, Italian, Polish, Bohemian, Lithuanian, French and Russian.

The Amalgamated also values educational work considerably. It established an educational department which carries on educational work throughout the United States and Canada. It published a series of educational pamphlets and is planning an Amalgamated Labour Year Book.

Besides the regular administration departments in the organisation, there are two departments which are not common in all Labour Unions. They are the Record and Research Departments. The Record Department concerns itself with the records and statistics of the members, while the duty of the Research Department is to gather statistics about the industry, the earnings of the members, the cost of living and all other matters of interest to Labour.

# CARTOONS OF THE MONTH

## A RUSSIAN CARICATURE



From *Moscow*, the organ of the Third Congress of the Communist International

# UNEMPLOYMENT IN AMERICA



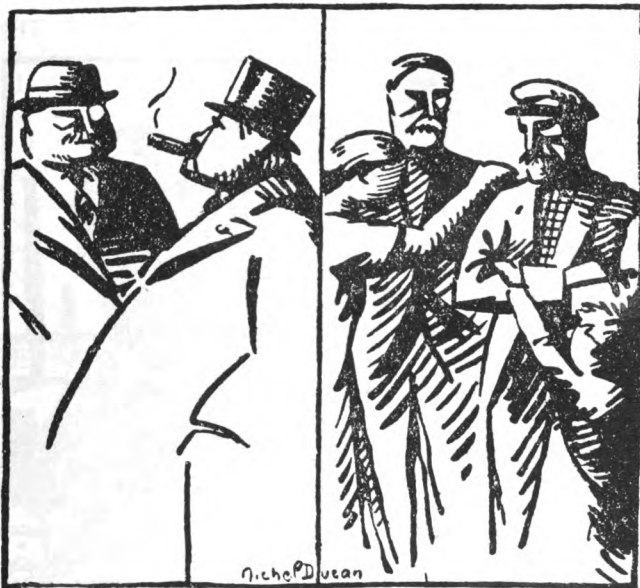
*Cake for Plutocracy*

From the New York Call. Drawing by Ryan Walker

# MILITARISM AND ANTI-MILITARISM IN FRANCE

THE CONQUERORS

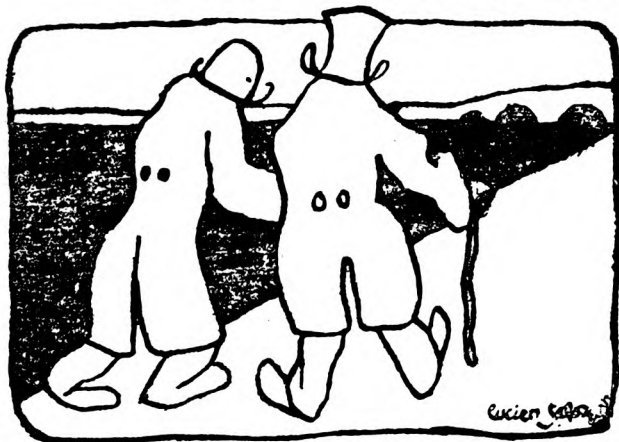
THE CONQUERED



French and German Capitalists

French and German Workers

From the *Voix Paysanne*. Drawing by Michel Ducan



"When I think that in this twentieth century there are still Germans in existence, I ask myself whether I am still a Frenchman"

From *Humanité*. Drawing by Lucien Laforge

# GERMAN CAPITALISM RECOVERING



The Tentacles of Stinnes

The great German industrialist, Stinnes, is reported to control over 170 enterprises and 60 newspapers

*From the Freie Welt*

# SHORTER NOTICES

## THE FOURTH ALL-RUSSIAN TRADES UNION CONGRESS

**T**HE Fourth All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions was held in Moscow on May 18, and lasted to May 26, 1921. It was the first full Congress of Russian Trade Unionists since the end of military operations on all fronts in Soviet Russia. The agenda covered a wide field, as can be seen from the following items:—

- (a) Report of the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions;
- (b) Regulation of payment by commodities and money;
- (c) Protection of labour and insurance;
- (d) Methods of increasing production;
- (e) Reconstruction of Soviet Russia's industry;
- (f) Co-operation;
- (g) Education, etc.

Secretary Schmidt gave a detailed report about the activities of the Presidium of the All-Russian Council. The Executive report dealt with the difficulties of organising during the past year owing to the continuous operations on many fronts. The proposed regulation for payment by commodities had also been hindered by the great scarcity of food and of manufactured goods. It was hoped, however, that in the near future this subject would be regulated according to the decisions of the last Congress. The activities of Trade Unionists in the different Soviet institutions were also reported, and it was pointed out that the power of the Trade Unions as regards questions of labour, food, etc., had increased very much. The report showed that the number of trade organisations had doubled. The total membership of all Russian Trade Unions is estimated at 6,800,000, of whom 1,123,000 are in Ukraine, 450,000 in Caucasia, 559,000 in Siberia and Urals, and 120,000 in the Soviet Republic of Kirgiz.

Kaplun spoke on the protection of labour. He pointed out that now all institutions in connection with this are no longer in the hands of the Commissariat of Labour, but are entrusted to the Trade Unions.

Ziperovich spoke on economic reconstruction. He submitted a number of practical proposals which were accepted by the Congress.

Schmidt gave a report on co-operation, while Tomsy spoke on future work of the Trade Unions and Isaieff on education.

At the end Comrade Bucharin gave a speech on the economic position of Western Europe and Russia. When Bucharin had finished his speech Lozovsky moved that the Congress should vote

a sum of 200,000 gold roubles for the British miners. This was seconded by hundreds of voices at once, and carried unanimously. Thereupon all the delegates rose and sang the Internationale and gave many hearty cheers for the British miners.

## NORWEGIAN MEMORANDUM ON THE CONTROL OF INDUSTRY

**T**HE Norwegian Federation of Labour has addressed a memorandum to the Government demanding control of industry and support for the unemployed. The following extracts are given in the Danish *Arbejderbladet* (June 7):—

“ We have repeatedly demanded the introduction of industrial control, so that it may be possible to prevent undertakings from being closed down, except on grounds of public utility. For it appears to us quite evident that in many cases the closing down of works is simply a concealed form of lock-out on the part of the employers, carried out in order to force down wages fixed by arbitration or agreement. It was made abundantly clear during the negotiations in the seamen’s dispute that the employers do not hesitate to demand changes in wage-rates which, according to arbitration decree, are valid until 1922.

“ It is therefore essential that the closing down of works and the management of industry as a whole shall be subject to control. We do not here propose to enter into details as to how this may be carried out. There should be no great difficulties, provided the will to overcome them is there. The general lines of control in this matter may be supposed to take the form of control by industry. A council or committee may be appointed for each industry, composed of representatives of the workers in the industry (the term workers to cover all persons engaged in the industry irrespective of position). These industrial councils would link up with the workers’ committees or works’ councils of individual undertakings. They would have the right to control management, examine accounts, etc. No stoppage would be allowed without the sanction of the industrial council.

“ Control of this type would make for security, and would prevent the exploitation of crises for speculative purposes or for forcing down the workers’ wages. . . .

“ If work cannot be found the unemployed must be supported. Hitherto the unemployment funds of the Trade Unions, supplemented by public grants, have been sufficient. But with the growth of unemployment the Trade Union funds become depleted, to which should be added the fact that the unemployment of individual workers is of such long duration that they lose the right to benefit. It is estimated that at present some 15,000 of the unemployed are



wholly without support, and this number is steadily increasing. It is to be feared that the position next autumn and winter will be even worse.

“Under these circumstances our Executive Committee (Representantskap) has determined to demand a grant of Kr. 50 millions for the unemployed, and we therefore request the Government to include such grant in the forthcoming Budget.

“In laying this matter before the Government we demand that action be taken immediately. Delay may have fatal results. The many thousands who are prevented from earning their living by their labour have the right to demand of the Government of the country that no means be left untried to provide them with work or support.”

### GERMAN TRADE UNION STATISTICS

**T**HE latest statistics from Germany show that the membership of the Trade Union movement has decreased during 1921. The total number of organised workers is now 7,968,590—6,308,000 men and 1,660,590 women; for the last quarter of 1920 the figures were: total, 8,006,435—men, 6,315,303; women, 1,691,132. In part this may be due to the Silesian situation, for many Germans have there joined the Polish Unions; but the reduction is also attributed to a growing apathy amongst the workers caused by the increase in the cost of living on the one hand, and the impossibility of procuring wage increases to meet the situation.

Employers are threatening an all-round 15 per cent. reduction in wages; many industries are closed down or working part time because of the “sanctions” and resultant cut in the export trade.

### TRADE UNION REPRESSION IN HUNGARY AND JUGO-SLAVIA

**A** RECENT report shows the number of organised workers in Hungary to be 152,441, while in 1918 the strength was 721,437. The counter-revolutionary activities have done much to reduce the Trade Union membership, and in addition the railway, tramway, State and municipal employees' Unions have been disbanded. Unemployment is rife owing to cessation of exports, and Union funds are being rapidly exhausted, as there are no State unemployment grants.

In Jugo-Slavia the Government has led the way in the matter of wage reductions; after the unsuccessful strike in the Bosnian State Mines the first act of the Government was to reduce wages.

Despite the Government's desire to kill the Trade Union movement, it has not dared to declare Trade Unions in general illegal; but employees in State enterprises or those of public utility are forbidden to belong to any Union or to strike.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## THE GERMAN REVOLUTION.

*Die Deutsche Revolution, ihr Ursprung, ihr Verlauf, und ihr Werk.*  
Eduard Bernstein. Verlag Gesellschaft und Erziehung,  
Fichtenau.

*Was ist das Verbrechen? Die Maerzaktion oder die Kritik darum.*  
Paul Levi. Verlag Seehof, Berlin.

EDWARD BERNSTEIN has just published the first volume of his history of the German Revolution. There are probably few people better adapted to write this history than Bernstein, who as the founder of the Reformist school of German Socialism, is the obvious man to interpret this most reformist of Revolutions. This last term is, of course, a contradiction, but the fact is that Bernstein has to face a contradiction from the outset of his book. For the early chapters contain admirable descriptions of the great mass action of November, 1918, for "freedom, peace and bread," of the sailors' revolt at Kiel, and of the general strike at Berlin—all very improper forms of direct action, which must pain the heart of a good Reformist; while the rest of the book has to explain how this great revolt was in reality nothing more than a desire on the part of the German people to live a little more comfortably within the framework of the capitalist system. One may therefore be pardoned for harbouring the idea that Bernstein would really have preferred that the Kiel sailors had not revolted, that the Berlin workmen had not struck, but had instead sent a deputation to William Hohenzollern, requesting him to be so kind as to grant a constitution and to abdicate. But if they had done this, I do not believe that Bernstein would ever have written his book.

This history is certainly the best that has yet appeared on the German Revolution. Bernstein has had access to the official archives and gives us, as objectively as possible, the various currents running within the Revolution. He is tolerably fair even to the Spartacists, and quotes large extracts from their Press of that period. Of course, he allows his own views to intrude upon the narrative, as he is duly entitled to do. One sees the author's pet idea of Socialist Unity running through the book. For instance, the Independent Socialists come in for criticism in Chapter xi for having left the revolutionary Government in December, 1918, as a protest against the activities of Scheidemann, Ebert and Landsberg. "This made the situation of the young republic most difficult. It removed from the Government those elements, whose attitude during the war guaranteed a break with Kaiserdom. At home it removed the guarantees against the suspicions of the most radical elements of the populace. From

a human point of view the coup of the Independents was explicable. Politically it was a disastrous capitulation to Spartakus." And here, of course, Bernstein just fails to see the essential fact of this period, viz.: the inevitable collision between those who were determined that the German Revolution should be a social one and those who were equally determined that it should be nothing more than a political one with a change of personalities.

Bernstein is quite fair in those of his passages dealing with the revolts of the Marine Brigade and the activities of Noske. His own party comrades come in for criticism for having used the military units of the old Kaiser's army to fire upon Berlin workmen and sailors on Christmas Eve, 1918, before all avenues of peaceful persuasion had been explored. Noske is regarded as a "victim of circumstances," which required that "someone must be a bloodhound." In fact, Bernstein is uncomfortably aware of the fact, which outside observers in Berlin during these weeks had become aware of, namely, that once the Majority Socialists had decided to postpone big social changes in Germany to the indefinite future, there was nothing left for them but to crush Spartakus in blood and to use the ex-Kaiser's generals to do the job, with a Socialist camouflage in the person of Noske to make it look respectable. Bernstein obviously does not like the rôle that his party was forced to play by the logic of circumstances. So he thunders at Spartakus and shakes his head sadly over Scheidemann.

Throughout the book there is complete failure to see in Spartakus anything but an anarcho-Blanquist phenomenon. This is curious, for Bernstein, with his knowledge of Marxian literature, should at least understand that "direct mass action" is not the same as "Blanquism." In order to understand this period of the German Revolution it is necessary to read Paul Levi's new booklet, which has opportunely just appeared, on the crisis in the German Communist Party. Levi shows that among the Spartacists in January, 1919, there were two tendencies in sharp conflict with one another. One was for the overthrow of the Scheidemann Government by the armed revolt of a few select forces. To this group Liebknecht gave his prestige and partly also his leadership. Levi correctly calls this the "Blanquist" group within Spartakus, seeking to bring about great social changes by the shock tactics of an armed minority. Against this was the other group, led by Rosa Luxemburg and Yogisches, who held that the time was not ripe for the overthrow of the Scheidemann regime, and that no social revolution can be "made" by a small group without at least the passive support of the indifferent masses. Levi makes the startling assertion that Rosa Luxemburg would have broken with Liebknecht, as soon as the rising of January, 1919, in Berlin had been liquidated, had not both of them been cruelly

murdered in the meantime. The crisis, which owing to their deaths and the Noske Terror did not take place within the German Communist Party, has now come and is reflected in the crisis of the whole Third International. The World Congress in Moscow will have to decide whether the Third International is to become an "anarchist club," as Levi puts it, or the centre round which the revolutionary "mass parties" of the world are to congregate.

M. PHILLIPS PRICE.

### BACK TO PLOTINUS.

*Back to Methusaleh: A Metaphysical Pentateuch.* By Bernard Shaw. Constable, 10s.

**I**N their old age men turn to religion. The alarming parallelism between the later Shaw and the later Wells in the freedom with which they scatter the name of God about their pages is an interesting example of the pietism of the post-war period. Not that Shaw ever sinks to the level of Wells; his style, far from being less brilliant as he pretends, is more packed and incisive than ever; but there is in both, whether translated through the commonplaceness of the one mind or the fineness of the other, the same air of intensive and slightly inhuman ethical preoccupation.

The explanation may be found by a little closer study of the social philosopher, Marx, whom Shaw appears to confuse with the materialist, Buckle, and to remember only as the author of a work on Capital. All post-war literature needs to be studied pathologically. Horror and the breakdown of all visible order makes men seek for comfort. Some find it in animalism, some in spiritualism, and some in mysticism. On the intense and trained perception of Shaw the war has produced a reaction more intense than on any other living writer. Nowhere, save in the manifestoes of the Third International, is there anything so nearly adequate to its significance as in "Heartbreak House" and the present volume. Far more than the direct war-studies and war poems these books will stand out as a measure of the horror reached. It is this vivid, unforgetting consciousness of contemporary fact, and not his rather thin philosophising, that gives to Shaw his pre-eminent position and makes other writers appear as children besides him.

The actual basic conception may be dull. In the present volume he proposes that human beings by a great effort of will (like John Stuart Mill overcoming his natural bonhomie to write on political economy) should live for 300 years. There is nothing very striking or convincing in this. The notion that length of years gives a wider outlook hardly seems justified by experience. But the real point of the suggestion is in the demonstration that men to-day are children,

unfit to live or look after themselves, and yet armed with powers that would make the ancient gods look small.

One must be excused for not treating the long discourses on "Creative Evolution" too seriously. They are very inspiring and uplifting to those who like an inspiration and uplift that is at any rate sensible and not palpably dishonest. But the scientific jargon is just juggling. Shaw is always good at getting up the technicalities of a trade, witness his splendid stuff on boxing. But the real argument is purely and simply ethical. He objects to mind being driven out of the universe. The alternative theory of chance, or rather "circumstantial selection," he describes successively as coarse, shallow, sickening, and inhuman. In other words, he does not like it. Now it is very creditable to prefer that mind and will should be given first place, if a theory is to have vital value. But someone else may prefer that a personal God should be introduced as essential to the scheme of things from the point of view of good living. And someone else may prefer heaven, purgatory, and hell, or the divine mission of the State. And so on without end. That is the worst of teleology. It always leads you to fit reality to your desires, instead of learning to subordinate your desires to reality. The only real alternative is dialectic. But the Marxian dialectic is unknown and unguessed at to the bourgeois and intellectual world, as the writings of their most distinguished representatives continually betray. And after all Shaw is simply a first-class old-school teleological philosopher. R. P. D.



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Drawing by Henri Jean Louis

Back to the Pre-War Grind.



# NOTES of the MONTH

*Two Conferences—The Moscow Congress—Militarism and  
Economics—The Red Trade Union International—  
The French Crisis at Lille—American  
Labour Developments*

**T**WO Conferences are likely to mark the year 1921. One is the Conference of the Great Powers to be held at Washington under the auspices of the American Government. The other is the Conference of the revolutionary movements of the world just held at Moscow under the auspices of the Russian Government. In the perspective of 1921 these two conferences may be expected to take on a certain symbolic significance. Not that they succeed in summing up in themselves the manifold tendencies and forces at present operating in every country. But they do present in a sharp and extreme contrast the dominant opposing forces in the world situation to-day. It will not fail to be noticed that in a conference of States concerned with the Far East, Russia, a State as directly concerned as any, is ostentatiously left out of the invitation. The Conference of Washington is the Conference of Capitalism endeavouring to recover its balance. Whether Capitalism will succeed in this is the question of the future. Will it ever be possible to return to the pre-war equilibrium? "Back to Pre-War" is the Capitalist motto of to-day—"Normalcy," as President Harding calls it, using, with the skill of the experienced advertiser, a word that repels to fascinate the attention of the world. But, as Bernard Shaw recently remarked to a Committee that was endeavouring to estimate its budget for a normal year, "there will be no more normal years." And even if it were possible to return to Pre-War, does not Pre-War inevitably lead to The War? Thus Capitalism is tied up in its own tangle: the rivalries and dislocations of which it is composed have not been solved, but magnified a hundred times, by the war, and President Harding's Association of Nations has to answer an enigma which has defeated in turn the Hague, the Concert and the League.

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**B**UT if there is no solution along these lines, if the present depression gives way, not to renewed prosperity, but only to temporary stimulations followed by greater crises, if the path to bankruptcy and world war is followed out to its bitter end, then, and then only, arises the importance of that permanent waiting opposition of revolution which is represented by the Moscow Congress. This, rather than the actual proceedings, which seem to have been less noteworthy than on previous occasions, is the significance for the world in general of the Moscow Congress. The reports that are so far available of the Congress do not suggest any important decision or change in policy. The central question that dominated all others is the question that is facing every government and school of thought to-day. What is the future of the world situation? Is the revolutionary wave passing, or is the present set-back only temporary? Will Capitalism be able to re-establish itself as a stable system? It is the same question that in another form is facing Washington. The answer of Moscow will be found in the report presented to the Congress by L. Trotsky and E. Varga, which we reprint elsewhere, so far as it bears on the world economic situation. For the rest, the Congress was occupied for most of the time with internal questions of the various parties; and on these the existing situation was approved without change. The Italian Socialist Party, which under the leadership of Serrati had stood for unity with the Parliamentarian Turati, was definitely refused admission; the German Communist Labour Party (a Left-Wing semi-Syndicalist body) was instructed to unite with the German Communist Party if it was to remain in the Third International; the French Communist Party, which, having only just taken over the majority of French Socialists to Communism, is still new to the Communist tradition, was let off with a caution; the same treatment was accorded to the other principal new accession, the Czecho-Slovak Communist party, a new party with nearly half a million members; and the British Communist Party appears to have received a severe admonition for its lack of effective contact with the masses. All this is an interesting example of the working of an International which does not feel satisfied with simple conferences and resolutions, but is clearly very keen on keeping its constituent parties up to the scratch.

## Notes of the Month

**S**OME of the debates of the Congress make fascinating reading. On one occasion, during the discussion of the Economic Report, a fiery Polish delegate objected to the appearance of so much economics at a revolutionary congress. "We welcome the fact," said he, "that the report on the economic situation was made by the leader of the Red Army, Comrade Trotsky. This shows that the Communist International will conduct the struggle, not by means of statistics and figures, but with the sword." Trotsky's reply is characteristic. He said: "Comrade Braun declared that we must fight the bourgeoisie, not with statistics, but with the sword; and he confused me with the report. I must remark that in my work with the Red Army I had to deal more with statistics than the sword. The very idea of the sword is romantic. I had to devote more time in the Red Army to uniforms, trousers and pants. Statistics is an adjunct of the sword, and the sword an adjunct of statistics." This scene, which might have come straight out of Shaw's "Arms and the Man," is incidentally a useful corrective to the conventional picture of Trotsky as the fire-eating militarist. It looks as if the Bertrand Russell picture of Trotsky will have to go the way of his picture of Gorki "dying."

**F**OR the Labour world in general the principal event that happened at Moscow is not the Communist Congress, but the founding of the Red Trade Union International. This project has been incubating ever since last August, and has now at last been hatched. The representatives present at the Congress do not seem to have been much more authoritative spokesmen for their countries than were those at the Inaugural Congress of the Third International two and a half years ago. In the majority of cases, apart from Russia, Italy, and one or two other countries, they represented minority sections, either forming separate movements, as with the I.W.W. of America, or existing simply as oppositions within the national movements. These oppositions represented very varying degrees of organisation; in the case of the British delegation, which was headed by Tom Mann, organisation can hardly be said to have begun. The figures of membership quoted at the Congress were, to say the least of it, premature. Nevertheless, it would be a mis-

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take to underestimate the potentialities of the Red Trade Union International. It may easily become the rallying point round which all the discontents in the Trade Union world may gather and concentrate their attack upon the present leadership. What stands in the way of this is the incurable dissensions of the left wing among themselves. He is a bold man who will hope to unite in one fold the I.W.W., the Syndicalists, the Worker's Committees, the Italian Confederation of Labour, and the Communist Trade Unions of Russia. These dissensions revealed themselves already at the first Congress. A resolution in favour of the closest working relation with the Communist International was carried by 282 to 35 votes, the minority standing for the principle of Trade Union autonomy; and the decision has immediately led to difficulties in the French left wing movement, with its anti-political traditions. Meanwhile we note that the South Wales Miners' Federation (like the Scottish Trades Union Congress before the recent referendum) has voted in favour of affiliation by a large majority.

**T**HE first test of the new Trade Union International has been witnessed in France. The Lille Congress of the French Confederation of Labour represented the culmination of a conflict which has been going on for seven years, ever since the momentous decisions of 1914, when the Confederation on the outbreak of war abandoned its tradition of uncompromising revolution and entered on the new path of social solidarity. The revolutionary minority has been growing steadily, and last year at the Orleans Congress mustered 602 votes against 1,479 for the Executive. Since then a whole series of separate Federations and Departmental Unions have been going over to the revolutionary opposition, including the Railwaymen, the Builders, the Postal and Telegraph Employees and the Unions of the Paris area. The official elements adopted the doubtful policy of endeavouring to expel the opposition from the Trade Union ranks. The final voting shows a very striking growth in the revolutionary strength. The Executive Report was only adopted by 1,556 to 1,348 votes, with 46 abstentions. The policy resolution in favour of continued affiliation to the International Federation of Trade Unions (Amsterdam) was

## Notes of the Month

carried by 1,572 to 1,327 votes for the Red Trade Union International. This position is not likely to be permanent; although the danger of a split has been avoided for the present. If the increase in strength of the revolutionaries goes on at the present rate, they should be in control of the Confederation in a very short time. But much may happen before then: the position of the Executive is extremely difficult, and the danger of a split is not yet over.

**T**HE difference between a Congress and a Convention is that the former takes place in Europe and the latter in America. Two recent Conventions in America worth noting must be added to the list of Conferences that have monopolised this month's NOTES. The Denver Convention of the American Federation of Labour in June seemed in the first reports to be merely a victory for President Gompers in the familiar style. But fuller reports now show that a resolution of some interest on the democratic control of industry was passed without a division. The resolution which was introduced by the International Association of Machinists, the third largest Union in the Federation (reprinted on page 180), is entirely vague in character except for its reference to the public ownership and democratic operation of the railways; but it marks a new departure for the American Federation of Labour, and is an extension of the resolution carried last year with reference to the railways alone. It is significant that President Gompers took no part in the discussion. The election to the Presidency was also challenged for the first time since 1885; and Gompers retained his position by 25,324 votes against 12,324 for John Lewis, of the United Mine Workers. In the same month took place the Detroit Convention of the American Socialist Party. The American Socialist Party is now only a shadow of its former self: in the place of the 1919 membership of 109,589 the total was announced to have sunk to 17,000. This is the result of the events of 1919, when many large sections of the party with Communist sympathies were expelled on the ground of alleged irregularities. A message from the National Headquarters states that 60,000 members were then expelled. The party decided to take no action with regard to international affiliation.

# “BLACK FRIDAY’ AND AFTER”

## A REPLY

By ROBERT WILLIAMS

**D**URING periods like the present we become prone to over-estimate everything of an untoward nature.

I am fully convinced the Triple Alliance is irretrievably broken, but the Labour Movement and its constituent sections remain with all their possibilities, latent and actual.

We are now back to the state of acute depression we were in during the terrible period between August, 1914, and the end of 1917. In almost every country the vitality of the Labour Movement is at a very low ebb; it is suffering from the physical, mental and moral effects which inevitably follow as a direct consequence of war. The militant section of the rank and file blames and condemns the leaders; the leaders ascribe the present apathy, bordering on despair, to the lack of interest or pugnacity on the part of the overwhelming masses of the rank and file. I think they are both correct. Wars have invariably been followed by periods of physical exhaustion. Ought we to expect virility, pugnacity and audacity to be the outcome of the most recent outburst of organised butchery? The fact remains, the Movement, as such, has for the time being, at least, lost its “punch.”

Mr. Cole in his recent article does well to point out, “it is not worth while to use revolutionary means for purely reformist ends,” nor, may I add, can we possibly use reformist means to accomplish revolutionary aims and objects. The Triple Alliance could never be held to be a revolutionary organisation. From the period of its inception in 1914

## “‘Black Friday’ and After.” A Reply

it has been frankly a reformist body. In private conversations between Smillie and myself we have been at all times convinced that it was impossible for the Triple Alliance ever to be more than a sort of finger-post indicating the direction in which organised Labour might ultimately march as a solid phalanx.

When, in 1914, the constitution was drawn up, the Alliance was almost torpedoed by the attempt on the part of the Miners’ Federation to impose its ballot system upon the other two constituent organisations. A compromise was arranged in the following form (Clause 8 of the Constitution):—

“Joint action can only be taken when the question at issue has been before the members of the three organisations and decided upon by such methods as the constitution of each organisation provides.”

The Miners’ Federation, outnumbering as it does the Railwaymen and Transport workers combined, has largely influenced the thought, feeling and policy of the Alliance. To the Miners the ballot is a sacred institution; the tradition has grown up in consequence of the conditions obtaining in mining work. Men in the mining world move slowly, but their movement is solid and precise; for many years non-unionism has ceased to exist, and the employment of blackleg labour is quite out of the question in a Mining Dispute. Transport workers and Railwaymen—especially the intelligent amongst them—realise that a ballot in their industries would be disastrous. On many occasions it has been pointed out to the Miners’ Federation representatives that there should be an all-round reciprocal obligation on the part of the three organisations, if the Triple Alliance was ever to become a really militant organisation. The Alliance has always rested on the assumption that if the Railwaymen and/or the Transport workers found themselves in a position where they had to fight for the very existence of their organisation, no material help, in the form of sympathetic strike action, could come from the Miners’ Federa-

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tion until the members of that body had been balloted and a two-thirds majority in favour of such action obtained. The Railway and Transport workers, however, having the power, real or nominal in the case of the Transport workers, to declare strike action through their respective Executives and/or Delegate Conferences, as and when circumstances should determine, are supposed by implication at least to declare immediately for sympathetic strike action to assist the Mine Workers. This, as has been well realised, is an intolerable position. It has been urged over and over again that the Miners' Federation should modify its constitution in order to give, either to its Executive or Delegate Conference, powers comparable to those possessed by the other two organisations, or, on the other hand, the other two constituent bodies in the Alliance should be entitled to take a ballot as to whether joint action should be engaged in with the Miners' Federation. Some of us have tried to make it clear that in the case of a Transport dispute the cumbrous, long-drawn-out ballot process would have the effect of enabling the authorities to improvise a strike-breaking machine which would make the strike almost impotent from its very commencement.

Although the Miners appear to think otherwise, we have sufficient knowledge and experience to realise there is no comparison whatsoever between a Mining dispute and a Transport dispute. In the former case, when a million Mine Workers withdraw their labour little or no immediate effects are felt at the outset, but week by week the shortage of coal has the effect of a creeping paralysis upon the industries of the country, and the strike, as we have seen recently, becomes increasingly more deadly. In a Transport strike the results are entirely different. When a half-million Railway Workers stop, as they did in September, 1919, the immediate results are dramatic and apparently decisive; but as the dispute protracts the Government and the railway companies are able, at least, to improvise some kind of transport service. In the case of a joint strike between Rail-



## “‘Black Friday’ and After.” A Reply

men and Transport Workers the effect would be even more complete, and, therefore, more decisive.

The opponents to the inclusion of a clause in the Railways Bill enabling railway companies to embark upon a road transport service have made this possibility one of their foremost objections to the railway companies having such powers, because it has been held that the men employed in such road transport services organised by the railway companies would be in the Railwaymen's organisation, and would, therefore, make common cause with their fellow-members in the existing railway service, thus making the paralysis in the event of a stoppage more complete.

Another palpable defect in the structure of the Triple Alliance, to which a few of us called constant attention, was the unwillingness of the National Union of Railwaymen to accept the application of the Associated Society of Locomotive Enginemen and Firemen for joint participation in the work of the Alliance, and also the unwillingness on the part of the Miners' Federation to accede to the request made on behalf of the colliery enginemen and other comparable grades engaged in and about collieries to become parties to the work and obligations of the Triple Alliance. Here are two key sections, without the co-operation of which a Triple Alliance strike would run a serious risk of non-success. The defects within the Transport Workers' Federation have been made as clear to me as to any one man in the Movement, and arising out of my knowledge of these defects I pressed for the insertion of the following as part of the constitution of the Alliance at the time that constitution was finally ratified:—

Simultaneously with this arrangement for united action between the three organisations in question every effort shall proceed amongst the three sections to create effective and complete control of their respective bodies.

The Transport Workers' Federation has suffered in the past from the diversity of its Executive control. Nominal power is vested in the hands of its Executive Council, but actually an Executive Council of fourteen permanent

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officials, appointed from separate organisations, could scarcely presume to shape a policy which would call for the active co-operation and support of thirty-five separate and distinct organisations, each having its own Executive Council.

It must not be forgotten in criticising the Triple Alliance that, whether by prophetic insight, by audacious strategy, or by simple bluff, the Triple Alliance has rendered conspicuous service to the Working-class Movement in Great Britain and to the International. Many of the leaders of the Soviet Government with whom I conversed whilst in Russia, during the visit of the Labour Delegation last year, were convinced that the action of the Triple Alliance, by its threat of strike action against Britain's anti-Russian policy and in holding up the transport of munitions of war, saved the situation during the counter-revolutionary onslaughts of Koltchak, Denikin, Yudenitch and others during 1918 and 1919. The Triple Alliance, moreover, was responsible, definitely and unquestionably, for preventing the importation of coloured indentured labour into this country, even when such policy had been approved by the Labour member of the War Cabinet. The Triple Alliance was successful in the joint economic movement which secured an all-round reduction of hours of labour for Miners, Railwaymen and Transport Workers during the period immediately following the signing of the Armistice, and it showed at least some insight into the capacity for deception on the part of Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues by keeping aloof, when he and his colleagues formed the National Joint Industrial Council, of which, if my memory serves me well, Mr. Cole consented to act as secretary. The leaders of the Alliance at that period when economic conditions were propitious, and consequently when a militant policy was easier, were not led away by the specious pleas of Mr. Lloyd George at the inaugural meeting of the said National Joint Industrial Council, for they realised that this effort on his part was only used as a sort of lightning conductor against

## “ ‘Black Friday’ and After.” A Reply

the clamorous demands of the Miners, Railwaymen and Transport Workers.

Now let us approach the subject-matter of Mr. Cole's criticism of the declaration of the Strike and its eventual cancellation. We are told “it was easy enough to be a loyal Trade Unionist when trade was good and labour scarce, but it would be hard when the period of artificial prosperity came to an end, and was replaced by a period of depression equally born of war conditions.” Were we not all compelled to realise this? Was not this our veriest nightmare amongst Transport Workers? Of course we were, and are, Socialists; certainly we had voted for, and shall continue to subscribe to, revolutionary principles! The really phenomenal thing was that, despite the efforts of Havelock Wilson and the delegates of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union (which, by the way, is leaving the Transport Workers' Federation before being asked to do so, as the outcome of a decision of the Edinburgh Conference) to sabotage the Strike resolution, the Transport Workers' delegates showed unexampled working-class solidarity. The Railwaymen's delegates, too, were for fighting to the last man and the last shilling. And the most encouraging feature of the entire crisis was the way in which the Executive Committee of the “Locomen,” forgetful of the rivalries arising out of the Mallow and a thousand and one other incidents, determined to throw in their lot with the Alliance. Looking back upon it all, I am confident that delay brought strength day by day. We had to convince our scattered and diverse legions; it would be madness to attempt to coerce them into strike action. It must not be overlooked they were being called upon, not for action in their own immediate interests or on their own behalf, but to assist their fellow mine workers, the justice of whose claim a thousand lying tongues were denying.

Hodges said the other day at Brighton—it is idle to attempt to apportion blame to individuals; the reasons for failure could not be found in any subversive efforts of this, that, or any other man. The reasons for the failure are right

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down in the root of things, and personal recrimination leads us nowhere. Personal factors must, however, count in all human movements. The delegate conferences were good, and the direct representatives of the rank and file were sound to the core. The movement gathered strength daily, despite all that has been said and written against delay. The bulk of the delegates quite properly believed the threat of strike action would be sufficient to force a settlement satisfactory to the Miners' Federation. How we missed the guiding hand of Robert Smillie those fateful days! he would have resisted any diversity of Executive counsel, and he would not have permitted the open rupture which transpired after the House of Commons incident on "Black Thursday." He would have appreciated to the full the difference between heroics on the one hand and stern, inexorable realism on the other. Harry Gosling, the acting president of the Alliance, expressed the straightforward working-class view when he said to Lloyd George at Downing Street: "We should be rotters not to help the Miners out of their difficulty." Had Smillie been present, he, as president of the Miners' Federation and of the Triple Alliance, with his almost uncanny insight would, I am confident, have fought to the end against the separate meeting of the Miners' Executive which, by turning down Hodges, drove a wedge right through the Alliance.

"Neither the N.U.R. nor the Transport Workers' Federation could emerge successfully from such an ordeal as the Miners have come through, with their resources exhausted indeed, but with their Trade Unionism unimpaired," says Mr. Cole. Here is a statement of the very obvious to us who have been forced to realise the differences between Mining and Transport. In the recent Mining Dispute, as well as in the eight weeks' dispute of 1912, not one single ton of coal was obtained from the coal face by the employment of black-leg labour. Can anyone imagine that a Railway or Transport Strike would be allowed to proceed even for eight hours, leave alone eight weeks, without the introduction of the

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military, naval ratings, the air force, “white guards,” “volunteers,” and all the loyal members of the community upon whom the Government would be able to call? Mr. Cole’s accusation, if, indeed, accusation it be, is our strongest justification for the action thrust upon us; in fact, when a general strike took place in the Port of Glasgow because of the unwillingness of the Glasgow Dockers to handle imported coal, four thousand “volunteers,” “scabs” and imported labourers were found to carry on the work of those of our members who had risked their all in support of the Miners’ Federation. Surely every intelligent Socialist must realise that Transport is the very arterial blood system of the community! All the forces of the State were brought into being, not to replace one single Mine Worker, but to take the places of Railway and Transport Workers. After a long-drawn-out Mining Dispute, when a resumption takes place the problem of reinstatement does not arise, the men automatically proceeding to their work; but in the case especially of a Transport Dispute, as we have found to our bitter cost since the policy of the embargo on foreign coal, reinstatement is the most difficult problem that concerns us everywhere.

It has been urged that there were those who were anxiously awaiting any slender pretext to excuse participation in a Strike of Triple Alliance proportions. Here they were provided with an excuse almost amounting to justification. It was not, as has been suggested, the influence of “Panic”; it was something nearer a blind, unreasoning, unwillingness to face the stubborn reality. Most of us were convinced that in a struggle of endurance between the Government and the Miners alone the end could be clearly foreseen. We knew that at any time a Triple Alliance contest against “all the resources of the State” would be an “even” chance, but that on a falling market, with some million and a half unemployed, the odds were against us.

This was pointed out more than once, but we were

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peremptorily told to "get on t'field" by the President of the Miners' Federation.

It is only my reasoned conviction, but I offer it for what it is worth: Had the Miners' Federation gone to Lloyd George, who was just as scared as we were, in the forenoon of that important Friday when the Triple Alliance Strike was *in potentia*, the Miners could have made a settlement wherein the Government would have given such financial assistance to the Mining Industry as would have been requisite to maintain wages up to the cost-of-living figures. Be that as it may, we were entitled to consider whether we could force the hands of the Cabinet as they were being forced by the Coalition members who were prepared to desert Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Robert Horne.

Now let me admit Mr. Cole's distinction between the mass meeting and the Executive Council. At a conference facts have to be faced which, in the nature of the case, are scarcely touched upon at a mass meeting or demonstration.

I could easily fill many more pages with an array of incidents known to us before and fully confirmed since, the mere revelation of which, whilst being of little value to us, would add to our opponents' knowledge of our manifold weaknesses. Military wars have an ending, when there can be the most intimate revelations regarding policy, tactics and strategical considerations, but the Class Struggle continues interminably.

The Triple Alliance has gone. What can be done to maintain a strong and well-directed alliance of the workers employed in the various forms of Transport remains to be seen. The Triple Alliance paved the way for the Council of Action, and the proposed General Council or "General Staff." We must not give one another the "hump" these dolorous days.

I have been amongst those who have ever suggested that reform or revolution must come ultimately from well-directed pressure from beneath.

We were told that on "Black Friday" and after thousands of Railway and Transport Workers were straining at the leash

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to do something to help the Miners. Not being able to do as some of us would have liked, we attempted to render the Miners all the help we could by placing an embargo on imported coal. Both nationally and internationally, all the factors of unemployment, with the “reserve army of labour” as a means of recruitment of strike breakers, were against us. The Coal Embargo, like the threatened Triple Alliance Strike, fizzled out.

In spite of all, the Movement will go on. The sheer pressure of industrial and political events will compel solidarity. Things were obtained rather too easily during the war. We, and especially the Miners, have been caught in the backwash of the infamous Treaty of Versailles.

It does not matter very much what I or Mr. Cole may write. The men in the coal mines, on the railways, in the factories and workshops, and on the docks will have to keep the Movement straight. They are dimly and vaguely, but definitely, realising the implications of Internationalism. Most things of value in this life are those which take longest to produce. The Transport Workers’ Federation was down, right down, after the ill-fated London Dock Strike of 1912 and the abortive National Strike called to help the London Transport Workers; but the Movement recovered and became strong because of its signal failure.

Successes have made us over-confident; and my own sincere desire is that upon the ruins of the Triple Alliance shall be built another stronger and more helpful structure for the purpose of working-class emancipation. The Triple Alliance is dead! Long live International Working-Class Solidarity!

# THE WORLD ECONOMIC SITUATION

By L. TROTSKY and E. VARGA

## §1 *The Root of the Problem*

**T**HE revolutionary movement at the close of the imperialist war and during the succeeding period has been marked by unprecedented intensity. The month of March, 1917, witnessed the overthrow of Tsarism. In May, 1917, a vehement strike movement broke out in England. In November, 1917, the Russian proletariat seized the power of Government. The month of November, 1918, marked the downfall of the German and Austro-Hungarian monarchies. In the course of the succeeding year, a number of European countries were being swept by a powerful strike movement constantly gaining in scope and intensity. In March, 1919, a Soviet Republic was inaugurated in Hungary. At the close of that year the United States were convulsed by turbulent strikes involving the metal-workers, miners and railwaymen. Following the January and March battles of 1919, the revolutionary movement in Germany reached its culminating point shortly after the Kapp uprising in March, 1920. The internal situation in France became most tense in the month of May, 1920. In Italy we witnessed the constant growth of unrest among the industrial and agrarian proletariat, leading in September, 1920, to the seizure of factories, mills and estates by the workers. In December, 1920, the Czech proletariat resorted to the weapon of the proletarian mass strike. March, 1921, marked the uprising of workers in Central Germany and the coal miners' strike in England.



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Having reached its highest point in those countries which had been involved in the war, particularly in the defeated countries, the revolutionary movement spread to the neutral countries as well. In Asia and in Africa, the movement aroused and intensified the revolutionary spirit of the great masses of the colonial countries. But this powerful revolutionary wave did not succeed in sweeping away international capitalism, nor even the capitalist order of Europe itself.

A number of uprisings and revolutionary battles have taken place during the past year, which resulted in sectional defeats (the Red Army offensive near Warsaw in August, 1920, the movement of the Italian proletariat in September, 1920, and the uprising of the German workers in March, 1921).

Following the close of the war, which has been characterised by the elemental nature of its onslaught, by the considerable formlessness of its methods and aims, and the extreme panic of the ruling classes, the first period of the revolutionary movement may now be regarded as having reached its termination. The self-confidence of the bourgeoisie as a class, and the apparent stability of its government apparatus, have undoubtedly become strengthened. The panic of Communism haunting the bourgeoisie, while not having disappeared, has, nevertheless, somewhat relaxed. The leading spirits of the bourgeoisie are now even boasting of the might of their government apparatus, and have assumed the offensive against the labouring masses everywhere, on both the economic and the political fields.

This situation presents the following questions to the working class:

To what extent does this transformation in the relations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat correspond to the actual balance of the contending forces? Is it true that the bourgeoisie is about to restore the social balance which had been upset by the war? Is there any ground to suppose that the period of political upheaval and of class-wars is going to

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be superseded by a new epoch of restoration and capitalist development?

### §2 *The War, Artificial Business Stimulation. The Crisis and the Countries of Europe*

The high tide of capitalism was reached in the two decades preceding the war. The intervals of prosperity were superseded by periods of depression of comparatively shorter duration and intensity. The general trend was that of an upward curve: the capitalist countries were growing rich.

Having scoured the world market through their trusts, cartels, and consortiums, the masters of world-capitalism well realised that this mad growth of capitalism will finally strike a dead wall confining the limits of the capacity of the market created by themselves. They therefore tried to get out of the difficulty by a surgical method. In place of a lengthy period of economic depression which was to follow and result in wholesale destruction of productive resources, the bloody crisis of the world war was ushered in to serve the same purpose.

But the war proved not only extremely destructive in its methods, but also of an unexpectedly lengthy duration. So that besides the economic destruction of the "surplus" productive resources, it also weakened, shattered, and undermined the fundamental apparatus of European production. At the same time it gave a powerful impetus to the capitalist development of the United States and quickened the aggrandisement of Japan. Thus the centre of gravity of world industry was shifted from Europe to America.

The period following upon the termination of the four years' slaughter, the demobilisation of the armies, the transition to a peaceful state of affairs, and the inevitable economic crisis coming as a result of the exhaustion and chaos caused by the war—all this was regarded by the bourgeoisie with the greatest anxiety as the approach of the most critical moment. As a matter of fact, during the two years following the war the

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countries involved became the arena of a mighty movement of the proletariat.

One of the chief causes which enabled the bourgeoisie to preserve its dominant position was furnished by the fact that the first months after the war, instead of bringing about the seemingly unavoidable crisis, were marked by economic prosperity. This lasted approximately for one year and a half. Nearly all the demobilised workers were absorbed in industry. As a general rule wages did not catch up with the cost of living, but they nevertheless kept rising, and that created the illusion of economic gains.

It was just this *commercial and industrial revival of 1919 and 1920*, which, to some extent, relieved the tension of the post-war period, that caused the bourgeoisie to assume an extremely self-confident air, and to *proclaim the advent of a new era of organic capitalist development*. But as a matter of fact, the industrial revival of 1919-20 was not in essence the beginning of the regeneration of capitalist industry, but a mere prolongation of the artificially stimulated state of industry and commerce which was created by the war, and which undermined the economy of capitalism.

The outbreak of the imperialist war coincided with the industrial crisis which had its origin in America (1913) and began to hover menacingly over Europe. The normal development of the industrial cycle was checked by the war, which had itself become the most powerful economic factor. It created unlimited markets for the basic branches of industry and secured them against competition. The war played the part of a solid customer ever in want of goods. The manufacture of productive commodities was supplanted by the fabrication of means of destruction. Millions of people not engaged in production, but in work of destruction, were continuously using up necessities of life at ever-increasing prices. This process is the cause of the present economic decline. By the contradictions of capitalist society the masters lent the cloak of prosperity to this ruinous prospect. The State kept

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issuing loan after loan, one issue of paper money followed upon another, till State accounting began to be carried on in billions instead of millions. The wear and tear of machinery and of equipment was not repaired. The cultivation of land was in a bad state. Public constructions in the cities and on the high-roads were discontinued. At the same time the number of government bonds, credit and treasury bills and notes, kept growing incessantly. Fictitious capital increased in proportion as productive capital kept diminishing. The credit system, instead of serving as a medium for the circulation of goods, became the means whereby national property, including that which is to be created by the growing generations, was being mobilised for military purposes.

The capitalist State, dreading the impending crisis, continued after the war to follow the same policy as it did during the war, namely, new issues of paper money, new loans, regulation of prices of prime necessities, guaranteeing of profits, government subsidies, and other additions of salaries and wages plus military censorship and military dictatorship.

At the same time the termination of hostilities, and the renewal of international relations, limited though it was, brought out a demand for various commodities from all parts of the globe. Large stocks of products were left unused during the war, and the enormous sums of money centred in the hands of dealers and speculators were mobilised by them to where they could produce the largest profits. Hence, the feverish boom accompanied by an unusual rise of prices and fantastic dividends, while in reality none of the basic branches of industry, anywhere in Europe, approached the pre-war level.

By means of a continuous derangement of the economic system, accumulation of inflated capital, depreciation of currency (speculation instead of economic restoration), the bourgeois governments, in league with the banking combines and industrial trusts, succeeded in putting off the beginning of the economic crisis till the moment when the political

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crisis, consequent upon the demobilisation and the first squaring of accounts, was somewhat allayed.

Thus, having gained a considerable breathing space, the bourgeoisie imagined that the dreaded crisis had been removed for an indefinite time. Optimism reigned supreme. It appeared as if the needs of reconstruction had opened a new era of lasting expansion of industry, commerce, and particularly speculation. But the year 1920 proved to have been a period of shattered hopes.

The crises—financial, commercial, and industrial—began in March, 1920. Japan saw the beginning of it in the month of April. In the United States, it opened by a slight fall of prices in January. Then it passed on to England, France and Italy (in April). It reached the neutral countries of Europe, then Germany, and extended to all the countries involved in the capitalist sphere of influence during the second half of 1920.

Thus *the crisis of 1920* is not a periodic stage of the "normal" industrial cycle, but a profound *reaction consequent upon the artificial stimulation that prevailed during the war and during the two years thereafter and was based upon ruination and exhaustion.*

The upward curve of industrial development was marked by turns of good times followed by crises. During the last seven years, however, there was no rise in the productive forces of Europe, but, on the contrary, they kept at a downward sweep.

The crumbling of the very foundation of industry is only beginning and is going to proceed along the whole line.

European economy is going to contract and expand during a number of years to come. The curve marking the productive forces is going to decline from the present fictitious level. The expansions are going to be only short-lived and of a speculative nature to a considerable extent, while the crises are going to be hard and lasting. The present European crisis is one of under-production. It is the form in which

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destitution reacts against the striving to produce trade and resume life on the usual capitalist level.

Of all countries of Europe *England* is economically the strongest, and has been the least damaged by the war; but, even with regard to this country, one cannot say that it has in any way regained its capitalist equilibrium after the war. Owing to its international organisation and to the fact that it came out victorious from the war, England did, indeed, achieve some *commercial* and *financial* success. It improved its commercial balance, it raised the rate of the pound and reached an accounting surplus in its budget. But, in the *industrial* sphere, England, after the war, not only did not progress, it made big strides backwards. The productivity of labour in England to-day and her national income are much below that of the pre-war period. The coal industry, which is the fundamental branch of her national economy, is getting ever worse and worse, pulling down all the other branches of industry. The incessant disturbances caused by the strikes are not the cause but the consequence of the derangement of English economy.

The ruin of *Belgium*, *Italy* and *France* brought about by the war is no less than that inflicted on Germany. The post-bellum "reconstruction" of France is being parasitically carried on by means of the progressive ruination of Germany, robbing the latter of her coal, machinery, cattle and gold. The French bourgeoisie is striking heavy blows at the entire capitalist order. France is getting much less than what Germany is losing. The so-called reconstruction of France is nothing more than piracy accompanied by diplomatic blackmail. The economic decline of that country is imminent. When the last period of expansion came to its end (in March, 1920) the depreciation of French paper money reached 60%, while that of Italy came down to 75% of its face value.

A striking illustration of the illusory nature of this kind of business expansion is presented by *Germany*, where a seven-fold increase in prices coincided with a sharp decline

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of production. Germany won her apparent success in international trade relations at the cost of both the deterioration of the nation's basic capital (the destruction of industry, transportation and credit system) and the progressive lowering of the standard of living of her working class. From the social economic standpoint the profits gained by German exporters represent pure loss. For this export in reality amounts to selling out the country's resources at a low price; while the capitalist masters of Germany are securing for themselves a constantly increasing share of the ever decreasing national wealth, the workers of the country are becoming the coolies of Europe.

As to the *smaller neutral countries*, they preserve their deceptive political independence, thanks to the antagonistic contentions of the great powers, and maintain their economic existence on the fringes of the world market, whose essential nature used to be determined in the ante-bellum period by England, Germany, America and France.

During the war the bourgeoisie of these countries was making enormous profits, but the devastation of those countries which had been involved in the war led to the economic disorganisation of these neutral countries as well. Their debts have increased, their currency exchange has dropped. The crisis spares them no blows.

### §3 *The United States, Japan, Colonial Countries and Soviet Russia*

The development of the *United States* during the war proceeded in an opposite direction, in a certain sense, to that of Europe. The part played by the United States in the war was chiefly that of a salesman. The destructive consequences of the war had no direct effect upon that country, and the damage caused to its transport, agriculture, etc., was only of an indirect nature and of a far smaller degree than that caused to England, not to speak of either France or Germany. At the same time, the United States, taking full advantage of the

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fact that European competition had either been removed entirely or had become extremely weak, succeeded in raising some of its most important industries (such as petroleum production, ship-building, automobile and coal industry) to such a height as it had never anticipated. To-day most of the countries of Europe are dependent on America not only for their petroleum and corn, but also for their coal.

While America's export prior to the war consisted chiefly of agricultural products and raw materials (making up more than two-thirds of the entire export), her main export at the present time is made up of manufactured articles (60% of her entire export). Having been in debt prior to the war, the United States is now the world's creditor, concentrating within its coffers about one half of the world's gold reserve and continually augmenting its treasury. The dominating part played by the pound sterling in the world's financial market has now been taken over by the American dollar.

This extraordinary expansion of American industry was the cause of a special combination of circumstances, namely, the withdrawal of European competition and, above all, the demands of the European war market. But American capitalism to-day has also got out of balance. Since devastated Europe as a competitor of America is not in a position to regain its pre-war role in the world market, the American market as well can preserve only an insignificant part of its former position with Europe as a customer. At the same time, America to-day is producing goods for export purposes to a much greater extent than prior to the war. The over-expansion of American industry, during the war, cannot find any outlet owing to the scarcity of world markets. As a consequence, many industries have become part-time or seasonal industries, affording employment to the workers only part of the year. The crisis in the United States resulting from the decline of Europe signifies the beginning of a profound and lasting economic disorganisation. This is



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the result of the fundamental disturbance of the World's Subdivision of Labour.

*Japan* also took advantage of the war in order to extend its influence on the world market. Her development has been of a much more limited scope than that of the United States, and some branches of Japanese industry have acquired the character of what might be termed "hothouse" production. Her productive forces were sufficiently strong to enable her to take hold of the market while there were no competitors. But they are utterly insufficient to retain that market in a competitive struggle with the more powerful capitalist countries. Hence the acute crisis which had its starting point particularly in *Japan*.

*The Trans-Atlantic countries and the colonies* (such as South America, Canada, Australia, China, Egypt and others), which used to export raw materials, in their turn took advantage of the rupture in international relations for the development of their home industries. But the world crisis has now involved these countries as well, and their internal industrial development is going to be checked, thereby serving as an additional cause for trade handicaps of England and of the whole of Europe.

Thus, there is no ground whatsoever to speak of any restoration of lasting balance, to-day, either in the sphere of production, commerce or credit with reference to Europe or even with reference to the world as a whole. The economic decline of Europe is still going on, and the decay of the foundation of European Industry manifests itself in the near future.

The world market is in a state of disorganisation. Europe wants American products, for which, however, it can give nothing in return. While the body of Europe is suffering from anæmia, that of America is affected with plethora. The gold standard has been destroyed and the world market has been deprived of its general exchange medium.

The only way by which the restoration of the gold standard

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in Europe could be achieved would be by getting the export to exceed the import. But this is just what devastated Europe is not in a condition to do. America, on the other hand, is trying to check the influx of European goods by raising her tariff.

Thus, Europe has become a bedlam. England has introduced prohibitive customs duties. The export as well as the entire economic life of Germany is at the mercy of the Parisian speculators. The former Austria-Hungary is now broken up into a number of provinces divided by customs borders. The net in which the Versailles Treaty has entangled the world is becoming more and more tightened.

The reappearance of *Russia* on the world market is not going to produce any appreciable changes in it. Russia's means of production have been always completely dependent upon the industrial conditions of the rest of the world, and this dependence particularly with regard to the allied countries has become intensified during the war, when her home industry was almost completely mobilised for war purposes. But the blockade cut off these vital connections between Russia and the other countries. There could be no question of setting up any new branches of industry which were needed to prevent the general decay caused by the wear and tear of machinery and equipment in a country completely exhausted during three years of incessant civil war. In addition to this, hundreds and thousands of her best proletarian elements, comprising a great number of skilled workers, had to be recruited for the Red Army. Under these conditions, surrounded by the iron ring of the blockade, carrying on incessant wars and suffering from the heritage of an industrial collapse, no other regime could have maintained the economic life of the country and created such conditions as would permit of its centralised administration. There is no denying, however, that the struggle against world imperialism was carried on at the price of the progressive diminution of the productive resources of industry in various branches. Now, since the blockade has relaxed and the relations between town and

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country are becoming more regular, the Soviet power has been enabled for the first time to direct the country gradually and steadily upon the road to economic prosperity in a centralised manner.

### §4 *Social Contradictions Intensified*

The unprecedented destruction of industrial resources brought about by the war did not check the process of social differentiation. On the contrary, the proletarianisation of the intermediary classes, including the new middle-groupings of employees, officials, etc., and the concentration of wealth in the hands of the small clique of trusts, combines and so on, have, for the last ten years, made enormous strides in the more backward countries. The Stinnes combine is now the most important factor of the economic life of Germany.

The soaring of prices of all commodities coincident with the catastrophic depreciation of currency in all countries involved in the war meant a redistribution of the national incomes to the disadvantage of the working class, officials, employees and small owners and all other persons with a more or less fixed income.

Thus we see that though Europe has been thrown back for a number of decades with reference to its material resources, the intensification of the social contradictions has not only not retrograded or been suspended, but has, on the contrary, assumed a particular acuteness.

This cardinal fact is, of itself, sufficient to dispel any illusions of the possibility of a lasting and peaceful development under a democratic form of government. *The social differentiation proceeding along the line of economic decline predetermines the most intense, convulsive and cruel nature of the class struggle.*

The present crisis is only a continuation of the destructive work done by the war and the post-bellum speculative boom.

Owing to the fact that agricultural products have risen in price, the country places have accumulated a large amount of *cheap* money. This produced the illusion that the villages were prosperous. The farmers did, indeed, succeed in paying off

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in paper money the debts they had contracted in currency at its face value. But the well-being of the farmer is not to be brought about merely by settling mortgages. The lack of labour power, the diminution of cattle, the scarcity of fertilisers and the high cost of manufactured products brought European agriculture into a state of complete decline.

On the other hand, the universal impoverishment of Europe, rendering it incapable of purchasing the necessary amount of American or Canadian corn, resulted in getting the farming industry of the transatlantic countries into a critical situation. The ruin of the peasants and small farmers is going on not only in Europe, but also in the United States, Canada, Argentine and Australia and South Africa. The capital newly acquired during the war is being used for buying up country estates. The village is being disintegrated, proletarianised and pauperised, and is becoming a hot-bed of discontent.

Capitalist Europe has completely lost its dominating position in the world economy. But it was just this domination that had lent some relative equilibrium between its social classes. All the efforts of the European countries (England and partly France) to restore former conditions only tend to intensify their instability and disorganisation.

While the concentration of wealth going on in Europe has its foundations in the ruinous conditions of that Continent, in the United States the concentration of property and the extreme intensification of class distinctions are proceeding on the basis of the feverish growth of capitalist accumulation. The class struggle going on in America has assumed an extremely tense revolutionary character owing to the sharp vacillations produced by the general instability of the world market. The period of an unprecedented rise of capitalism is bound to be followed by an extraordinary rise of revolutionary struggle.

The emigration of workers and peasants across the ocean has always served as a safety-valve to the capitalist

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regime in Europe. It grew during prolonged periods of depression and upon unsuccessful revolutionary outbreaks. At present, however, America and Australia are putting ever-growing obstacles in the way of emigration. Thus, this safety-valve, so necessary to the capitalist regime, has ceased to exist.

The vigorous development of capitalism in the East, particularly in India and in China, has created new social foundations for the revolutionary struggle. The bourgeoisie of the Eastern countries has bound up its fate even more closely with foreign capital, and has thus become a very important weapon of capitalist domination. The contest between this bourgeois and foreign imperialism is the contest of a weaker competitor against his stronger rival, and is by its very nature only half-hearted and unreal. The development of the native proletariat paralyses the nationalistic-revolutionary tendencies of the capitalist bourgeoisie. At the same time, the great masses of the peasants of the Oriental countries look upon the Communist vanguard as their real revolutionary leader. This is particularly true of the more progressive elements of these masses.

The combination of the military nationalistic oppression of foreign imperialism, of the capitalist exploitation by foreign and native bourgeoisie, and the survivals of the feudal disabilities are creating the conditions in which the immature proletariat of the colonial countries must develop rapidly and take the lead in the revolutionary movement of the peasant masses.

The revolutionary national movement in India and in other colonies is to-day an essential component part of the world revolution just as much as the uprising of the proletariat in the capitalist countries of the old and the new world.

### *§5 International Relations*

The economic condition of the world in general, and the decline of Europe in particular, presages a long period of

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hard times, disturbances, crises of a general and partial character, and so forth. The international relations inaugurated by the war and the Versailles Treaty are rendering the situation more and more hopeless. The trend of the economic forces tending to sweep away national boundaries and convert Europe and the rest of the world into one economic territory, gave birth to imperialism; but, on the other hand, the scuffle between the contending forces of this imperialism led to the creation of a multiplicity of new national boundaries, new customs-barriers and new armies. With regard to State administration and economy, Europe has been thrown back to the mediæval state.

The soil which has been exhausted and laid bare is now being called upon to feed an army exceeding in numbers that of 1914, the hey-day of the "world in arms."

The policy of France, which is playing a dominant part in Europe to-day, is based upon the following two principles:

The blind rage of the usurer, ready to pounce upon and strangle an insolvent debtor; and the greed of the predatory heavy industry, striving to create favourable conditions for industrial imperialism to supplant financial imperialism with the aid of the Saar, Ruhr, and Upper Silesian Coal Basins.

But this striving runs counter to the interests of England, whose aim it is to keep the German coal away from the French ore, which, if brought together, would create the conditions necessary for the reconstruction of Europe.

Great Britain to-day has reached the high-water mark of her power. Having retained all the dominions, she also acquired new ones. Nevertheless, it is just at this moment that it is becoming most evident that the dominating international position of England stands in contradiction to its actual economic decline. German capitalism, technically and organisationally much more progressive than that of England, has been crushed by force of arms. The United States, having taken possession of both Americas, has now come out as a triumphant rival even more menacing than Germany was.

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The productivity of labour and of industry in the United States, owing to its superior organisation and technique, is now above that of England. Within the territory of the United States from 65—70% of the world's petroleum is being produced upon which depends the automobile industry, tractor production, the fleet and aviation. England's dominant position in the coal market, which used to be almost a monopoly, has been shaken. America has now assumed first place and her European export is ominously increasing. America's commercial marine has nearly come up to that of England, neither is the United States content to put up any longer with England's monopoly over the Atlantic cables. Great Britain has taken up a defensive position with regard to her industry, and is now resorting to protective legislation against the United States under the guise of combating German competition. Finally, while the English fleet, comprising a large number of battleships of the old type, has been checked in its further development, the Harding administration has taken up the Wilsonian programme of naval construction intended to secure the superiority of the American flag on the sea within the next couple of years.

The situation has become such that either England will be automatically pushed back and, in spite of her victory over Germany, will become a second-rate power, or she will be constrained in the very near future to gather up all the power she had inherited from former times and engage in a mortal struggle with the United States.

This is just the reason why England is maintaining her alliance with Japan and is making concessions to France in order to secure the latter's assistance, or neutrality at any rate. The growth of the international role of the latter country within the European continent during last year has been caused not by a strengthening of France, but by the international weakening of England.

Germany's capitulation last May on the Indemnity question signifies, however, a temporary victory for England,

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including as it does a supplementary guarantee of further economic decay of Central Europe, without in any way excluding seizure by France of the Ruhr district and Upper Silesian basin in the near future.

The antagonism between Japan and the United States, which was temporarily veiled by the former's participation in the war against Germany, is now tending to come out into the open. In consequence of the war, Japan has approached the American coast, having secured for itself a number of islands on the Pacific which are of great strategic importance.

The crisis of Japanese industry, following upon its rapid expansion, has again put to the front the problem of emigration. Being very thickly populated and poor in natural resources, Japan must export either her goods or her men, but, whether she does the one or the other, she gets into collision with the United States: in California, in China and on the Yap Islands.

Japan is spending one-half of its budget on the maintenance of its army and fleet. In the impending struggle between England and the United States, Japan is going to play on the sea the same part as that played by France on land during the war with Germany. Japan to-day is making use of the antagonism between Great Britain and America, but, when the final struggle between these two giants for world hegemony breaks out, Japan is going to be the battleground of that fight.

Both the original causes that called forth the recent great slaughter and the chief combatants that took part in it marked it as a European war, the crucial point of which was the antagonism between England and Germany. The intervention of the United States only widened the scope of the struggle, but it did not divert it from its original direction. The European conflict was being settled by world-wide means. The war, having settled the English-German and German-American quarrel in its own way, not only did not solve the problem of the relations between the United States and



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England, but has, for the first time, put that problem prominently forward as one of the first order, and the question of the American-Japanese as one of the second order. Thus, the last war was in reality only a prelude to a genuine world war which is to solve the problem of *imperialist autocracy*.

This, however, forms only one focus of international policy, which has yet another focus located in the Russian Soviet Federation and the Third International, brought about by the war. All the forces of the world revolution are arraying themselves against all the imperialist combinations.

Whether the alliance between England and France is going to be maintained or broken up, whether the Anglo-Japanese treaty is going to be renewed or not, whether the United States are going to join the League of Nations or not—all this is of little value as far as the interests of the proletariat or the securing of peace is concerned. The proletariat can see no guarantee for peace in the vacillating, predatory, and treacherous combinations of capitalist powers, whose policy turns to an ever increasing extent around the antagonism between England and America, fostering that antagonism and preparing for a new bloody outbreak.

The fact that some of the capitalist Governments have concluded peace and commercial treaties with Soviet Russia does not mean that the bourgeoisie of the world has given up the idea of destroying the Soviet Republic. What we are witnessing now is nothing but a change, a temporary change, perhaps, of the forms and methods of struggle. The uprising caused by the Japanese troops in the Far East may serve as an introduction into a new stage of armed intervention.

It is altogether obvious that the longer the revolutionary movement of the world proletariat will go on, the more inevitably will the bourgeoisie be impelled by the contradiction of the international economic and political situation to make another bloody denouement on a world-wide scale.

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If this should come to pass, the "restoration of capitalist equilibrium" consequent upon a new war would have to proceed under conditions of economic exhaustion and barbarity in comparison with which the present state of Europe might be regarded as the height of well-being.

### §6 *The Working Class and the Post-Bellum Period*

The problem of capitalist reconstruction along the lines outlined above essentially puts forward the question as to whether the working class is willing to bear any more heavy sacrifices in order to perpetuate its own slavery, which is going to be ever more heavy and more cruel than it has been prior to the war.

The industrial and economic reconstruction of Europe requires the setting up of new machinery to replace that destroyed during the war and the creation of new capital. This would be possible only if the proletariat were willing to work more and to accept a lower standard of living. The capitalists are insisting on this, and the treacherous leaders of the Yellow International urge the proletariat to assist in the reconstruction of Capitalism in the first place, and then proceed to fighting for the betterment of their own conditions. But the European proletariat refuses the sacrifice. It demands a higher standard of living, which is utterly incompatible with the present state of the capitalist system. Hence the everlasting strikes and uprisings; hence the impossibility of the economic reconstruction of Europe.

To restore the value of paper money means for a number of European countries (Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Poland, the Balkans, etc.) first of all to throw off the burden of too heavy obligations—*i.e.*, to declare themselves bankrupt; but this would mean a strong impulse to the struggle of all classes for a new distribution of the National Income. To restore the value of paper money means further reduction of State expenditures to the detriment of the masses (to forego the regulation of wages and of articles of prime

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necessity); to prevent the import of cheaper foreign manufactures and increase the amount of exported articles by lowering the cost of production, which can be achieved, above all, by increasing the exploitation of Labour.

Every radical measure tending to restore capitalist equilibrium must by the very nature of the case tend to disturb class equilibrium to a still greater extent than heretofore, lending additional impetus to the class war. Thus, the attempt at a revival of Capitalism involves a contest of vital forces, of classes and parties. If one of the two contending classes, namely, the proletariat, should decide to refrain from the revolutionary struggle, the bourgeoisie would undoubtedly establish some sort of a new capitalist equilibrium, an equilibrium based upon material and spiritual deterioration, leading to new wars, to the progressive impoverishment of entire countries, and to the continuous dying out of these millions of toiling masses.

But the frame of mind of the world proletariat to-day furnishes no ground whatever for any such supposition.

The elements of stability, of conservatism, and of tradition have, to a considerable extent, lost their power over the minds of the labouring masses. It is true that Social Democracy and the trade unions still exercise an influence over a considerable part of the proletariat, thanks to the apparatus of organisation that has come down to them from former times. But the nature of this influence as well as that of the proletariat itself has undergone considerable changes in no way consistent with the "step by step" methods of the pre-war period.

Millions of workers, having gone through the experience of the war and having acquired the ability to use the rifle, are now prepared to a large extent to turn the weapons against their class enemies, provided they were given the strong leadership and serious training which are essential for victory.

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Millions of working men and particularly women have been newly recruited for industrial pursuits during the war. These new workers brought with themselves their petty-bourgeois prejudices. But they also brought along their impatient claims for better conditions of life.

There are also millions of young working men and women who have grown up in the storm and stress of war and revolution, who are more susceptible to the Communist ideas and are anxious to act.

The ebb and flow of the gigantic army of unemployed, some of whom are unattached to any class, while others possess only partial class attachments, form a striking illustration of the disintegration of capitalist production and represent a constant menace to the bourgeois order. All these proletarian elements, varying so much in origin and character, have been enlisting in the post-bellum revolutionary movement at various times and in varying degrees. This explains the vacillations, the ebbs and flows, the attacks and retreats, characterising the revolutionary war. But the shattering of old illusions, the terrible uncertainty of existence, the arbitrary domination of the trusts and the practical methods of the militarised State—all this is rapidly welding the overwhelming majority of the proletarian masses together. The great masses are searching for a determined and definite leadership and for the closely welded and centralising Communist Party to take the lead.

During the war the condition of the working class became perceptibly worse. It is true some groups of workers improved their condition, and in those cases where several members of a working man's family were in a position to hold their place near the loom, the workers succeeded in maintaining and even in raising their standard of life. But as a general rule wages did not keep up with the rise in prices.

The proletariat of Central Europe has been doomed to ever greater privations ever since the war began. The lowering of the standard of life was not so noticeable in the

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allied countries up till lately. In England, the proletariat succeeded in stopping the process of lowering the standard of life by means of an energetic struggle carried on during the last period of the war. In the United States, some of the workers succeeded in improving their conditions, others only retained their previous standard of living, while still others have their standard of living lowered.

The economic crisis has come down upon the proletariat at a terrific rate. The falling of wages began to exceed the fall of prices. The number of unemployed and semi-employed has reached such dimensions as have never been equalled in capitalist history.

The ups and downs in the condition of existence not only have an unfavourable effect on productivity, but also prevent the restoration of class equilibrium in its most essential domain, that of production. The instability of the conditions of life reflecting the general instability of the economic conditions nationally and internationally, is to-day the most revolutionary factor of social development.

### *§7 The Perspective*

The war did not have, as its immediate consequence, a proletarian revolution, and the bourgeoisie has some ground to register this fact as a great victory for itself.

Only petty bourgeois dullards can imagine that the fact that the European proletariat has not succeeded in overthrowing the bourgeoisie during the war or immediately after it, is an indication that the programme of the Communist International failed. The Communist International is basing its policy on the proletarian revolution, but this by no means implies either dogmatically fixing any definite date for the revolution, or any pledge to bring it about mechanically at a set time. Revolution has always been, and is to-day, nothing else but a struggle of living forces carried on within given historic conditions. The war has destroyed capitalist equilibrium all over the world, thus creating conditions favouring

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the proletariat, which is the fundamental force of the revolution. The Communist International has been exerting all its efforts to take full advantage of these conditions.

The distinction between the Communist International and the Social Democrats of all colours, does not consist in the fact that we are trying to force the revolution and set a definite date for it while they are opposed to any utopian and immature uprisings. No, the distinction lies in the fact that Social Democrats hinder the actual development of the revolution by rendering all possible assistance in the way of restoring the equilibrium of the bourgeois State, while the Communists on the other hand are trying to take advantage of all means and methods for the purpose of overthrowing and destroying the capitalist government and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But, during the two and a half years following the war, the proletarians of various countries have exhibited their self-sacrifice, energy and readiness for the struggle to such an extent as would amply suffice to make the revolution triumphant, provided there had been a strong centralised International Communist Party on the scene ready for action. But, during the war, and immediately thereafter, by force of historic circumstances, there was at the head of the European proletariat the organisation of the Second International, which has been and remains to this day the invaluable political weapon in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

By the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919, the power of the Government in Germany was practically in the hands of the working class, but the Social Democracy and the trade unions used all their traditional influence and all their apparatus for the purpose of restoring the power into the hands of the bourgeoisie.

In Italy, the revolutionary movement of the proletariat during one and a half years has been marked by abundant force, and it was only thanks to the petty bourgeois impotence of the Socialist party, to the treacherous policy of the

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parliamentary groups, and to the cowardly opportunism of the Trade Union organisations, that the bourgeoisie got into a position to reconstruct its apparatus, to mobilise its white guards and to assume the offensive against the proletariat, which has thus been temporarily discouraged by the bankruptcy of its leading organs.

The mighty strike movement in England has been frustrated once and again during the last year, not so much by the Government police forces as by the conservative Trade Unions, whose apparatus has been most shamefully used to serve counter-revolutionary ends. Should the machinery of the English Trade Unions develop half the amount of energy in the interests of Socialism which it has been using in the interests of Capitalism, the English proletariat would conquer power and would start the reconstruction of the economic organisation of the country with only an insignificant amount of sacrifice.

The same refers to a greater or less extent to all other capitalist countries.

It is absolutely beyond dispute that the open revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for power has been temporarily checked and its tempo delayed. But in the very nature of the case, it was impossible to expect that the revolutionary offensive after the war, not having resulted in an immediate victory, should go on developing incessantly along an upward curve. The political evolution proceeds in cycles and has its ups and downs. The enemy does not remain passive, but fights for his existence. If the offensive of the proletariat does not lead to direct victory, the bourgeoisie embraces the first opportunity for a counter-offensive. The proletariat, in losing some of its positions which were too easily won, usually experiences some confusion in its ranks. But it is an undoubted mark of our time that the curve of the capitalist evolution proceeds through temporary rises constantly *downwards*, while the curve of revolution proceeds through some vacillations constantly *upwards*.

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Should the rate of development prove to be more protracted, and should the present industrial crisis be superseded in a number of countries by a period of prosperity, this would not in the least signify the advent of the "organic" epoch. So long as Capitalism exists, periodic vacillations are inevitable. These vacillations are going to accompany Capitalism in its agony, as was the case during its youth and maturity. The proletariat having been somewhat repulsed during the present crisis by the onslaught of Capitalism, is going to assume the offensive as soon as the situation begins to improve. The offensive character of the economic struggle of the proletariat which would inevitably be carried on under the slogan of revenge for all the deceptions of the war period, and for all the plunder and abuses of the crisis, will tend to turn into an open civil war just as the present defensive stage of the struggle does.

No matter whether the revolutionary movement in the near future is going to proceed at a rapid or protracted rate, the Communist Party must, in either case, be the *party of action*. This party stands at the head of the struggling masses, it must firmly and definitely proclaim their war cries and must expose and sweep aside all equivocal slogans of the Social Democrats, which always tend towards compromise. Whatever the turns in the course of the struggle, the Communist Party always strives to fortify the contested positions, to get the masses used to active manœuvring, to equip them with new methods calculated to lead to an open conflict with the enemy forces. Taking advantage of every breathing space offered in order to appreciate the experience of the preceding phase of the struggle, the Communist Party strives to deepen and widen the class conflicts, to combine them nationally and internationally by unity of goal and of practical activity, in such a way as to clear the path of the proletariat and lead it on to the Socialist revolution.



# EUROPE'S COOLIE PLANTATION

By M. PHILIPS PRICE

“THE fate of Germany is no longer the fate of Germany alone, but of all Europe and of the civilised world.” These words, spoken by Herr Helfferich in the Reichstag on July 7, are symptomatic of the new outlook among the more far-seeing and chastened elements of the ruling classes of post-war Germany. But they contain a lesson not only for the International of Capital, fearful lest the economic chaos of Europe should affect rates of interest on war debt and wreck exchanges. They contain a lesson for the International of Labour, unable as yet to see in the strikes, lock-outs and unemployment demonstrations of this year the symptoms of a world process.

Why has the “land fit for heroes” after the war proved to be a mirage, which in 1920 appeared inverted, strange and uncanny, and in 1921 vanished altogether? In the general disillusionment of to-day it is not the time for recriminations between the rank and file of Labour. The demand of the hour both in “victor” and “vanquished” countries is for Labour to understand from now on that periods of colonial expansion, wars, booms and trade depressions are but revolving phases of the class struggle intimately connected with its own struggle for daily bread. It is the last of these four phases that we are experiencing to-day. Let us examine in detail some of the causes.

The European war, i.e., the period of colonial expansion, ended in the German Revolution. It is first necessary to get some idea of what this revolution exactly was and what will be its place in history. The defeat of Germany was no accident due to the better generalship of Foch or to the more righteous cause of the Allies, whose self-determination

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passion during the war finds expression now in the treatment of Ireland, Egypt, India, Persia, and of the Russian Revolution. On the contrary, it is possible to explain the defeat of Germany not in terms of personalities and war-programmes at all, but in terms of class dynamics. Germany's weakness lay in the fact that her ruling classes were not a homogeneous unit, as they were more or less in all the Allied countries, but consisted of a coalition of two classes, each following its own social and political aims. The Hohenzollerns and the petty princes of ruling dynasties were not like the Kings of England, figure-heads of a middle-class, who use the crown as a symbol to obscure the operations of financial corporations. The Hohenzollerns and the Prussian squirearchy which supported them always followed positive political ends of their own.

And it came about in this way. When Napoleon was careering about Europe, battering the political rubbish of a feudal past, he did not unfortunately either land in England or do anything permanent east of the Elbe. What he failed to do in England the Chartists and Freetraders did some thirty years later. But the work of removing agrarian privilege east of the Elbe was delayed for several generations. The backward state of Europe, which had never recovered from the Thirty Years War, and the loss, through the discovery of America and the sea-route round the Cape, of the trading centres between East and West, left the greater part of the Continent in the hands of "cabbage-garden squires" and petty princes, following narrow, domestic interests.

The European revolutions of 1848, which might have made up for lost time, were in Germany abortive. But the Hohenzollerns and junkers, if they were in the long run to escape being rudely pushed aside by the rising middle classes, as in France in 1792, had to strike some pact with the latter. It was Bismarck's rôle to bring about a junker-cum-middle class coalition, which held for nearly fifty years. The princes had to give up their petty customs-frontiers and the junkers their vexatious restrictions on trade, and in return

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acquired the control of the army and the high political and administrative appointments.

Thus the chariot of German Capitalism set out on the race of Imperial expansion, drawn by a Reventlow camel and a Stinnes thoroughbred. About the outcome of the race with the Entente chariot, whose driver had discarded his camel, there never could have been, from an objective historical standpoint, any doubt. A modern war entirely over-taxed the mental capacity of the East Elbe "kraut-junker" and of the Potsdam parade-ground "Drauflosgeher." Their psychology was responsible for Germany's amazing diplomatic blunders and senseless propaganda during the war. They had not, in fact, like the British ruling classes, learned how to lie profitably. Thus the German middle classes, burdened by Bismarck's pact with the feudal past, was not a match for men who ran the colossal apparatus of Allied propaganda. So the end came on November 9, 1918. And in this revolution the German middle classes, no less than German Labour, followed positive ends; were in fact up to a certain point revolutionary also. They wanted to complete the work which had been left undone in 1848, and to acquire sole control over the new, united German State. And in actual fact they did the same as the Manchester Whigs in 1832. They used a popular movement against the oppression and incompetence of an agrarian caste to sneak into power, and then wielded that power to put down the very people who helped them to get it.

Germany's social and political encumbrances, which in the long run prevented her from winning the war, are nowhere better seen than in the financial policy of her ruling classes between 1914 and 1918. Let me give a few figures. In 1914 the paper money issued by the Reichsbank was not more than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  milliard marks. At the close of the war the paper money in circulation was 22 milliard marks, and the gold standard had been completely abolished. The greater part of this paper money was circulating between the Reichsbank, the war industries, and the public. The two latter

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gave their surplus income during the war (this amounted roughly to 20 milliard marks annually) to the Reichsbank, which issued war-loan papers. With the paper money thus obtained the Reichsbank bought on Government account war material which was, in course of time, blown into the air, leaving only the paper behind. Thus 20 milliard marks annually found their way into the pockets of the war industry captains, and the latter got back not only what they had lent to the State, but also what the small investing public, patriotic peasants and the petit bourgeoisie, had lent as well. As the war lasted four years, these annual war loans of 20 milliard marks amounted to rather over 80 milliard marks. No attempt was made to limit this gigantic accumulation of surplus values by direct taxation. This was studiously shunned by all Imperial finance ministers. Paper-money issues rose tenfold and, roughly, in proportion with them, the prices of all commodities. Thus the sheet anchor of the Central Powers' war finance became the easy method of depreciating currencies, which was equivalent to throwing the burden of the war on the lower middle classes and on Labour.

The rulers of the Anglo-Saxon countries, on the other hand, were clever enough to see that to escape all war-time burdens would be to play with fire. The British Government's policy of direct taxation to pay off war debt, while it was inadequate and did not take more than a fraction of the surplus value, which had gone into the coffers of the war industries, at least had the advantage of preventing so catastrophic an inflation and rise in prices as took place in Germany. But in Germany the masses had to pay the penalty of not having completed their middle-class revolution in 1848. Burdened with Bismarck's pact with the junkers, Herr Helferich did not dare, even in the hour of Germany's greatest distress, to touch the incomes of the agrarians or to violate those privileges which the latter had acquired in return for giving the bourgeoisie a free hand in industrial spheres. The bourgeoisie, in return, were unwilling to dis-

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gorge even a part of their surplus values, as long as the junkers could shelter behind a Prussian Assembly, elected on a three-class franchise.

It is often assumed that the political ripeness of a class is directly determined by its material standard of life. But it is more probably true that mass psychology follows behind and not alongside of economic changes. The German Revolution of 1918 tends to prove this. Without doubt the great mass of German Labour in November, 1918, in spite of its privations, had little thought of any wide social changes. Its main object was to get peace and to remove from power the junker class which, as head of the army, it regarded as being responsible for all its sufferings during the four years of war. In this respect its aims were not necessarily opposed to those of the middle classes. The clever propaganda of the ruling classes of the Allied countries let it be known at the right moment that the Hohenzollerns alone were the obstacles to peace. President Wilson's reply to Prince Max of Baden, in October, 1918, is historically important, mainly because it united the German middle classes, represented by the Reichstag Bloc, with the German petit bourgeoisie and Labour, represented by the two Socialist parties, in a fighting front against the junkers. The situation of 1848 was repeated, but this time it was much more favourable for the German middle classes. The junkers and the dynasties were isolated and discredited. The coalition, created by Bismarck with such care, was gone in a night. A new page in the history of Germany had begun.

**That this was the real meaning of the German Revolution is plain from the fact that, except for a few weeks, the middle classes did not let the direction of State policy out of their hands. In this task they were assisted by the leaders of Labour, and even by a part of the rank and file, and by the whole of the petit bourgeoisie, whose wavering, indecisive attitude in times of revolution is historically notorious. All these elements were deeply affected by middle-class ideology. Only a small clear-sighted minority in the chief industrial**

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centres and a few intellectuals saw further than the immediate future. Thus, in 1920, the Independent Socialist leader, Heinrich Ströbel,\* reviewing the events of these days, wrote:—"The victorious German Revolution had before it the task, uninfluenced by the Russian example, to consolidate popular government by removing the old military apparatus and the old civil administration, and by making a beginning in socialisation. The accomplishing of this would have taken some months, and during this time the Government of the People's Commissioners, relying on the Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils, should have used their authority to the full. After they had laid the foundations of a permanent Labour régime, it was possible and necessary to leave further development to a constituent assembly elected on a democratic franchise. But instead of closing the front against the common enemy, the currents of German Socialism went different ways and began conflicting with each other."

German Labour was not ripe for the task presented to it in November, 1918. Herein lay its failure to direct subsequent events. Herein also lies one of the causes which, together with the failure of British Labour to hinder the Treaty of Versailles, has turned Central Europe into a coolie plantation for the benefit of the German neo-bourgeoisie and of the Entente rulers.

The war acted like a two-edged sword on the German masses. Some of them it roused to higher social consciousness, others it unclassed and threw them demoralised on to the social rubbish heap, where they were recruited for the pretorian guards of Noske. In the absence of any serious resistance from this quarter, it was a comparatively easy matter for the German middle classes to salvage their great war-industry machine and re-organise it with the object of winning alone and by aid of depreciated currency and sweated wages what they and the junkers together had failed to win by the sword. And to a large extent they succeeded in doing this during 1919. A "prosperous" phase in the develop-

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\* "Die deutsche Revolution, ihr Unglück und ihre Rettung."

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ment of German Capitalism again set in. One cannot, however, say that this after-war prosperity was real. It might be compared with St. Martin's Little Summer, following the midsummer of Colonial expansion and war prosperity preceding the winter of depression and discontent.

The catastrophic state of the German exchanges in 1919, the deflated currency, and the dearth of articles were now the cause of renewed accumulation of surplus values in the hands of the German neo-bourgeoisie, just as the war loans and the methods of floating them had been the cause of similar accumulation during the war. While the Big Four in Paris were dividing up the world territorially, Big Business in Berlin was dividing up speculations on exchanges. With a currency reduced on the foreign exchanges to one sixteenth, and on the home market to one-tenth of its pre-war value, it was possible for the German manufacturer to reap the difference on all goods exported. This difference now became part of the surplus value, appropriated by German Capital from German Labour. How this was possible can be seen from the following table of wages, prices and currency values in Germany between 1914 and 1921:—

### WAGES, PRICES, AND CURRENCY IN GERMANY, 1914-1921.

Level of prices in 1920 over 1914 prices, reckoned as 100 .. .. .	1400*
Level of wages in 1920 over 1914 wages, reckoned as 100 .. .. .	806**
Reduction in 1920 of real wages against 1914 standard .. .. .	43%
Reduction in value of mark in June, 1920, against dollar in July, 1914 .. .. .	94%
Reduction in value of mark in June, 1921, against gold mark of July, 1914 .. .. .	90%

\* Kucznicki, Berlin.

\*\* After allowing for short time and unemployment.

The difference between the 90 per cent. reduction of the mark value at home and the 94 per cent. reduction abroad, together with the 43 per cent. real wage reduction, formed the

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new post-war surplus value, which the German neo-bourgeoisie could annex on all foreign exports.

On the other hand the post-war industries in England were in a very different and, against Germany at first, disadvantageous position. This will be seen from the following table:—

### WAGES, PRICES, AND EXCHANGE IN GREAT BRITAIN, 1914-1921.

Level of prices in 1920 over 1914 prices, reckoned as 100 .. .. .	289*
Level of wages in 1920 over 1914 wages, reckoned as 100 .. .. .	220
Reduction in 1920 of real wages against 1914 standard .. .. .	25%
Reduction in value of sterling in June, 1921, against dollar in July, 1914 .. .. .	25%

\* Joint Labour Committee statistics.

The fact that real wages and the sterling exchange was only 25 per cent. down exposed British industries to German dumping. By the end of 1920 it gradually began to dawn upon some of the Allied Governments that indemnities and coal deliveries were only assisting the disproportion in the exchanges and that, although this might be welcomed as an excuse for inaugurating a general attack on the standard of living in Western Europe, it must nevertheless be kept within bounds. At this point the difference of interest between the French and British Governments began to appear in strong relief. To the militarist money-lending Imperialism of France Germany was a potential industrial colony. The policy of the French banks has been since the end of 1920 to acquire through diplomatic and military pressure the direct control over German heavy industries, to annex the bulk of the surplus values by acquiring in the form of reparations 90 per cent. of the shares, and to throw a few sophs to the German captains of industry for their services in disciplining German labour. This policy lies at the bottom of all the French threats of occupation of the Ruhr and intrigues with Korfanty in Upper Silesia. By this means it



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is hoped to finally unite the iron industries of Lorraine, surrendered by the terms of the Armistice to France, to the coal industry of Silesia and the Ruhr, heavily mortgaged by the reparations fixed by the London ultimatum.

The industrial and trading magnates of the British Empire had other objects in view. The war had put them in possession of vast resources of coal, iron and oil in Asia and Africa, and hence the acquisition of economic spheres on the European continent was superfluous. On the other hand, a Germany with industries dumping into colonial areas of the Levant and South America was a danger. Their policy, therefore, at the end of 1920 was to bring up the German export prices to the level of the world markets by protective tariffs and sanctions, and to bring up the level of the German home prices to that of the world market by forcing the German Government to abandon its subsidy of necessary foods and raw material for the benefit of its working classes. The difference between the 90 per cent. reduction of the home value of the German mark and the 94 per cent. reduction of its world market value as against the value in 1914 must be bridged at all costs. Hence the pressure of the British Government on the German Government to force it to increase indirect taxation in Germany and abandon the bread subsidies; hence the 28 per cent. protective duty on German exports and the wage cuts on British labour—all of which have been features of the first half of 1921. The net result in England can be seen by the following table:—

### WAGES AND PRICES IN GREAT BRITAIN, 1920-1921.

Level of prices in 1921 over 1914 prices, reckoned as 100 .. .. .	250
Drop in prices since 1920 .. .. .	14%
Level of wages in June, 1921, over 1914 wages, reckoned as 100 .. .. .	180
Drop in wages since 1920 .. .. .	20%

British Labour has had its real wages docked 20 per cent., while prices have only fallen 14 per cent., and this does not take into consideration short time and unemployment. Thus British Labour has begun at last to feel in its own person the

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effects of the low standard of living in Europe's coolie plantation.

The London ultimatum was a compromise between the colonial investment policy of the French financiers and the Protectionist policy of British exporting and manufacturing houses. The German capitalists responded in two ways. Their captains of heavy industry, with Stinnes at their head, set about to complete a process, which had begun after the Revolution, viz., to squeeze out by price manipulation the German manufacturing industries that use coal and iron as raw material, and so to force the latter to join great vertical trusts, handling everything from the raw mineral to the finished product. They thus concentrated their forces, so that in face of the French financier they would be able to present a united front and so secure in bargaining over a Franco-German industrial consortium a good share of the exploitation rights. On the other hand, they are preparing to meet the tariffs, imposed by the English in the London ultimatum, by a further reduction in the standard of living of their own Labour. Already the German heavy industry Press has begun to put out feelers in this direction. Thus the Stinnes organ, *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, says in its issue of July 9th: "The position of the German iron industry has been much endangered by the fact that in the Saar, in Belgium, Luxemburg, America, France and England wages reductions varying from 5 to 35 per cent. have taken place. In face of the indemnity burdens laid on Germany by the London ultimatum, the German iron industry will be placed in a most difficult position on the world market as long as the question of a wages reduction is ruled out." In other words, the British captains of industry have used the German sweated wages as an excuse for a 20 per cent. wage cut in England, and the German captains of industry use this wage cut and other measures of the British Government to commence a campaign against the already low standard of life in their own country. And so the vicious circle goes on.

## *Europe's Coolie Plantation*

As far as Germany is concerned, the attack has already begun in an indirect way. An attempt is being made to introduce a number of the 400,000 odd unemployed to dilute the labour of those in full employment. This has resulted in the mining area of Middle Germany in a real wage reduction of 20 per cent. The German Trade Union Central Commission is trying to counteract this danger by inducing the Minister of Railways and of Public Works to undertake large reconstruction schemes to absorb part of the unemployed. But the Allied Commissions threatened to forbid this on the grounds that the money spent on reconstruction is so much off reparation. In actual fact this reconstruction work, if carried through, will relieve the competition between the employed and unemployed for jobs, and so tend to prevent wage reductions. It will also increase internal production, and so tend to keep down prices. The members of the Allied Commissions desire neither of these developments, because they would tend to break the vicious circle and free Labour in Central Europe from some of the consequences of the "sanctions."

What are the general conclusions to be drawn from the above? The German Revolution has resulted in a strengthening of German Capitalism by relieving it from a coalition with an agrarian caste. Its coalition with this class in the war brought about a colossal depreciation in the purchasing power of money in Central Europe. Germany after the war has become an autochthonous economic unit, separated by a currency barrier from England, the United States, and partly also from France. Its working classes can at present only advantageously exchange products in countries where the currency is equally or even more depreciated than in Germany, as in Poland, the Baltic States, the Balkans, Turkey and Russia. The Treaties of Versailles, the Spa Agreement and the London Ultimatum have caused her to join the autochthonous economic unit of countries with a higher currency than her own. She is to become the coolie plantation annexed to this unit. In the process of annexation her

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native Capitalists, the class that alone has benefited by the German Revolution, are ceasing to have a national character or to follow national aims. They are showing increasing tendencies to become the servants of the masters of industries in the countries with the high exchanges. And as long as a Capitalist Imperialism in England, France and America remains, German Labour can only hope to escape some of the worst results of its economic situation by trade relations with the countries of East Europe. More than that, the whole of the impoverished European continent will tend to become an economic unit. The barrier to this at present is France and Poland, both of whom are not free agents, but through war debts are mortgaged to London and Wall Street. Should this bond be broken by revolution or any other process, the economic unity of the Continent will be complete.

How can British Labour help in freeing the Continent? It can help to cut the bonds that bind the Continent to London and Wall Street. It can insist that the low wage standard in the coolie plantation be not made its own standard. It can, by forcing a capital levy, by annulling the war loans and the Versailles indemnities, cut the chains which force Labour on the Continent to pay tribute to London and Wall Street. And then it will find that these measures are all part of its own social emancipation.

But in order to do this a new spirit is needed. Labour must have an international organisation, which can not only summon conferences but can act across the arbitrary lines of nationality, race and sphere of interest. It must avoid the mistakes of those who, in Germany in November, 1918, allied themselves with Labour's class enemy for fear of real, not sham, social changes. It must avoid the timidity which caused "Black Friday," and the apathy and muddle which caused the blockade of strike-breaking Continental coal to collapse. An active International General Staff of Labour alone can secure a common European standard of living. The failure to do this has already brought its nemesis in 1921. And there is worse to follow.

# THE CONFLICT IN GERMAN TRADE UNIONISM

**T**HE Peace Treaty, the "sanctions" and the whole question of economic reconstruction play an important part in the life of the German workers. Each demand of the Allies for coal or gold reacts on the lives of the workers, with the consequent effort of the employers to increase the working day, whilst reducing pay; and where neither of these methods succeeds, lock-outs or short time result. It is thus inevitable that the political situation should be an important factor in German Trade Unionism to-day, and give an added intensity to the internal controversies which have recently arisen.

German Trade Unionism has in the past never been strongly political in character, although it has been organised from the outset as a Socialist Trade Union movement. The explanation of this apparent contradiction is simple. The German Trade Unions were reorganised in 1890 under the auspices of the Social Democratic Party, and have since worked in conjunction with it until two years ago. They have thus grown up as an elaborate machinery on the economic side, content to leave political questions to the party in which their leaders played a prominent part. During the war they played a purely subordinate rôle in connection with the tasks of economic organisation: in the Revolution they had no part as an official movement, and, indeed, were engaged in negotiating an Alliance of Employers and Employed at the very moment when, in November, 1918, the Revolution broke out through the entirely unofficial Workers' and Soldiers' Councils. This Alliance of Employers and Employed, it is worth noting, has continued to be adhered to by the General Federation of Trade Unions right through the Revolution; and in Novem-

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ber, 1920, the Executive of the Federation rejected a motion to withdraw from it by 24 votes to 7. It was only during the Kapp coup, in March, 1920, that the Trade Unions for the first time entered the political arena, and then only in defence: their positive programme on that occasion, the "Eight Points," never secured effective fulfilment.

In consequence the conflict in German Trade Unionism has taken place through the leadership of the political parties. This is in complete contrast with France, where a tradition of revolutionary Unionism has always been maintained by a vigorous minority which has looked with suspicion on all political parties. The campaign of the newer forces in the German Unions, which is still only beginning, has taken place, at first through the Independent Socialist Party, and lately through the Communist Party. On the other hand, the official elements have responded in the same way as in France, by the attempted expulsion of revolutionary sections. This policy was definitely adopted at a meeting of the Council (Ausschuss) of the Federation in December, 1920.

### RESOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE GENERAL FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (A.D.G.B.), DECEMBER 15, 1920.

The Moscow "Communist International" has declared war and destruction on the Trade Union International (Amsterdam). Statements, impossible to prove, allege that the Trade Unions of Central and West Europe are "yellow" and their leaders "bribed" by private capital. On this account a campaign is to be begun, with the intent to destroy the result of our decades of struggle and work by which we built up the Trade Union movement in Germany. Trade Union members are obliged by the Moscow theses to subject both Works Councils and Trade Unions to the supervision of the Communist Party. Not only that, but splits in the movement are advocated in cases where rejection of revolutionary activity in the Unions would be involved. German Trade Unions have always cherished their right to decide independently at their Congresses on all tactics; now they are requested to submit to the decisions of persons, ignorant of their conditions, who judge dogmatically; not a dictatorship of the proletariat, but of obscure cliques *over* the proletariat.

## *The Conflict in German Trade Unionism*

Faithful to their traditions, the German Unions reiterate their solidarity and sympathy with the workers in all countries, including Russia, whose sufferings and strivings call for the deepest sympathy. In their opinion the affiliation of the Russian Unions to Amsterdam would greatly strengthen the fighting power of the workers and be also advantageous to Russian workers. For these reasons the German Trade Unions will make a determined stand against any movement likely to detract from their autonomy and freedom of action: as such the proposed "Communist Groups" are regarded. These groups will tend to paralyse the activity of the Unions; their methods (cunning, illegal procedure, secrecy, perversion of truth, etc.) are to be rejected and fought against as immoral and injurious to Trade Union organisation.

Since the programme advocated by Moscow threatens the preservation of unity within the movement, and would result in chaos and ineffectiveness, the Executive of the General Federation of German Trade Unions considers it its most pressing duty to recommend all affiliated bodies to combat these destructive activities with every means they can command. Members who, either alone or in conjunction with others, thus weaken the necessary unity of the Trade Unions in their struggle against Capitalism, break the rules of the movement and consequently place themselves outside the Unions. The results of such behaviour can be easily imagined.

The Executive of the A.D.G.B., therefore, in the interests of Trade Unionism, warns all organisations against the Moscow propaganda, and exhorts all affiliated societies to remain faithful to the rules of the German Unions, and to oppose with united energy all efforts likely to cause disunity and dissension within the ranks of the members.

The reply to this appeared in an appeal for the unity of the workers issued by the Communist Party on January 8, 1921. The appeal was issued as an open letter addressed to the General Federation of Trade Unions, the Clerical and Technical Employees' Alliance (A.F.A.), the General Workers' Union, the Free Workers' Union (Syndicalist), the Social Democratic Party, the Independent Socialist Party, and the Communist Workers.

### OPEN LETTER OF THE GERMAN COMMUNIST PARTY TO ALL GERMAN LABOUR ORGANISATIONS, JANUARY 8, 1921.

The United Communist Party of Germany considers it to be its duty to approach all Socialist Parties and Trade Union Organisations at this period of difficulty and menace for the German working class.

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The German working class, including all those sections just awakening to their position in the proletarian world, must now as a whole combine for defence. This is necessary because of the advancing dissolution of Capitalism, the world crisis, the fall in the exchange and the ever-increasing cost of living.

Reaction is working to keep the working class in subjection by continually forging new chains, by means of the "Orgesch" assassinations, and the law ever ready to hush up the culprits.

For these reasons the United Communist Party of Germany makes the following propositions to all Socialist Parties and Trade Union organisations, so that they may form a basis for further action and discussion :—

1. (a) The introduction of uniform wage demands to insure an existence to workers, employees and State clerks. Unity, with the object of united action, between the wage demands of the railway workers, State clerks, miners, agricultural workers and those in other industries.
  - (b) Increase in incomes and pensions of war victims, private people and pensioners so as to put these on a level with the various wage demands.
  - (c) Uniform regulation of the unemployment subsidy for the whole country, taking the income of full-time workers as a basis. For this purpose the money should be procured by the State. The control of the unemployed to be in the hands of special unemployment councils in connection with the Trade Unions.
2. Measures to reduce the cost of living, such as :
    - (a) Distribution of provisions at reduced prices to wage earners and those in receipt of small incomes (widows, orphans, etc.). This to be done through the Co-operative Societies under the control of the Trade Unions and Works Councils. The provision of the necessary supplies to be the business of the State.
    - (b) Immediate requisition of all available rooms, not only with the object of distributing them, but also to render it possible to remove small families from large flats or houses.
3. Measures to procure provisions and other necessaries :
    - (a) The Works Councils to take control of all available raw materials, coal, and fertilisers. All disused factories, suitable for the production of necessities, to be re-started and the products distributed as in II. (a).
    - (b) Agricultural Councils, composed of landed proprietors and peasants, in conjunction with the Agricultural Workers' Union to be responsible for tillage, harvesting and sale of all agricultural produce.



## *The Conflict in German Trade Unionism*

4. (a) All bourgeois defence leagues to be dissolved and disarmed, and proletarian organisations formed in all provinces and corporations to take their place.
- (b) Amnesty to be granted to all those whose crimes are due to political causes or the general necessity of the moment. All political prisoners to be liberated.
- (c) Removal of present strike ban.
- (d) Immediate diplomatic and trade relations to be begun with Russia.

In suggesting this plan of action, we do not disguise the fact, either to ourselves or to the workers, that these suggestions will not relieve their need. The United Communist Party, however, without relaxing the fight for the dictatorship, which is the only solution, is prepared to carry through the suggestions made above in conjunction with other parties who are supported by the working class. We make no secret of the cleft which divides us from other parties. We wish rather to make clear that no mere lip-service to the points just laid down will suffice; but action to carry through these demands is necessary. We ask the parties, to whom we address ourselves, not whether they regard the demands as justified; that we take for granted. We ask them rather: are you prepared to join with us to secure these demands regardless of consequences? To this open and straightforward question we ask an equally open and straightforward reply. The situation demands an immediate answer; therefore we expect one on or before January 18.

In case the various Parties and Unions whom we now address are unwilling to enter the struggle, we, the United Communist Party, will feel compelled to carry on the fight alone, convinced of the support of the masses. The United Communist Party to-day asks all existing organisations in the country to make known their attitude towards the fight against Capitalism and reaction.

The policy of expulsions was, nevertheless, proceeded with: and the more important Union decisions may be noted.

### TRANSPORT WORKERS. EXECUTIVE DECISION OF MARCH, 1921.

1. The decisions of Congresses of the German Trade Union Federation, the Union Congress and the stipulations of the rules are authoritative for all members of the German Transport Workers' Union.

2. Any member of the Union following the decisions of the United Communist Party of Germany or the Moscow Trade Union International, which are directed against the German Trade Unions,

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places himself automatically outside the ranks of the organisation and thereby forfeits all membership rights.

3. The Executive Committee is instructed to proceed with the utmost vigour which the rules admit (including expulsion) against all those members who

- (a) take part in the formation of Communist fractions ("cells") aiming at schism within the Trade Unions;
- (b) compile, sign, distribute or circulate pamphlets whose contents are directed against the Trade Unions;
- (c) actively take part in meetings, conferences, assemblies, etc., which have the object of endangering the unity, capacity for action, and the existence of Trade Unions;
- (d) advocate the refusal of paying contributions or practise this themselves and consequently imperil the capacity for action of the organisation;
- (e) endeavour to undermine either verbally or in writing the requisite discipline for accomplishment of Trade Union aims.

4. Any person employing for his own use Union property of any kind without authorisation of the Union Executive or who retains same in his possession shall be proceeded against at law.

5. Salaried Union Officials who are guilty of infringement of the above principles are liable to immediate dismissal without payment of salary.

### **RAILWAYMEN. EXECUTIVE DECISION OF FEBRUARY, 1921.**

"Whoever in his capacity as member of the German Railwaymen's Union obeys or acts upon decisions or instructions of the Moscow International Council in Trade Union matters, violates the constitution of the Union and the decisions of the Congresses of Jena and Dresden, and thereby automatically excludes himself from the Union. Employees, officials and other members of the German Railwaymen's Union shall be held guilty of acting according to the policy of the Moscow Trade Union International if, without the authority and approval of the Executive Committee they collect contributions, write and circulate manifestoes, pamphlets and circulars which are directed against the Free Trade Unions. Whosoever acts in this manner or takes part in conferences or meetings which call upon those persons attending them to carry out decisions calculated to prejudice the unity and influence, and even the existence of the organisation, shall be expelled from the Union."

### **METALWORKERS. EXECUTIVE DECISION OF JANUARY, 1921.**

"The carrying out of the activities demanded by the Communist International in the Trade Unions tends to weaken the power of

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action and efficiency of the organisations; the abusing and attacking of one's own organisation must lead inevitably to a split in the organisation. Whosoever thus aids and abets in weakening and shattering our Union increases the present difficulty of the grim struggle against Capitalism, and is therefore to be treated as a danger to the Union. The Executive Council, which endorses the principles of the Amsterdam Trade Union International and strongly condemns the tactics of the Moscow International Council, therefore calls upon the Executive Committee to use every means to which the rules empower them against those members who are guilty of conduct so injurious to the Union and its members."

These decisions have been put into effect. The most notable example has been the industrial district of Halle, where the Communists have been in the majority. The local council of the metalworkers, as elected, was purely Communist. Thereupon the supply of Union stamps was immediately stopped; the A.D.G.B. sent down a special representative to organise the opposition; and a secretary was appointed above the heads of the local members.

On the other hand, it should be observed that the Extreme Left of the revolutionary movement in the Unions has also pursued disruptive tactics and broken away to form a separate "Free Workers' Union" of a Syndicalist tendency. This movement of the Rhenish-Westphalian miners has its centre at Gelsenkirchen. Its present strength is 130,000 members, of whom, roughly, 115,000 are miners, the remainder comprising all classes of workers. It has voted to join the Red Trade Union International; but the latter body has appealed to it to abandon its present tactics.

The official policy of the Left Wing has been to continue working with the Unions as far as possible, in spite of the attempted expulsions. This is laid down in the following instructions:—

### **CIRCULAR OF THE CENTRAL TRADE UNION COMMITTEE (COMMUNIST), MARCH, 1921.**

1. The measures now being taken by many Unions should on no account induce Communists to resign their Trade Union member-

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ship. They should remain in the Unions and influence others. Those who resign are acting contrary to the rules of the Communist Party.

2. The combined action of the employers, Government, and Trade Union bureaucracy makes it obligatory for every Communist to work with redoubled energy on Communist lines within the Unions. They should take the lead in the workers' movement.

3. It is the Communists' duty to draw attention at every meeting to the official betrayal of the workers. The "Open Letter" must be brought up for discussion and the workers invited to support our demands.

4. Workshop meetings should also be called at which the economic and political position is discussed, with the "Open Letter" as basis. These meetings give the best opportunities for opening the eyes of non-Communists to the machinations of the enemy.

5. Local party representatives must follow assiduously our former instruction re Communists in Trade Unions.

6. Where Communist groups have not yet been formed in factories, there should be no delay in forming them. Neglect of this matter will be regarded as failure to do one's duty as Communist leaders.

7. The local Communist leader is to elect a representative for every fifteen industrial groups. This representative should see that all the Unions in the groups are in touch with the Trade Union centre.

The whole issue has entered a new phase as a result of the strike movement of last March. The strike met with the active opposition of the General Federation of Trade Unions. For the first time the Communists endeavoured to take the lead in an industrial movement. It is too early to estimate the full effects of this new development.

# “AN INCIDENT OF CANAL CONSTRUCTION”

By J. F. HORRABIN

WHEN any action on the part of a modern capitalist Government is acclaimed by its Press as a shining example of “disinterestedness,” “good-will,” “statesmanlike generosity,” and so forth, Labour students of world-politics may be forgiven for suspecting that there is more in the case than meets the eye in the newspaper headlines, and for proceeding to do a little research work on their own account. Such research work often affords quite useful evidence as to the little ways of Imperialists.

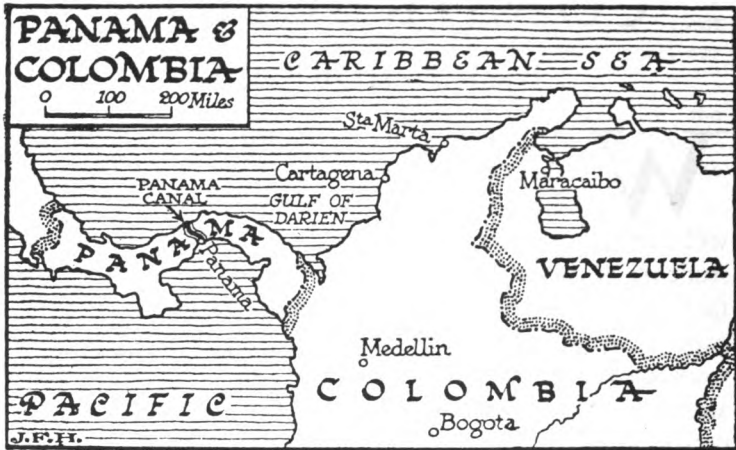
Here is a case in which sundry factors of importance in the world of to-day—the Pacific Problem, the Rights of Small Nationalities, Routes and Oil—all play their part.

It was announced recently that President Harding had ratified the Colombian Treaty, by the terms of which the United States pays to the Republic of Colombia the sum of \$25,000,000 in consideration of the fact that the Panama Canal is built through territory which *once* belonged to Colombia, but which she lost—I quote the excellent phrase used in the monthly review of Economic Affairs issued by the National City Bank of New York—“as an incident of canal construction.” “The payment of this sum,” declares the Bank’s leader-writer, “is an act of good-will and fundamental justice on the part of the United States,” and it is due, says he, entirely to America’s consideration for “the natural feelings of the people of Colombia.”

Now most people—and proletarians certainly not least—will agree that \$25,000,000 implies quite a lot of considera-

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tion. Such a lot, indeed, that one is curious to know more about the "natural feelings" of the Colombians, and how it came to pass that they secured so handsome a sum for merely moral damages. Let us recall certain not uninteresting facts about the construction of the Panama Canal.



In 1902, the French company which had started work on the Isthmus twenty years earlier offered all its rights and assets to the United States Government for the sum of \$40,000,000. President Roosevelt—the same Theodore, it is worthy of note in passing, who had declared, after the experience of the Spanish-American War, that the cutting of an Atlantic-Pacific canal would instantly "double the strength of the U.S. Navy"—at once opened negotiations with the Republic of Colombia, which included in its territory the Isthmus of Panama. He offered \$10,000,000 for the grant to the United States of a perpetual lease of the "Canal zone." Negotiations went on for some months, but were at length, in August, 1903, abruptly broken off by Colombia, with the intention, so President Roosevelt thought and said, of "trying to extort more money"—a not altogether uncommon motive, even among States pretending to a higher degree of civilisation than mere South American Republics.

## *An Incident of Canal Construction*

This, observe, was in August. In the following November—on November 4, 1903, to be quite precise—Panama revolted from its mother-land, Colombia, and declared itself a free and independent State. On November 13—nine days later—its independence was “recognised” by the Government of the United States. And on November 18—just a fortnight after Panama’s declaration of independence—a treaty was signed by the United States and the Republic of Panama, by which the Canal zone (i.e., five miles of territory of each side of the Canal) was leased to the United States for ever and ever, and the sum of \$10,000,000 paid to Panama. Other countries promptly followed the United States’ lead in recognising the new State; and both territory and “compensation” were lost to Colombia. An interesting little chapter of international history, especially when read alongside of that later chapter which tells of the endless delays, postponements, refusals, attending the negotiations for the recognition of the Soviet Republic of Russia. There were, indeed, rude people who went so far as to hint that the American Government “promoted” the Panama Rebellion. But President Roosevelt positively denied this; and who—but a German—would doubt the word of an American President?

It is not surprising that the little State over whose beginning so powerful a fairy godmother watched thus tenderly—which was born, so to speak, with a \$10,000,000 silver spoon in its mouth!—has done quite well in the world, and entirely avoided such incumbrances as national debts, for instance. But what of the mother-land, Colombia, the State which was “left” so badly in the deal? Naturally, the Colombians were sore; especially when the Canal was completed and a new highway of world commerce was opened, just outside their borders.

And now, nearly twenty years after, comes the announcement that the United States Government, purely out of consideration for these natural feelings, is paying, not merely the \$10,000,000 which Colombia lost “as an incident of canal construction,” but \$25,000,000 to

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the aggrieved State; and paying it in spite of hostile critics who assert that such payment amounts to "an acknowledgment of wrong-doing on the part of the American Government." Could there be a nobler example of generosity and upright dealing in international affairs? On the part of a Big Business Government, too!

What other considerations lie behind the "good-will" and the "fundamental justice"?

One is sufficiently obvious after a glance at the map. Panama is one of the gateways to the Pacific—the vital gateway for the United States. To leave on the very borders of the Canal a State with "natural feelings" of strong resentment against the Canal owners would, therefore, plainly be an unwise policy.

But there is yet another factor, and that, too, a vastly important one—oil.

It is common knowledge that the oil supplies of the U.S., hitherto the richest in the world, are nearing their end, or at any rate decreasing their output; and that American statesmen are correspondingly anxious. Whither are they to turn for the supplies they need?

Let me quote a sentence or two from a recently published volume which deserves to be read by every Labour student—"Coal, Iron, and War," by E. C. Eckel (Harrap, 12s. 6d. net):—

The struggle must begin again, *based on other sources of supply*. . . . To the southward of our own border lies *the second great petroliferous area*, so far as probable time of development is concerned, for it seems likely that the nearby deficiencies in U.S. output will be met by greatly increased production from Mexico, Venezuela and *Colombia*. The fields in this Caribbean area are extensive . . . and they are in process of intensive development.

Further comment would be superfluous. It is fairly evident that the "natural resources" of Colombia, as well as her "natural feelings," were taken into account when President Harding's Government decided to give their \$25,000,000 exhibition of "good-will."



# THE LILLE CONGRESS

**T**HE origins of the controversy which came to a head at the Lille Congress of the Confederation of Labour have been described in detail in last month's issue. Just before the Congress a new element was added to the situation by the receipt of a telegraphic version of the resolution adopted at the Red Trade Union International Congress in Moscow (printed on page 179). The Left Wing were immediately alarmed at the possibility of the resolution committing them to a position not consistent with the tradition of Revolutionary Syndicalism which they were upholding. Accordingly a group of their leading representatives immediately issued an unofficial manifesto to clear the position.

## MANIFESTO OF MEMBERS OF THE C.S.R. (COMITÉ SYNDICALISTE RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE), JULY 15, 1921.

In view of the resolution voted at the Congress of the Red Trade Union International, the comrades who sign the following believe it must be issued immediately, since it is impossible for the Central Committee of the C.S.R. to meet this evening.

1. We are surprised to find appended to this resolution the names of two French delegates who have apparently exceeded their mandate.
2. We are of opinion that Revolutionary Trade Unionism would fail in its traditions of Trade Union independence if it accepted the view embodied in this resolution.
3. We are absolutely convinced that a Red Trade Union International with this basis would be incapable of rallying the Revolutionary Trade Union movement into its ranks, and consequently of fulfilling its purpose and flourishing. It seems impossible to us to admit, as regards the French Trade Union movement, that a definite connection should exist between the Unions and the Communist Party on a national basis, and between the Trade Union International and the Communist International on an international basis.

This alliance, in the ranks, as well as above, would necessarily lead to a change in the character of Trade Unionism by preventing it from continuing to be a class organisation open to all workers and transforming it into an organisation with a political tendency. We would assist in the creation of as many Trade Union movements as there are Communist or Socialist Internationals. A Trade Union

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International must be independent of international politics, just as a Trade Union is independent of political organisations.

From the national standpoint, French Revolutionary Trade Unionism cannot agree to this union with the Communist Party; faithful to the Charter of Amiens, it claims its independence, which makes it possible to organise within its ranks all workers regardless of their political outlook.

In the International field, it recognises that other Trade Union organisations have the right to be governed according to their historic and economic conditions; but it also reserves the same right for itself. In its opinion a Red Trade Union International which does not consider these different conditions condemns itself to inaction and death. It will only attract a section of the Revolutionary Unions; whilst in taking the different peculiarities of the movements into consideration, and in giving to the new International the double support of Russian Trade Unionism and the Revolutionary Trade Unionism of the Latin and Anglo-Saxon countries, great strides would be made along the road of Revolutionary Trade Unionism.

Our request to the C.S.R. Executive is that the Red Trade Union International be asked to summon a new Congress to rescind this resolution, and that the Congress at Lille confine its agitation to the request for the withdrawal of the C.G.T. (*Confédération Générale du Travail*) from the Amsterdam International. The motion for affiliation to Moscow to be postponed till a special conference meets.

No defiance of the Communist International, nor weakening of the bonds which unite us with the Russian Revolution, is intended by our present attitude; we are actuated by what we regard the superior interest of the world revolutionary movement: it alone guides us.

To-day, as yesterday, we repudiate Amsterdam. This temporary non-acceptance of the decision of the Red Trade Union International has not caused us to discover the merits of an International grafted on the war organisation of the inter-allied Unions, and whose policy is organically linked to the International Bureau of Albert Thomas and the Second International, the International of the King's Ministers.

We desire more than ever that our Russian comrades will be present at the Lille Congress, where we shall have an opportunity of putting our point of view before them.

Signed: MONMOUSSEAU, SÈMARD, BARTHE, JOUVE, CHABERT, QUINTON, RACAMOND, GUINET, TEULADE, MEYER, FONTAINE, RÉBILLON, BRIOLET, MONATTE, VERDIER, VADÉCART, BISCH, RAMBAU, DAGUERRE.

This manifesto was issued hastily, before any further

## The Lille Congress

message had been received. The crisis, however, was speedily allayed, though not composed, by a special explanatory message from the Council of the Red Trade Union International.

### MESSAGE OF THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF THE RED TRADE UNION INTERNATIONAL TO THE LILLE CONGRESS, JULY 25, 1921.

The Central Council of the Red Trade Union International sends fraternal greetings to the French C.G.T. Congress at Lille.

It hopes that the Congress will decide that French Trade Unionism will regenerate and work in connection with the revolutionary organisations of all countries for the realisation of proletarian liberty through the medium of Communism; that it will repudiate the Amsterdam International and join the Red Trade Union International of Moscow, to which are affiliated Communist and Trade Union Comrades from forty-two countries (Spain, Italy, England, America, etc.).

The Congress of the R.T.U.I. resolved by a majority vote, that the executive committees of both Communist and Red Trade Union Internationals should have joint members so as to collaborate effectively in the cause of revolution.

*Yet despite this unity, the Congress had no intention of encroaching on the autonomy of Trade Union organisations in the various countries, neither was it intended that one international should be subordinate to the other.*

Reformists and the manoeuvres of the bourgeois Government have tried to make the French militants believe that the Moscow Congress had decided to make the Trade Union movement subordinate to the Communist International: clear-sighted revolutionaries, however, will see through this.

We reiterate the hope once again that French Revolutionaries will not, on the pretext of fighting for autonomy, fall into the trap made for them by bourgeois rulers and their faithful satellites.

*Long Live the Red Trade Union International.*

*Long Live the Proletarian World Revolution.*

By order of and on behalf of the Central Council of the Red Trade Union International.

The Executive Bureau: LOZOWSKY, General Secretary; NOGUIME (Russia); ARLANDIS (Spain); MAYER (Germany); TOM MANN (England), ANDROISHINE (America).

At the Congress a united front was presented on either side, and a straight vote was taken between the two opposing schools of policy. The Executive Report was carried by

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1,556 to 1,348 votes, with 46 abstentions. The principal division, however, concerned the resolution on Trade Union policy, which covered both the international field and the whole issues of internal policy. Here the two resolutions presented form a conspectus of the rival points of view. The vote showed 1,572 for the official resolution against 1,327 for the Left Wing, and 66 abstentions.

### THE MAJORITY RESOLUTION ON TRADE UNION POLICY

The sixteenth National Congress of the C.G.T., inspired by the continuous traditions of Trade Union policy, again maintains that the struggle of the organised workers to change the social system will not end until class disappears, the wage system is superseded, and the producers take their place in the direction of all social activity.

This Congress reaffirms in their entirety the principles of the Amiens Resolution, which all succeeding C.G.T. Congresses have approved. It points out, however, that the interpretation of these principles absolutely excludes all propositions which renounce the necessary and absolute autonomy and independence of Trade Unionism from any political party or Government whatsoever.

There is an irreconcilable contradiction between the independence of the Trade Union movement and any form of permanent connection with a political party which would subject the movement, its aims and activities, to its direction, at the same time entangling the workers in struggles which they have neither decided for themselves nor discussed so as to know whither they will lead.

The Congress authorises the C.G.T. to carry out the minimum programme for the reconstruction of the devastated areas; to bring about the industrial nationalisation of the large public services, national insurance, and workers' control, and finally to resist the attacks of employers on wages and hours, in accordance with the Charter of Amiens, which declares that Trade Unionism should agitate for "the increase in the well-being of the workers by the realisation of immediate improvements."

To realise this programme the Congress believes the working-class movement has but one weapon: unity; for this reason it is of opinion the militants should concentrate on co-ordination in the first place.

In the present condition of the world the Congress believes that all national questions are dependent upon the international situation, and therefore it decides to continue the affiliation to the International Federation of Trade Unions centred at Amsterdam.

This Congress declares working-class unity can only be effectively maintained by the voluntary discipline of the Trade Unionists and of the organisations.

## *The Lille Congress*

Diversity of opinion, which has every right to free expression, cannot justify the use of abusive language between militants. This practice is unworthy of Trade Unionism and is censured and condemned by the Congress. Mutual respect within the ranks of Trade Unionism does not in any way interfere with freedom of opinion.

The rights of minorities remain what they ought to be, nobody can limit the liberty to criticise; yet minorities are obliged to abide by any decisions taken; under no pretext should groups of those whose tendencies are alike take the place of the chief organisation, whether departmental or national, such substitution causing confusion and rendering propaganda and solidarity impossible.

The activity of the minorities is permissible at the regular meetings of the Congress; it cannot be tolerated, however, when it becomes a public opposition to the decisions arrived at by the will of the majority.

Just as one Trade Unionist cannot belong to two Unions, or one Union to two Federations, these minority groups are forbidden to belong to two Internationals.

### THE MINORITY RESOLUTION ON TRADE UNION POLICY.

The Confederal Congress at Lille hopes to see realised the leftward tendency supported by the recent Congresses, and thus place the C.G.T. on the road of Revolutionary Trade Unionism.

This new orientation is expected by the masses of Trade Unionists as well as by the militants: the present disorder, resulting from economic conditions and from the policy of the Confederation during and after the war, can and should give way to a new period of confidence and action.

The Lille Congress recalls the C.G.T. to adherence, in the spirit and in the letter, to the Charter of Amiens; it recalls that Trade Unions are the necessary groupings of workers which no one has the right to split up into fragments, and to which each should give of his best, both in the daily struggle for immediate demands and in the labour of preparation for the integral emancipation of the workers.

Recalling to mind the basic principles of Revolutionary Trade Unionism, this Congress will not let it be replaced by a spirit of social peace, nor be made the subject of calumnious attack as if involving disrespect for Trade Union organisation and leading towards rash and chaotic movements.

For the very reason of the high esteem in which the Revolutionaries hold Trade Unionism they are most anxious to see it methodical, vigorous and strong.

This Congress opposes most decidedly any decision to exclude Revolutionary Trade Unions or Trade Unionists; such action would inevitably lead to a split, destroy working-class unity, weaken the

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Trade Union movement and render it incapable for a time of carrying out its mission.

The Congress claims the imprescriptible right of freedom of opinion for all tendencies within the ranks of the C.G.T. It calls on supporters of Amsterdam to respect national Trade Union unity, just as the adherents of Moscow have not thought it necessary to leave the C.G.T.

Voicing directly the organised workers in the C.G.T., this Congress proclaims again that no realisation of the Trade Union ideal is possible without the complete transformation of society. The working-class movement, born of the class struggle and expressing the actual situation of the proletariat, inspired in its action and in its aims by the desire to defend the interests and establish the rights of the workers, reiterates its aim as that of the abolition of classes and the wage system.

Imbued with these principles, and having this aim in view, the Congress confirms the Amiens resolution, which declares:—

“The C.G.T. groups together, independently of all political schools, all workers who are conscious of the struggle to be carried on for the abolition of the wage system.

“In the sphere of everyday demands, Trade Unionism aims at co-ordinating the efforts of the workers and improving their conditions through the realisation of immediate ameliorations, such as the shortening of hours, increase of wages, etc. But this is only one aspect of its work; Trade Unionism is preparing the integral emancipation, which can be realised only by the expropriation of the capitalist class; it commends, as a means to this end, the general strike, and considers that the Trade Union, now a grouping for the purpose of resistance, will be in the future the basis of social organisation, as the group for production and distribution.”

The Lille Congress, in condemning class collaboration, considers that this does not mean the inevitable intercourse between master and worker, but the participation in permanent organisations of workers and capitalist representatives together for the common study of economic problems the solution of which can only prolong the existence of the present régime.

It declares that to seek economic solutions inspired by consideration for the “general interest” is contrary to the principle enunciated above; that the rôle of Trade Unionism should be determined by class interest, and that any call to the workers to increase production while the capitalist régime continues is not in accordance with the Amiens Charter.

Considering that in the pre-Revolutionary period the essential rôle of Trade Unionism is to raise constant opposition to the capitalist forces, the Congress asserts that the work of documentation or technical and professional education cannot be neglected. It declares that the Trade Unions, whose duty it is to build up the framework

## The Lille Congress

of the new society, should organise and absorb the technicians, and not be absorbed and dominated by them.

The true Economic Council of Labour will not be outside Trade Unionism, but constituted within its ranks, with its spirit in every cell of our organisation. From top to bottom, in the local Union, the Departmental Council and the National Federation, the C.G.T. should pursue this work of preparation for the control of the means of production and exchange simultaneously with the daily struggle against the employer and for the attainment of the workers' demands.

Faithful to the Amiens Resolution, the Congress considers that Trade Unionism is by its origin, by its character and by its ideals a revolutionary force. It once more affirms its complete independence in relation to theoretical movements; it declares it will not be tampered with by any external influences during its daily national or international action.

It believes that Trade Unionism ought to develop Trade Union activities to a maximum in order to achieve the destruction of the capitalist régime and the realisation of the proletarian Revolution.

In this work of Revolution the Trade Union movement places the Revolution above all systems and theories, and declares itself ready to collaborate with all Revolutionary forces for this end.

In the midst of the present world chaos, the workers have, more than ever, the imperious duty to extend their hands across the frontier, and proclaim that they belong to their class before belonging to the State that oppresses them.

In order to oppose a united and irresistible front to the power of international Capital, the workers of the whole world should unite in a movement in which they can continue internationally the class war that they carry on in their own country against their respective employers.

Being of the opinion that the place of a Trade Union movement based on the class war and on internationalism cannot be in the Amsterdam International—intimately connected with the International Labour Office subsidised by the capitalist Governments—this Congress declares that the French C.G.T. should leave this organisation of class-collaboration and that, without violating the Amiens Resolution, it can adhere to the Trade Union International of Moscow on the definite understanding that its statutes respect the autonomy of the Trade Union movement.

The final vote on the above resolutions was taken on July 30. On July 31 the C.S.R. met separately and decided to continue its organisation within the C.G.T.; but that if the Executive should endeavour to carry out the threat of expulsion contained in the majority resolution, the minority would secede as a whole.

# THE LABOUR STRUGGLE IN JAPAN

I

By T. NOSAKA

§ 1—*Early Trade Unionism: 1867-1900*

**T**HE Revolution of 1867 (Meiji Ishin) saw the birth of "Modern" Japan. Economic, and consequently political, power was transferred from the feudal-landlord to the rising commercial capitalist class, with the Emperor as their figurehead.

This was rapidly (especially after the reactionary revolt of 1878) followed by the "Industrial Revolution." It should be remembered that the industrial slavery system was at the first step introduced into the textile industry which is still one of the main sources of Japanese bourgeois wealth, and also that the great majority of workers employed in this industry is composed of peasant girls. This is one of the reasons why we had a scanty existence of workers' organisations at the earlier stage of the Industrial Revolution.

During a quarter of a century since the Bourgeois Revolution, therefore, there were, apart from friendly and trade societies, only a few Unions, of which the printers and metal workers were notable.

In the meantime, young Japanese capitalists challenged China in 1894, and after two years' fight succeeded in winning Formosa and Korea from China, and in getting the right to share with European countries in exploiting the vast commercial markets of China. This naturally caused a great economic prosperity, an important development of industrialism, and a consequent growth of the modern fighting proletariat. Those facts, side by side with an enormous advance in prices, gave a remarkable impetus to the



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combination movement of the working classes, as well as to industrial disputes.

Generally speaking, it is since those years that the modern Trade Union movement has come into existence in Japan.

A body which worked to a great extent for the development of the movement was the Society for the Promotion of Trade Unions in 1897. The society was an educational or propaganda association established by a dozen intellectuals (Katayama, Takano, etc.), followed by thousands of workers.

The first Union, born directly from the propaganda of the above society, was the Iron Workers' Union in 1897, consisting of metal workers in several workshops near Tokyo. This is a landmark in the history of the Japanese Trade Union movement, both in a historical sense and in structure. Although its formal object was friendly benefit and mediation in trade disputes, with the rapid growth in membership (claiming 5,400 in 1900) it became more and more militant against the employers. But the defeat of a dispute in the same year was a fatal blow to the young organisation and soon a rapid reduction of members came.

Other Unions formed through the activities of the society covered the locomotive engineers and firemen, and the printers.

The first appearance of labour unrest reached its climax in 1898-1899. Up to 1899 the disputes were closed comparatively in favour of the workers. But by 1900 a sudden change came. Not only industrial and commercial depression had a serious effect on the movement, but also the possessing classes, alarmed by the rising tide of revolt of the masses, put a speedy end to strike action through legislative measures—that is, the notorious Police Law of 1900, which is still exercising its heavy power. According to Article 17 of the Law, any action of instigation or agitation for strikes is to be punished (imprisonment of one to six months). No discussion is necessary to prove that the Law practically for-

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bids strikes and the organised movement of the working classes.

The result is easily foreseen. Within a short time, almost all noticeable Unions, one after another, ceased to exist.

In this manner, the earlier history of the Japanese Trade Union movement was concluded. During nearly a decade till 1912, when the Yuai-kai was formed, the industrial workers' mass movement hardly showed any sign of life.

But the movement for the emancipation of the exploited class was not absolutely left for dead when the Trade Union quitted the battlefield. For the field was promptly taken over by a forlorn hope—a group of Revolutionary Socialists.

### § 2—*Early Socialism: 1901-1910*

**T**HE history of Socialism in its wider sense can be traced far back into the radical movement of bourgeois Liberalism of 1877-1900. It was, however, not until 1901 that modern Socialism took a form and programme as the Social Democratic Party. But the party was an unfortunate child. It had no sooner come out than the Government suppressed it. Then in 1903, the Plebs League was formed by a dozen intellectuals for the purpose of study and Socialist propoganda. This was the father of Modern Socialism in Japan. It was the League which sowed the seeds of revolutionary Marxism in the soil of Japan. It was also the followers or remnants of the League who have been today the leaders of the Communist movement in our country. The period of seven years, from 1903 to 1910, was, in fact, the history of the League.

At the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War (1904), the League sent Comrade Katayama as a delegate to the Congress of the Second International, held then at Amsterdam, and also made the most energetic agitation against the war, in which many members were sent to prison and their paper suppressed. In 1905 the League itself was forced to dissolve.

The years following the Russo-Japanese War are marked

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by a series of important social events—on the economic side, the great expansion of commercial markets, the astonishing growth of industrial (particularly iron and steel) Capitalism, the enormous advance of prices; on the political side, the “national” upheaval against the “compromised” peace terms with Russia, to which the Government answered with martial law, and the first appearance of a regular bourgeois Cabinet; abroad, the first Russian Revolution, and, at home, desperate struggles of Socialists, and incessant persecutions against them.

It is of importance to notice the fact that there already appeared three main currents of thought in the Socialist movement: that is, Marxism led by Sakai, which always predominated over the rest; Anarchism (of the Kropotkin school) led by Kotoku, one of the greatest thinkers Japan has ever produced; thirdly, Christian Socialism. In the practical movement, however, those sections always united against their common enemy, which had prepared to sweep away by every forcible means all obstacles from the paths of capitalist exploitation.

In 1907 they published the first Socialist daily, called the *Plebs Paper*, but this was soon prohibited. In the next year the “Red Flag Demonstration” took place, in which more than fifty active Socialists were arrested.

At last in 1909 occurred one of the most tragical events in the Socialist history of the world. Twenty-four comrades were arrested under a false charge of “Anarchist conspiracy”; and half of them (including Kotoku and Oishi) were hanged and another imprisoned for life.

The earlier history of our Socialist movement thus ended in a tragical catastrophe. Surviving Socialists (mainly Marxists) have been kept under the extremest watch by the police, and persecuted by the hatred, calumny and threats of the possessing classes. A few of them fled to foreign countries, and a few went over to the enemy.

This is but the path through which all social martyrs have

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had to, and shall, pass before their final goal could be attained. One thing, however, is regretful to the utmost—they died before they were able to attract the working masses to their red banner, and before the masses could experience such a proletarian revolutionary rehearsal as the Russian workers experienced in 1905, the French in 1871, the British in the Chartist movement. But nobody can blame our earlier Socialists on that ground when taking into consideration the economic and political conditions of the time, which were far from being ripe for social revolution.

At any rate, from 1910 to 1918, the whole Socialist movement went underground.

### § 3—*The Yuai-kai and the Shinyu-kai: 1912-1917*

**N**OT less than a decade after the wholesale collapse of the Trade Unions under the blow of the Police Law of 1900, and only two years after the massacre of leading Socialists and Anarchists, a new glimmer was thrown on the dark world of Labour by a social reform movement which led to the formation of the Yuai-kai (August, 1912) by B. Suzuki as the President and a handful of workers in Tokyo, principally for the purpose of educating the working peoples.

During the first few years, the Yuai-kai did nothing but preach social reform among its members and arbitrate in case of industrial disputes. But as there existed then no other organisations, the intellectual section of the working classes had begun to join it. Rank-and-file members created the branches in their workshops, and everywhere took a leading part in strikes, in agitation, and in social life. Thus, in 1917 it claimed a membership of 27,000 men and women and more than 100 branches, based on the district or workshop, all over the country.

In 1915 and 1916 the Yuai-kai sent the President as a fraternal delegate to the Conference of American Federation

## *The Labour Struggle in Japan*

of Labour. This is the opening of the international relations of the Japanese Trade Unions.

This unceasing development of the Yuai-kai, however, met fierce opposition (with lock-outs, black-lists, and police-spies) from the employers, who, both rightly and wrongly, attributed the labour unrest of the time to the existence of the Yuai-kai. Despite its moderate propaganda and its opportunist leaders, from 1917 onward it suffered from the bitter attacks of the possessing classes (especially in the Government factories). The membership suddenly began to drop (16,000 in 1918), and, at the same time, the old leaders deserted it.

In spite of the ominous situation, in spite of the wish of the governing classes, the Yuai-kai did exist. Not only so; the assaults upon it served as an invaluable stimulus to give up the former opportunist attitude toward the employer.

Mention should also be made of the Shinyu-kai, or Fraternal Society of Printers, founded in 1916. At the outset, it was a pure craft Union with an exclusive policy founded by the European typographers employed in several plants in Tokyo. But soon it opened its door for all workers employed in the same industry, and in 1917 enrolled 700 members.

From the beginning the Shinyu-kai has been led by a few Socialist workers and has taken a militant policy against the employer. This has soon made the Union the focus of fire from the enemy camp. Above all, when the "rice riot" broke out in 1918, a number of members were arrested under the charge of seditious action, and then came the secession of timid members from the Union. For a while it remained heavily weakened.

I have described in some detail two Unions, the Yuai-kai and the Shinyu-kai, because these Unions are to-day not only leading the whole of Labour movement, but also represent two types or tendencies of the Trade Unions.

It is not, therefore, without interest to make comparison,

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to point out a few differences between them. In the first place, both differ in their origin. The Yuai-kai grew largely by effort of middle-class reformers from above for some "wider" object, while the Shinyu-kai (of printers) was created by the workers themselves in order to fulfil their own immediate necessities. Secondly, on the spiritual side, the former represented the compromising type of Union (however, this is not the fact to-day), the latter militant Unionism. Thirdly, the former was a General (Trades) Union or "One Big Union" including several trades and industries. On the other hand, the latter was a Trade (or Industrial in the wider sense) Union of printing workers only.

In other words, the Yuai-kai was characterised by its constitution, organisation, and number of membership, while the Shinyu-kai by its fighting spirit. Doubtlessly it is clear that the alliance of the two Unions was absolutely necessary for the development of a proletarian revolutionary movement. And happily this was finally accomplished early in 1920.

*[The further sections of this article, dealing with Labour in Japan during and after the war, will be given in next month's issue.]*

# THE WISDOM OF THE POOR FISH

*(Readers of Art Young's journal, "Good Morning," will have already made the acquaintance of the Poor Fish. To those who have not yet had that pleasure the present opportunity is taken of introducing him from its columns.)*

## THE POOR FISH IN PARIS

Paris, September, 1920



**I**MAGINE my surprise when I met the Poor Fish at the Café de la Paix the other day!

He said he had decided on a month in Europe for a complete change of air and environment.

If every working man in America would do the same thing now and then, he was sure there would not be so much unrest. Foreign travel broadens

the mind and keeps you from fretting about petty matters.

The great evil of the day, he says, is Agitation, which is nothing but Organised Kicking. Life may not be perfect, but a Kicker only makes things more unpleasant for himself and for others.

We need people who will Take Their Medicine with a Smile.

Just that very morning a Committee had asked him, as a representative of the Great American Masses, to make a speech at the Pré St. Gervais in favour of amnesty for political prisoners.

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He declined to make a speech, because he is opposed to public demonstrations, but he told the Committee that they had his Moral Support.

He is in favour of amnesty, but he does not approve of making a Fuss about it.

The Poor Fish has discovered that Human Nature is much the same the world over. He finds the same Big Problems here as in America.

And these Big World Problems are far too complicated for the Masses to understand. He says he sometimes doubts if even the statesmen understand them, they are so tremendous.

And if the statesmen don't understand them, what right has a mere workman got to presume to impose his opinions?

Not that every man hasn't a right to his own views, but he should keep them to himself.

I told him that as special correspondent for *Good Morning* I was anxious to have a statement from him to the American people.

He coughed slightly and then began to dictate slowly:

"You may tell the American people that we are living in an age of transition.

"The great danger is that we shall make progress too fast.

"Rome was not built in a day, and it would be a very bad thing for the working classes if they get too much money before they learn the value of it.

"I am for Progress, but it must be Sane, Orderly progress.

"Evolution, not Revolution, is my motto. Respect for law is the great need of the times.

"Let the working man resolve to Build Up, not to Tear Down.

"Do not decry Wealth. If a man has saved up a billion dollars he is entitled to enjoy it. Instead of trying to take his billion away from him, every man should resolve to save up a billion of his own.



## The Wisdom of the Poor Fish



THE POOR FISH says he does not believe wages should be high or low, but they ought to be reasonable.



THE POOR FISH says he doesn't take much stock in religion, but he thinks that going to church is good business.

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"Work hard and Play hard. That should be the rule of life of every honest man.

"The eight-hour day may be a good thing in some industries, but it is not necessarily good in all industries.

"Work twelve hours, if necessary. Go to bed early, and get up refreshed for the next day's toil.

"Go to church on Sunday.

"And outside of working hours get your mind off your work. Take a spin in the country. Go to the seashore or the mountains or to Europe in the summer.

"And above all, save, save, save."

He poured himself out another drink of brandy, and it occurred to me to ask him what he thought of Prohibition.

"Liquor is not injurious if taken in Moderation," he replied. "Unfortunately, however, the working man never knows when he has had enough. Many things are good in themselves, but dangerous in the hands of ignorant people. I would be in favour of repealing Prohibition if drinking could be limited to those who can indulge in it wisely."



# SHORTER NOTICES

## THE RED TRADE UNION INTERNATIONAL

**T**HE basis of the new "Red Trade Union International," which was formed at the Inaugural Congress held in Moscow on July 3 to 21, is given in the following resolution adopted at the Congress by 282 to 35 votes:—

Whereas the struggle between Labour and Capital in all capitalist countries has assumed, as a result of the world war and crisis, an exceptionally acute, implacable and decisive character;

Whereas in the process of this struggle every day the labouring masses realise ever more clearly the necessity of eliminating the bourgeoisie from the administration of industry, and consequently from political power;

Whereas the above result can be obtained solely by establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist system;

Whereas in the struggle to preserve the bourgeois dictatorship all the capitalist ruling classes have already succeeded in consolidating and concentrating to a high degree their national and international organisations, political as well as economic, and making a solid front of all the bourgeois forces, both defensive and offensive, against the onrush of the proletariat;

Whereas the logic of the modern class struggle demands the greatest consolidation of the proletarian forces in the revolutionary struggle, and consequently means that there should be the closest contact and organic connection between the different forms of the revolutionary Labour movement, and particularly between the Third (Communist) International and the Red Trade Union International, as well as between the Communist Parties and the Red Trade Unions within their respective countries;

Therefore this Congress resolves (1) To take all steps for bringing together in the most energetic manner all the Trade Unions into one united fighting organisation with one international centre, the Red Trade Union International.

(2) To establish the closest possible contact with the Third (Communist) International, as the vanguard of the revolutionary Labour movement in all parts of the world on the basis of joint representation at both executive committees, joint conferences, etc.

(3) That the above connection should have an organic and business character, and be expressed in the joint preparation of revolutionary actions and in the concerted manner of their realisation both on a national and an international scale.

(4) That it is imperative for every country to strive to unite the revolutionary Trade Union organisations, and for the establishment of close and every-day contact between the Red Trade Unions and the Communist Party, for the carrying out of the decisions of both Congresses.

This resolution should clearly be interpreted in conjunction with the official explanation sent to the Lille Congress, and printed on

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page 163. The following Conditions of Affiliation are reported to have been adopted:—

- (1) Realisation, not only in words, but in fact, of the class struggle.
- (2) Acceptance of the dictatorship of the proletariat.
- (3) Prohibition of the simultaneous adhesion to Moscow and Amsterdam.
- (4) Co-ordination of the action inside each country—action directed against the bourgeoisie.
- (5) Recognition of international proletarian discipline: that is to say, obligatory submission of national organisations to decisions taken by the international Congress.

## RUSSIAN TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

**R**ECENT issues of the Russian Press contain reports of the progress of peace and trade negotiations. At the end of June, Soviet Russia and Soviet Ukraine sent a joint telegram to the Rumanian Minister of Foreign Affairs to arrange a meeting for the discussion of peace negotiations. The Italian Government trade negotiations with the Soviet representative in Italy are still in progress. The text of the proposed Russo-Danish trade agreement was handed to the Soviet representative at the end of June. The German State Council has ratified the Russo-German supplementary agreement. Negotiations have taken place with Finland on maritime questions; and a Finnish trade delegation, after visiting Russia, has issued a detailed report pointing out the mutual advantages to be gained by extended trade relations and recommending the establishment of a permanent Finnish Trade Bureau in Moscow. A Russian trade delegation arrived in Norway on July 5; and the Soviet Government has officially requested Sweden for a new trade agreement. The British Government has handed over to Soviet Russia a ship bought in Liverpool before the Bolshevik revolution. The ship has arrived in Kronstadt flying the Soviet flag. A large delegation from Czecho-Slovakia has gone to Russia to clear up questions of political and commercial relations.

## THE A.F. OF L. ON THE CONTROL OF INDUSTRY

**A**T the Denver Convention of the American Federation of Labour in June, 1921, the following resolution was adopted:—

Whereas our Government was founded as a democracy, instituted to protect all of its citizens in their inherent right to equality of opportunity in their industrial relations with each other, and to that end the fathers declared the following fundamental principles as controlling every act of the Government they had established:

First: Government is instituted for the common good, for the pro-

## Shorter Notices

tection, safety, prosperity and happiness of the people, and not for the honour or profit of any man, family, or class of men.

Second: No man, corporation, or group of men shall have any other title to receive compensation from the public than that which is measured by the value of the service they render to the public.

Third: "The prime purpose of Government is to give security to life, liberty, and the enjoyment by the people of the gains of their own industry."

And whereas as government is now administered, we as a people have departed from these fundamental principles of democracy; now therefore be it resolved—

Resolved, That the American Federation of Labour hereby declares its purpose to secure a return to these principles upon which our Government was instituted in order that we may better secure the blessings of liberty, and to that end we re-affirm our united support of legislation that will bring about the public ownership and democratic operation of the railways of the United States as being in strict conformity with these principles upon which our Government was instituted. And be it further

Resolved, That we declare for the recognition and restoration of these fundamental principles in all industries organised under corporate grants of privileges, so that those men who contribute their effort to the industry shall enjoy all of the rights, privileges and immunities granted to those men who contribute Capital in proportion to the value which each contributes, in order that government shall be instituted for the common good and not for the profit of a class, and in order that all men may enjoy the gains of their own industry. Be it further

Resolved, That the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labour be and it is hereby directed to assist the recognised railroad Labour organisations by every effort within their power to have proper legislation enacted providing for Government ownership and democratic operation of the transportation systems of the United States. Be it further

Resolved, That in order that this resolution may become effective in the industrial life of this nation, the Executive Council be and is hereby directed to devise and publish the necessary legislative program designed to make effective the fundamental principles of government above set forth and to secure to men employed in organised industry that equality of enjoyment of all the rights, privileges, and immunities now enjoyed by those who contribute capital to organised industrial enterprises, to the end that industry conducted under corporate grants shall be conducted for the common good, and not for the profit of a class of men.

## AN APPEAL OF INDIAN LABOUR

**T**HE All India Trade Union Congress, which was formed in November, 1920, under the presidency of Lajpet Rai, has issued the following manifesto: —

Workers of India! The time has come for you to assert your rights as arbiters of your country's destiny. You cannot stand aloof from the stream of national life. You cannot refuse to face the events that are making history to-day for India. You are the mass of the population.

## The Labour Monthly

Every movement on the political chess-board, every step in the financial or economical arrangements of your country, affects you more than it affects any other class. You must become conscious of your responsibilities. You must understand your rights. You must prepare yourselves to realise your destiny.

**Workers of India!** Your lot is a hard one. How will you better it? Look at the slaves at the Assam tea plantations, now become desperate! Their real daily wages are less than three annas a day prescribed under Government Acts. They are often victims of brutal treatment, working under the lash for unlimited hours, while some of these plantations pay 20 to 40 per cent. dividends. They are death and starvation dividends, and it is you, your wives, your children who are the innocent unoffending victims. We call upon you to realise the meaning of this exploitation and offer, by special levies from the members of each Union, what help you can to Mr. C. F. Andrews, who is fighting at Chandpur the battle of these semi-slaves.

**Workers of India!** The earth is your common heritage. It is not specially reserved for professional politicians or the Simla bureaucrats, or the mill plutocrats. When your nation's leaders ask for *Swaraj* you must not let them leave you out of the reckoning. Political freedom to you is of no worth without economic freedom. You cannot therefore afford to neglect the movement for national freedom. You are part and parcel of that movement. You will neglect it only at the peril of your liberty.

**Workers of India!** There is nothing in the nature of your Union membership to prevent you from joining the Indian National Congress. You will continue to suffer as your Assam comrades are suffering for upholding the cause of freedom. Your masters will go out of their way, as Sir William Vincent has done, to threaten those of your leaders who happen to be Non-co-operators for an alleged attempt to sow disaffection amongst the workers. You have nothing to fear. It is not a crime to create a repugnance for brutal treatment, of conditions of semi-slavery and of the horrible exploitation of women and children. You know well enough that it is the influence of these very leaders which has kept the peace and effected a settlement in almost every big strike in India during the past twelve months, in spite of every provocation and in spite of the surrender-or-starve policy of the employers. Your cause is the cause of humanity. It cannot suffer for misrepresentation.

**Workers of India!** There is only one thing for you to do. You must realise your unity. You must solidify your organisations. Do not look for salvation to the Factory Act. The law cannot give you unity. The law cannot create in you the spirit of brotherhood. That must be your own work. Spoliation of the worker is the cry of the capitalists in field and factory. Let unity and brotherhood of man be your watchwords. Your salvation lies in the strength of your organisations. Cling fast to them. Cast all weakness from you, and you will surely tread the path of power and freedom.

D. CHAMAN LALL, General Secretary.

All India Trade Union Congress,  
20, Tamrind Lane, Bombay.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## THE STORY OF THE "COMMUNIST MANIFESTO."

*Die Londoner Kommunistische Zeitschrift und andere Urkunden, 1847-48.* (Hauptwerke des Sozialismus, Neue Folge, Heft 5.) Carl Grünberg, Verlag Hirschfeld, Leipzig, 1921.

**I**N the last years several old documents and papers have been discovered which are well calculated to throw full light on the circumstances and sources which contributed to the composition of the "Communist Manifesto." A very scholarly summary of them is given in the above noted booklet by Dr. Carl Grünberg, Professor at the Vienna University and editor of the *Archiv für Geschichte des Sozialismus*. Here are some of the salient facts relevant to our subject.

The Communist current in the French Revolution was represented by Gracchus Babeuf and Darthé. After their execution on May 27, 1797, Communism disappeared and was apparently forgotten, until the surviving member of that movement, Ph. Buonarroti, published in 1828, at Brussels, his "Conspiration pour l'égalité dite de Babeuf," one of the seminal books of Socialist literature (translated into English by Bronterre O'Brien, London, 1836). At the same time the French Democrats and Radicals, incensed at the reactionary measures of the Bourbon Restoration, began secretly to organise, and after the July Revolution (1830) united with the proletarian elements, mainly for preparing a broad Republican movement. These organisations were the "Société des Amis du Peuple" and the "Société des Droits de l'Homme." Gradually the proletarian elements got the upper hand, and Communist theories, taken from Buonarroti, were propagated. The leaders of these proletarian Communist elements were Armand Barbès and Louis August Blanqui. They seceded from the older Republican organisations and formed the "Société des Familles," and in 1835 the "Société des Saisons," which in May, 1839, attempted an insurrection, but were defeated. By the way, my studies of British Chartism led me to the belief that the great agitation in Britain in that year was connected, through Dr. John Taylor, with the Paris movement of Barbès and Blanqui, Taylor having been a member of the Paris Republican and Communist secret societies. Connected with the same societies and movements were the German refugees in Paris, who in 1834 founded there the "League of the Banished" (Bund der Geächteten), among whom the proletarian Communist elements were preponderating. Their leader was Wilhelm Schuster, a University lecturer of Goettingen, who had a clear notion of the

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class struggle. This League of the Banished was transformed, in 1836, into the "League of the Just" (Bund der Gerechten), which, through the journeyman tailor, Weitling (1808-1871), was partly inculcated with Fourierist and Owenite ideas of co-operative production. The "League" was connected with the "Société des Saisons," and, indirectly, with the Left Wing of the Chartist movement. Thus a nucleus of a proletarian Communist International was created in the 'thirties in Paris. Most of the German Leaguers were involved in the insurrection of 1839 and had to flee for their life. Weitling went to Switzerland, others to London, among the latter being Karl Schapper, who joined Chartism, and on February 7, 1841, formed, at 19A, Drury Lane, the Communist Working Men's Educational Society, which existed till 1915 (107, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square). The headquarters of the League were transferred to London, where Chartist views took hold of its members, so that Weitling, who had come to London in August, 1844, and lectured before the Owenites in Charlotte Street (see "New Moral World," 1844), had only a passing success. He removed to Paris, where he was active among the German workmen, who at that time were attaching themselves to Proudhonism. The League of the Just thus presented a medley of ideas, all Utopian, originating as they did from Fourier, Owen, and Proudhon.

At the end of 1843 Marx settled in Paris, and in 1844-1845 worked on his materialist conception of history, on the significance of the social classes and their opposing interests, finally on the application of Ricardian economics to the proletarian movement. He came in contact with Proudhon, with the Parisian and German working men, and in attempting to make them familiar with his views he saw that his first business was to demolish Proudhon, Weitling, and all Utopianism. He wrote, therefore, after having removed to Brussels, his Anti-Proudhon ("Misery of Philosophy" against Proudhon's book "Philosophy of Misery"), smashed poor Weitling in a debate and fought systematically against all petty bourgeois reform, Socialism and journeymen's schemes of emancipating humanity. The members of the "League" soon reported the activity of Marx to the headquarters in London, where Marx's books began to be studied. In this work he was greatly assisted by Engels, who, in 1844, made the acquaintance of Harvey, the editor of the *Northern Star*, for which paper he used to write occasional letters on German and Continental affairs. Harvey, Schapper and his Geneva friends formed in London (1845) the "Fraternal Democrats," for whom Lovett wrote the international Addresses (see Tawney's edition of Lovett's "Life," vol. ii., p. 314 *seqq.*). Proletarian Internationalism and Communism were coming to the fore. The effect on the "League of the Just" was quite revolutionary. They turned against O'Connor's land schemes, against Weitling,



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against Cabet, who besought them to join the Icarian expedition against all system making, and finally adopted the Communist theories as propagated by Marx in Brussels through the medium of a hectographic correspondence. In November, 1846, and in February, 1847, the League sent out two circulars to its members, with the following questions for discussion:—

“1. What is Communism and what are the Communists aiming at? 2. What is Socialism and what do the Socialists want? 3. By what means can Communism be introduced in the quickest and surest way? Can it be introduced at once, or must there be a transition period in order to educate the masses for it, and if so, how long shall that period last? Shall it be introduced by force or by peaceful means? 4. What is the attitude of the proletariat towards the higher and lower middle classes? Is it advisable to co-operate with the lower and radical middle classes? 5. What is the attitude of the proletariat towards the various religious parties? 6. What is our attitude towards the various Socialist and Communist parties? Is it desirable and advisable to effect the unity of all Socialists? 7. What is a proletarian?”

These questions were discussed in the Congress of the League in 1847; in September the first and only number of the *Kommunistische Zeitschrift* appeared in London, with the memorable sub-heading, “Proletarians of all countries, unite!” and in November, 1847, took place the final Congress, which was attended both by Marx and Engels, and which commissioned them to write the “Communist Manifesto” as the most adequate reply to those questions.

M. BEER.

### FRANCE AND THE PEACE

*La Paix.* André Tardieu. Payot et Cie, Paris.

THE real drama of the Peace Conference was the conflict between France and Great Britain.

President Wilson took the limelight. But he didn't really matter. That, indeed, is why he was given the limelight. He was very useful, not only to bemuse Liberals with charming phrases and with Leagues of Nations, but also to distract attention from the real business of the Conference.

That is why, in M. Tardieu's book, you will find very little about the President and his League. They served their purpose: but the people who really counted at the Conference weren't worrying about them. And, very definitely, M. Tardieu was one of the people who counted.

He can claim to have been one of the makers of the war. He was among the chief makers of the peace. He was to M. Clemenceau

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pretty much what Mr. Philip Kerr was to Mr. Lloyd George. Only he had a far more cynical appreciation of realities than Mr. Kerr.

Of course his book—like other Conference “revelations”—is a book with a purpose. He is out to justify M. Clemenceau and M. Tardieu and their treaty against the critics. And therefore one makes the necessary allowances, and one forgives some of the turgid rhetoric.

But the essence of the book is extraordinarily interesting just now. For it is the history of the earlier phases of that Anglo-French quarrel which has led at last to the breaking of the Entente and to the beginnings of an entirely new orientation of European politics.

That quarrel came inevitably with victory. For the two Governments approached the problems of the peace with two entirely different purposes.

For Great Britain the essentials were secure. Germany's navy was destroyed: and with its destruction all fear of Germany vanished. Germany's colonies had been conquered: and the lion's share of them was in British hands. Germany's over-seas trade had been apparently captured. England had her desires.

For the rest she was concerned—because of election pledges—with the punishment of the war criminals, and with the securing of as big an indemnity as possible. But the territorial disruption of Germany was of no advantage to her. It was even a disadvantage, tending to unbalance Europe and to reduce Germany's capacity to pay. Nor had Britain's business interests any desire to see all the richest industrial districts of Germany pass into the hands of the French and their clients.

For France, on the other hand, the disruption, the enfeebling, of Germany was the prime necessity. Economic interests pointed to the Rhineland, to the Ruhr, to Silesia, as desirable loot. But over and above all France was afraid; afraid of a German revival, afraid of a war of revenge.

That is the key to the Conference disputes. It is the key to the disputes since the Conference. England has nothing to fear; France has everything to fear.

It is the recurrent theme of M. Tardieu's book. It is the dominant motive of French policy. Germany, in any case, was being so treated that she must hanker for revenge. Therefore she must be treated so that she would be incapable of revenge.

France must hold the Rhine. Germany must lose the Saar. Germany must lose Silesia. She must be pillaged and plundered so that she should be permanently at the mercy of France. Not so much Imperialism, lust of domination, the Napoleonic tradition, as sheer stark fear, was the motive of all the vindictiveness of Clemenceau and Foch.

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The whole quarrel is summed up in the note which M. Tardieu himself drafted in March, 1919, in reply to an appeal by Mr. Lloyd George for moderation in the European settlement, lest harsh terms arouse bitter resentment in Germany.

"The proposal," said M. Tardieu, "would be valuable, if the war had been only a European one.

"But there have been taken from Germany, without hesitation from fear of her resentment, her colonies, her war fleet, a great part of her merchant fleet, and her foreign markets.

"If it is desirable to give satisfaction to Germany it is not in Europe we should look for satisfaction."

That retort is still valid enough. It is not for British imperialists, fresh from the annexation of East Africa, of South West Africa, of Palestine, of Mesopotamia, of the Pacific Islands, to accuse the French of imperialism.

Both are imperialist, because both are Capitalist. But France is also afraid. Her craving for a military hegemony in Europe, her ceaseless desire to inflict new injury on Germany, are follies bred of fear.

M. Tardieu, for all his noisy patriotic pride, makes that clear enough: and so has added a useful contribution to the pathology of imperialism.

W. N. E.

### A GUIDE TO THE INTERNATIONAL

*The Labour International Handbook*, 1921. The Labour Publishing Company, Ltd., 6, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1.  
12s. 6d. net.

**T**HE first impression given by this Handbook is its amazing comprehensiveness. It deals with everything which is of interest to industrial and political Labour, from the Peace Treaties to the Russian Soviet system, and with labour in every country from Argentine to the United States. The industry required for its compilation must have been immense, and its Editor and his colleagues are to be congratulated on the result. The Handbook should be on the reference shelves of every person and organisation in the Labour movement. The editors of capitalist papers would also be well advised to consult it, and in particular to send copies to their foreign correspondents, whose messages frequently reveal the most abysmal ignorance of the movements which they attempt to describe.

The Handbook is divided into two sections, of which the second deals with the Labour movements in every country. This section is of enormous value, and gives a concise account of the development of the Labour movement—industrial, political, and co-operative—

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with a clear explanation of the various tendencies, and an indication of their strength when this is known. The only criticism that can be made is that in these accounts of the movement in each country, little information is given about the "Left-Wing" movements in the Trade Unions, although the political Left-Wing is usually dealt with. This omission is no doubt due to the fact that the Left-Wing movements in the Trade Unions have only within the last few months become coherent units, with a common policy identified with that of the Red Trade Union International. The Internationals—both political and industrial—are, however, dealt with separately, and the main documents relating to each are printed in full.

In attempting to review the first section of the Handbook it is more difficult to preserve an open mind. This section consists for the most part of signed articles, some of which betray the prejudices which might be expected. The exposition of the Peace Treaties is clear and useful; the League of Nations Covenant is given in full, together with a critical statement of the League's activities; the International Labour Office of the League of Nations is described—in far too objective and uncritical a spirit—and other organs of international government are dealt with briefly. Then follow articles on the Economic Conditions after the war, and the economic effects of the Peace Treaties, with useful statistics. The remaining chapters on Russia, Ireland, India, Egypt, Problems of Racial Conflict, the British Empire Constitution, and various aspects of Foreign Policy, are very unequal. They are all of great value from the point of view of history and information; but some—notably the description of the British Empire Constitution, by H. Duncan Hall (who has recently been writing for the *Times* on a similar subject)—show a total lack of the critical spirit—especially of that criticism which is based on class. A little more of definite class criticism would have added to the value of the first part of the book.

Nevertheless, the Handbook is of extraordinary value, and the user, whether "Left" or "Right," will find in it every fact about the International movement, and about international affairs generally, which he can reasonably want to know.

E. B.

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*The Famine in the Volga Provinces—The Press and the Famine—Sabotaging Relief—Relief plus Reconstruction—The Rôle of International Labour—The Depression in Britain—And the Future*

**O**VERSHADOWING all else in the international situation at present is the famine in the regions of the Volga which threatens the lives of eighteen millions of people. By the decree of July 21 the famine area was declared as constituting the following provinces: Astrakhan, Samara, Simbirsk, Saratov, Tsaritsyn, Ufa (Beleyev and Birk counties), Viatka (Yaran, Soviet, Urzhum and Malmyzh counties), the German Commune of the Volga, the Tartar Republic, the Chuvash area, the Mari area (Serunsk and Krasnokokshaisk cantons). This area, which covers some eight hundred miles from north to south and three hundred from east to west, with a population of eighteen millions, is equivalent in extent to the whole of France, Belgium, and Holland. There is some measure of correspondence in the regions affected (especially if the reported serious situation in the Ukraine is taken into account) with the area which suffered from the maladministration of the White generals and the ravagings of counter-revolutionary bandits: but there seems no real justification for tracing a connection. The calamity is purely climatic. The average rainfall in the region affected for the past ten years between October and June has been 14 inches: between October, 1920, and June, 1921, it was 2.75 inches, or 19 per cent. of normal. The crops, where they have not failed outright, have attained about 15 per cent. of normal. The calamity has come the more cruelly in that the increased sowings which have taken place during the past year under the Soviet administration would have, under normal conditions, produced an increased crop. As it is, the 1921 harvest in Soviet Russia, despite the position in the Volga region, is in excess of the 1920 harvest; but the advantage of this is destroyed by the lack of transport. Not only is

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road and rail transport still crippled by the legacy of the war and the blockade, but in addition the coincidence of the famine region with the waterway of the Volga means that the great highway of Russia is held up by the inability of the starved population on its banks to cope with the operations of loading and unloading.

IT is a curious commentary on the atmosphere of Western society that this great natural calamity in the East has been made the occasion of a singularly ignorant campaign against the Soviet Government. Even while the statesmen concerned have, from the very responsibilities of their position, been forced to recognise the terrible nature of the menace and to proclaim the necessity of relief for simple reasons of self-preservation, the Press has thought it a suitable opportunity to improve the chances of relief by attributing the drought to the Bolsheviki. From the *Times* downwards (or upwards) they have proclaimed the famine to be "the result of Bolshevism." Now it is not often that this habit of opposition organs of attributing anything that goes wrong to "the wickedness of the Government" can be proved wrong; but in this case it happens that thirty seconds' reasoning can prove the *Times* thesis to be false. For if Bolshevist rule has produced the famine, then the area of the famine should show some relation to the area of Bolshevist rule. But the contrary is the case. In just those regions around Petrograd and Moscow, where the Bolshevist rule has been most continuously and securely established, the harvest has come nearest to normal or even above it. The famine area is a specific geographical area, the greater part of which has not been under continuous Bolshevist rule. A case might be argued for connection with the previous White Governments and wars, because of the measure of coincidence of area. We do not accept that view, because the climatic statistics afford a wholly adequate explanation. But no case whatever can be made for connection with the Bolshevist Government. The matter may be put in another way. Under the British Government in India famines have taken place of a very terrible character. In 1918 alone partial famine and underfeeding resulted in six millions being carried off by the wave of influenza, the total death-rate for



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the year rising from the normal eight millions to fourteen millions. Whether the famines in India are to be connected with the methods of administration of the British Government is a question of hot dispute. But if the *Times* habit of immediately attributing the existence of a famine in a country to the maladministration of the Government in that country were to be accepted, then the *Times* articles would only go to prove that, in the opinion of the *Times*, the British Government is guilty of gross maladministration in India.

**T**HE Yahoo habits of the civilised Press would not be of much importance if it were not for the object that is behind them. That object was briefly exposed by the *Times* in its leader of August 25, when it said: "So long as the Bolshevists remain in power in Russia, very little real relief is possible." To exploit a natural calamity for the purpose of overthrowing the Soviet Government is the real object of the present campaign. It is an object that cannot be openly avowed; for the revulsion such an avowal would produce would defeat it. But it can be pushed in a hundred indirect ways, by playing for delay and prolonged negotiations, by sowing doubt and distrust of the good will of the Soviet Government, by demanding impossible and humiliating conditions, and by endeavouring to use the opportunity to set up an elaborate foreign machinery in the heart of Russia under the banner of "independent control." Therefore nothing is more important than for it to be made clear from the first, as the reports of independent expert observers and helpers have already established, that there can be no question of carrying through relief effectively save in cooperation with the machinery already set up by the Soviet Government, that the proposal to set up an entirely independent relief administration over the quarter million square miles of the famine area is as preposterous a proposal (viewed simply in terms of personnel) as would be a proposal to set up an independent system of local government from outside over the whole of France and Spain, and that the demand for such a scheme is simply an indirect method of sabotaging relief. The American Relief Administration was able to conclude on August 20 an agreement with which they expressed perfect satisfaction, giving full powers and

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diplomatic privileges to their representatives, while at the same time arranging for joint working with the Soviet machinery, and giving the Soviet Government power to request the removal of any representatives who might abuse their privileges. At the same time the voluntary organisations, by their conference at Geneva on August 15 and 16, have set up a central International Relief Committee with Dr. Nansen at its head; and a Labour Relief Committee, representing Socialist and Labour organisations of all colours, has been set up at Berlin. But voluntary help cannot go far with sufficient speed, and the Allied Governments at the end of August had only reached the stage of appointing delegates to an International Commission to "Study the question of giving help to starving Russia."

**W**HAT makes the question of time all the more important is not only the lives of men, women, and children who are dying with every day and every hour of delay, but the less obvious, yet no less desperate, need of immediate provision, to prevent even greater calamity in the future. September 15 is the latest date for the sowing of the seed for the next year's harvest: and if the necessary supplies, not only of relief, but of seed-corn have not reached the stricken provinces by that date, the imagination shrinks before the prospects that next year will have in store. The more the whole situation is examined, the more it becomes clear that the question is wider than one of relief. Relief, immediate, unstinted, unconditional, is the first necessity; but it is not the solution. Unless relief is accompanied by measures of provision for the recovery of Russia, relief to-day will only be succeeded by the need of more relief to-morrow. It is the machinery of production, agricultural machinery, locomotives, rails, spare parts and supplies, of which Russia has been deprived by years of war, blockade and trade-bans, which is the urgent need of to-day. To help Russia to stand upon her feet again is no more than the reparation that the world owes Russia for the deadly and treacherous injuries of the past years; it is the redemption which the world owes itself for its own self-preservation. Let the agriculture of Russia receive the modern machinery which

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it so urgently requires and which the Russian Government itself is so eager to introduce; let the industrial production of the towns be re-started on a full-time basis, so as to be able to resume relations of exchange with the country: and Russia will become a help, and not a hindrance, to the world's production. All this means international credits for the immediate importation of the necessary machinery and supplies for Russian reconstruction. It may take the form, as suggested by Lord Parmoor and Sir George Paish, of an international credit under the League of Nations. Or it may take the form, as has been suggested elsewhere, of an Anglo-American loan of a hundred million pounds. Such a loan would, of course, only be possible on the basis of the recognition by the Russian Government of the previous Russian debts. This is a matter for the decision of the Russian Government; but there are indications that they would be prepared to face this liability if the necessary help were forthcoming. At the present moment it is the imperative interest of the Russian Government to re-establish Russian production at all costs; and it is the imperative interest of the rest of the world to re-establish Russia in her place in the world of economic interchange if the whole economic system is not to be in danger of collapse.

**I**N the present juncture the international co-operative movement should have a great part to play, if its members are sufficiently alert to secure the activity of their organisations. The memory of the food ships sent to Dublin in 1913 is a standing inspiration for the future. The first International Co-operative Congress since the war has just been held at Geneva during the end of August. Four hundred delegates were present, representing 24 countries, with an aggregate membership of 24,295,520. It is satisfactory to note that the proposal of the Central Committee to exclude Russia from representation was defeated by the Congress by a vote of 733 to 474; and in securing this result the British delegates played an honourable part. But it was clear from this, as well as from other incidents at the Congress, that the Central Committee has been out of touch with the spirit of the membership. The general proceedings of the Congress, as far as it is possible to judge from

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the reports, gave the impression of a certain lack of clearness of direction and an unpreparedness to grasp the immense possibilities of the future; and the outlook does not appear hopeful unless the members are able to exert sufficient power upon the great wholesale organisations to make them live up to the ideals of co-operation. An International Congress which has revealed a slightly more pronounced policy was that of the Metal Workers at Lucerne on August 8 to 14. This Congress, which united representatives of 3,338,477 workers in 18 countries, reached a decision worth noting on the subject of the manufacture of munitions of war. Last year's Congress at Copenhagen had already passed a general resolution in favour of refusing to manufacture further arms, munitions, or war material. This year's Congress proceeded to endeavour to give substance to that decision by making it obligatory on all constituent Unions to concentrate propaganda on its execution. For this purpose full international records are to be drawn up of all work done in the manufacture of weapons of war. It is interesting to note that while the Congress was in progress a strike of French workmen was taking place at Roubaix against the manufacture of grenades, which it was presumed were intended for use against Russia. It is less satisfactory to note that the English delegates, voiced by Mr. Brownlie, expressed some opposition to the resolution.

“**T**HERE is a better spirit in the industrial world,” according to Mr. Lloyd George, in this country. By this he means that the victim is pretty well knocked out, and that for the time being Labour has about as much fight left as Carpentier after meeting Dempsey. No further anæsthetic being needed, the process on the operating table can go on; wage cuts are made in the most amicable manner, and unemployment meets with riots, not resistance. This situation has its natural reflex in some of the more conservative influences in the Labour movement, who have seized the opportunity to preach the virtues of industrial peace, to hint at possible understandings between Capital and Labour, and to attack bitterly the more ardent of their followers for goading them into positions they never intended to adopt. It is very human that all this should

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happen; but it may be suggested that for this very reason it ought not to happen. It is one thing to accept defeat with a good grace and with determination for the future. It is another to kiss your chains and curse your followers. We do not defend the much criticised "Left Wing" campaign with its monotony of personal invective and its substitution of denunciation for explanation and guidance. But the weaknesses of the Left Wing do not establish the justice of the Right Wing policy. It may no doubt be true that the defeat of 1921 was in the main inevitable, even had there been no errors in tactics. But if it was inevitable, it was because it had been made inevitable by the policy of 1919, and indeed by the whole policy of 1914-1918. In the controversy that has gone on in our pages between Mr. Cole and Mr. Robert Williams, Mr. Williams has replied to Mr. Cole by taunting him with his participation in the National Joint Industrial Council. This may be a very good answer for Mr. Cole, but it is no answer for the Labour movement. The question still remains of what is to be done in the future to prevent a repetition of the past. Are we to see again a repetition of the usual swing of the pendulum from industrial to political action, without realising that both the old Trade Unionism and the old Parliamentarism have proved equally futile in relation to the issues of to-day? Or will the present disaster lead to a reconsideration of the whole present spirit and policy of the working-class movement in this country?

**I**S there a way out? it is asked. It is not possible to pretend that any single person or group of persons is in possession of the key to the present problems of the British Labour movement. But certain things do emerge as tolerably clear already. In the first place, the whole aim of Trade Unionism needs to be reviewed afresh. The clash at present between conflicting schools of thought inevitably makes for paralysis in action. Are the larger aims now commonly professed by the Trade Unions definitely and deliberately meant? If they are meant, we must shape our organisation accordingly. It is no good professing aims which go beyond the whole present system, and maintaining a scheme of organisation which was built up solely for the

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purpose of protection within the present system. And this consideration of aim leads at once to the primary and immediate question before us, the question of machinery. The two crying evils of the Labour movement to-day are the evils of obsolete machinery and the evils of sectionalism. With the best will in the world for class solidarity, the machinery at present in existence prevents it being carried out. In fact, we may say that if the decision on the initial question of aim goes in favour of the root-and-branch policy of the destruction of the existing system, the present machinery of the Trade Union movement renders the execution of that policy impossible. Not only a new spirit is needed, but a new plan. That new plan must be at once simple and comprehensive: it must be comprehensive enough to embrace the whole sphere of Trade Union structure and organisation; it must be simple enough to be understood in its broad outlines by every worker, and for every worker to feel that he can play his part in it. Can any such plan be conceived? To the details of this we shall return in our next issue.

# THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

By H. N. BRAILSFORD

**T**HE Conference which President Harding has summoned to deal with Disarmament and the Far East, may prove to be the most instructive of all international meetings since Imperialism entered on its modern phase. For the first time in conferences of this type, power and the motives for the accumulation of power are brought into their obvious correlation. That is a new fact in the history of official internationalism. There have been conferences enough to promote disarmament, which tried to attain their end without considering the reasons which impel Great Powers to arm. The Hague began this record of futility, and the League of Nations has continued it.

At Washington, for the first time, the whole phenomenon of modern Imperialism will come under review, at least in its more superficial aspects. The three Powers chiefly interested in the exploitation of China will have to scrutinise the economic processes in which they are engaged, and one divines from the terms of Mr. Harding's invitation that American realism finds it natural and proper to admit the connection of the struggle for spheres of influence, closed Hinterlands, concessions and monopolised markets, with the rivalry in building super-Dreadnoughts, and in the acquisition of naval bases. It seems to follow, that any considerable success in limiting naval competition must depend upon the discovery of some new formula, or the invention of some new technique for adjusting, regulating or eliminating the economic competition. The unusual simplicity of the problem adds to the interest, since it makes disguise and secrecy difficult. Though the Siberian Republic is excluded, the chief victim of "expansion" in the Pacific will herself be present at the Conference,

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and however ruthless in fact the process of spoliation may be, a people so highly civilised, so articulate and so numerous as the Chinese, cannot be treated in public as White Empires are wont to treat the dim tribes of Africa, or the nomads of Mesopotamia. The result of the war, moreover, has been to simplify the problem of naval power by reducing to three the fleets which serve large ambitions, and are capable of acting with effect in a distant field.

One may dismiss any expectation that the Conference can deal seriously with land armaments. That will happen when France and Poland offer to disarm, a miracle which we shall witness only after another no less improbable—the voluntary abandonment of the European system created at Versailles. On the other hand, any attempt to regulate the naval problem of the Pacific is necessarily a general naval settlement. “The sea is one,” as the experts are fond of reminding us, and the sea-power of the British Empire cannot be united in the Pacific without affecting sea-power the world over. Much more than the counting of capital ships will enter, explicitly or tacitly, into everyone’s calculations. The entire Peace Settlement rested, and will rest on two dominating real factors—the ability of France with her big conscript army, her African reserves and her East-European satellites to dominate the Continent on land, and the ability of Great Britain to repeat at any moment the blockade, which was the main factor in reducing the hungry populations of Central Europe to abject submission. It is conceivable that financial pressure might bring the British Government to the point of accepting a fairly drastic limitation on the building of capital ships. They play no direct part either in attacking or defending commerce. What is vital to British sea-power is the almost unlimited right to blockade, as it was stretched by the experience of the Great War.

We may never see another blockade in our life-time, but the psychological basis of our world-ascendency will remain. The generation that is growing up from the Rhine



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to the Volga, bears in its shattered nervous system and its rickety bones the mark of our hunger-blockade, and when Downing Street speaks, there will long be a perceptible physical reaction to its words. There were two decisive preliminaries to the wrecking of the League of Nations and the whole Wilsonian idealism at Paris. One of them was certainly M. Clemenceau's decision to act on the maxim that peace is war pursued by other means. The other was Mr. Lloyd George's refusal to consider "the freedom of the seas." Given the determination to retain this terrific threat to mankind, the League could be nothing but a stucco façade built to conceal the fact of our mastery of the seas. That is, perhaps, the decisive, though not the only reason why America will not enter the League, and it is certainly the main reason that underlies the resolve of America to build a navy at least as powerful as our own.

Mr. Wilson's notion that the right to blockade might be invested in the League and in it alone, was an attempt to fetter sea-power, and subject it to the regulation of the whole civilised world. It broke down before the resolve of our governing class to abate nothing of the awful power which it had tasted in the exercise of our blockade of Germany. Mr. Wilson's idealism may have been simple-minded. The League, if he had managed to create a working League, would have blockaded Russia as ruthlessly as the Supreme Council did. His failure, none the less, dated the new naval epoch. Its basic fact is that the right to blockade belongs to any Power which is strong enough to use it. It would be a mistake to assume that America is building solely in order to check Japanese expansion in China, or to win for herself a place in the sun. She is building, also, in order that she may have the power to veto or exercise the right of blockade.

Disarmament, then, in any sense in which it is likely to be discussed at Washington, may leave the problem of militarism at sea wholly untouched. The right to exercise this terrific power will still be left to the arbitrary decision of national governments. If, as is probable, the negotiations

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turn mainly on the limitation of capital ships, the gain may be great from the standpoint of economy, but scarcely from any other. The united case of the economists, the younger sailors and the pacifists against the capital ship is overwhelming. It serves no purpose save to fight other capital ships, and if the three chief naval Powers really were resolved to avoid war among themselves, there would be no obstacle, save the pride of the various services and the interests of the steel trades, to its total and general abolition. To that we may conceivably come when the conviction of the few, that the costly monster is also a useless encumbrance, has outlived the present generation of admirals. The probability is that the Washington Conference will not go beyond an arrangement to suspend the further building of capital ships or to limit their numbers. The acuter debate, indeed, may turn on other equally vital factors in naval power. America has a great superiority over Japan in capital ships, and the ability to increase it almost indefinitely. The chief weakness of her naval position in the Pacific is that she possesses few naval bases, and has neglected to fortify those she does possess, or to equip them with docks in which a super-Dreadnought could be repaired. That deficiency is so serious that a naval war in its early stages might result in a considerable success for Japan. Capable experts, for example, think it likely that she could occupy the Philippines without much difficulty. Any naval arrangement must obviously include expenditure on fortifications and docks, as well as on capital ships. The real risk in Japanese-American relationships is that the Japanese are well aware of their initial advantages, while their memory of their comparatively easy victory over Russia may incline them to underestimate the reserve power and the obstinacy of the United States, which would certainly not accept a first check as decisive.

An arrangement to limit building or expenditure or both, between Great Britain, America and Japan is thinkable and may even be easy, provided the central economic question of China is solved. Imperialism in its modern form dates from

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the transition in the latter half of last century from the export of goods to the export of capital. One may envisage it as the transition from cotton to iron. So long as textiles were the typical export, there was little incentive to the acquisition of territory, and, on the whole, the philosophy of the Manchester school prevailed. The change came with the spread of railway building to the backward continents. It could proceed only on a concession basis. It had to deal no longer with private customers, but with "native" Governments, and this in turn meant that national groups of capitalists had to secure the backing of their national Governments. The concentration of capital went on with rapid steps, and entered the phase of "finance-capital." Capitalism at this stage aims openly at the suppression of competition, and the stakes of diplomacy become the closed monopoly area, the concession zone or the sphere of interest, reserved for the exploitation of a particular national group, formed as a rule round a bank. The struggles which filled the first fourteen years of this century must be read in the light of the evolution of the steel industry. To dig iron ore in Morocco, and lay it down as steel rails to Bagdad, was typical of the aims which inspired the struggles and the competitive shipbuilding of the armed peace.

If that be so, one may reason, then it is futile to talk of Conferences and arrangements. Over the vaster area of China and its richer fields of iron-ore and coal, the struggle will go on, with bickerings and armings, until the "inevitable" war. The conclusion is not irresistible. There are two chief methods by which Capitalism has in the past, and may again in the future, avoid the extremity of war. It may, first of all, reach an amicable arrangement among the chief competitors to partition the coveted area. That has been done by the Allies in Turkey, though one cannot say that the result has been any startling development of good-will among them. They might have applied the same technique of conquest to China at Paris, but for the inconvenient fact that she herself was nominally an ally and a

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victor. At several moments in the last generation China has seemed to be near partition. Shadowy British and French zones emerged; Germany acquired a footing; and even Italy put in a modest claim, only to withdraw it; while Russia and Japan fought for the North. No accepted lines were ever drawn, however, and our own claim to the lion's share, the Yangtse Valley, was allowed to lapse. During the war, Japan showed her hand rashly in the famous Twenty-one Points of her secret Ultimatum, which really involved the setting up of a prior claim to economic preference and a political protectorate over the whole of China. There Japan overreached herself, and though she has continued by devious intrigues in Peking, by fomenting the civil war, and by subsidising Chinese military adventurers, to overshadow the whole political life of China, her predominance is not formally recognised, save, indeed, in the vague Lansing agreement, which undertakes to respect her special interests. Much more solid is her position in Manchuria, where from the lease of Port Arthur and the military control of the railways, she has gone on to monopolise trade by means of preferential transport rates, and has even begun to colonise the soil. Had she been content with Manchuria and the neighbouring Mongolia, her usurpation might have been tolerated. But the peculiarly scandalous claim to Shantung, where she has expanded the German privileges and pushed her military occupation into the interior along the railways, was a form of "liberation" which aroused American wrath. The clause which abandoned Shantung to Japan was almost enough in itself to secure the rejection of the Versailles Treaty by the Senate.

How far the Anglo-Japanese Alliance disguises some arrangement, formal or tacit, to partition China, is a question very difficult to answer. That may lie in the logic of events and the manifest destiny to which Imperialists always appeal, but no evidence of any secret agreement has come to light. It is an obvious consequence of geography that Japanese expansion has begun in the North, while our pene-

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tration, with its base in Hong Kong, is most conspicuous in the South. The risk of such a partition is greatly increased by the internal dissensions of the still unstable Chinese Republic, and the apparently permanent condition of civil war between the relatively Conservative North and the more alert and progressive South. There is one grave piece of recent evidence which tends to show that with or without an understanding with Japan, we are ear-marking a portion of the South as our own economic preserve. The facts have been published in the *New Republic* by no less an authority than the American philosopher, Professor Dewey. During the civil war, while the Northern faction was in temporary military possession of the province of Kwantung, a syndicate of British financiers obtained from it a widely drawn concession to work the entire coalfield of this big and wealthy province, and incidentally to develop its railways and waterways. The details of the contract suggest that all the profits will probably go to the syndicate, and only if they should exceed an improbably high yield will some modest share fall to the provincial revenues. The concession has not been ratified by Peking, and still less by the Southern Government; but Professor Dewey states, with corroborative detail, that it has been backed by British diplomacy, and even quotes an official of the Hong Kong administration as claiming that Kwantung is "a British Hinterland." Were this concession ratified, it would, by bringing the power supply and the transport of Canton and Kwantung under the control of a single British syndicate, create a monopoly as absolute as Japan possesses in the North. It would be interesting to know how far the Hong Kong "Hinterland" extends, and also whether a similar claim is based on our possession of Wei-hai-wei.

It is impossible that an amicable solution of the problem of Imperialism should be found at Washington on the lines of partition. That would imply that the United States was prepared to come into the "deal," and to accept a region of China as her own preserve. This, for a variety of reasons,

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she will not do. In the first place, her interests are not localised, but rather widely diffused. While we have become a debtor, she has become a creditor nation, and with her great surplus of exploitable capital there is no reason why she should consent to confine herself to a limited area of China. In the second place, her very active Christian Missions, which devote themselves mainly to education, have given her the undisputed leadership in the cultural advance of China. She is popular with the Chinese, because she has snatched neither territory nor spheres of interest for herself; and while large numbers of Chinese students have reason to be grateful to her, large numbers of American teachers have acquired a decided sympathy for the Chinese. A disinterested concern like this may avail little, if finance pulls the other way, but in this case the pro-Chinese sentiment and financial interest are, up to a point, agreed. The slowly awakening nationalism of the Chinese is now thoroughly aroused by Japanese encroachments, and of late it has begun to turn against us as the allies of the Japanese, and the practitioners on a smaller scale and in a less high-handed way, of the same policy. There have been threats in the South that the boycott of Japanese goods might be turned against us also—a risk which has lately caused our China Association (the powerful organisation of British traders in China) to modify its original attitude of support for the Alliance. American interests are naturally well aware that they have something to gain by avoiding the suspicions in which their chief rivals are involved. Lastly, though the United States, after completing the absorption of its immense continental area, has begun on a small scale to expand over-seas, the sentiment against “Imperialism” is still very strong. How rapidly the passion for expansion will grow, as American capital reaches out for the opportunities of monopoly, one cannot predict, but it is likely to absorb the Mexican oil-field long before it turns to China. No American Government would dream to-day of claiming or accepting territory on the Asiatic con-

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continent, even under the disguise of a mandate. There will be no solution by partition at Washington. On the contrary, we may be sure that British diplomacy will be cautious in arousing any exclusive ambitions which it may quietly cherish (Lord Curzon and Mr. Churchill are fortunately absorbed elsewhere), and Japan will be hard put to it, to maintain her pretensions to Shantung and Eastern Siberia.

There is another and subtler alternative to the rivalry of national groups, with which Imperialism has been experimenting at intervals during the last twenty years. Instead of demarcating zones of exploitation, they may combine to exploit. There is no reason why the concentration of capital should stop short at the national group, and before the war there existed several instances in which working arrangements or alliances between national trusts or cartels covered an entire industry throughout the civilised world. Several attempts have been made to ease or remove political conflicts by associating the finance of rival Powers in the exploitation of a disputed country. An agreement of this kind (to admit a certain percentage of German capital into the chief French undertakings) was made at one time over Morocco, but it came to nothing. The Germans tried to disarm hostility to the Bagdad Railway by inviting British and French capital to share in it. M. Caillaux before the war believed that Franco-German hostility could be removed by financial interpenetration, and M. Loucheur is credited with the same idea to-day. Herr Erzberger, shortly before the end of the war, made the shrewd proposal that peace should be guaranteed by an arrangement that British and German finance should each acquire one-third of the shares in the other's shipping concerns. Suggestions from the German side were even made during the Armistice that British capital should buy up a proportion of the shares in all the chief German industrial concerns. Nothing substantial has ever come of artificial proposals of this type, but they are interesting as anticipations of a kind of internationalism to which Capitalism may be tending. As yet the national group, the concentration which

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stops short at the frontier, and desires to carry the flag with it when it establishes itself overseas, is still the decisive unit in world-finance.

To the formula of the Open Door all the Powers do lip service in China. It has generally been held to mean simply the absence of discrimination between imported foreign goods in the matter of tariffs, and perhaps also in railway rates. The Americans desire to extend it also to capital enterprises and concessions. By this they mean presumably to exclude all political arrangements by which the finance of a given Power acquires priority in all claims for concessions in a certain area. A negative doctrine of this kind does not carry us far. The competition of the several groups would continue, involving diplomatic rivalry, and eventually also the struggle in armaments. Nor is it easy to prevent the growth *de facto* of local claims. If a certain syndicate acquires a coalfield, it will look out for the nearest supply of iron-ore, and in either case will try to build or acquire the necessary railways, or else a parent bank will link up all these correlated ventures. More often the railway is the pioneer undertaking. Arrangements of this kind are natural, and make for efficiency. On the other hand, they create a strangle-hold monopoly in that area, and in a weak and disturbed country they inevitably involve, by violence or corruption, or the mere use of prestige, a measure of political control.

It is hard to see how the gradual growth of zones of national monopoly can be prevented in such a country as China, save by the pursuit of a positive and constructive policy of financial internationalism. That would involve, for example, in the vital matter of railways, that all existing and future lines should be built or managed by a single international syndicate, or else that a single Chinese State Railway system should be financed by a single international bank or financial trust. The Americans tried at one time to solve the Manchurian question by proposing the "neutralisation" in this sense of the railways. The more other ventures, especially mines, were handled in the same way, the less risk would



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there be of the creation of national spheres of interest. There exists already a "consortium" of foreign banks in China, which might become the nucleus of a big scheme of internationalisation.

From the Chinese standpoint the creation of a vast foreign money trust is, of course, an immense evil. It would infallibly act in politics, and it might be trusted to act in support of conservative and propertied interests, parties and habits of thought. That, however, is already the case wherever foreign national finance makes its influence felt. Our own bankers, traders and diplomatists favour the Northern as against the much more progressive Southern Government, advocate on occasion the basing of the constitution on a plutocracy, and even sigh for the return of the dynasty. Their tendency is always to back some native "strong man," usually a Conservative and a militarist, against any popular and progressive movement. If the democratic movement deepens into anything that has a constructive Socialist purpose, however sober, or if a class cleavage appears (I gather there is little or none at present, and the ruling class, with its traditional basis in academic distinction, is by no means the propertied class), foreign finance will, of course, be hostile and obstructive. One sees no reason, however, why it should be more formidable, if it acts as a single composite international unit, than if it acts locally in a number of "spheres of interest." The gain to China from an international discipline of capital would be, firstly, that partition would be avoided, and, secondly, that some of the less reputable tricks of predatory finance might be checked. To the rest of the world a settlement of the economic problem would ensure at least a period of peace and a step towards disarmament.

It would be sanguine, however, to reckon on any constructive or far-reaching definition of the Open Door at Washington. Japan will try to avoid even the discussion of her claim to Shantung, on the ground that it was settled at Versailles, while in Eastern Siberia, though she may possibly withdraw her troops, she adheres to her demand for conces-

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sions and large economic privileges. If the Conference breaks up, as it may do, without the withdrawal of Japan from Shantung, there can be no arrangement over armaments, other than make-believe, and a war between America and Japan will be more than ever possible and even probable. There lies the danger of the equivocal attitude of our Government over the renewal of the Alliance. The mischief of the Alliance is not so much that it might involve us in war with America (there is no obligation to go to such extremes), but rather that it commits us to support—or, at least, not to oppose—Japanese expansion. So long as this support is given, the process of penetration and acquisition will go on. The American veto upon it might be effective, by using diplomatic means alone, if Japan were isolated in her worst adventures. As it is, while we stand beside Japan, America can only grumble impotently, and allow the offences to accumulate which may one day make a war. The solution is no doubt, as Mr. Lloyd George now sees (thanks to the rough but salutary tuition of Canada), that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance should be merged in a wider partnership or concert. But it cannot be in form an alliance, and it cannot be based on partition. America will have neither. The indispensable first step is the ending of both Japanese and British encroachments upon China and Siberia. That either Power is prepared for any real sacrifice of the footing won or claimed on the mainland has yet to be proved.

The Conference, especially if it is ineffectual, will be the parting of the ways. It will try by accurate tests the value of our sentimental or prudential professions of a desire for friendly co-operation with America. If we prefer to retain the Japanese Alliance, and if we cover Japanese encroachments (not to mention our own more furtive reaching after Hinterlands), the talk of co-operation will cease, and a period of acute and even dangerous tension may begin. We might, to be sure, resolve to remain neutral, if an American-Japanese war should occur, but our ally would expect loans and munitions, and the inconveniences of a blockade might

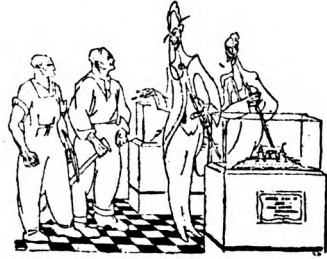
## DISARMAMENT



### THE PEACE LOVER

JAPAN: "Disarmament? Yes, let us talk about it. But—no tampering with my 'sovereign rights.'"

[The Japanese dragon is holding with all its claws on to Kiao-Tsao and Shantung.]—*Notenkraher.*



### LOGIC

"Yes, we are carrying through our building programme. How do you suppose we could disarm if we did not first take care and be strongly armed?"—*Notenkraher.*



### THE SPANISH TREASURE-SEEKER IN MOROCCO.—

*Notenkraher.*



### "IT WILL NOT COVER THEM"

[A violent law against anti-militarism has been produced in France.]  
—*Les Hommes du Jour.*

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soon remind us of the moral very widely drawn from the Great War—that neutrality is impossible for a naval Power in a modern war at sea.

Our historic part in China and in Chinese seas has been one of consistent egoism. We struck the key-note in the Opium Wars with a cynicism rare even in our history. We used the erratic talent of General Gordon to drown in massacre the promising renaissance known as the Taiping rebellion. We have since sanctioned the robberies and cruelties of the Japanese, first in Korea then in Manchuria, and at length in Shantung. In so doing we pursued our traditional policy of the Balance of Power. Japan served our ends by attacking first Russia and then Germany in the Far East. We have now to choose definitely whether, under the dictates of the same maxim of a Balance, we shall continue our cautious and qualified, but still effective, support of Japan against the United States. The instinct of our governing class is to evade the decision. Evasion will be difficult in the publicity of Washington, and a choice may be forced upon us. The risks of a war which might bring the capitalist system and even civilisation itself tumbling about our ears, are sufficiently understood. That madness, if only because it would involve the disruption of our Empire, we shall not choose with our eyes open. The danger is rather that the equivocations, the incompatible policies, the courting of America combined with the supporting of Japan, may be continued until we drift, after all, into a naval rivalry, which may repeat the Anglo-German precedent. There comes a moment in the relation of two Powers when an equivocal and indifferent relationship is impossible. They have to choose between co-operation and rivalry. That moment came in our dealings with Germany twenty years ago. It has come in our standing with America to-day.

# HELP RUSSIA

By ELLEN C. WILKINSON

ONE of the chief amusements of the foreigner in Russia is to read the foreign Press. The Russian Government has learned by bitter experience to keep hostile journalists outside its borders; so these hard-working gentlemen produce from scraps of rumour goods of the colour desired by their papers. It is difficult for even the conscientious journalist to tell the truth, for there are few possibilities of checking any news that comes through. At the Soviet Embassy itself, for example, delegates to the International Congress arriving in mid June were told by one official that the Conference was over, and by another that it had not yet begun.

These delegates, greeted with the utmost kindness by the citizens, not only of Petrograd and Moscow, but of all the towns through which they passed, were able to read in the German and Polish Press of how they were imprisoned in their hotels by starving crowds only kept from murdering them by innumerable soldiers, a general strike having been proclaimed on their entry into Moscow; or, alternatively, that they were flaunting themselves in motor-cars round the streets, waving bottles of champagne in the faces of the sullen mobs. The most circumstantial accounts of the doings of Radek in Berlin were given day by day while he sat on the Congress platform in Moscow, and it was strange in that peaceful city, with the cheerful crowds thronging the boulevards, to read of how hordes of insurgents were besieging the Kremlin demanding the downfall of the Bolshevik Government.

If it is difficult for the journalist to know what is happening in Moscow and Petrograd, it is practically impossible to get trustworthy accounts of events in the famine areas, hundreds of miles further inland. Wild stories coming from any of

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the frontier towns should be read with the reservation that the man who has written them knows little more of the actual conditions in Russia than the reader in his English armchair, the journalists being under the additional disadvantage of living in an atmosphere of rumour circulated by the local propaganda factory.

This is not to minimise the distress that exists. No words can adequately describe the extent of the awful calamity that has befallen those living in the Volga Basin. But terrible famines have recently occurred in China, and recur periodically in India without causing more than a mild murmur of sympathy. The Russian Famine has shaken the world, not by its extent or its misery, but by its possible political consequences. "How will the famine affect the power of the Bolsheviks?" is the real issue behind all the talk of relief.

To answer this question it is necessary to consider the situation in Russia before the threat of famine became a certainty. The Communists have always considered that Russia could not maintain a Socialist state by herself, and they therefore regarded their measures as provisional until the Red Wave should cover Europe. If that hope sounds fantastical now, it was a forecast based on the most careful study of the world situation in 1918 and 1919 by men who were in at least as good a position to know the truth as the class-bound diplomatists of Paris. For the European Revolution to be successful, the Soviet Regime had to be kept going at all costs. Russia was the front-line trench of the class war.

Taking over a shattered country from Tsarism, the Bolsheviks threw all their remaining resources into the struggle against the world bourgeoisie. The following table, compiled by the Commissariat of Finances of the Soviet Republic, shows how bad was the legacy they received, and how severe a strain were the years of war which ensued.

Year.	Expenditure (roubles).	Deficits (roubles).	Deficit in % to total expenditure.
1915 ...	11,562 millions ...	8,561 millions ...	74
1916 ...	18,101 ,, ...	13,756 ,, ...	76

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Year.	Expenditure (roubles).	Deficits (roubles).	Deficit in % to total expenditure.
1917 ...	27,607 millions	... 22,568 millions	... 82
1918 ...	46,706 "	... 31,126 "	... 67
1919 ...	215,402 "	... 166,443 "	... 77
1920 ...	1,215,159 "	... 1,055,555 "	... 87

(The figures for 1920 include large sums assigned for economically productive purposes.)

Apart from the confiscation of private resources, this deficit was largely met by the issue of paper money. The following table, from the same source as the previous one, compares the number of millions of paper roubles issued per month by the Soviet Government with the Tsarist issue.

No. of paper roubles issued per month in 1915 was	217.6 millions
" " " " " " " " " 1916 "	281.6 "
" " " " " " " " " 1917 "	1,597.6 "
" " " " " " " " " 1918 "	2,829.3 "
" " " " " " " " " 1919 "	13,645.9 "
" " " " " " " " " 1920 "	78,651.8 "

What this torrent of paper money meant, in actual purchasing power, has been calculated by the Finance Minister on the basis of the average price of bread in Moscow and Saratov at the outbreak of war. In 1914 the average price of bread per Russian pound was 2.8 kopecks, which rose in 1915 to 3.5 kopecks, the rouble having sunk to 80 kopecks. The price rose to 4.5 kopecks in 1916, the rouble being depreciated to 62 kopecks. In 1918 the total amount of paper money issued by the Soviet Government was 33,952 million roubles, which would then buy the equivalent of the commodities obtainable by 523 million gold roubles. In 1919 the 163,751 millions of paper roubles issued were calculated to be worth 390 millions gold, and in 1920 the 955,223 millions issued were worth about 180 millions gold. In 1917 it was still possible to buy something with 50 kopecks; in 1921 the seller calculated only in 1,000 and 5,000 rouble notes.

Many factors other than the amount of paper money in circulation have to be taken into consideration when trying

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to arrive at a true estimate of the economic position of Russia before the famine; but most of these only make the situation seem more desperate—the continued ravaging of the rich cornlands, the speed with which all kinds of engines had to be worn out, and the blockade which prevented the importation of spare parts. But more serious than all has been the continual wastage of personnel—the skilled miner, the experienced factory worker, the competent administrator, the brilliant propagandist, so many having thrown themselves gladly into the breach when Russia struggled to keep the pass for the exploited masses in all countries, to give them, as she hoped, time to form their ranks behind her.

As 1920 wore on and the hope of immediate world revolution faded, the Communists were faced with a new situation, which led to the struggle between two lines of policy, apparent in the Congress of 1921. This is not to imply that there were two parties with alternative programmes, rather one saw the opposing tendencies struggling in the mind of the same individual. Was it better to attempt to force through, in spite of all, the measures of complete socialisation laid down in the first few months of the Revolution, or to consolidate the present position, marking time until the movements in the other countries should advance, offering concessions to capital in return for the means to restart their industries?

Without losing sight of their main objective, the Bolsheviks used the opportunities of peace to start the work of reconstruction. The great exhibition at the Dom Soyusov (House of the Trade Unions) in Moscow this summer showed how much had already been accomplished, especially in the railway, metal, glass and rubber factories. The grants of seed, the fixed agricultural tax, and the corresponding legalisation of trade in food were great inducements to the peasants to extend their sowings. The clouds seemed to be lifting.

Then came the Great Drought. After seven years of war that gaping maw which had sucked down Russia's best lives and her resources had been closed. Immediately in her very



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centre another yawning abyss opens, and what is left must be thrown into that.

The Press has produced the appropriate forgery, a statement supposed to have come from Lenin, a desperate "It is enough, I can do no more." But this came too late to be convincing. Plague and famine are being fought with the same methodical organisation that held back the foreign troops. The machinery of relief is there, but the means cannot be found from Russian sources. On whom provides that relief may depend issues greater even than the existence of the Russian Soviet Republic.

The Russians dread the invasion of hosts of relief workers. They have not forgotten the thefts of platinum and the destruction of hospital stores by Red Cross workers. Is Russia to open her gates to potential or active White Spies and agitators? This is not to suggest that many of the relief workers will not be very conscientious people, but Englishmen may remember that others than pitiful refugees came over from Belgium in the early days of the War. Apart from this possibility the official attitude is well illustrated by the opening remarks of a prominent and high-minded bureaucrat at a Relief Committee meeting. "We must bear in mind that this relief is to be absolutely non-political. Of course, I take it that we are all against the Bolsheviks."

Whatever their opinions about the Bolshevik theories, the Labour movements of the other countries have repeatedly demonstrated that they consider the Russian fight is that of the world proletariat against Capital and Monarchy. Cannot these Labour organisations themselves supply the needs of the Russian workers? In all countries the workers are unemployed and starving, but consider what might be done if the spirit were there. During the miners' lock-out the soldiers and workmen in the Ukraine contributed from their utter poverty over two million roubles to the miners' funds. The Labour funds need not be limited to contributions from the workers, the essential thing is that food, medicaments, and means of transport should be sent to Russia as the fraternal

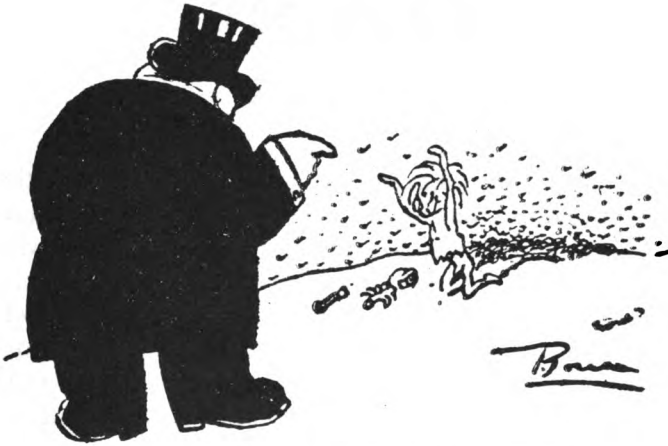
## *The Labour Monthly*

gift of fellow workmen, and not held before starving people as a bribe from Capitalism. The distribution of the workers' gifts should be left in the hands of the Workers' Government.

What is the alternative? No sensible man can believe that at the call of human distress the French Government has relinquished its desire for revenge on those who have repudiated its bonds, or that Lord Curzon will let bygones be bygones. The famine has given to the world bourgeoisie an opportunity beyond their wildest hopes. Suppose they succeed in overthrowing the Bolshevik Government, what then? Russia will never have the Monarchy back. Soviet propaganda has gone too deep for that. Any kind of Western Parliamentary democracy, based as it is on a strong middle class, could in Russia only be another name for White reaction, the forcible establishment of the rule of the emigrés. This would lead to endless agitation and repression, and the formation of bands of outlaws harrying the new régime. Makno in the Ukraine has shown how devastatingly effective such operations can be.

Russia's spirit is alien to the democratic forms we know, but she is working out a great experiment in government that the world cannot afford to lose. From the depths of age-long oppression she struggled to the light in 1917. The capitalists of the world have tried to thrust her back, and what they have failed to do with bayonets may be accomplished through natural calamity, under the guise of benevolence. Can the world's workers afford to allow this?

## THE FAMINE



“ That will teach you to be a Bolsheviki! ”—*Avanti*.



“ Help the Russians? It's against my principles. I don't even give to the French. Charity demoralises. ”—*L'Humanité*.

# FACTS ABOUT THE FAMINE

By L. Petrovsky

**T**RUE to their vocation of purveyors of opium for the workers, the capitalist newspapers have done their utmost to confuse the issue about the Russian famine. The chaotic and conflicting reports, most of them false, which were circulated by the Press agencies during the first weeks of the crisis were of immense assistance to this. It is a careful and systematic survey of the facts which alone can at once defeat the objects of the workers' enemies, and reveal to the British Labour movement the problems involved in all their magnitude. This work of clarification and methodical exposition I shall attempt in this survey, by the courtesy of the Editors of the *LABOUR MONTHLY*.\*

\* \* \*

I. The normal pre-war corn production of the territory now covered by the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic was 4,200 million poods. By the summer of 1920 the decrease in tillage brought about by the circumstances of the civil war had reduced the harvest to 3,000 million poods; which a bad harvest in the central provinces further brought down to 2,100 millions. This year a much larger harvest was anticipated: the energetic "sowing campaign" carried on by the Government and by all industrial organisations in the spring, and the alterations in economic policy introduced in April and May, largely restored the confidence of the peasantry, and sowings considerably increased. In the Ukraine the area sown was larger than in 1916. In 14 provinces of the rest of Russia, of which 7 have now been stricken with famine, the area sown amounts on an average to 70 per cent. of the 1916 area, while the 1920 average was

\* For much of the information contained in this article I am indebted to the famine memoranda issued by the Russian Trade Delegation.

## Facts About the Famine

approximately 48 per cent. So marked, indeed, has been the improvement in this respect that even the drought has not been able to reduce the anticipated total quantity of corn to less than 2,250,000 poods—i.e., *more* than last year.

\* \* \*

II. But these figures, which seem to convey a message of encouragement to those who look upon the Soviet Republic as a new world order fighting for life, in sharp contrast to the decaying order all round it, conceal in reality a disaster unprecedented in the history of Europe. Eighteen millions of people are faced with death by starvation or by the pestilence that walks in hunger's track. The average rainfall in the ten or twelve provinces concerned during the important months from October to June was ordinarily 14 inches. In 1920-1921 only  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches fell. The harvest came up early, attracted by the unusually warm spring and consequent thaw; but weeks and then months began to pass without a trace of rain, and the blazing sun, which in normal years transformed the Volga region into the granary of Russia, became from a welcome friend a ruthless enemy. Province after province was transformed into a parched and blackened waste, so dry and iron-hard that, even when rain fell in small quantities in June, it did not penetrate sufficiently far to affect the seeds (Samara, Simbirsk). It is calculated that over 900 million poods (15 million tons) of grain have perished in all. The ten provinces most immediately affected, stretching 800 miles, from Viatka in the north to Astrakhan in the south, were expecting to be able to contribute 60 million poods, or one quarter of the total, to the national food tax, in addition, of course, to the much greater quantity they would have contributed to the national larder by the co-operative machinery set up in accordance with the new economic policy. So complete has been the devastation, however, that the population actually requires 60 million poods (or 1 million tons) of grain to enable it to live on starvation rations (roughly, half a pound of bread a day) until the next harvest; and 15 million poods for sowing the next crop.

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The complete destruction of all civilisation, and the death by starvation of gigantic masses of the population—these were the prospects, unromantically and soberly described, with which the Volga population was faced in the early summer. The result was what might have been expected. In whole areas the peasants began to abandon their villages, moving slowly in long waggon-treks to the south, the east and the west—to the “Tsar of India,” as the rumour went, who would feed them all. The heart-rending descriptions in the bourgeois Press of Western Europe, though intended, of course, to convey an exaggerated idea of the magnitude of the movement, and thereby serve a political end, do not and could not overdraw the scenes of suffering, pestilence, and death which attended every step of these refugee columns. And though the cholera epidemic at no time reached the dimensions it assumed in the fevered imaginations or the malignant inventions of the enemies of the Soviet Government, its growth :

January—March .....	369 cases
April .....	649 ”
May .....	1,755 ”
June .....	42,803 ”
July (and up to August 10) .....	33,110 ”

was at one time sufficiently alarming to try the stoutest nerves.

\* \* \*

III. A survey of the conditions prevailing in the districts will give the best possible picture of what the disaster must mean to the Russian man in the street—the unfortunate muzhik.

*In the German Volga Commune*

In 1920-21 the deficit was 4,000,000 poods.

In 1921-22 70 per cent. of the harvest has entirely perished, and of the remainder only 5 poods per dessiatine (90 lbs. per acre) can be expected.

The population is feeding on substitutes, field rats, etc., while the Commissariat for Food has been able to give only 27,000 poods of corn

## *Facts About the Famine*

and 15,000 poods of fish. The problem is to sow the winter crops, of which 210,000 dess. should be sown, while the province can only sow 20,000 dess. 1,000,000 poods of winter seeds are required.

To feed the 300,000 starving people, there are needed monthly 51,000 poods of corn, 14,000 poods of barley, 7,500 poods of fats, 225,000 poods of vegetables.

### *Samara Province*

The fields represent an almost entirely bare and parched waste, except at one or two points where rain has fallen. The population is feeding mainly on substitutes: all the grass is eaten, acorns are considered a luxury, and bread is being baked from horse-radishes. Field rats are also being eaten. Cholera is rampant; in Samara city alone there are 400 cases daily. The number of children cared for by the State has risen from 20,000 in May to 60,000, and, owing to desertions by parents, is increasing by 60 to 70 daily. The children are being fed (insufficiently) on oat bread and oatmeal. They require 30,000 poods of corn monthly.

### *Kirghiz Steppe*

This steppe, which occupies an enormous district bordering on the Samara and Orenburg provinces, is nothing but a parched desert. Here and there in the valleys may be seen a little green on which the nomads' cattle graze. There is no hay, of course. The corn has entirely perished, destroyed by the drought, while the remainder is devoured by the locusts, which fly in clouds from place to place. The Kirghizes are ruthlessly slaughtering their cattle, and the local markets—Orenburg, Aktiubinsk—are choked with meat. The population expects a ghastly famine this winter.

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### *Simbirsk Province*

In the Singileyev county, the winter crop and vegetable gardens have entirely perished, while the summer crops have not come up at all. The Syzran county is a little better: 25 per cent. of the area will give two to three poods per dessiatine; 50 per cent. about six to eight poods; and 25 per cent. about twelve poods. Wheat and oats have long ago been mown for fodder.

Rains have fallen in the Simbirsk county, but in insufficient quantity to penetrate through the first layer of burning earth, in consequence of which it soon evaporated.

### *Tartar Republic*

The situation in this area along the Kama River is very serious, especially in the southern districts. All private stores are now exhausted, and rich and poor peasants are now suffering alike. A special steamer has been dispatched to this area to reassure the inhabitants that Governmental and other relief is at hand, and this campaign has been successful in stopping the panic emigration which had begun. Groups of starving peasants have been sent to more prosperous districts to collect the food tax and to appeal for fraternal aid.

### *Saratov*

The failure of crops has been unprecedented. In some districts of the Volsk country the yield amounts only to from 40 to 50 lbs. per acre, though the Soviet farms on the whole have given better yields. The peasants, who as late as last April used almost exclusively white bread, have had to resort to acorns and similar substitutes. In these circumstances the live stock has, naturally, been greatly reduced, one of the contributing causes being also the effect of the drought on the pastures. Such is the situation in the Eastern districts of the province. The Western ones have fared somewhat better,



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the yield averaging from 250 to 300 lbs. per acre.

A correspondent of *Pravda*, writing from the Volsk county of the Saratov province, describes the present attitude of the peasants. The absence of any opposition to the Soviets stands out clearly. Only a year ago the peasant was unable to understand the need of State assistance for relieving the starving cities of Central and Northern Russia. To-day he himself is anxiously looking for such help. Moreover, he takes part in organising subsidiary work, such as growing vegetables, etc., and shows a keen interest in the propaganda of national husbandry. At the same time the majority of peasants are seized with a desire to move to "a new land." On all roads one sees carts and wagons carrying household goods and children. Some go to Siberia and Turkestan, others to the Kuban and the Ukraine.

*The Middle  
Volga*

Peasants are moving from this region towards Siberia and the Ukraine. They have no bread and live by digging up seed potatoes that have not sprouted, and by gathering the scanty crops abandoned because worthless. In many districts all means of local transport are fully occupied transporting refugees, who are camped on the river-banks near the towns. The local Soviets are making as good arrangements for them as they can.

The peasants are preparing lists of those who wish to leave their provinces; these are handed in to the local Soviets. Some who have already left the famine area have settled down in the more prosperous districts. Letters written to their friends in the famine area by these refugees have tended to increase the number of

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those who tramp the roads without waiting for the schemes that are being worked out by the Government and the local Soviets. One letter, from a peasant who had arrived in the district of Amu-Daria with only 100 roubles and some bundles of cloth in his possession, has become legendary. The traveller is said to have exchanged his roubles and his cloths for over 800 lbs. of flour and two horses, and to have "got on all right." The population of ten districts near Volsk know of and believe in this letter.

The peasants who do not intend to leave their homes are concentrating their energies on potatoes and other vegetables. Near Volsk whole villages have turned out and diverted streams from their channels, using them for irrigation. In this way a very big crop of green vegetable-garden stuff is expected.

Cholera has decreased on the whole, but it is still raging in the villages and particularly among the Mahommedan population, the Chuvashis of the Volsk and Khvaluinsk districts.

The Volsk Soviet lately received permission to transfer 600 starving people to another region. Railway transport was arranged within twenty-four hours.

### *A Letter from the Districts*

*Isvestia* of August 12 publishes a letter from a member of the special delegation which was sent by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee to report on the actual position in the famine area. The writer of the letter, which is dated Kazan, August 7, reached the famine area on June 30, and during the following month visited about 70 villages, 18 towns and 26 river wharves. Without trying to minimise the extent of the disaster which has overtaken the Volga region, he notes a characteristic feature of the situa-

## *Facts About the Famine*

tion, the prevalence of fantastic rumours, which remind one of the wild reports that used to come from the war front. As an illustration, he mentions the stories that are circulated about the state of things at Sizran. At the Sizran railway station, they were told, thousands of emigrants were besieging the trains. Bodies of men who had died of starvation were lying about the place, and coffins could not be manufactured quickly enough in view of the shortage of wood and labour. The whole peasant population of the Samara province was said to be "on the wheels," with men pulling the carts, as the horses and even their skins had absolutely been eaten. The people were dying, the crops were completely destroyed, the rodents ate what was left of the crops, and the men ate the rodents. Such was the story spread by rumours. The reality, as it revealed itself to the delegates on their arrival at Sizran, was this: at the station there was a mixed crowd of passengers, numbering about 250, and including a noticeable sprinkling of food speculators. There were only three groups of peasants, consisting of five persons each, bound for Tashkent. The remaining passengers were going to Moscow and other central provinces for ordinary private or business purposes. The rest of the story proved a complete fabrication.

Nevertheless, the actual situation is very grave. The whole middle Volga region has suffered badly from the drought. The situation there is certainly critical, though in view of the abundant rainfall in July, there is still hope that the spring sowings may yield a satisfactory crop. The first week of September will make clear whether this hope has been realised.

As to the harvest of winter rye, the following figures will give an approximate idea of the situation:—

Percentage of total sowings.	Yield (per acre).
5%	nil
10%	6 to 10 lbs.
35%	30 to 60 lbs.
35%	60 to 100 lbs.
10%	100 to 160 lbs.
5%	160 to 350 lbs.

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Despite the critical position, the peasants are breaking up the soil for the coming winter sowing of rye up to 60 per cent., and in some districts (the Chuvash province) up to 90 per cent. of the last year's sowing. The shortage of fodder and the fear that the cattle may not survive the coming winter induces the peasants to increase the autumn sowings as much as possible. There is also noticeable an inclination to extend potato growing, as less liable to damage from drought. The reduction in the number of live-stock and cattle, as compared with the agricultural census of 1920, is shown in the following figures: horses, reduction not more than 20 per cent.; other cattle about 25 per cent.; sheep and pigs about 30 per cent.

The number of people who emigrated from the famine area up to the end of July is estimated at about 3 per cent. of the population, and of these only a small proportion had long associations with those provinces.

In respect of damage caused by the drought, the districts come in the following order, starting from the worst affected: Samara, Kazan, Simbirsk, and Chuvash province.

Mixing flour with grass in making bread began to be practised as early as May, and in some parts even April, the admixture amounting to from 25 to 50 per cent., though in some cases substitutes alone were used. About 40 per cent. of the agricultural population has been feeding on such substitutes. From the middle of July, however, with the gathering in of the new crops, the food used has somewhat improved, though the peasants continue to collect stocks of substitutes for the winter.

It is difficult to say whether cases of death from hunger have actually occurred. The delegates did not come across any such cases confirmed by medical certificates. On the other hand, there have been cases of death caused by stomach and intestinal disorders as the result of feeding on substitutes. One should also note the general tendency among the people to attribute every case of death to the famine conditions.

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The above communication concludes with the statement, "If September shows that the yield from the spring sowings is under the average, then in December the famine will assume the most menacing proportions."

IV. No more complete description than the above is necessary. It remains only to enumerate the measures undertaken by the Soviet Government and the other proletarian organisations of Russia to grapple with the stupendous problems created by the famine.

1. The provinces of the famine area were immediately freed from all taxation. The food tax may still be collected from districts where the harvest amounts to upwards of 130 lbs. an acre, but exclusively for local purposes.

2. An appeal was issued to all peasants in the fertile districts who received advances of seeds from State funds last winter and spring to repay their debts to the extent of 50 to 100 per cent. immediately. This measure, which has already met with an enthusiastic response from all over the country, is expected to bring in over 5 million poods of grain for sowing purposes. The Soviet estates—farms cultivated collectively on behalf of municipal Soviets, large industrial undertakings, etc.—have undertaken to collect 4 million poods of seeds by January from their own produce, half being handed over immediately by them, and half being advanced on their behalf by the State out of the first results of the collection of the food tax.

With certain imports from abroad, therefore (for which a sum of £1,200,000 was set aside), the most urgent need, apart from feeding the sufferers themselves—that of providing a harvest for next year—will have been adequately met. Many thousands of tons have already been dispatched.

3. The People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade has been voted a credit of 500 million gold roubles (£50,000,000) for the purpose of buying manufactured articles abroad, to be used for exchange purposes in the provinces least affected by the drought. These purchases are already being made.

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4. Immediate measures were taken to direct the streams of refugees into regular and controlled channels. All outward-going railway traffic from the famine area was placed at their disposal, the People's Commissariat for Labour and the local authorities in the principal industrial areas of Central Russia being taken into consultation, with a view to preventing the work of relief from becoming more of an economic burden on the community than was inevitable. There were evacuated :

	To Industrial Provinces.		To Autonomous Republics.
In May .....	15,000 persons	...	12,000 persons
In June .....	60,000 „	...	33,000 „
In July .....	57,000 „	...	58,000 „
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	132,000 persons		103,000 persons

Arrangements have been made to evacuate 105,000 persons in August.

5. A series of "shock" measures were taken to check the cholera epidemic—dispatch of sanitary trains and medical detachments, purchase of drugs and medical stores abroad, compulsory inoculation of the Red Army, of transport workers, and of all railway passengers—which, as the figures quoted earlier go to show, have already had the effect of arresting the progress of the epidemic, if not yet of finally eradicating it.

6. While an "All-Russian Famine Relief Committee," composed for the most part of representatives of political and non-political groups, previously either neutral towards or hostile to the Soviet Government, was given a number of exclusive privileges (such as priority and free transit on the railways), the actual control of all relief work was vested in a Special Famine Relief Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. This body, meeting daily in Moscow, maintaining contact with the districts by means of special missions and plenipotentiary representatives, granting relief through its own local machinery

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(provincial, county, and rural district committees, elected by local executives and working-class organisations), and opening up communications with foreign countries and relief organisations (notably the American Relief Administration), is perhaps the supreme instance of the extraordinary elasticity of mind and creative energy of which the Russian Communist Party is capable when faced with a situation before which every other social force (not excluding Lord Curzon and his "district commissioners" on the Indian model) must have failed. (Let us not forget the 6 millions of deaths from Spanish 'flu in India).

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V. Every issue of a Soviet newspaper contains the elements now needed to complete the picture thus roughly sketched. Under the headings: "Minsk, Briansk, Gomel, Vladimir"; "Chemical Workers, Petrograd Bakers, Moscow Leather Works, Tula Metal Workers"; "The Prokhorov Factory, Art Workers of the Khamovnichesky Ward"; "Children of the fourth Orphan Home, Workers and Peasants of the sixth Crimean Rest Home, invalided Red soldiers of Rostov-on-Don, 8th Battalion of the Extraordinary Commission"; and, most characteristic of all, "Political prisoners interned in the Moscow provincial concentration camp"; we find column after column recording the sacrifices—a week's pay, one day's rations, two days' flour, all the goods accumulated for exchanging with the peasants during the past two months—being made in every corner of Russia by the workers, over and above the support they are showing their stricken comrades through the machinery of the State.

It is this spirit of solidarity and self-sacrifice that brought the Russian workers unbroken through the worst trials of the imperialist war and the revolution. There is every reason to believe that they will emerge as triumphant from this last and, in some respects, worst test. But, if they do, it will not be because of goodwill on the part of their enemies. The weeks which have passed since the European

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Allies began "discussing" and "investigating" the question of international relief are likely to pass into months before anything materialises of their meditations, even if we had not already before us the appointment of Noulens as Chairman of their Council—the former French Ambassador in Moscow, who was the centre of counter-revolutionary plotting in 1918—as a signal indication of the intentions and the spirit in which the Allies approach their humanitarian task. On the other hand, the activities in certain directions of the "non-political" Famine Relief Committee in Russia itself have been such, and its inactivity in others so glaring, that the Soviet Government has been forced to bring its existence to an end.

If the Russian workers win through, they will do so because of their own stern resolution and the support of their fellows in other countries. It is only the British Labour movement whose fraternal help and steady pressure is being counted upon at this moment. More than ever the proletarian watchword of Marx and Engels, "Workers of all countries, unite!" must be called to the aid of the first working-class republic.



# THE RUSSIAN ATLAS



Not slipping.—*Liberator*

# THE DECAY OF SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

By S. K.

**T**HE main difference between the present world economic chaos and previous capitalist crises lies in this unprecedented fact, that the principal cause of the present anarchical situation is, not the over-production of the highly developed capitalist countries, but the under-production and the economic and social disintegration of a considerable part of the world. For this reason, if there is to be any prospect of a recovery of the old capitalist system, the revival must begin with the re-organisation of these decomposed economic units. Otherwise this process of disorganisation cannot even be restricted to its present area, but will spread over other countries, and will end with the total breakdown of the whole capitalist world. For this reason, we cannot pay too much attention to the economical and political development in those countries where the decline of the social-economic system has attained the most serious proportions. It is in this connection that the study of the present situation of the Balkan countries and the Succession States of the ruined Austro-Hungarian Empire is particularly important.

There are some difficulties in analysing this situation, because owing to the anarchical and ever-changing conditions, we possess very few statistical data, and these are also very often incomplete, untrustworthy and out-of-date. But this very difficulty, the fluctuating and uncertain character of our information, is the clearest evidence of the prevailing disorder. And the few statistical data which we can accept as conforming to the real situation and to other sources of information indisputably indicate that not only is

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there no sign of approaching stability, but that on the contrary the situation is becoming more and more critical every day.

This is a very grave statement, if we remember in what a chaotic state the war has already left this unfortunate population. Nowhere was the war so destructive as in these regions. The human and material losses here attained their highest proportions. Old Serbia lost almost one-third of its whole population, and in Austria, where the famine had the most victims, the transport system absolutely collapsed, and agriculture and industry were in a desperate condition owing to the devastations of the war, invasions and the blockade. And as a consequence of the military and economic collapse, there was added to all this the breakdown of the State organisation. Apart from Bulgaria and Albania all the other countries were faced not only with the extremely difficult task of restoring their destroyed economic life, but also with the complicated work of organising a new State apparatus.

But this new partition, creating new customs barriers and separating the organic parts of coherent economic units, has severely reacted on economic life itself. The Chauvinism of the newly-created States was misused for a prolonged policy of national enmity and hatred. The national injustices inflicted by the Peace Treaties are too well known to be repeated here. What is important is their main object, namely that the Allies of Germany are to be made economically incapable of any future action. For this purpose, the small Allies of the Entente are compelled to maintain enormous armies and to continue a suicidal policy of isolation and economic war. The Little Entente of Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia and Rumania, with some co-operation of Greece and Poland,\* is a clear expression of this mad policy directed against Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Albania and Turkey. As

\*Their present military forces, according to English and French official declarations, are: Poland 600,000, Greece 250,000, Rumania 250,000, Jugo-Slavia 200,000, Czecho-Slovakia 150,000.

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a matter of fact, we find differences between the members of the Little Entente arising from their different Imperialistic aims, but at present they are united in the oppression of their defeated neighbours. This oppression does not consist, even to-day, in mere blackmailing supported by military superiority, but in continued occupation and warfare.

The Greeks are still fighting the Turks, and thereby cutting off the starving population of Constantinople from its large resources; Southern Albania is still occupied by Greek, and Northern Albania by Jugo-Slav troops.

But if this madness has aggravated the already serious disorder and disintegration in the defeated countries, it has produced the same effect on the "victorious" States. A short survey of the present economic situation reveals a continuous decline in all these countries. Greece, which had a rather easy part in the world war and could remain in a relatively stable position, has lost her privileged position in consequence of her Imperialistic war policy.

The transport system is still in a critical condition. Notwithstanding the fact that without good communications there is no modern economic life, very little has been done to restore even the old inadequate standards. Rumania has not sufficient rolling stock to transport even the largely diminished output of her oil and agricultural production. Poland, with a population of 30,000,000, had in April, 1920, not more than 1,936 serviceable and 1,680 unserviceable locomotives of standard gauge, and 108 serviceable and 153 unserviceable locomotives of broad gauge. Hungary in April, 1921, had only 1,717 locomotives and 2,348 passenger coaches. Railways, roads and all other branches of communication reveal similar conditions in the whole area, and it is impossible to see how these bankrupt countries will be able to bear the large expenses of their reconstruction.

If we turn to agriculture, we find there the same desperate conditions. A few examples will suffice. In Rumania—the most important agricultural country amongst those in

## *The Decay of South-Eastern Europe*

question—the wheat harvest in 1919 was only 63.5 per cent. and in 1920, 39.6 per cent. of the pre-war average. The cause of this extremely low production is not due to any natural disaster, but to the continued military service of several classes, the unsolved agrarian question, and want of agricultural implements and fertilisers. The sowing of wheat in 1919 (for the 1920 harvest) was less than half of the normal. In Hungary the average yield of cereals was little more than 50 per cent. of the pre-war output. In Poland the total yield of wheat and rye was the following in 1919 and 1920:—

	Rye.	Wheat.
Pre-War .....	5,009,900 tons	1,637,100 tons.
1919 .....	3,414,400 „	653,600 „
1920 .....	1,901,400 „	619,400 „

In Austria, with its desperate need of bread, we find that the sowings of the main cereals in 1920 have declined, compared with 1913, by 25 per cent., and the total output by 60 per cent. We find a similar decline in the other countries and in the other branches of agricultural production. Greece was an exception to this in 1920, but the prospects for this year's harvest, owing to serious agrarian troubles, are very unfavourable.

With regard to industrial production we find still worse conditions. There are whole branches of industry at a standstill, as with the building industry, which is not able to yield sufficient profits to be worth working. Companies which have re-started work are mostly financed by foreign capital. A very remarkable phenomenon is that the improvement of the currency has an unfavourable effect on production, because it makes dumping more difficult. A good example of this is Austria, where industry has revived just in this year, when the krone has attained an unprecedentedly low state. The production is now about 50 per cent. of the normal. But this revival is only a temporary one, and is not a real revival at all. It is true that some capitalists, foreign and native, are able to make a good profit

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on the export of these cheaply produced articles, which are so badly needed in the country itself. But this profit is paid by the Austrian State, which is compelled to supplement the insufficient wages paid with various subsidies and reliefs. In addition, this is far from equalising the high costs of imported food and imported raw materials, for which import a favourable exchange of currency is desirable. But when the currency improves the factories cease to work. This was the situation in Hungary in the spring, when a slight increase in the value of the Hungarian krone caused again, after a temporary improvement, an almost complete cessation of industrial production. There "revivals" are of almost no importance in affecting the great question of reorganisation. The vacillations simply occur because the general situation is so unstable, that a big speculation, an important strike, a new loan, etc., may produce enormous changes in the disturbed economic life of these dwarf States. In Czecho-Slovakia, where the situation was relatively the most stabilised, a new marked decline is beginning to take place in industry, because they have a too favourable exchange—only one-fifteenth of the pre-war value—and the neighbouring States are easily able to undersell them. The important weaving and cotton-spinning industry is occupied only up to 35 or 40 per cent. of its normal capacity and there is an increasing crisis also in the metallurgical, chemical and sugar industries. In Poland the productive capacity of industry may be estimated at 20 to 40 per cent. of what it was before the war. The Galician oil output, where foreign capital is strongly interested, has amounted in 1919 to 833,980 tons, in 1920 to 765,090 tons. The pre-war output varied between 1,100,000 and 2,100,000 tons. Of the remaining countries mention may also be made of Rumania, where, in spite of new foreign capital, the production both in 1919 and 1920 did not amount to above 20 to 40 per cent. of the pre-war average (the only exception is in the case of the flour mills, which reached 60 per cent.).

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Taking into consideration the great decline of production and the low state of currency on the one side, and the enormous requirements of these exhausted countries on the other, nobody can wonder that all these States have a heavily unfavourable trade balance. Recently the relation between exports and imports has slightly improved, but this is primarily due to the diminished buying capacity of the population. In the interest of the powerful export consortiums and industrial groups, the export duties have recently been abolished almost universally and the import duties raised again. As a sign of the great retrogression the barter system is coming more and more into existence, not only in internal but also external trade.

Corresponding to the diminished production a deficit in the State budgets is universal, and it is growing every year simultaneously with the aggravation of the general economic chaos. The budget estimates are absolutely valueless and in some cases there have been years in which no budgets were prepared at all. But we can see the large actual deficits from the ever-growing national debts, and the new issues of bank notes without any reserve. I leave out of account the fantastical figures of national debts, where comparison is, in fact, difficult owing to the different currencies for each country; but for the better illustration of the alleged recent stabilisation I give two tables: one showing in percentage the increase of the notes in circulation during the last few months, and the other showing the depreciation of the currency, which in the capitalist system is the best register of the economic and political situation.

### INCREASE OF THE NOTES IN CIRCULATION.\*

Rumania .....	134%	during the last 12 months up to June, 1921.
Greece .....	20%	” ” 12 ” ” ” ”
Poland .....	209%	” ” 9 ” ” ” ”
Austria .....	80%	” ” 7 ” ” July ”
Hungary .....	34%	” ” 7 ” ” ” ”
Jugo-Slavia ...	20%	” ” 7 ” ” ” ”
Czecho-Slovakia	5%	” ” 5 ” ” ” ”

\* There is no official report of Bulgarian note circulation since April, 1921, but a marked inflation took place in the last few months. Turkey does not exist at present as an independent State, and Albania has no national currency.

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## RATES OF EXCHANGE.

Figures giving the Exchange for £1.

Currency.	Par.	Aug. 13, 1920.	Aug. 12, 1921.
Vienna.....	krone . 24.02	... 715—725	... 2800—3000
Prague.....	krone . 24.02	... 200—210	... 290—295
Warsaw.....	mark ... 20.43	... 710—810	... 7400—7600
Bucharest.....	lev ... 25.22½	... 160—170	... 283—288
Constantinople....	piastre . 110	... 168	... 545—565
Sofia.....	lev ... 25.22½	... 160	... 420—450
Belgrade .....	dinar .. 25.22½	... 73	... 145—155
Athens.....	drachma 25.22½	31.70—31.80	65—66½
Budapest.....	krone .. 24.02	... 720—725	... 1300—1400

If the financial collapse—so clearly expressed in the ever-growing deficits and national debts, and the unlimited inflation and depreciation of currency—is only the logical consequence of the devastation of war and of the decline of production, it has also in its turn an important reaction on production. The financial risk connected with an ordinary business stands in the way of any return to sound productive work. The capitalist has always to be prepared for a sudden rise or fall of prices ranging from 50 to 150 per cent. In consequence of this, capitalist enterprise necessarily assumes more and more of a speculative character.

Proposals for the “stabilisation” of currency, as the beginning of a general revival, cannot be taken more seriously than the proposals of a quack-doctor to regulate the pulse of a dying man; quackeries can only accelerate the death of the patient. There is no economic miracle, there is only economic development. An economic miracle would be, for instance, the cancellation of large foreign loans, or the unselfish support of the big capitalist powers for undeveloped countries, or the financial success of a new money system while everything else remained unchanged, etc. The direction of the economic development in the countries in question is towards complete bankruptcy, which actually—if not yet declared—has been already attained in Austria, Poland, Hungary, and Turkey, while the remaining States are rapidly precipitating towards the same



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end. But millions of people cannot live long in a bankrupt state, and the present absurd situation—maintained by terroristic means or by international charity—cannot remain for a long time. What is to come then?

Before going into the examination of this all-important question, we must first study the great social changes which have occurred simultaneously with the great economic disintegration. Till now, in order to avoid complication, I have carefully omitted to mention this important aspect. Great as was the effect of the war and post-war "peace" on the economic order, their direct and indirect influence on the social conditions has struck most observers much more sharply.

The war has revealed the great importance of the working masses, and great were their expectations regarding their future prospects. But, in strong contrast to all their hopes, they find that the social and economic differences after the war are much greater than ever before. Nowhere is this so remarkable as in the countries where money has become absolutely valueless. There is an impassable gulf between the small group of capitalists who possess considerable international values, and all the rest of the population. Owing to their present great economic importance—the consequence of abnormal conditions—these small financial and mercantile cliques have also an almost absolute political power. Being the incontestable masters of the economic life of the country, however ruined it may be, quite naturally they are the absolute commanders of the political field. But they depend largely on foreign capital, and it is the joint front of native and foreign capital and their oppressive organs, which have secured their further domination when the old economic system has already ceased to function regularly. The abnormal conditions offer large speculative possibilities, and profiteering is cultivated on an extremely large scale. This, and the unheard-of display of luxury are only accentuating still more the social struggle.

The most active opponents of this capitalist group are

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the industrial workers. Depending entirely on their inadequate wages, these latter are really in a desperate situation, and therefore it is easy to understand their great activity, even in these countries where the industrial population is but a small part of the whole population. They cannot satisfy even their most moderate desires. They cannot buy healthy and sufficient food, and they are living in unhealthy, overcrowded slums. The increases in wages are never in harmony with the enormous rises in prices, and they have to be fought for by long and desperate struggles. The consequences of this miserable standard of life are dirt, disease, immorality, great mortality, low birthrate and inefficiency of labour. The birthrate in Vienna in 1920 was 14.2 per cent.; in Budapest, 17 per cent.; in London, 26.4 per cent.; the death rate in the same year and towns, 20 per cent., 22 per cent., and 12.6 per cent.; the infant mortality in Budapest was 180 per cent., and in London 76 per cent. In Vienna 117,000 schoolboys and girls were medically examined last year, and of them 64.6 per cent. were found underfed, of whom 34.9 per cent. were severely underfed. The workers have first tried to ameliorate their position by a long series of strikes. After local and partial strikes they made experiments with the general strike. But all these attempts had no durable results, and the more important conflicts, as with the railwaymen, the miners, and the general strikes, have been crushed by brutal means. Militarisation of undertakings of essential importance and the imprisonment of the workers' leaders, sometimes followed by tortures and murders: these have been the answer of the bourgeoisie to the economic attack of the working masses. These lessons have taught the proletariat the importance of revolutionary political organisation and action. The proletariat is preparing for revolution; and strong Communist parties are organising the rebel population, whose number is increasing with every day of the prolonged misery. It is enough to mention the Czecho-Slovak, Jugo-Slav and Bulgarian parties to show the rapidly growing influence of Com-

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munist ideas and organisations. The bourgeoisie has now realised the great danger, and the most severe terroristic means are being used against Communists.

The middle classes are also finding themselves for the most part under the same miserable conditions, and large sections of them are struggling together with the industrial workers. It needed this terrible catastrophe to bring these "brain" workers to understand that they too are wage-slaves first and foremost. Typical middle-class elements are now using the despised strike weapon to obtain higher salaries and better working conditions. Thus we find strikes of bank clerks, (in Constantinople, in Spalato, in Zagreb, in Vienna, and in the whole of Czecho-Slovakia, etc.), physicians, pharmaceutical assistants, State employees, professors, etc. What is the more important, the strikes do not aim only at obtaining larger salaries, but also at securing more control in regulating the conditions of their labour. The middle class is beginning to adhere to the idea of social co-operation in place of that of individual supremacy and competition.

The larger part of the agrarian population, the small peasants and agricultural labourers, is also awakening. In these mainly agricultural countries they are of a very considerable importance. This importance is more potential than really existent, and it is a great exaggeration to state, as is often done, that the industrial workers have suffered and struggled and the peasants enjoy the fruits. The fact is that in Poland, Hungary, Eastern Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, Northern Jugo-Slavia, and Thessaly (Greece), where we find a large number of big estates, the agrarian question is still unsolved—or, what is the same, solved only on paper. But even where the small peasantry forms the majority of the population their actual political importance is very slight. In Bulgaria, where they succeeded in capturing the majority of the seats in the Parliament and forming a Cabinet consisting exclusively of members of the Peasant Party, they were compelled by the Reparations Commission to

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change their whole programme. The safeguarding of the interests of the small, but with the aid of the Allies, powerful capitalist group was put above the vital interests of a large peasant population. The great riches of the peasants are also only mythical. They have a large stock of valueless banknotes, but they do not possess good plant for cultivation; they work painfully with bad implements (where they have not yet realised the present futility of tillage) and their harvest will be requisitioned, or compulsorily bought at a low price; they are the first to be taken into the army if it is necessary; and pay heavy taxes, whilst the "lazy townpeople" have all the privileges. The enfeebled capitalist system cannot satisfy the desires of the peasantry, and for this reason an important part of the agricultural population in this part of Europe is a revolutionary factor. But owing to the international situation they cannot carry out a narrow peasant policy and build up a peasant state. Either they are serving the interests of the capitalists, or they have to rally to industrial labour. We find already some good examples of this co-operation, the most marked so far being in Jugo-Slavia and Bulgaria, where the Communists have a considerable number of supporters amongst the peasants.

National rivalries are responsible for their own special difficulties, which only serve to aggravate the present situation. These questions will remain a disturbing factor so long as the competitive system exists, and will only disappear with its final breakdown. The question of national minorities, the question of Upper Silesia, Constantinople, Thrace, Macedonia, and the question of hegemony between Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, between Czechs and Slovaks, between "Old Rumanians" and "New Rumanians," cannot be settled definitely under the present economical and social conditions.

Thus the main question still remains: What is the path to economic recovery? The capitalists have utterly failed to achieve any recovery, and the prospect of their so doing

## NATIONALISM



Poland, Silesia, Mesopotamia, etc.

“Then, Mother, if there were no more ‘right’ and no more ‘civilisation,’ there would be no more wars?”—*L’Humanité*.



I. “Hallo! Yes, I will try to attend the disarmament conference myself. Bravo!”

II. “Hallo! Why have you not attacked the Turks? Get on with it.”—*Le Peuple*.

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is still more unlikely in the future, because under-production and economic anarchy have an ever-increasing influence on the economic and social troubles of the "sound" capitalist countries. The peasantry is not able to take over power, and still less to retain it. The reorganisation of the ruined economic and social order can only come from the working masses. It is a singular historical phenomenon that the workers of the less highly developed capitalist countries have to fight for their emancipation, before the large proletarian masses of the big capitalistic powers have arrived at the stage of an open revolutionary period. But the workers of the Balkan and Succession States are forced to begin an active revolutionary struggle, if they are not prepared to accept without resistance a prolonged period of starvation and slavery.

The words of J. M. Keynes, in speaking of the Continent as a whole, apply with redoubled force to these particular countries: "There it is not just a matter of extravagance or 'Labour troubles,' but of life and death, of starvation and existence, and of fearful convulsions of a dying civilisation." If the workers in these countries lose their great battle, this would have a serious influence on the outcome of the general struggle of the international working class. And if this great war does not end with the victory of the working class, there remains only one alternative: the common ruin of both the capitalists and the working classes together.

# ECONOMIC PHASES OF AMERICA'S COLOUR PROBLEM

By HERBERT J. SELIGMANN

**M**OST human problems at present seem to have their origins in the possession, or the desire to possess, the power which is money. This is no less true now of the so-called colour problem in the United States than it was in slavery days. About the simple desire to exploit human beings for profit, however, has grown a social and political complex which seems to many observers to be impelling our society toward catastrophe. Two warnings of the danger have already come to Americans in 1921; one in the form of an extraordinary pamphlet published by the Governor of Georgia, another in the colour riots at Tulsa, Oklahoma, in June.

The first warning, Governor Hugh M. Dorsey's, "The Negro in Georgia," is nothing more than a bare statement of appalling facts. It was published in April of 1921, shortly after the world had learned that eleven Negro peons had been murdered on a farm in Jasper County, Georgia; and that the murders had been planned and executed to obliterate evidence sought by federal agents of the practice of peonage, or debt slavery. "In some counties," Governor Dorsey's report said, "the Negro is being driven out as though he were a wild beast. In others he is being held as a slave. In others, no Negroes remain." There followed a recital of 135 examples of mistreatment of Negroes, only two of them involving the "usual crime" against a white woman, practically all of them unpunished—a list which, as is stated, might have been multiplied had additional cases been sought.

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The report tells of Negroes lynched—hanged, burned and tortured over a “slow” fire, riddled with bullets—for any or no apparent cause. One Negro was brutally assaulted—his daughters with him being also kicked and beaten—thrown in jail, fined, imprisoned, and his family forced to flee, leaving behind them their possessions. “The education of his children and the success of his thrift seem to be the sole offence of the Negro,” is the comment of the report.

The Dorsey report has been bitterly attacked. The Governor’s political opponents talked of impeaching him before his term expired. Every effort will be made in the future to discredit this document, its author and the sources of his information. But the facts stand. North and South, Americans know that there is no horror that was perpetrated in Belgium, in Turkey, Armenia or Korea, which exceeds those visited upon innocent Negroes in the United States as late as 1921. In this sense the Dorsey report is the summation of a case which has for many years been placed piecemeal before a minority of Americans disposed to listen. It is the case of millions of people denied education, disfranchised by fraud and violence,\* denied recourse to the law, subjected to segregated and inferior public accommodations at exorbitant prices, denied even the opportunity to defend themselves and their own against the most flagrant and glaring brutalities and violence. The cases chosen to represent conditions in Georgia may be applied with modifications to any other Southern state.

There is much talk of the biological inferiority of the Negro, of the danger of Negro domination, and of the menace to the “purity” of the white race. All this is the bandying of misconceived or fraudulent scientific terminology to conceal one of the fundamentals of the colour problem in the United States; that the economic life of the South is built upon the labour, often involuntary, mostly underpaid, of Negroes.

\* See *The Disfranchisement of Coloured Americans in the Presidential Election of 1920*, published by the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, New York.



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Typical cases in point are numbers 11 and 12, cited in the Dorsey report. Number 11: "A Negro was sentenced to 30 days in the Fulton County Chain Gang for vagrancy. When he had served enough of his time to pay his fine, excepting \$5.00, the son of a farmer in this County paid him out [*i.e.*, released him by paying the fine]. With ten other Negroes he was carried to the man's farm, where they were locked up for the night. They were guarded by two armed Negroes by day and locked up every night." Case 12: "The man stayed from February 1 until September 1, when he and another Negro ran away. They were caught, brought back and whipped. The other Negro begged to be killed. The white owner shot him. A weight was put upon him. His body was put in a nearby pond back of the owner's home. Fifteen Negroes were working on the place. They were frequently beaten." This is to treat human beings as less than chattels.

Similar treatment of Negroes brought about the Arkansas riots of 1919. Those riots were provoked by white men determined to prevent recourse to the courts on the part of Negroes seeking redress. The agricultural system which prevails in Arkansas, in Georgia, and throughout the South, especially where there are large holdings of land, fastens the Negro to the land. By the so-called share cropper or rent cropper system, the Negro farmer pays his rent in produce. Having to purchase his supplies, in many cases, at the plantation store, he is at the mercy of his landlord. No account is rendered him, and he may be kept perpetually in debt. If he demands an itemised statement of his account he is threatened with death. If he tries to escape he may be arrested, whipped or killed. One plantation owner will not take a Negro escaped from another's employ. The white men stand together. Labour has been, and still is, recruited by arresting Negroes on any pretext whatever. They are then "worked" in chain gangs on the roads; or some white man pays the fine and the Negro becomes virtually his property under the pre-

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text of paying off the debt. White men, under this system, talk of the Negro's invariable appeal to some white friend when he is in difficulty. The Negro is forced to this appeal because he has no legal or civil standing respected by white men. Exploitation and pauperisation are familiar bed-fellows.

It is upon this system that the white man's ascendancy is based. He fortifies it with spurious science and maintains it by violence and intimidation. It colours the relations of white and coloured people even where peonage does not prevail in its worst and most brutal forms. Every coloured man who emancipates himself from the condition of labourer or farmer, who becomes other than a source of exploitable labour in the industrial scheme, constitutes, by the fact of his education and his possession of means, a threat to the white man's ascendancy. It is literally true that one of the worst crimes which a Negro can commit, in the eyes of an astoundingly large number of white men in the far Southern states, is to become wealthy and to attempt to live in the manner affected by white men of similar attainments.

At the root, then, of race conflict in the South are economic class divisions, with skin pigmentation as a distinguishing mark. The "good nigger," the "hat-in-hand darkey," as he is named, is what is wanted throughout the rural South. Such Negroes do not demand what is theirs. They take what is given them in return for the labour that enriches the white men. At best such docile Negroes are the recipients of benevolently paternal care. At worst they are robbed, driven from home, or butchered.

## II

The urban and industrial difficulties under which the Negro labours in the United States are derived from this antiquated and inequitable agricultural scheme. It powerfully affected the heavy northward migration of Negroes during the war; a movement which is to some extent con-

## *Economic Phases of America's Colour Problem*

tinuing; though the growing industrial depression into which the country is plunging gives it a check. The Negro who wishes to progress has to come North eventually, even if he be an industrial and not an agricultural labourer. In the South there is virtually no opportunity to form Labour Unions which include Negroes. Organisers of Negro Unions are lumped in public condemnation with "agitators," "Bolshevists," and the I.W.W. In one town in Mississippi there was actually posted this spring a warning to the effect that, any Labour Union organiser who attempted to meddle with, or, incite Negroes would be given short shrift.

In lumber towns, and in the mining districts especially, the company "guards" and detectives rule. Officers of local government are often dependent upon industrial managers for their election to office. White labour Unionists in the South, moreover, with few exceptions, are indoctrinated with colour prejudice to such an extent that any admission of Negro workmen on an equal basis with white is inconceivable. In times of unemployment like the present, violence is frequently employed to rid jobs of their Negro incumbents in favour of white men. Only recently the attention of the Governor of Mississippi was called to the murder of several Negro brakemen, constituting an attempt to force Negroes out of that branch of railroading. At the annual convention of the American Federation of Labour in Denver, in the month of June, Negro delegates made a number of complaints of discrimination against their people. A correspondent of the *New York Evening Post* quoted the following statement which had been handed to him by a number of Negro delegates:

"We have been debarred from certain parts of our work, and all holidays, overtime, Sundays or any other overtime. We are told by a committee of white carmen, local number —, that we are not recognised as carmen. We have been working for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad for five, ten and fifteen years. Now we are only protected by officials of the railroad. Had it not been for them we would have been blotted out by

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white carmen." Similar conditions were said to prevail in all unions but those of the longshoremen.

In the circumstances it will be seen how readily Negro labour can be used as a weapon against white Unionism whether on the railroads in the less highly organised branches, in the stockyards, steel foundries, or, as was the case recently, in the shipping strike at the port of New York. The national and international executives of the Unions constituting the American Federation of Labour, for the most part do not sanction this discrimination against and exclusion of Negroes. But it is practised generally in the South and in the locals elsewhere. Negroes are made to distrust white organisations: they find that if they go on strike the jobs they relinquished are filled, at the settlement or resumption, by white men. The imposing pronouncements against discrimination promulgated by Unions and by the Federation of Labour are unheeded. Only the I.W.W. organisers, hounded and decried as they are, admit the Negro on equal terms.

### III

The consequences of the exploitation of the Negro in agriculture, and of his being ground between the upper and nether millstone of industrial warfare, are to be seen in cities throughout the country. Cities are the scene of colour riots. They occur, often, as a consequence of the segregation of coloured and white populations. But there are other effects of segregation, not less serious, in bad housing and lighting in the Negro districts, inferior policing and sanitation. This is not true of the largest cities such as New York and Chicago, but in Chicago even, with its large voting coloured population, municipal administration when applied to paving, etc., is made contingent upon the use of the coloured vote in elections. Furthermore, in the cities there is an active discrimination against Negroes in many forms of employment.

It is from bad housing at exorbitant rentals that the Negro has suffered, especially in American cities. Where he is

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limited to an unofficially segregated district, his own people and white landlords overcharge him. When he migrates from the South in such numbers that his district expands and encroaches upon white territory, as was the case in Chicago, there is war. Property values fell precipitately as the Negroes moved into new neighbourhoods in Chicago, only to rise again as overcrowding brought large rentals. The white owners who sold their residences, parted with them, often at absurdly low prices, to real estate speculators whose interest it was to stimulate both the expansion of the Negro district and the terror and resentment of white people at the invaders. The situation was, of course, intensified by the industrial and manufacturing companies which "imported" southern Negroes and encouraged their migration.

The separation, which is becoming increasingly definite in American cities, between the white and the coloured groups of the population, is reflected in the Press. Attempts are constantly made to foster antagonism. A southern gentleman in an office of importance, told me in Atlanta that it was not fear of physical violence so much which prevented dissemination in the newspapers of the facts concerning race relations, but, as he believed, fear of decreased circulation.

In this way the white press of the South performs a function similar to that of the press in the North and West. All represent dominant classes. In the South, although many white persons live in a poverty and squalor quite as desperate as that of the Negroes, it is in the main the Negro who furnishes the element it is desired to exploit. In the North it is rare that any question involving labour, strikes, or the human aspect of industrialism is adequately or fairly reported. In the South, the underdog "proletarian" is the Negro.

Despite, then, the surviving sense of responsibility which many southerners feel for "their" Negroes, old family retainers or descendants of them; and despite the waning charm of personal relationships between master and servant, the colour problem is becoming one with the problem of freeing

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human beings, white or black, from abuse for money's sake. In this struggle the kindlier voices are silenced. Only a few valiant men like Hugh M. Dorsey of Georgia, Ashby-Jones, Wilmer and their associates on the Inter-Racial Councils throughout the South, are endeavouring to stem the tide of ignorant bitterness, are insisting on humane treatment of Negroes and recognition of their dignity as human beings. There is more decency in the South than finds expression. Here, as elsewhere in the United States, the newspapers are misrepresentative and constitute the chief instrument of power of a governing and possessing minority.

# THE LABOUR STRUGGLE IN JAPAN

## II

By T. NOSAKA

§ 4—*The Effects of the War: 1917-1918*

ONE thousand nine hundred and seventeen and the following years mark the turning point in the world history, not only because the Workers' Republic was for the first time established in Russia, but also because the enslaved classes in the Far Eastern countries have begun to awake from their long sleep. In Egypt, in India, in China, in Korea, we have seen the open rebellions of the toiling masses against the exploiting classes, both foreign and at home, at first in the form of riot and then in organised mass action.

In Japan this tide of proletarian revolt and organising movement synchronises with (1) an extraordinary development of industrial Capitalism, (2) a numerical increase of industrial workers, (3) an amazing advancement of prices, and (4) revolutionary ferments in Russia and Europe.

Without doubt the "European War" gave Japanese capitalists a golden opportunity for their expansion and adventure, while to European capitalists it meant a sword for their suicide. During the war Japanese Capitalism triumphantly invaded the huge markets of the Eastern countries, seized upon navigation on the western part of the Pacific and the Indian Sea, robbed the former German flash-houses in the South Sea for future large-scale piracy, and finally laid, with the sanction of the English Government, their avaricious hands on rich coal and iron fields in China. Everywhere Japanese and American exploiters have knocked their heads together and grappled together, leading both into another bloodthirsty war.

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At home, the centre of economic gravity passed from agriculture to commerce and industry. The iron and steel industry rose to the rank next to the textile. Financially, Capitalism has largely shaken itself free from British and American gold.

The extraordinary growth of economic power profoundly reacted on every direction of political and social life. The "heimin" (plebeian, bourgeois, or democratic) Cabinet (based on a political party—the Seiyu-kai—of the commercial and agricultural capitalists) took in 1918 the reins of the Government, practically ousting the emperor and the aristocrats from the political sphere, and depriving the militarists of their mighty power. The franchise was more and more extended in the poor middle class. The principle of "democracy" and "liberty" has been actively advocated by middle-class Liberals.

Thus "bourgeois Japan" was completely established.

It is an inevitable result that such a capitalist development has been accompanied with no less rapidity by the increase in number and power of its mortal enemy—the proletariat and semi-proletariat, whose social position is naturally bringing up class-consciousness and class-antagonism in their minds. The following table clearly shows the fact.

Year.	No. of Factories.	No. of Workers.
1905 .....	9,776 .....	689,750
1914 .....	17,062 .....	911,453
1916 .....	19,299 .....	1,157,540
1918 .....	22,391 .....	1,504,761

The economic prosperity caused extremely high prices of life necessities (particularly of rice prices), resulting in the reduction of real wages. The next table indicates the heavy pressure which "war prosperity" brought upon the life of the producing classes.

Year.	Index of General Prices.	Price Index of Rice.	Cotton.	Index of Wages.	Difference.
1900 .....	100 ...	100 ...	100 ...	100 ...	0
1914 .....	126 ...	140 ...	119 ...	141 ...	+15
1915 .....	117 ...	106 ...	103 ...	139 ...	+22



## *The Labour Struggle in Japan*

Year.	Index of General Prices.	Price Index of Rice.	Price Index of Cotton.	Index of Wages.	Difference.
1916 .....	136 ...	108 ...	129 ...	146 ...	+10
1917 .....	191 ...	170 ...	268 ...	168 ...	-23
1918 .....	277 ...	280 ...	318 ...	208 ...	-69
1919 .....	294 ...	372 ...	506 ...	267 ...	-27

Every event produced by the Western workers is keenly responded to and soon followed by the Japanese workers. Above all, the proletarian revolution in Russia aroused a stormy enthusiasm, awakened in them a great hope, and drew them into the vortex of the world-wide revolutionary ferment.

But the influence of the Russian Revolution over the Japanese proletariat should not be over-estimated. The Japanese workers not only felt a great difficulty in getting the true news on Soviet Russia, but also they had been never well educated in the Socialist ideals.

With all these conditions Japan entered upon a period of great social and industrial unrest such as she had never seen in any of the foregoing periods. The following figures will show the astonishing increase of strikes since 1917.

Year.	No. of Strikes.	Members directly affected.
1900 .....	11 .....	2,316
1914 .....	50 .....	7,904
1915 .....	64 .....	7,852
1916 .....	108 .....	8,413
1917 .....	398 .....	57,309
1918 .....	417 .....	66,457
1919 .....	497 .....	63,137
1920 .....	282 .....	36,371

In August, 1918, this unrest burst out as the notorious "rice riot," at first in a hamlet and then spreading all over the country. Everywhere rice merchants were raided by hungry people; beautiful show-windows along the busy streets were smashed open. In Kobe and Osaka street fighting took place between rioters and military forces. The price of rice suddenly went down. But these wild risings were mercilessly suppressed by summoning armies and by the arrest of hundreds; and the fury faded away at the end of the month.

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It should be remembered that this event was not any sort of social revolutionary movement in character at all, but an unconscious and unorganised rebellion of the poorest masses against artificially high prices of rice particularly, and against the rich people generally. Not only the majority of industrial and organised workers did not take part in the "riot," but it entirely lacked revolutionary ideas and leaders. By saying so I do not imply that the "riot" ended without any effect. But, on the contrary, it has left a profound lesson to the Japanese working classes—by demonstrating the mighty power of mass action or violent force, against which the rich class was pitifully powerless, and by unmasking the real nature of the soldiers, who were ordered to level their rifles against their starving "brothers and sisters" instead of the foreign enemy.

### § 5—*The New Unionism*

**S**UCH a growing intensity of industrial disputes gave a fresh impetus to Trade Unionism—both to the re-organisation of the existing Unions and the creation of new Unions. This period of rapid growth took place in the year 1919. Both the Yuai-kai and the Shinyu-kai took on new life, and many new Unions were formed, spreading to the less industrial towns and the less skilled workers.

It is, however, to be remembered that along with the creation of real fighting bodies there increased such Unions as (1) Blackleg Unions, to keep away the employees from the real Unions or to crush the already existing organisations; (2) Yellow Unions, utilised by middle-class politicians for their political ambitions; (3) Unions specially formed for the purpose of electing the Labour Delegate to the Washington International Labour Conference.

Among the militant Unions formed during this period were the Koishikawa Labour Society (1,200 members), established by workers of the Tokyo Ordnance Factory, who carried out a strike for recognition, an eight-hour day and higher wages, leading to the calling out of the gendar-

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merie, the dismissal of a large number of the strikers and the arrest of twenty-three leaders; the Jujo-kai of employees of military powder mills; the Transport Workers' Union of tramway employees in Tokyo; the Miners' Federation of Japan (5,000 members) at the Ashio copper mines and elsewhere; and printing Unions in many towns.

Association also extended from the factory to outdoor workers, and from manual to brain workers. Unions developed covering dockers and carriers, agricultural workers, tailors, dyers, carpenters and cabinet makers, postal workers and clerks.

On the other hand, yellow and blackleg Unions rapidly increased everywhere. Most of them take the form of the workshop committee, openly or in secret, helped or created by the employer, both for the purpose of "promoting the intimate relation between master and employee," and of smashing the real workers' Union from inside. The Kokusui-kai (Nationality Society) is a type of such disgraceful bodies. It was formed in December by outdoor workers, led by political underlings, under the auspices of the Minister of the Interior. This makes a curious coincidence with the Okrana Union in Russia early this century. But the Japanese Okrana has been rendering better service to its patron than the Russian. In February, 1920, it did its best to break the great strike in the Yawata Iron Foundry, and now is carrying on a bloody counter-action against the Socialist and Communist movements.

Two developments during this time are worth noticing. One arose from the election by the Government of a former director of a big shipbuilding firm as a Labour delegate to the Washington International Labour Conference. This aroused huge demonstrations of protest, and did much to awaken the Japanese workers to begin to question "What is the State?" "What is the Government?" The agitation led also to a temporary unity for the first time among the various Unions, which took a more permanent form next year. The

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other development of special interest was the first case of organised (peaceful) sabotage carried on by all the workers (15,000) employed in the Kawasaki Dockyard in Kobe. Being led by the Yuai-kai, this ended in complete victory of the men after two weeks' fight, and also demonstrated a new fighting weapon to the Japanese workers. Since then peaceful sabotage, or go-easy, has become one of the popular methods of fighting, because it is safe from the Police Law which has been yearly throwing hundreds of strike instigators into prison.

### § 6—*Towards Solidarity*

**T**HE later months of 1919 and the months of 1920 brought a heavy set-back to the Unions, with trade depression and increasing unemployment leading to a series of defeats. It was now that the time of trial of the strength of the Trade Unions came.

Almost all Unions, except non-fighting ones, experienced a big drop in membership and more or less a crippling of their fighting capacity, owing to the incessant arrests of able leaders, and economically exhausted scanty funds. Nevertheless, instead of raising the white flag, they turned, under the shower of bullets, from the offensive to the defensive, and commenced to combine all their powers against the triumphant enemy—to federate or amalgamate several Unions. At the same time, from the inside of their camp rushed out a squadron of daring vanguards—the "Left Wing" sections which I shall describe later. That is to say, the Japanese Labour movement has, through the hardest experiments, gained spiritually or qualitatively, while it lost numerically or quantitatively.

The new movement for the amalgamation or federation of separate Unions can be traced back to September, 1919, when a dozen Unions of different industries temporarily combined in Tokyo against the Labour Delegation of the Washington International Labour Conference. Since that

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time onwards, the important Unions took co-operative action; they worked shoulder to shoulder and helped each other in every emergency.

Then, in January, 1920, they acted jointly for their common claim—Universal Suffrage and the repeal of the Police Law. Again in May, they carried on a May Day Demonstration in Tokyo, which was the first May Day held in Japan. The time became ripe for uniting them in a concrete form. In the next month, the former Joint Committee of May Day, including most leading Unions led by the Yuai-kai and the Shinyu-kai, decided to come into a permanent organisation, called the Federation of Trade Unions. This was not a Federation in a narrow sense, but a joint committee for common purposes, industrial and political, consisting of the most advanced section of Unions in several trades and industries (metal, printing, transport, mining, tailoring, teachers, etc.) in and near Tokyo. Later friction arose due to the leading part played by the Yuai-kai in the Federation; in May, 1921, the Yuai-kai and all unions belonging to it decided to withdraw from the Federation of Trade Unions, thereby greatly weakening the Federation. In October, at the annual general meeting of the Yuai-kai, the whole situation caused by this withdrawal will come up for consideration.

In December 1920, a similar body was formed by fourteen Unions in Osaka, called the Western Federation of Trade Unions.

So far I have spoken of the federation of Unions in the different industries. It is of no less importance that the amalgamation of Unions of the same trade or industry has been swiftly in progress. For instance, the Jujo-kai and the Koyu-kai were amalgamated in March, called the Koyu-kai (Workers' Fraternal Society), and mainly composed of the employees in one of the ordnance factories in Tokyo. In July, a great fusion took place in the mining industry, three big bodies—the Miners' Department of Yuai-kai, the

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Miners' Federation of Japan and the National Miners' Union—were strongly incorporated in a single unit, the All-Japanese Miners' Federation, which is directly affiliated to the Yuai-kai. Later, a federation was effected between various seamen's Unions, led by the Yuai-kai; a similar attempt was successfully made in the printing industry by the Shinyu-kai and the Seishin-kai.

As a matter of course, the above-mentioned consolidations are not in a position to represent the whole of the working class all over the country. Such a body, however, is paramountly necessary. So a scheme was planned by the Yuai-kai at its Conference of 1920 to hold annually a big Congress of all existing Unions for the purpose of consulting on common problems. When this plan will be carried out in practice, the Congress should become a training ground in education for the working-class struggle.

### § 7—*The Revival of Socialism*

IN 1910, the year of the bloody execution, the Japanese propertied class succeeded in guillotining or imprisoning a number of Revolutionists, but could achieve no effects in massacring or imprisoning the Socialist ideas. Soon after the tragedy, Sakai\* established the Baibun-sha (Sling-ink Society), both for the study of Marxism and for supporting the livelihood of colleagues. In 1914, the Baibun-sha started a monthly journal, *The New Society*. Naturally the society and its journal became a bond of Socialists scattered over the country and in foreign countries.

In 1916 Osugi† published a syndicalist journal, *The Modern Thought*, but it could not continue long.

\* Toshihiko Sakai is a leader of Marxism, practically the chairman of the newly-formed Socialist Federation. Co-translator (with Kotoku) of Marx's and Engels' "Communist Manifesto," the translator of Kautsky's "Ethics and Materialistic Conception of History," Gorter's "Materialistic Conception of History," co-writer of "The Life of Karl Marx," etc.

† Sakae Osugi, Anarchist in his youth, then Syndicalist, and now the true leader of the Communist group. Writer and translator on Anarchism, Syndicalism, natural science, etc. The editor of *The Labour Movement*, weekly.

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A little later, there appeared a few small study groups of Socialist intellectuals and workers in Tokyo, among which the Hokufu-kai was prominent.

Taken on the whole, however, all those groups, papers, and activities were largely confined to the academic study of Socialist theory, and the masses of workers and their organisations were not touched by them. Poor, miserable and wretched, not materially alone, but mentally also, were the exploited peoples of this period.

Faced with the life-and-death struggles of the enslaved for their existence at home and the great example of the revolution in Russia, Socialism (especially Marxism), since early 1918, began to revive from a decade's enforced silence, to come out on the highway from its refuge or the dusty bookshelf.

One year from the summer of 1919 was that of the greatest crop of Socialist literature unprecedented in all the previous years. Translations, writings and papers on Socialism of all schools (Marxism\*, Syndicalism, Guild Socialism, Anarchism, State Socialism, Fabianism, etc.) were published in a considerable amount by the Baibun-sha group of professors and journalists; some of them, however, being suppressed by the censor and some published in secret. At the same time, groups for the study and propaganda of Socialism sprang up everywhere. Intellectual quarrels took place between various schools.

Alarmed and frightened by the growing new tendency, the possessing classes hurried to exterminate all "dangerous thoughts" with the usual ruthless methods. Since early 1920, there appeared again the hysterical confiscation of "dangerous" papers and the arrest of Socialists; almost all revolutionary propaganda meetings were dispersed by police.

\* Marx became so popular that the translation of his whole volumes of "Das Kapital" was attempted by three persons separately, and also the translation by a few professors of all his important works is in progress. His "Lohnarbeit und Kapital" was translated by a professor in this period.

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However, instead of extinguishing the revolutionary thought, this bourgeois terrorism resulted, firstly, in a hasty withdrawal of the counterfeit Socialists and Socialist Philistines from the stage, putting an end to the "popularisation" of Socialism, and justly leaving the victory in the hands of Revolutionary Socialists; secondly, in adding fresh fuel to the revolutionary fire, and in driving all revolutionists towards Communism. Studies of Communist theory and the fragmentary information about the real conditions in Soviet Russia through the foreign books and papers began to appear in all the Socialist papers. Although the propaganda or agitation for Communism is absolutely prohibited, it is being carried on by every possible means among workers, soldiers, policemen, and teachers with considerable results.

Thirdly, it met with a cynical effect in uniting those revolutionary elements into one solid army—the Socialist Federation of Japan,\* which was, in the teeth of the authorities, openly formed in Tokyo, December, 1920, although it was practically founded three months before. The Federation is in form neither a Communist nor Socialist party possessing a certain definite programme, but merely a body calling together individual persons and groups which had a tendency of Revolutionary Socialism in a wider sense. But practically it was engineered and led by the Baibun-sha group and dominated by Communism. Therefore, the formation of the Socialist Federation is a preliminary proceeding to create a Communist Party at no very distant date.

Now, turning to the workers' side, the severest experiences of the class-struggle on the one hand, and the revolutionary propaganda on the other, threw a cold light on the

\* The manifesto produced by the Organising Committee of the Socialist Federation was confiscated before distribution. December 10 was fixed for the inauguration, but, in anticipation of being broken up by the police, it was unexpectedly (to the police) held on the previous day. At the propaganda meetings on the following day not less than fifty Socialists were arrested under a charge of seditious action. The Federation claims 2,000 members over the country, publishing a monthly, *Socialism*: Address: 44, Ichome, Motozono-cho, Kojinachi-Ku, Tokyo.



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minds of the oppressed. They gradually began to put their eyes upon the fundamental cause of their present agony, the Capitalist System, and upon the gospel of freeing themselves completely from the fetter of the system, Socialism or Communism. Thus, for the first time, Communism or Socialism rightly came down from being the monopoly of the intelligentsia into the possession of the proletariat themselves. To-day everybody can observe this new or revolutionary tendency in the Labour movement, as revealed in various declarations\* of the Trade Unions, in their uncompromising attitude to the master classes, and in their deep hatred to Parliament.

In August, 1920, for instance, each leader of the Yuai-kai, the Shinyu-kai, the Seishin-kai, the Transport Workers' Union and Japanese Watch Makers' Union, worked as a member of the Organising Committee of the Socialist Federation. In December many rank-and-file members of Labour organisations joined the Federation. At the Conference of the Yuai-kai, in October, the "Left Wing," or the Direct Actionist, won in a debate—"Direct Action or Parliamentarism."

This is the latest tendency—the steady increase in power of the "Left Wing" inside the Trade Unions, though the great bulk of the masses have nothing to do with it. Whether this tendency will take more definite shape, and evolve in an acute Communist movement, of course depends largely upon the following achieved by the present Left-Wing leaders and Communists.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* For example: "Through the long and bitterest experiences, we, Japanese workers, learned that the function of Trade Unions is to strike at the nucleus of the Capitalist system. . . . Now the time is approaching when we shake off the yoke of the wage-slavery system—Capitalism."—(From *Labour*, the official organ of the Yuai-kai, published in January, 1921.) "Remember that our urgent demand—eight-hour day and other improvement of our conditions—is nothing more than a first step. . . . Our final aim is upon the complete overthrow of the present wage system itself."—(From *Fraternity*, the official organ of the Shinyu-kai, published in January, 1921.)

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The present prospect for 1921 is dark and gruesome. The economic situation shows no signs of recovering; the tyrannical class does not slacken the reign of terrorism.

In the past two years the toiling masses strove and fought, by common impulse, with all means for their existence. But everywhere they were ruthlessly beaten and defeated. Exhausted and despairing, they retreated to the last stronghold, behind which the abysmal Death Ravine deepens.

Now, they are standing on the cross-roads—more fight or the surrender to their enemy, the Social Revolution or Class Harmony.

In closing this account, I will quote a few words from a manifesto issued by the printers' Seishin-kai in January, 1921, in order to show the spirit and determination of the Japanese proletarian vanguards and also to show the road through which they are going to march.

“Twice we had to be knocked down—but only to get on to our feet again. Thrice . . . Our present silence is merely a short rest for the further fight, for rising up in full force, and for making our fight more vital, more serious, more ‘red.’ ”

### § 8—*A Survey of Present Organisations*

**I**N order to understand the extent of the Japanese Trade Union movement, it is necessary to bear in mind: (1) that agriculture and semi-agriculture occupy nearly 60 per cent. of the population (56.5 millions); (2) that the handicraft and small-scale industries greatly dominate; and (3) that there is an extraordinary number of women labourers, chiefly employed in the textile industry (650,000 in factories and 700,000 small and home works) and other small-scale productions.

According to the latest official report (1918), we obtain the following figures in connection with a rough estimate of the so-called “organisable” workers, with complete exclusion of wage-earners engaging in distributive, domestic, clerical,

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and other similar services, outdoor (including building), and agricultural labourers.

- (1) Factory workers (factories employing over 10), 1,680,000 (855,000 men and 825,000 women).
  - (2) Transport workers (railwaymen, seamen, dockers, and postmen), 590,000 (560,000 men and 30,000 women).
  - (3) Miners, 465,000 (360,000 men and 105,000 women).
- Total, 2,735,000 (1,775,000 men and 960,000 women).

The total figure shows that there are nearly 3,000,000 of the industrial workers. But, as the Trade Union movement among the women workers is at present extremely insignificant, it is better to omit this section from our estimate for a moment. Thus, we arrive at the conclusion—only hypothetical—that about 2,000,000 of the manual male workers constitute the fundamental “organisable” basis of Trade Unionism.

Under such a transitional phase, nobody can tell exactly how many independent Unions exist in Japan and what membership they enlist. But if I do not make a mistake, from the statistics recently published in connection with all Labour organisations which existed at the end of 1919, I hypothetically estimate that the total number of Trade Unions in the modern sense certainly exceeded 100 Unions and 80,000 members, and probably did not reach 150 Unions and 100,000 members. As the aggregate number of male “organisable” workers was about 2,000,000, the membership of Unions numbered between 4.5 and 5 per cent. of all. This estimation may be moderately applied to the present condition.

Of those Unions, however, only one-third belong to the proletarian fighting bodies.

Although at a glance the present situation of the Trade Union movement in Japan seems confused and without unification, in reality the condition is not so. A few Unions are by far predominant in membership and power over others, and are always leading the whole movement; above all, the Yuai-kai stands unparalleled. Next come the Shinyu-kai, the

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Seishin-kai (both printers'), the Transport Workers' Union, the Osaka Iron Workers' Union, and a few other Unions which affiliate to the Federation of Trade Unions both in Tokyo and Osaka.

Trade Unionism is specially concentrated in certain districts, such as : (a) Tokyo and Yokohama district, (b) Osaka and Kobe district, (c) Fukuoka district, and (d) Okaya district.

The industries in which Trade Unionism is mainly concentrated are the iron, steel, engineering and shipbuilding industries (the strongest and most disciplined section), printing (the most revolutionary section) and mining. Transport is weaker; the State railways make genuine Trade Unionism on the railways impossible (there is one exception, the Engine Drivers' Union), and the seamen's organisations are little more than labour exchanges and friendly societies. Textiles and agriculture are almost untouched. There is hardly any organisation of the women workers except for a few bodies of the Yuai-kai in Tokyo.

With regard to structure, it is rather a curious feature that craft Unionism is not very popular among the Japanese workers, and the existing Unions are for the most part constructed on the unit of the factory committee, including all grades of the employees. But it is inevitable in such an immature state that the members are, in fact, chiefly composed of the skilled workers.

Among the rest the Yuai-kai occupies a peculiar position in the Trade Union structure. Accordingly, it will be well to glance briefly at its constitution and strength. At the last Conference, it determined to become a federal body of Unions or Federations which are organised on the basis either of industry, trade, workshop or area, regardless of craft or skill. All units enjoy, as a rule, a great deal of autonomy. But in practice the Yuai-kai is more strongly united than a mere Federation. The Central Committee (elected at the Conference) has not only the right to order strikes to all affiliated

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bodies, but is always interfering in important businesses of the Unions. Where Unions or branches are massed, there is a Local Committee (Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe, etc.). From the administrative point, the country is divided into three wide District Committees (Eastern, Western, Kyushu), and two Industrial sections (All-Japanese Miners' Federation and Seamen's Union of Japan). At the present moment, it includes several industries and trades: iron, steel, ship-building, mining, shipping, textile and miscellaneous trades (tailoring, building, gum-producing, etc.). It claims 30,000 membership and 150 Unions or branches covering the whole country (from Hokkaido to Manchuria).

A word should be added on the legal position of Trade Unions. There is no law directly prohibiting the formation of the Trade Unions nor recognising them. Convinced of the impossibility of wiping out the workers' combination, the Government is now drafting a Bill which is expected to be brought forward at the session of the Diet in 1922, in order to restrict the sphere of labour movement and to destroy the true proletarian Union.

Although Japanese workers have never experienced such a brutal suppression of their own associations as the British workers did in 1800-1824, and the Russian in 1874, the Article 17 of Police Law (1900), which punishes the instigation of strikes is effective enough to hamper the Trade Union activities. The following official figures show how many strike leaders are thrown into prison every year by the Law:—

Year.	Imprisoned.		Strikes.	
	Cases.	Men.	Cases.	Strikers.
1914 .....	5 ...	18	50 ...	7,904
1915 .....	5 ...	64	64 ...	7,852
1916 .....	12 ...	40	108 ...	8,413
1917 .....	22 ...	138	398 ...	57,309
1918 .....	31 ...	359	417 ...	66,457
1919 .....	18 ...	119	497 ...	63,137
1920 .....	22 ...	185	282 ...	36,371

Besides the above there are 2,086 strikers punished by the Criminal Law during the five years from 1916 to 1920.

# THE WHITE TERROR IN JUGO-SLAVIA

**R**ECENT reports in the Press have given some slight conception of the White Terror which is raging in Jugo-Slavia and which warrants comparison with the Horthy Terror in Hungary two years ago. The figure of those imprisoned or banished has been placed as high as fourteen thousand; Trade Unions have been broken up, Labour papers suppressed, and even wholesale co-operative societies dissolved.

The text of the Public Security Defence Law just passed (in August, 1921), which gives legal sanction to the Terror, deserves to be widely known. By this law an eighteen-year-old girl can be sentenced to death for distributing anti-militarist leaflets, or for being a member of a revolutionary organisation. This law was issued within less than six weeks of the adoption of the Jugo-Slav constitution by which it is proudly laid down (Article 9) that no one can be sentenced to death for political offences.

It is worth noting that the Western Powers have raised no protest against this Terror, and that the Jugo-Slav Government has expressed the hope that other countries will follow its example and sign an Anti-Communist Convention.

## AN ACT FOR THE DEFENCE OF PUBLIC SECURITY AND ORDER.

### §1.

The following acts will be considered as treason falling within the criminal law :

(a) To write, publish, print or distribute books, papers, posters or appeals, with intent to promote violence against the constitution, or in general, to disturb the public peace, or to endanger public order; further to carry on communist or anarchist propaganda, by words or by writings, or to persuade others that the present economic or social order ought to be changed by coup d'état, violence or any kind of terrorist means.

(b) To organise or support any association, or to be a member of

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any association which has for its aim to propagate communism, anarchism, terrorism, or the preparation or execution of murder, or the illegal and unparliamentary seizing of power, or in general anything mentioned in the previous point.

(c) To let, or to authorise the use of a room or building for an assembly of persons whose purpose is to prepare or carry out anything mentioned in the two previous points, if the person who granted the use of the room or building has known for what purpose it will be used.

(d) To form an organisation or association, or to carry on propaganda with the intention to cause revolt, riot or discontent amongst the soldiers, or to incite soldiers or civilians not to fulfil their military duties, or to prevent, hamper or restrict the production, repairs or transport of war material; further to prepare, attempt or cause damage or destruction to objects in the service of public communication, institutions or necessities, and in general to carry on anti-militarist propaganda.

(e) To be in any connection with any person or association abroad in order to receive from there any kind of support for the preparation of revolution, or violent transformation of the existing order or for any other action mentioned in the previous points.

(f) To produce or buy firearms, weapons or explosive material for the above-mentioned purposes, or to conceal them.

(g) To prepare, attempt or carry out the murder of any State functionary or political personality.

### §2.

Every person who commits any action enumerated in Clause 1 of this Act is liable to be sentenced to death or to twenty years' penal servitude. The instruments of the crime are to be confiscated.

Every person who has knowledge of any action set out in Clause 1, and does not inform the State authorities, is liable to be sentenced to a maximum of twenty years' penal servitude.

To ensure the more rapid arrest of criminals, it is allowed to the respective authorities to hold domiciliary visits, even at night, if there is a necessity for this.

### §3.

The civil authorities may ask military help from the nearest headquarters in order to ensure public security. If it happens in a particular crisis that their forces for safeguarding life and property are insufficient, detailed regulations about the disposal of military force will be prescribed by the Government Council.

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## §4.

If in an emergency military force is sent into a municipality or district, the population of the municipality or district—each house corresponding to its material resources—has to feed the soldiers and to supply them with all necessities. The collection is to be carried out by the local council under the control of the Governmental and Police Authorities, and the collected articles to be handed over all together to the military force.

All other expenses arising out of the disposal of the military force are to be borne by the population ; but if order is rapidly restored they will be freed from the payment of these expenses, which will be borne by the State treasury, and those articles which had already been given to the military forces will be returned to them.

Persons convicted for actions which caused the use of military force are liable to refund the expense caused to the State and population by the calling in of the army.

## §5.

Upon the requirement of the Minister of Home Affairs, the Minister of the Army and Navy will allow a sufficient number of soldiers to go over into the service of the gendarmerie and to serve their terms in that body.

## §6.

Drunkards, vagrants and persons leading an immoral life who cannot prove that they keep themselves in an honest manner are liable to be sentenced to three months' imprisonment, and besides this, as morally depraved persons, inclined to commit crimes, may be sent, after the fulfilment of their punishment, into an institution for compulsory labour. Persons under age, if they are not convicted, may be sent into reformatory institutions, where they may remain for not more than five years if they are under 16 years of age, otherwise till they attain their majority.

The Minister of Justice is empowered to promulgate a statute on the procedure in case of sending these persons into institutions for compulsory labour, or into reformatories if they are minors.

## §7.

Every person is liable to be sentenced to penal servitude who produces explosive material or instruments for the production of it, who induces others to do this, who acquires, conceals or sells them, provided that he knows or has reason to know that they are destined to be used for the execution of any crime with the exception of those mentioned in Clause 1.

## §8.

Every person empowered to keep explosive material who breaks



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the existing rules of the competent authorities and thereby causes any damage or danger to the property, life, or health of others is liable to be punished with hard labour, or in particularly light cases with imprisonment.

### §9.

Every person violating the existing Acts concerning the production, importation and sale of gunpowder, firearms, dynamite and other explosive material is liable to be fined from 10,000 to 100,000 dinars according to the severity of the offence and to his financial position.

This fine may be imposed by the Court also in all cases mentioned in Clauses 7 and 8 of this Act, besides the punishment as fixed there, if this is thought to be in the interests of public order.

### §10.

Civil Servants and clerks, workers in military undertakings, employees of recognised bodies, if they cease to carry on their duties in order to strike, either separately, in large groups, or all together, are liable to be imprisoned, and instigators and leaders are liable in addition to be fined 10,000 dinars.

The same punishment may be imposed upon those persons who by sabotage or passive resistance prevent the regular course of the service or work entrusted to them.

### §11.

Every person attempting to prevent others from working is to be punished with six months' imprisonment, if his action cannot be taken as a more severe criminal case.

If such persons do not disperse immediately upon the order of the authorities of the place where they had assembled without permission, they are liable to be imprisoned for one year and to be fined 3,000 dinars as maximum punishment.

### §12.

Every person is liable to be sentenced to at least one year's imprisonment and to a fine of 50,000 dinars, or to both punishments, who displays at indoor or outdoor meetings or anywhere else any sort of badge, flag or inscription, as signs of appeal or persuasion, in order to persuade public opinion that the existing order ought to be changed by revolution, the destruction of private property or the disturbance of public peace.

### §13.

The simple presence at manifestations against the organised State Power, as stated in Clause 12, is to be punished with one year's imprisonment or with a fine of 3,000 dinars, or with both punishments.

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## §14.

If the competent authorities have prohibited such, or any other manifestations directed against the interests of the State, those present who do not disperse at once upon the order of the authorities are to be sentenced to at least one year's imprisonment, and instigators and speakers who urge the rest not to go away also to a fine of 5,000 dinars.

## §15.

The State Administrative Power shall dissolve any organisation if it finds that the association in question, whether a Trade Union or any other organisation, has changed its original aim, permitted by the law, and has begun to carry on openly or secretly an illegal or prohibited propaganda or activity. Against this decision the legal representatives of the association have the right of appeal to the Court of Justice within the next three days, and against the decision of this latter within the same term to the Court of Cassation.

The legal representatives of such dissolved organisations are liable to be sentenced for their illegal work to imprisonment of at least one year and to a fine of 5,000 dinars, if there is no more severe criminal action connected with their activity.

## §16.

If anybody accused on the ground of Clause 46 of the Serbian Press Act is summoned and he hides himself, flees or in general is not in his domicile three days after the summons, and this is duly declared by the official report of the competent authority, the Court will not summon such a defendant through the Official Gazette, but all the decisions of the Court which are to be handed to him will be stuck on the house of his last stay or sojourn and on the tables of the Court, and this will be considered as valid regarding the terms.

## §17.

With reference to Clause 20 of this Act it is to be considered in the future that Clause 58, Part 1, of the Serbian Press Act, as also the Press Acts of the other parts of the kingdom, have ceased to be valid as to crimes enumerated in this Act.

## §18.

Persons, who are members of the Communist Party or of any other organisation prohibited by this Act, cannot perform any public service or function, nor can they be members of Parliament or of recognised bodies. The same members of the Communist Party cannot be employed in private undertakings or institutions which have special privileges from the State.

## *The White Terror in Jugo-Slavia*

Persons who perform at present such functions are to be dismissed on the coming in force of this Act.

Clerks and Civil Servants who will be dismissed on the grounds of this Act may appeal against the decision of the Minister to the State Council. The receipt of this appeal does not suspend the execution of the decision.

### §19.

All the criminal cases based on this Act are to be dealt with as urgent cases before any others, and the judges have to give their sentence upon their free judicial conviction.

The general part of the Serbian Criminal Law (Clauses 1 to 81) is not to be taken into consideration for criminal cases based upon this Act. Notwithstanding Clause 58 of the Serbian Criminal Law, any person who has attained 18 years of age at the time of the offence may be sentenced to death for an offence falling under this Act.

### §20.

All Acts of the General Criminal Law, as also other Criminal Acts, Press Acts, Association Acts, etc., at variance with this Act, are not to be taken into consideration so long as this Act will be in force.

# SHORTER NOTICES

## THE FASCISTI-SOCIALIST TREATY IN ITALY

**T**HE following is the text of the Treaty which has been concluded between the Fascisti and the Socialist Party in Italy on August 3, 1921. The Communist Party took no share in the negotiations or the agreement.

§1. It is understood that the official communiqué of July 28,\* which settles the question raised by the Fascisti concerning the relations between the Socialist Party and the Communist Party, is hereby confirmed.

§2. The five parties undersigned pledge themselves to take immediate action to put an end to all threatenings, acts of violence, reprisals, punishment, revenge, intimidation and acts of personal violence.

§3. The emblems, badges and flags of either party will be respected. On this point the question of displaying flags on public buildings has been raised, but the president (M. de Nicola) has pointed out that the solution of this matter is under the jurisdiction of the Government and Parliament and cannot be decided by agreements between political bodies.

§4. The parties give a mutual undertaking to respect economic organisations.

§5. Any action or behaviour liable to be interpreted as a violation of this present agreement, will henceforth meet with disapproval and censure by both parties. The Socialist Party disassociates itself from the organisation and activity of the Arditi of the People, as is obvious from the constitution of the latter, which declares their organisation to be independent of all political parties.

§6. Any infringement of this agreement will be referred to arbitrators, who will publicly determine responsibility.

§7. To carry out this the political and economic organisations of either party will set up in each province an Arbitration Committee composed of two representatives of the Socialist Party and two of the Fascisti, with a president chosen by agreement, or, failing that, by the President of the Chamber of Deputies. If in the fortnight following the establishment of the agreement the various parties have not appointed their representatives on the Arbitration Committee the nomination of these latter will rest with the undersigned.

§8. Any local agreements entered into and not in accordance with the present treaty are annulled.

§9. Both parties agree not to oppose by violence the resumption of legally established responsibilities on the part of those who have been compelled by force to resign from public positions.

\* This communiqué of July 28 is a declaration of the Socialist Party announcing their solidarity with the Communist Party in case of the continuance of the attacks of the Fascisti against the latter, but only in that case.

## Shorter Notices

§10. Both parties reciprocally pledge themselves to restore all objects and possessions of value, belonging to organisations or persons, which have been seized by organisations or persons from the opposite side.

§11. The undersigned invite their Party Press on either side to submit to and conform with the regulations of this agreement, so that the object in view may be more easily attained. All proceedings are made public through the Press, in the hope that, in the present crisis, this common pledge of peace will be understood and obeyed by everyone.

*Rome, in the Parliamentary President's room at Montecitorio, August 3, 1921.*

*Signed: Benito Mussolini, Cesare Maria de Vecchi, Giovanni Giuriali, Cesare Rossi, Umberto Pasella, Gaetano Polverelli, Nicola Sansanelli, for the National Council of the Fascisti and the Fascisti Parliamentary Group; Giovanni Bacci, Emilio Zannerini, for the Executive of the Italian Socialist Party; Elia Musatti, Oddino Morgari, for the Socialist Parliamentary Group; Gino Baldesi, Alessandro Galli, Ernesto Caporali, for the General Confederation of Labour; Enrico de Nicola, President of the Chamber of Deputies.*

## METAL WORKERS' ANTI-WAR DECISION

**T**HE following resolution was passed at the International Congress of Metal Workers at Lucerne on August 8 to 14, 1921:—

The ninth Congress of International Metal Workers reminds all affiliated societies of the resolution passed at the eighth Congress, held at Copenhagen on August 23, 1920, which sums up its attitude towards war thus: "That it recognises the community of interest amongst all workers, and, in solidarity with the Amsterdam Trade Union International, the eighth Congress of Metal Workers invites workers of all countries to prove their solidarity with their fellow workers by refusing to make arms, munitions or any kind of war material; further, to watch all orders for such work, and to support transport and rail workers in their refusal to carry troops, arms and munitions."

The ninth Conference assembled at Lucerne reaffirms this section of the Copenhagen resolution, and invites metal workers of all countries to carry on the struggle against Capitalism and Militarism in conjunction with the working-class as a whole, so that munition workers may be able to be employed in constructive work of service to humanity and in the interests of the working-class.

For this reason the Congress insists on all affiliated bodies intensifying their propaganda to transform gradually the work of war factories to that of peace work.

It therefore authorises the international secretariat to undertake inquiries to ascertain: How many workers of each nation are at work on munitions and other war materials.

The ninth Congress determines that all nations should regard it as their duty to furnish the International Secretariat of Metal Workers with particulars of the materials manufactured, whether they are cartridges,

## The Labour Monthly

guns, cannons, aeroplanes, airships, etc., at the same stating the number of workers thus engaged and the strength of their organisations.

In addition, the Congress repeats the text of the Copenhagen resolution to the effect that

“All metal workers of the world are called on to respond to any appeal of the Amsterdam Trade Union International in support of anti-war action.”

The Congress reaffirms this resolution, being convinced that the return of war can only be averted through the unity of the workers and their determination to persevere in this struggle.

### CO-OPERATION IN RUSSIA 1919-1921

**T**HE famous Moscow Centrosoyuz, to which are federated all the Co-operative Unions in Russia, has recently published a statistical account of its work in 1919, together with preliminary accounts for 1920 and 1921. The membership in 1919 consisted of 332 large Unions of Co-operative Societies. (Separate societies are not admitted as members.) In 1919 the turnover on trading operations amounted to 1,544,394 thousand roubles and the resulting gross profit was 98,889 thousand roubles. On warehouse operations the turnover was 5,669,643 thousand roubles, with a gross profit of 429,316 thousand roubles. Products to the value of 249,005 thousand roubles were manufactured by co-operative enterprise. Expenditure on non-commercial activities amounted to 15,768 thousand roubles, including here expenses on propaganda and educational work.

In 1920 the trade turnover was 9,067,051 thousand roubles. Of this the provincial Co-operative Unions were responsible for 5,570,058 thousand roubles, and government institutions for 3,115,336 thousand roubles. The activity on the industrial side is shown by their manufacture of goods to the value of 528,879 thousand roubles. A special section for small-scale production was established in 1920, which produced goods to the value of 192,086 thousand roubles. A separate section was also organised for village industry. Its turnover on seed-stuffs amounted to 87,136 thousand roubles, and on agricultural machinery, fertilisers, etc., to 6,124 thousand roubles.

The preliminary figures for the first four months of 1921 show that the trade turnover during this period was 1,244,329 thousand roubles. The manufacture of goods is recorded at 312,623 thousand roubles. In the section for village industry the turnover increased to 870,851 thousand roubles, while for agricultural machinery, etc., the amount was 1,482 thousand roubles.

As an example of the wide field now covered by the Co-operative movement the following particulars are given of one of the large

## Shorter Notices

Unions—the Moscow Provincial Union of Workers' and Peasants' Consumers' Societies. This embraces all distributive and credit Co-operative Societies of the Moscow province, and forms a large organisation serving a population of over two millions, of which about 20 per cent. are industrial workers and 70 per cent. peasants. The Union possesses 213 large shops under the control of 20 regional sections of the Union. In 1920 it distributed 14 million arshins\* of manufactures, as well as various goods to the value of more than 100 million roubles. It carries on an enormous work in the production of food-stuffs. During the last food campaign it produced 35 million food products of various sorts from rye and bread-stuffs to butter, berries and fruits, the total value being 1,300 million roubles. At present the Moscow Union is undertaking the production of food products to the value of 8,000 million roubles, including 400,000 poods of fresh cabbage, 100,000 poods of potatoes, 25,000,000 cucumbers and 25,000 poods of various vegetables. The Union owns drying works, sausage factories, flour mills, brickworks, etc., and possesses also its own transport facilities, including 20 heavy motor lorries.

### CIVIL SERVANTS AND WORKERS IN GERMANY

**A**N agreement has been drafted between the German Civil Servants' Federation (which was founded in December, 1918), the Association of Trade Unions of Staff Employees (A.F.A.) and the General Federation of Trade Unions. The text of this agreement runs:—

In order that the common interests of workers, staff employees and Civil Servants may be effectually represented, the undersigned Federations agree upon the following terms, whilst maintaining their full independence and excluding all party, political and religious tendencies:

1. The three Federations pledge themselves and their affiliated Unions to co-operate for the protection of the common interests of the workers. Each body shall carry out its own programme. Decisions concerning common action shall be reached by agreement.

2. All the Unions included acknowledge mutually their various spheres of organisation, and will refrain from interference by agitation with the membership of the rest. Disputes regarding organisation shall be settled by friendly mediation and existing disagreements removed as quickly as possible.

3. The Unions included place themselves on the basis of the democratic Republican constitution. They pledge themselves to resist with determination any violation and any illegal alteration of this con-

\* 1 arshin = 28 inches.

## *The Labour Monthly*

stitution in the Realm or the Federal States, but will tolerate without question every political and religious conviction in the ranks of their members.

4. The members' position as employees and consumers shall determine the attitude towards economic questions and the common influence to be exercised on economic policy by the Unions of Civil Servants, staff employees and workers. The first principle in economic policy shall be that the general good shall always be considered before private interests.

5. This agreement shall be binding likewise upon the local and provincial organisations of the Federation included, as well as upon the specialist groups within the affiliated Unions in so far as Civil Servants, staff employees and workers are under the same employers in works and administrative departments



# BOOK REVIEWS

## FRANCE IN REVOLT

*Le Couteau entre les Dents.* Henri Barbusse. Clarté, 16 rue Jacques Callot, Paris.

*Les Chercheurs d'Or.* Pierre Hamp. Nouvelle Revue Française, 35 rue Madame, Paris.

*Reflexions sur l'Avenir Syndical.* Pierre Monatte. Bibliothèque du Travail, 144 rue Pelleport, Paris.

*Le Contrôle Ouvrier et les Comités d'Ateliers.* Theo Argence et Auguste Hercllet. Bibliothèque du Travail, 144 rue Pelleport, Paris.

THE France of Zola and of Victor Hugo is as dead as the France of Voltaire, Danton and Robespierre, and the Third Republic is hardly less of a monarchy than the Third Empire. For patriotism there is a hatred of Germany, and for religion there is (after fifteen years of separation) a rapprochement with Rome. But against the France of Maurice Barrès, of Raymond Poincaré, of the "Action Française," of the shameless, half sentimental, half sinister exploitation of the "Unknown Soldier" and of the paganism-in-pyjamas type of variety entertainment exemplified by "Je Veux Coucher avec Nini," a few heroic minds have groped upwards through terror and darkness towards another French ideal. From his high refuge in the Alps, Romain Rolland, rejecting the France of the little shopkeeper, the newspaper politician, the *rentier* and the speculator on the Bourse, projects into this twentieth century his vigorous peasant, his Colas Breugnon, of the sixteenth. And from his invalid's cottage near Senlis, Henri Barbusse, that other high pinnacle of pure and generous French thought, lightens the dark horizon like a volcano, with sudden flames of pity and of anger for the misery, the childishness, the little corrupt lives, the obscure hatreds and follies of the Frenchmen on the plain.

What Gorky says of Tchekov, in his Reminiscences of the Russian writer, might well be said of Barbusse—he faces the mean-living men of his day and says to them, with anger and yet with compassion, "It is shameful to live so." For, to the intellectuals of his generation, in his latest work, "*Le Couteau entre les Dents*," Barbusse, the knife of Communism well and firmly wedged between his teeth, says in effect: "It is shameful to think so," or rather "It is shameful to refuse to think." In this little book, issued by the Clarté group, the proud and nervous mind of Barbusse has made an appeal to men of his own period in letters and art that has all the freshness, the sincerity, and the poignancy of Kropotkin's famous "Appeal to the Young." Barbusse rebukes the writers and scientists for their intellectual com-

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placency in believing themselves free in having rejected labels and definitions. "You believe yourselves supreme," he cries in his nervous and indignant despair, "because Thought has sprung from your loins. But your child is now stronger than you. There is behind you a living flood which will uproot the foundations of life itself; which, daily gathering volume and energy, will one day engulf you." For the Revolution, whose phantom the conventionalised intellectuals of to-day regard with perturbation, anger and terror, is but the expression and the power of Thought, to which they have, all their lives, rendered confused homage.

There is, in no language, so formidable a series of epic novels on life under wage-slavery as that written by the Frenchman, Pierre Hamp, under the noble general title "The Travail of Men." The intellectual pedigree of Pierre Hamp is, in the manner of the stock-breeders, *out of Capitalism by Zola*. But unlike his literary sire, he is still troubled by melancholy clanking fetters that he has never entirely succeeded in shaking off. All his youth has been spent, as a manual worker at many trades, under the shadow and daily menace of the industrial system. And the iron of machinery, the dirty grey of ledgers, and the smoke of the chimneys of Industrialism are so in his eyes and nostrils that he can spare little pity for Man the individual, overwhelmingly preoccupied as he is with Man and Machinery in the mass.

The seventh novel in Pierre Hamp's epic series, "Les Chercheurs d'Or"—"The Treasure Seekers" as it has been too picturesquely rendered in the title of the English translation—is probably the worst book M. Hamp has ever written, chiefly I imagine because in it he has got out of his own world, into a world in which he is bewildered, indignant and contemptuous. He writes of Vienna, the lost city of Europe; Vienna the prey of disease, hunger and death, and of worse than these, the little grey, greedy men, the traders of all nations who have descended upon it to exploit—to buy everything beautiful and costly, cast off by a despairing people in exchange for bread; to mortgage the slave labour of Austria for generations to come, in return for a little present aid; to feast greedily upon the harvest of Death, and to quarrel among themselves in the feasting, like the ghouls they are. It is a bad book, but a terrible one: ugly but remorseless like a cheap photograph, in which all the high lights are dirty, and all the shadows ink.

Few Trade Unionists in England, unhappily, possess—with all his conviction of what may be called "the essential minority"—the serenity, the smiling good temper of Pierre Monatte, the leader of the Left Wing in the French industrial movement. These republished reflections on the future of Trade Unionism, written in

## Book Reviews

1917 by candlelight in the front-line trenches, or in rest-billets hardly less uncomfortable, amid the major and the minor noises of war (the snoring of one's comrades figuring not unimportantly among the latter), reveal very affably and as it were confidentially the strange serenity of a mind so essentially combative. Monatte insists in these articles (written before the formation of the famous C.S.R. or Revolutionary Trades Union Committees) on the encouragement of a far-seeing and energetic minority, and emphasises (in the pre-Lille preface to the little volume) the importance of preserving the C.S.R. as a critical Left Wing even if the present Left Wing should have gained the victory at the recent Lille Congress of the C.G.T., and the minority of Monatte should have become the majority.

In the same series of very handy "Labour Notebooks," as the publications of the Bibliothèque du Travail are called, is the pamphlet on Workers' Control and Shop Committees, written by Theo Argence and Auguste Herclot, a very able exposition of the project, conceived as a revolutionary and more particularly a post-revolutionary weapon of Labour, and not as the merely reformist scheme of industrial development advocated in the latest programme of the French Confederation of Labour. This subject, by the way, deserves adequate treatment in English, and in a popular form.

GEORGE SLOCOMBE.

### THE LITERARY REMAINS OF LASSALLE

*Ferdinand Lassalle. Nachgelassene Briefe und Schriften.* Edited by Dr. Gustav Mayer. Vol I. 64 marks. Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart, 1921.

**L**ASSALLE, the founder of the German Working-class Movement in 1863, was killed on August 31, 1864, in a duel near Geneva. His literary remains he bequeathed to his life-long friend, the Countess Hatzfeldt, the mother of Prince Hatzfeldt, one time German Ambassador in London. The latter, evidently ashamed of the relations of the spirited lady with the famous Socialist agitator, had the papers stowed away in the loft of the family mansion near Wiesbaden, and obstinately refused to surrender them for purposes of publication. Tens of years passed; the Countess and the Prince went the way of all flesh; Lassalle's extant works were published and re-published; German Social Democracy grew by leaps and bounds; then, in the wake of the Great War, came the upheaval of November, 1918, which appeared to usher in the triumph of Socialism. Gustav Mayer, who, since 1892, had searched and vainly applied for the missing literary remains of Lassalle, tried again, travelled to Wiesbaden, and this time succeeded in obtaining from the Hatzfeldts the coveted boxes with the papers—just a few hours prior to the occupation of Wiesbaden and the Hatzfeldt mansion by the

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victorious French military. Verily, books have their own adventures!

The first volume has just been published, containing mainly the letters of Lassalle as a student at the Berlin University, 1841-1844. They are of infinite charm to those who enjoy the spectacle of the unfolding of a great personality, as well as of absorbing interest to those who study the beginnings of German Socialism and its rise from Hegelian philosophy. Our admiration for the immense intellectual power of young Lassalle grows progressively with our reading of his letters. He was not precocious; he was a man, a full-grown man, bodily and mentally, at the age of eighteen. His superabundant political energies required a stage of Western European dimensions, while fate riveted him to the narrow, jagged Prussian rock of the 'forties, which bruised and lacerated him in body and soul the more he pressed against it for freedom and light.

He provoked opposition, courted danger, from sheer delight of having to fight and to overcome it. A born gladiator, he had to interrupt his public-school studies in his Silesian native town, Breslau, and to attend a commercial college at Leipsic, from where he escaped and prepared for his final public-school examination in order to enter the University. He had to fight for his leaving certificate which would entitle him to matriculation. And the Jewish boy bombarded the Prussian Minister of Education with petitions and letters until he obtained what he wanted. He entered the Breslau University in 1841, and soon found himself at the head of the rebellious youth who spread the literature and views of "Young Germany." In 1842 he removed to the Berlin University and plunged headlong into Hegelian philosophy, the rugged melody of which charmed him, as it had proved, some five years before, irresistible to Karl Marx. He came under the spell of the Hegelian theory concerning the dialectical evolution of Nature and society, and it soon flashed upon his mind that the development of manufacture and commerce marked the preliminary stage to Communism. The letters addressed by him, in the midst of his wrestling day and night with philosophical and social problems, to his father or to his friends, on the interpretation of manufacturing and commercial movements in the light of Hegelian dialectical evolution, betray a highly disciplined and most vigorous intellect. The upheaval of the Silesian weavers in 1844 he interpreted, in one of the letters to his bewildered father, as the "initial movements and convulsions of Communism which, theoretically and practically, fills and permeates our views."

This first volume intensifies our regret that Marx, while in some contact with Lassalle since 1848, never cordially responded to the overtures of the latter to act together and to assist one another in the work of propagating Communism. It is, of course, true that Lassalle was not a materialist in the Marxian sense, and that he remained a

## Book Reviews

Hegelian idealist, believing in the parallelism of the evolutionary processes of the Idea and the material world, whereby the Idea was the primary power. Still, Lassalle was ready to learn from Marx, and wooed for his *amor intellectualis*, but, unfortunately, never succeeded in entering into closer relations with him. The fault lay, in my opinion, largely with Frederick Engels, who prejudiced Marx against Lassalle, as it is plainly evident from the correspondence of Marx and Engels.

M. BEER.

### THE OLD WILSONIANS

*The Defeat in the Victory.* By George D. Herron. Cecil Palmer.  
7s. 6d. 1921.

IN whatever shades or purgatory await our public men after the completion of their labours, a special circle should be reserved for the Old Wilsonians. There, in congenial association, far removed from the harsh clamours of an unheeding world, all the distinguished Liberal and Socialist leaders who ran after the great Will o' the Wisp, could sit together and make moan over the irrecoverable past, gibbering their strange formulas or fluttering after some new phantom. And over them would be written the inscription: "*These to-day suffer anguish, because they put their faith in an idea.*"

It is always cruel to criticise the Liberal, because he is at once so pathetic and so grotesque. Professor Herron, the publisher's note tells us,

... is one of those influential men, those "éminences grises" as the French call them, who are the leaders of those who seem to be the leaders. Just what work he was doing during the great war is not known, for it was a work done in the background behind the stupendous scenes of the world-drama. And Mr. Herron will never tell, never betray a confidence. But this much is certain that tremendous issues passed through his hands during the war, and that much unwritten history was made in his house at Geneva. Here the official and unofficial envoys of all nations met; here even the members of enemy peoples exchanged their views; here—and that in spite of Prof. Herron's open partisanship for the Allied cause—the basis was laid for an honest peace, for an understanding between the nations that was to be lasting and that should put an end to the ghastly flood of warfare and vituperation. For Prof. Herron was a supporter of President Wilson and his generous and (with goodwill) entirely practical idea of the League of Nations.

So the gallant story opens, and then, like a study in Nemesis, comes the tragic conclusion:

But Prof. Herron was in a specially unfortunate position. Having come into contact with the representatives of so many nations, he had almost created a Wilson faith and pledged them to all the people of Europe and even with Western Asia. And now came the sudden disaster: Wilson's complete checkmate of the Peace Conference of Paris. With all his hopes shattered and all his fears substantiated, Prof. Herron stood

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in face of a bankruptcy which was all the more real, as all his ideals were involved in it. A grave illness, a complete nervous breakdown, was the consequence in this brave man's case, as in that of President Wilson. The present book, written in convalescence, is the expression of Prof. Herron's disappointment.

It is a cruel story, the old story of Liberalism at war with reality, and no heart can fail to be touched by it. And then, when one opens the book, the pathos suddenly disappears and gives place to the grotesque, as one discovers once again the Liberal in all his wordy self-inflation. For Professor Herron is the sort of man who sends telegrams like this :

A TELEGRAM TO THE PRESIDENT.

Le Retour, Geneva, Switzerland,

July 5, 1918.

Dear Mr. President,

My unhesitating and urgent answer to your crucial question is altogether affirmative.

Professor Herron is of those who proclaimed to the American recruits of 1917 :

In marching against the German, you march to the spiritual rescue of the race.

And when he found the peace was not what he expected, he has to talk of it like this :

It is a peace so atavistic in its psychology, that Julius Cæsar, had he been able to look upon so ignominious a result of twenty centuries of human continuity, would have stood aghast at the base futility of man.

Similarly, when in 1918 he wished to impress upon President Wilson the importance of the British Labour Party, our "éminence grise" gave vent to the following :

The new Labour Party, as it is now organised, includes the best intellectual life of England, and the real English democracy. Such men as Professor Gilbert Murray and John G. Hobson (the greatest living political economist) are among its members. England is absolutely in the hands of this party. The British working-class exists only by the Labour Party's sufferance. Completely organised, splendidly poised, it only bides its time, concentrating its first energies upon the war against the monstrous German. The moment the war is ended, this party will take possession of England.

Alas, poor Liberalism, pathetic alike in its facile optimism and its headlong despair, and childish in both.

It is hardly necessary to add that Professor Herron strongly disapproves of Marx. Marx, he finds, "drove spiritual impulse and also democracy from Socialist doctrine and propaganda." Marx, in fact, was not like President Wilson.

R. P. D.

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*The General Council—Disarmament—The Washington Conference—The Allies and the Famine—Dr. Nansen and the Allies—Famines in India—The Crisis in Germany*

THE birth of Labour's new General Council in this country has taken place amid scenes of no very sensational enthusiasm. It was born at a Congress which experienced observers of Trades Union Congresses for many years past have described as the most despondent and dispirited they have seen in recent times. Its entry on to the scene was marred by a slight confusion about voting, which gave the Parliamentary Committee another few weeks of life and left the actual inauguration to pass almost unnoticed. The lack of notice is the less surprising, in so far as the difference in personnel between the old Parliamentary Committee and the new General Council is, apart from the increase in numbers, almost negligible. And yet the formation of this new General Staff of Labour will either have to mean the beginning of a new period in the history of Labour in this country; or else it will mean the failure of the last experiment of the old trade unionism to face the conditions of modern capitalism, which are beating and baffling it at every turn. Is the General Council the last stage of the old order or the first stage of the new? That is the question which the coming period will have to decide. Mr. Fred Bramley, Assistant Secretary of the Trades Union Congress, takes a hopeful view. "A workers' combine of this kind," he says, envisaging a future Triple Alliance of Co-operation, Trade Unionism and Labour Politics, "representing somewhere about 12,000,000 adults and 25,000,000 of the population, would make the passing of resolutions of protest against the present economic system as but a foolish pastime. We should so act that capitalism and all its disadvantages would disappear." This optimism is at any rate rare in the present black surroundings of reduced wages, high prices and unemployment. But after all we come back to the solid practical question: how is it going to be done? The creation

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of a Central Co-ordinating Council in Eccleston Square, even though it consisted of the most distinguished luminaries in these islands, will not of itself blow up the fortress of capitalism. A plan is needed, and that plan must consist of something more than pious aspirations. A General Staff of Labour only has meaning in so far as it is the expression of a real living unity in action of the workers themselves. How that actual, as opposed to a merely formal, unity is to be achieved is the problem of to-day. As a contribution to this, the central problem of British Labour tactics at the present moment, we print the scheme outlined under the title of a Parliament of Labour for the consideration of our readers.

CURIOSLY enough, the most prominent debate at the Congress did not concern the General Council at all, but was on disarmament. If this were to be taken as a recognition of the bigger problems facing Labour, it is a good sign. But it is to be feared that the debate smacked too much of the old habit of ignoring immediate and painful questions of internal organisation in order to discuss the world at large. The discussion did not reach one stage further than similar discussions before the war, and therefore the practical menace of war remains as great as ever. There was the same type of general resolution passed in favour of peace, disarmament, and democratic diplomacy; there was the same reluctance to consider practical means to this end; there was the same vague talk of the possibilities of an international strike against war without any decision being reached; there was the same small section presenting the revolutionary anti-war position. Last time this discussion was held, the resolution passed acclaimed President Wilson and demanded Labour representation at the Versailles Conference. This time the resolution acclaims President Harding (his "brave and magnanimous act" as the proposer of the resolution called it) and demands Labour representation at the Washington Conference. Is the parallel an unfair one? If it is not, the omen it suggests is not pleasing. What has happened to the Wilson scheme could be witnessed at the parallel proceedings of the League of Nations Assembly at Geneva. The last example of the pathetic history of the League has been the proposal of a special Committee to

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abolish the clause prohibiting secret treaties on the ground of the "dangerous publicity" involved. Already the fickle hopes of the world have turned from the League of Nations to the Washington Conference. Is there any reason to expect a different issue from the Washington Conference? Or must the same process of trustful confidence and sorrowful disillusion be gone through again, until the fiftieth repetition (if the world still survives) begins to engender a doubt whether any conference or association of capitalist governments is likely to make an essential difference to the conditions of capitalism?

**A**S for the Washington Conference, President Harding (a sufficient authority on the subject) has delivered his opinion. Addressing officers of the Army War College last month, President Harding declared that the hope of entirely abolishing wars was "perfectly futile"; armies and navies would probably always be necessary, no matter how far aspirations towards world peace might lead. This is clearly the opinion of the British and American Governments, not to mention the Japanese. Mr. Lloyd George, in answer to a question in the House of Commons on July 21, stated that, assuming that the Washington Conference would be a complete success, he did not think it would remove the obligation which the Government was under to build ships. And the new United States Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Denby, stated on July 27, that he would proceed with the construction of the war vessels authorised by Congress despite the forthcoming conference on armaments. In view of these statements it is clear that the significance of the Washington Conference is not to be found in disarmament. The real significance of the Washington Conference is more likely to be found in its treatment of the Far East. Armaments may be modified; but that modification will at the best be no more than a temporary suspension of hostilities, so long as the fundamental question of mastery at sea is left untackled. But with regard to China and Japan the Washington Conference may have a very real importance. America is clearly endeavouring to manœuvre Japan out of its "fruits of victory" in China by diplomatic means under the formula of the "open door." Britain is faced with the

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awkward problem of choosing between Japan and the United States and endeavouring to reconcile both; and the problem is complicated by the attitude of the colonies. The British attempts to reach a preliminary triangular agreement have so far been coldly received in America. It may be that some temporary agreement over the exploitation of the body of China may be achieved (especially if some British concession to America over Mesopotamian oil-wells is thrown in); but the fundamental divergencies of imperialist rivalry remain to break out again at a later stage. The one thing that is certain is that Labour can play no part in these diplomatic traffickings; and that if it endeavours to play one, its only part will be that of a puppet called in to give to the proceedings a suitable "democratic" atmosphere.

**T**HE severest test of genuine internationalism to-day is the famine in Russia. Over two months ago Mr. Lloyd George declared, with the concurrence of the Supreme Council, that this "was not only a question of Russia, but one concerning the whole world." He announced with his usual rhetorical facility that this was "the most terrible catastrophe that has afflicted Europe or the world for centuries." He professed to see in it a danger to the whole world, such that "there is no doubt at all that this may end in one of the greatest scourges which ever visited Europe—pestilence on a gigantic scale." He dismissed the suggestion of private relief or action through the Red Cross organisations as wholly inadequate to the scale needed. This was two months ago. Since then what has happened? The record makes melancholy reading. The Inter-Allied Commission set up by the Supreme Council met in August and decided, in the face of famine and death, to send—a Commission of Inquiry. The indignant reply of Tchitcherin was strongly worded, but not more strongly than was justified by this "monstrous gesture of mockery at the expense of men dying of hunger." Thereupon the Inter-Allied Commission met again on September 15 (already more than a month after the Supreme Council's decision, and nothing done) and decided with majestic deliberation to call a Conference at Brussels on October 6, to be attended by representatives of twenty-four States. At the very same

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time as this decision was reached the League of Nations Assembly, representing twice the number of States, was already in session; and it would have seemed reasonable to put the matter before the League. But in the latter part of September it was announced on behalf of the League of Nations that a sub-committee had come to the conclusion that "in the present circumstances the Governments interested are not in a position to grant credits for famine relief in Russia," and accordingly it would not be desirable for the Assembly to issue an appeal to the various Governments to grant credits. And finally a Special Commission of the Assembly decided by 16 votes to 1 to reject Dr. Nansen's proposals for the relief of famine in Russia. That is the position at the time of writing. America has given practical help under the Hoover agreement. Germany has given help. The philanthropic societies, represented by Dr. Nansen, who concluded an agreement with the Soviet Government on August 27, have done what their limited means can afford. But voluntary aid, as Mr. Lloyd George has truly said, cannot touch the fringe of the calamity. And so far the British Government and the French Government have done nothing to fulfil the offers of assistance that they so grandiloquently made two months ago.

**H**OW the action of the Allies strikes an observer close at hand may be judged from the impassioned outburst of Dr. Nansen at the League of Nations Assembly. Dr. Nansen's speech deserves to stand as the classic record of the sensations of a man of decent feeling when brought face to face with the realities of the capitalist Governments. The Governments, he declared, had refused to advance money which hardly represented half the cost of building one battleship, while their co-operation would have saved from twenty to thirty million lives. "I do not believe that the people of Europe will sit with folded hands through the long months of winter and watch the millions of Russia starving to death. The crop in Canada this year is so good that Canada will be able to export three times as much as is necessary to meet the difficulty caused by the Russian famine. In the United States wheat is rotting in the farmers' stores because they cannot find purchasers for the surplus.

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In the Argentine maize is lying in such abundance that it is being used as fuel in locomotives because that is the only way in which they can use it. Between us and America ships are lying idle; we cannot find employment for them; and on the other side in the East, twenty or thirty million people are starving to death." The smaller Governments were already giving help to relieve the famine. But the larger Governments of the Allied Powers professed to be unable to sacrifice the cost of maintaining half a battalion of troops for one year. They criticised his plan, but they suggested no alternative. And meantime, while they delayed, the few precious moments of opportunity slipped by, and the Russian winter was approaching. "It is a terrible race we are running with the Russian winter, which is already silently and persistently approaching from the north. Soon will the waters of Russia be frozen. Soon will transport be hampered by frozen snow. Shall we allow winter to silence for ever those millions of voices which are crying out to us for help? There is still time but there is not much time left." But the Assembly was not to be moved. The following resolution was proposed by Lord Robert Cecil and carried without opposition: "In view of the statement made to the effect that the Governments do not consider that under the present circumstances they could grant official credits, this Assembly is of opinion that this fact settles for the time being this aspect of the matter, and disengages the possibility of the League's responsibility. It will rest with the Council to take up the question should circumstances demand, and if they believed that intervention could prove useful and effective."

**A**TTEMPTS have been made to controvert our statements last month which connected the famine with the former counter-revolutionary areas, and adduced the example of famines in India to suggest that famines may occur under other than Bolshevik Governments. It will therefore be of interest to know that both these points have been already made by Mr. Lloyd George. Speaking in the House of Commons in August, he brought forward as his strongest argument for relief the plea that "This is the area that put up the best fight against Bol-

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shevism." In other words, Mr. Lloyd George attributes the famine to the former counter-revolutionary areas. And, speaking at the Supreme Council just a few days before, he suggested the introduction of evidence from Lord Curzon on the ground that "Lord Curzon, as Viceroy in India, had had experience in dealing with a famine affecting seventy million people." It will be remembered that the British Government's estimate of the population affected by the famine in Russia was thirty-five millions, and the Russian Government's estimate eighteen to twenty millions. In the face of these figures the suggested parallel with India does not seem wholly outrageous. In fact, it is clear that Mr. Lloyd George, so far from considering famine the natural product of Bolshevism, is rightly of opinion that the British Empire can give points to Russia on the subject, as an expert in famines on a larger scale. In this connection interest attaches to the article we print by an official of the Indian Civil Service on the subject of famine-relief in India. He points out that one of the earliest (and worst) famines that occurred in the beginning of British administration in India was freely attributed in France and other parts of Europe to the exploitation of the country by the British—in exactly the same way as the British press behaves to-day with regard to the famine in Russia; that subsequently serious famines have occurred about once every twenty years, the last coming in 1918-1919; that right up to the beginning of the present century there was no clear-cut scheme for dealing with famines; and that in one case, in 1877, five million people died of starvation. Our contributor writes as an administrator, and not from a Labour or Socialist point of view; but this only adds to the interest of his testimony, which covers in general the position of the peasantry in India and affords a useful survey from the point of view of a critic with administrative experience.

**S**IGNS are not wanting in Germany that the situation may take a sharp turn this winter. At the Metal Workers' Congress in the middle of September the leader Dissmann stated that he "looked with grave uneasiness into the future. A new wave of unprecedented rising prices and of taxes to pay the Versailles indemnities

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was going to sweep over Germany this coming winter." And at the International Textile Workers' Congress the German delegate declared: "Our country is rapidly selling out by reason of the low value of the mark. I hope no other nation in the world will ever have to undergo suffering like ours of the past seven years. The death-rate in industry is appalling, and now, with the increase in bread prices instigated by the Junkers and the growing menace of the militarist elements in the country, we have a new misery added to our present condition." The economic crisis is reflected in the political uncertainties which have developed. The old militarist class, firmly entrenched in Bavaria, has sent out a virtual ultimatum to the Central Government. Once again the unstable deadlock of forces, which is represented by the Republic, is being threatened on either side. This sharpening of the struggle is leading to new groupings. The Majority Socialists have decided to enter into a coalition with the Capitalist parties, including the People's Party, which represents the big industrialists, as "a last attempt to protect Germany from the dangers of civil war." If the Independent Socialists unite with the Majority Socialists, only the Communists will remain outside on the Left and the Monarchists on the Right. The outcome of this new grouping remains to be seen; but it is clear that the winter is bringing to Germany, as to all the world, a period of hardship and struggle. The iron logic of Versailles is working itself out slowly and relentlessly.



# THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT\*

By BERNARD SHAW

**T**HE proletariat is the vast body of persons who have no other means of living except their labor.

A dictatorship is the office of an individual whom the people, made desperate by the absence of government, and unable to govern themselves, have invited or allowed to dictate a political constitution for their country, and control its administration, and who has the necessary will and conscience to use that power from his own point of view, to the complete disfranchisement of every hostile point of view. At present the term is extended from an individual to an oligarchy formed of an energetic minority of political doctrinaires. Where the doctrine is that the point of view must be that of the proletariat, and that the proprietariat (the people who live by owning instead of by working) must be disfranchised, expropriated, and in fact exterminated (by conversion or slaughter), then we call such an oligarchy, or allow it to call itself, the Dictatorship of The Proletariat.

As the proletariat is necessarily always in an overwhelming majority in modern industrial States, and cannot be finally and physically coerced except by itself, nothing can stand long between it and such a dictatorship but its own refusal to support it. The proletariat is not oppressed because its oppressors despise it and mistrust it, but because it despises and mistrusts itself. The proletariat is not robbed by persons whom it regards as thieves, but by persons whom it respects and privileges as specially honorable, and whom it would itself rob with the entire approval of its conscience if their positions were reversed. When it falls on

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itself and slaughters itself in heaps, tearing down its own cities, wrecking its own churches, blowing its own children to fragments, or leaving them to starve in millions, it does so, not because diplomatists and generals have any power in themselves to force it to commit such atrocities, but because it thinks it is behaving heroically and patriotically instead of suicidally. It obeys its rulers, and compels malcontents to submit to them, because its conscience is the same as that of its rulers.

As long as this sympathy exists between the proletariat and its rulers, no extension of the franchise will produce any change, much less that aimed at by the so-called Dictatorship of the Proletariat. On the contrary, adult suffrage will make all change impossible. Revolutionary changes are usually the work of autocrats. Peter the Great, personally a frightful blackguard who would have been tortured to death if he had been a peasant or a laborer, was able to make radical changes in the condition of Russia. Cromwell turned the realm of England into a Republican Commonwealth sword in hand after throwing his parliamentary opponents neck and crop into the street, a method copied by Bismarck two centuries later. Richelieu reduced the powerful and turbulent feudal barons of old France to the condition of mere court flunkies without consulting the proletariat. A modern democratic electorate would have swept all three out of power and replaced them by men who, even if they had wanted to, would not have dared to suggest any vital change in the established social order. Napoleon, because his mandate was revolutionary, was much more afraid of the French people than of the armies of the Old Order. There was a good deal of truth in the contention of the early French Syndicalists that aggrieved sections of the people had more power of obtaining redress under the old autocratic form of government, when they could interfere in politics only as a riotous mob, than under modern democratic parliamentary forms, when they interfere only as voters, mostly on the wrong side.

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Accordingly, a real dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be advocated as leading necessarily to better results than the present dictatorship of the Proprietariat. It might easily lead to worse. It would almost certainly do so in certain respects at first. It is advocated because certain changes which Socialists desire to bring about cannot be effected whilst the Proprietors, politically called the Capitalists, are predominant, and could not be maintained unless the Proletariat were permanently predominant. Consequently we have on the one hand the fear that the proletariat in power would play the very devil with the whole business of the country and provoke a reaction into oligarchy or Napoleonism, and, on the other, the belief that Capitalism will wreck civilization, as it has often done before, unless it can be forced to give way to Communism.

Fundamentally it is a question of conscience. So long as the average Englishman holds it to be self-evident, not that he has a natural right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, but that Lord Curzon is a superior being, and Nicolas Lenin a dirty scoundrel and no gentleman—so long as an ordinary British coroner's jury can be depended on to bring in a verdict expressly and gratuitously exonerating the prison authorities from all blame when they admittedly kill a Conscientious Objector by forcing food into his lungs under pretence of feeding him, so long will the political power of the proletariat, whether it come to them as the spoil of a revolution, or be thrown to them by their masters as a move in the parliamentary game, do nothing to change the existing system except by lopping off from it the few safeguards against tyranny won by energetic minorities in the past.

It follows that the task of the advocates of a change-over to Socialism, whether they call themselves Labor leaders, Socialists, Communists, Bolsheviks, or what not, is to create a Socialist conscience. (The task of the Capitalist and Imperialist is much easier: it is simply to trade on a conscience that already exists, and feed it by suitable incitements

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administered to children in nursery and school lessons, and to adults in newspapers and speeches.) And when this task is accomplished, there is still the very arduous one of devising a new constitution to carry out the new ethic of the new conscience. For there is all the difference in the world between driving an old locomotive (a Government is essentially a locomotive) and inventing and constructing an aeroplane. And there is the same difference between operating the established Capitalist system, and devising, setting up, and administering the political, legal, and industrial machinery proper to Socialism. Until this is done, no admission of Labor leaders, Socialists, Communists, or Bolshevists into Parliament or even into the Cabinet can establish Socialism or abolish Capitalism. Mr. Henderson and Mr. Clynes may be just as anti-Capitalist as Messrs. Trotsky and Lenin; but they can no more make our political machine produce Socialism than they can make a sewing machine produce fried eggs. It was not made for that purpose; and those who work it, though they may stand out for better wages and treatment for the workers, and perhaps get them, are still working the Capitalist machine, which will not produce anything else but Capitalism. The notion that we have in the British constitution a wonderful contrivance, infinitely adaptable to every variation in the temper of the British people, is a delusion. You might as well say that the feudal system was an exquisite contrivance adaptable to the subtlest *nuances* of the cotton exchange of Manchester.

What, exactly, does making a new constitution mean? It means altering the conditions on which men are permitted to live in society. When the alteration reverses the relation between the governing class and the governed, it is a revolution. Its advocates must therefore, if they succeed, undertake the government of the country under the new conditions, or make way for men who will and can. The new rulers will then be faced with a responsibility from which all humane men recoil with intense repugnance and dread. Not only must they, like all rulers, order the killing of their

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fellowcreatures on certain provocations; but they must determine afresh what those provocations are to be. Further, they have to see that in every school a morality shall be inculcated which will reconcile the consciences of their executive officers to the carrying out of such grim orders. That is why reformers cling so desperately to gradual modifications of existing systems rather than face revolutionary changes. It is quite easy to sign a death warrant or order the troops to fire on the mob as part of an old-established routine as to which there is no controversy, and for which the doomster has no personal responsibility. But to take a man and kill him for something a man has never been killed for before: nay, for which he has been honored and idolized before, or to fire on a body of men for exercising rights which have for centuries been regarded as the most sacred guarantees of popular liberty: that is a new departure that calls for iron nerve and fanatical conviction. As a matter of fact it cannot become a permanently established and unquestioned part of public order unless and until the conscience of the people has been so changed that the conduct they formerly admired seems criminal, and the rights they formerly exercised seem monstrous.

There are several points at which Socialism involves this revolutionary change in our constitution; but I need only deal with the fundamental one which would carry all the rest with it. That one is the ruthless extirpation of parasitic idleness. Compulsory labor, with death as the final penalty (as curtly stipulated by St. Paul) is the keystone of Socialism. "If a man will not work, neither shall he eat" is now evasively interpreted as "If a man has no money to buy food with, let him starve." But a Socialist State would make a millionaire work without the slightest regard to his money exactly as our late war tribunals made him fight. To clear our minds on this point, we must get down to the common morality of Socialism, which, like all common moralities, must be founded on a religion: that is, on a common belief binding all men together through their in-

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stinctive acceptance of the fundamental dogma that we must at all costs not only keep the world going but increase our power and our knowledge in spite of the demonstration (any Rationalist can make it) that the game, as far as the individual is concerned, is not worth the candle except for its own sake.

What, then, is the common morality of Socialism? Let us begin with the unquestionable facts on which it is based. The moment a child is conceived, it begins to exploit its mother, and indirectly the community which feeds its mother (to exploit people meaning to live parasitically on them). It is absolutely necessary to the existence of the community that this exploitation be not only permitted, but encouraged by making the support of the child as generous as possible. The child is in due time born; after which for several years it has to be fed, clothed, lodged, minded, educated and so forth on credit. Consequently, when the child grows up to productive capacity, it is inevitably in debt for all it has consumed from the moment of its conception; and a Socialist State would present it with the bill accordingly. It would then have not only to support itself by its productive work, but to produce a sinking fund by which its debt would finally be liquidated. But age has its debt as well as youth; and this must be provided for beforehand. The producer must therefore during his working years pay off the debt of his nonage; pay his way as he goes; and provide for his retirement when he is past work, or at whatever earlier age the community may be able to release him.

Now these are not new facts: they are natural necessities, and cannot be changed by Capitalism, Communism, Anarchism or any other ism. What can be changed, and drastically changed, is the common morality of the community concerning them.

The Socialist morality on the subject is quite simple. It regards the man who evades his debt to the community, which is really his debt to Nature, as a sneak thief to be disfranchised, disowned, disbanded, unfrocked, cashiered,

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struck off the registers, and, since he cannot, as Shakespear suggested in the case of Parolles, be transported to some island where there were women that had suffered as much shame as he, that he might begin an impudent nation (for Socialists do not desire to begin impudent nations, but to end them) subjected to all the penalties of a criminal and all the disabilities of a bankrupt. Every child in a Socialist State would be taught from its earliest understanding to feel a far deeper horror of a social parasite than anyone can now pretend to feel for the outcasts of the Capitalist system. There would be no concealment of the fact that the parasite inflicts on the community exactly the same injury as the burglar and pickpocket, and that only in a community where the laws were made by parasites for parasites would any form of parasitism be privileged.

Our Capitalist morality is flatly contrary. It does not regard the burden of labor as a debt of honor, but as a disgracefully vulgar necessity which everyone is justified in evading if he can, its ideal of the happy and honorable career being a life freed from all obligation and provided gratuitously with every luxury. In its language, success means success in attaining this condition, and failure a life of labor. This grotesque view is made practicable by the fact that labor is so productive that a laborer can not only pay the debt of his childhood, meet the expenses of his prime, and provide for his old age, but also support other persons in complete unproductiveness. If nine men combine to do this, they can support a tenth in outrageous waste and extravagance; and the more poorly the nine live, short of disabling themselves as producers, the richer the tenth man will be. All slave systems are founded on this fact, and have for their object the compulsion of nine-tenths of the population to maintain the "upper ten" by producing as much as possible, and allowing themselves to be despoiled of everything they produce over and above what is needed to support and reproduce themselves on the cheapest scale compatible with their efficiency.

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The two moralities have only to be plainly stated to make it clear that a change from one to the other must be revolutionary. The Capitalist system admits of so much apparent progress that superficial thinkers easily persuade themselves that it will finally progress into Socialism; but it can never do so without making a complete *volte face*. Slavery is always improving itself as a system. It begins by working its slaves to premature death. Then it finds out that badly treated slaves do not, except when they are so plentiful that they can be replaced very cheaply, produce so much booty for their masters as well-treated ones. Accordingly, much humanitarian progress is effected. Later, when modern industrial methods of exploitation are discovered and developed competitively, it is found that continuous employment under the same master cannot be provided for the slave. When this point is reached the master wants to be free to get rid of the slave when he has no work for him to do, and to pick him up again when trade revives, besides having no responsibility for him when he is old and not worth employing. Immediately a fervent enthusiasm for liberty pervades the Capitalist State; and after an agitation consecrated by the loftiest strains of poetry and the most splendid eloquence of rhetoric, the slave is set free to hire himself out to anyone who wants him; to starve when nobody wants him; to die in the workhouse; and to be told it is all his own fault. When it is presently discovered that this triumph of progress has been, in fact, a retrogression, the Progressive reformers are again set to work to mitigate its worst effects by Factory Acts, Old Age Pensions, Insurance against Unemployment ("ninepence for fourpence"), Wages Boards, Whitley Councils, and what not, all producing the impression that "we live in a progressive age." But this progress is only allowed whilst the workers are gaining in efficiency as slaves, and their masters consequently gaining in riches as exploiters.

A further comparison of the two moralities will shew that whereas the Socialist morality is fit for publication, the Capitalist morality is so questionable that every possible



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device has to be employed to reconcile the workers to it by disguising its real nature. As a reasoned system it has never been tolerated by public opinion. Although it has been set forth with perfect frankness by a succession of able political economists and professors of jurisprudence, notably (in point of uncompromising lucidity) by De Quincey and Austin, and justified as on the whole the best system human nature is capable of, the only effect has been to make "political economy," as the demonstration was called, abhorred. The Capitalist system has not been preserved by its merits as an economic system, but by a systematic glorification and idolization of the rich, and a vilification and debasement of the poor. Yet as it gives to every poor man a gambling chance, at odds of a million to one or thereabouts, of becoming a rich one (as Napoleon said, the careers are open to the talents, and every soldier has a field marshal's baton in his knapsack), no one is condemned by it to utter despair. In England especially, where the system of primogeniture, and the descent of the younger son into the commonalty with a family standard of expenditure so far beyond his income that his progeny follow him rapidly into chronic pecuniary embarrassment and finally into wretched poverty, a sense of belonging to the privileged class is to be found in all ranks; and a docker who does not regard himself as a gentleman under a cloud rather than as one of the proletariat is likely to be a man with too little self-respect to be of any use as a revolutionary recruit. Ferocious laws are made against those who steal in any but the legalized Capitalist way; so that though a woman may have the produce of sixteen hours of her work sold for ten shillings and receive only a shilling of it, and no man may buy anything without paying in addition to its cost of production a tribute for the landlord and capitalist, yet any attempt on the part of the proletariat to perform an operation of the same character on a proprietor is suppressed by the prison, the lash, the rifle, the gallows, and the whole moral armory of ostracism and loss of reputation and employment.

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But it is not by its hypocrisies and its coercions, potent as these are, that Capitalism retains its main grip on the proletariat. After all, few of the hypocrisies impose on those who do not wish to be imposed on by them; and the coercions are applied by the proletarians themselves. The really effective lure is the defiance of Nature in the name of liberty: the apparent freedom to be idle. It is useless to demonstrate that no such freedom is possible for all: that if Adolphus survives in idleness, Bill and Jack and the rest must be doing his share and having their liberty correspondingly curtailed. What does that matter to Adolphus? And who does not hope to be Adolphus, if only for a day or a week occasionally? The moment Socialism comes to the point and hints at compulsory industrial and civil service for all, the difference between Dean Inge and the Labor Party vanishes: they will stand anything, even Capitalism at its worst, rather than give up the right to down tools and amuse themselves at any moment. Thus their devotion to liberty keeps them in slavery; and after the most formidable combinations to better their condition they go back to defeat and drudgery under the unofficial but irresistible compulsion of starvation.

There is ghastly comedy in the fact that this right to idle which keeps the proletarians enslaved is cherished by them, not only as a privilege, but actually as a weapon. They call it the right to strike, and do not perceive that it is only a form of the right to commit suicide or to starve on their enemy's doorstep. This folly reaches its climax in the panacea of the general strike, the only sort of strike that could not possibly succeed even temporarily, because just in proportion to its completeness would be the suddenness and ignominy of its collapse. The ideal strike is a lightning strike of the waiters in a fashionable restaurant, hurting nobody but the enemy, and putting him for the moment in a corner from which he will extricate himself by any reasonable sacrifice. A general strike is a general suicide. A Napoleon who proposed to take his commissariat out of the kitchens

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and throw them into the trenches would be sent to a lunatic asylum. But the French General Confederation of Labor, though torn by dissensions between Communists, Syndicalists, Trade Unionists and heaven knows what other Ists, is solid in adhesion to an idiotic welter of phrases called the Charter of Amiens, out of which nothing intelligible emerges except the proclamation that the salvation of labor is to be achieved by the general strike.

A Socialist State would not tolerate such an attack on the community as a strike for a moment. If a Trade Union attempted such a thing, the old Capitalist law against Trade Unions as conspiracies would be re-enacted within twenty-four hours and put ruthlessly into execution. Such a monstrosity as the recent coal strike, during which the coal-miners spent all their savings in damaging their neighbors and wrecking the national industries, would be impossible under Socialism. It was miserably defeated, as it deserved to be. But if it had been conducted from the Socialist point of view instead of from the Trade Union point of view (which is essentially a commercial point of view) the strike might have been worth while. In that case, the leaders of Labor in Parliament would simply have challenged the Government to stop the strike by introducing compulsory service, and promised to vote for it themselves. This would have at once put them right with public opinion, and effected an epoch-making advance in Labor policy. And it would have put the Government into a very difficult position. All the Coalitionists of the extreme right, understanding their own Capitalism as little as they understand Socialism, and having no other idea but to smash these damned Trade Unions and bring the working class to heel, would have rallied to the proposal with enthusiasm. But the Government would have seen, or would soon have been shewn, that if the right to strike—that is, the right to be idle—were abolished, the Capitalist system would go with it. It is one thing to take a coalminer by the scruff of the neck and thrust him down a mine with an intimation that if he does not

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how his regulation number of tons in the week he will be handled as the conscientious objectors were handled during the war. It is quite another to lay violent hands on the Honourable Reginald Highcastle and his friend Tommy Briggs, the son of the Bradford wool millionaire, and yank them out of their hotel in Monte Carlo or their flat in St. James's in the same uncompromising manner, with no ladies to taunt them into consenting to the operation by presenting them with white feathers and calling them slackers. To exempt Reggie and Tommy, even if any satisfactory line could be drawn between them and their fellow creatures, would be a revolution of the proprietary classes against free contract and a return to open slavery. To conscribe them would be to attempt to carry on the Capitalist system without the lure that has hitherto persuaded its victims to tolerate it, and with its boasted Incentive to Labor side-tracked. In such a dilemma the Government, instead of encouraging the owners to fight, would probably have told them that they must settle with the men at any cost.

The opportunity was lost, and lost solely because Trade Unionism, instead of leading to the solution of the problem, led nowhere. As the leaders were either not willing to face compulsory service or were convinced that their followers would desert them at once if they hinted at such a thing, they had nothing to say except that the men objected to have their wages reduced. The coalowners replied that they could not and would not pay the same wages as before; and as the owners were in a position to starve the miners into submission, they did so, leaving Labor in a condition of humiliation and servitude, and Labor policy in a condition of exposed futility which has given Capitalism all the courage of success without giving Labor any of the courage of despair.

Labor won its way into Parliament as an independent party fifteen years ago; and its leaders made their way into the Cabinet. And this is the result. The Anarchists and Syndicalists smile, and say "We told you so." But they

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take care to add that however disillusioned they may be with Parliament and Government and Thrones and Churches and all the other superstitions of the bourgeoisie, they remain unalterably devoted to the Charter of Amiens and the general strike. Is it to be wondered at that prosaic men cry "A plague on your rights and lefts, your Reds and Whites and Pale Pinks, your first and second and third Internationals, your phrases that only differ from Lloyd George's in being translated from foreign languages: we shall vote for the Anti-Waste candidate, whom we can at least understand, and who has not sold us yet"?

There is nothing more to be said at present. There is nothing more to be done until Labor recognizes that there can be no life until the task imposed by Nature is performed, and no freedom until the burden of that task is impartially distributed and sternly enforced. The debt to Nature must cease to be regarded as a commercial debt which one man can accept for another like a bill of exchange. It is a personal debt which must be defrayed by the individual who has incurred it. If he says "My grandfather worked for six," the reply must be "Then go one better than your grandfather, and work for seven. In that way the world will be the better for your having lived, as it is for your grandfather having lived; and you shall not undo the good he did by wasting it in idleness." And as to the man who should say "My grandfather owned for a thousand," it is difficult to say what could be done with so hopeless a fool except to lead him to the nearest wall and ask him to look carefully down the barrels of half-a-dozen levelled rifles and consider whether he seriously proposed to follow his grandfather's example. At all events that is something like what will happen to him if the so-called Dictatorship of the Proletariat ever becomes an accomplished fact here as it is in Russia.

With compulsory social service imposed on every one, the resistance to the other measures involved with Socialism would not only become pointless but injurious to the resisters.

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Just as a poor landlord is a bad landlord, and a poor employer the worst of employers, an embarrassed, imperfect, poorly financed, struggling Socialist State would make things far less pleasant for its members than a powerful and prosperous one. At present the position of a rich proprietor is by no means free from care: his servants, his houses, his investments, his tenants all worry him a good deal; but he puts up with it, partly because he can no more help his riches than a poor man can help his poverty, but largely, of course, because he has luxury and attendance and sports and fashionable society, and can, up to a certain point, do what he likes, even if what he likes is doing nothing. But if his servants were conscribed for social service, and himself with them, of what use to him would his title deeds and his share certificates be? The possibility of keeping a big establishment vanishes with the servants; and even if the State employed him to manage his own estate, as it probably would if he had managed it capably before and not handed it over to bailiffs, stewards, agents and solicitors, he would be no better off as its legal owner than as a Commissioner of Woods and Forests or any other state official of the managing grade. It would not be worth his while to offer a moment's resistance to the transfer of his property rights to the State: on the contrary, as the richer the State was the larger would be the income to be distributed to its members, and the shorter that part of his life compulsorily devoted to its service, he would regard individual property rights as an attempt to fix on him responsibilities and duties from which his fellow-workers were happily exempt, without any equivalent advantage. Under such circumstances men would cling to and covet title, rank, renown, and any sort of immaterial distinction, as well as cherished personal possessions; but they certainly would not cling to property; and as the Socialist State would be liberal in the matter of moral distinctions and the glorification of good citizenship, and would enable its citizens to multiply choice personal possessions, their ambition and acquisitiveness would have ample satisfaction. There would still be a

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privilege for gentility. A man overpaying his debt to Nature, and thereby making his country better by every hour of his activity, would be distinguished as a gentleman, being thus exactly the opposite of the so-called gentleman of Capitalism, who leaves his country poorer than he found it, and is proud of the depredation.

Such a change as this, however little its full scope may be understood at first, is far too revolutionary to make itself effective by a simple majority of votes in a Parliamentary division under normal circumstances. The civil service would not administer it in good faith; the tribunals would not enforce it; the citizens would not obey it in the present state of the public conscience. The press would strain all its powers of comminatory rhetoric to make it infamous. Therefore, if circumstances remain normal, several years of explicit propaganda will be necessary to create even a nuclear social conscience in its favor; and the first step must be to convert the leaders of Labor and the official Socialists themselves. Trade Unionism must be turned inside out, and must deny, instead of affirming, that right to idle and slack and ca' canny, which makes the social parasitism of the proletariat legal. The "weapon of the strike" must be discarded as the charter of the idle rich, who are on permanent strike, and are the real Weary Willies and able-bodied paupers of our society. The Marxists must cease their intolerable swallowings and regurgitations of Marxian phrases which they do not understand (not having read Marx), and cease boring and disgusting the public with orations at pompously quarrelsome Congresses ending in Amiens Charters calling for that quintessence of anti-Socialism the general strike. If they have nothing better than that to recommend, they had better go home to bed, where they will bore and mislead nobody but themselves. They must at last begin to tell the public precisely what Socialism means in practice.

But the circumstances may not remain normal. The proprietary class, when it sees that the normal course of events

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is leading to the abolition of property, can and will produce abnormal conditions favorable to itself by Catherine the Second's expedient of a little war to amuse the people. The Labor movement may itself upset the apple cart by further attempts at a general strike by Triple Alliances and the like. It is important to remember that it was in Russia, the most backward first class Power in Europe, that the ground was cleared for Communism, not by the Communists, but by the Imperialists, who, in mere thriftless ignorance and incompetence, ditched their car, and left themselves at the mercy of an energetic section of Realist Communists, who no sooner took the country in hand than they were led by the irresistible logic of facts and of real responsibility, to compulsory social service on pain of death as the first condition not merely of Communism, but of bare survival. They shot men not only for shirking and slacking, but for drinking at their work. Now it is clear that in point of ignorance, incompetence, social myopia, class prejudice, and everything that can disqualify statesmen and wreck their countries, the sort of people who can get returned to Parliament at khaki elections in the west of Europe and in the United States of America can hold their own with anybody the Tsardom ever put into power in Russia. Capitalism is much stronger in the west than in Russia, where it was relatively undeveloped; but though it had not reached its climax there and was in its infancy, it has passed its climax here, and is getting unsteady on its feet of clay. It also may ditch its car, and leave the most capable realists to save the situation.

In that case, we may have the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in the sense in which the phrase is being used by the Russian Communist statesmen. To them dictatorship means overriding democracy. For example, though there are elected Soviets everywhere in Russia, and it sometimes happens that on some vital question the voting is 20 for the Government and 22 against it (the opposition consisting of Social Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Syndicalists and other persons quite as abhorrent to the *Morning Post* as the



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reigning Communists), the Government does not thereupon say "Your will be done: the voice of the majority is the voice of God". It very promptly dissolves that Soviet, and intimates to its constituents that until they elect a preponderantly Bolshevik Soviet they shall have no Soviet at all. It may even treat the majority as rebels. The British democrat is scandalized by this; and even those who are too cynical or indifferent to be scandalized say "What is the use of having a Soviet at all under such conditions?" But the rulers of Russia reply that the use of it is that they know where they are. They find out from it how public opinion is tending, and what districts are backward and need to be educated. The British democrat, dazed, asks whether it is cricket to exclude the Opposition from the governing bodies. The Russian Statesmen reply that they are fighting a class war, and that during a war an Opposition is the enemy. They are asked further whether they have any right to impose new institutions on their country until they have persuaded a majority of the inhabitants to demand it. They reply that if no political measure had ever been passed until the majority of the inhabitants understood it and demanded it, no political measure would ever have been passed at all. They add that any party, however revolutionary in theory, which refuses in a highminded manner to take any action until it is supported by a constitutional majority, is clearly led by *fainéants* (not to say cowards and incapables) who are making their democratic principles an excuse for keeping out of trouble.

Now I am not here concerned to refute or justify these retorts. I simply point out that they have been made, and always will be made, by Governments when they are accused of acting without democratic constitutional mandates, or of excluding from the franchise persons and classes on whose support they cannot rely. If what is quite incorrectly called the class struggle (for a large section of the proletariat is as parasitic as its propertied employers, and will vote and fight for them) is brought to a head in England by the mismanage-

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ment of the Government or by some catastrophe beyond its control, let no one imagine that either side will have any more regard for democracy than the Russian Communists, the Irish Republican Army, the British occupation of Egypt, Dublin Castle, or any Government in time of war. The democrats, as in Europe, will be inert: they will hold meetings and denounce both combatants as tyrants and murderers; and both sides will imprison or kill them when they are too troublesome to be ignored. They will have to console themselves as best they may by the reflection that in the long run no Government can stand without a certain minimum of public approval, were it only a melancholy admission that all the available alternatives are worse.

It must not be supposed that Capitalism has any more advocates than Communism if an advocate means one who understands his case. People are accustomed to it: that is all; and so it has plenty of adherents. When Capitalism is forgotten, and people have become accustomed to Communism, it, too, will have plenty of adherents. Meanwhile, the groups who do understand, and who desire the change with sufficient intensity to devote themselves to its accomplishment, will do what such men have always done: that is, strive for power to impose the realization of their desire on the world. But their craving will include a need for sympathy and countenance: there is little satisfaction in imposing what you conceive to be a millennial boon on the reluctant body of a neighbor who loathes you and your detested Communism. Until you can impose it on his soul by persuading him to desire it as ardently as you do yourself, you are not only not happy, but not secure. That is why the Russian Communists are insistent in their propaganda and inculcation of Communism, although the military forces and civil persecution which they employ against the counter-revolution are objectively undistinguishable from the forcible imposition of Communism on the bodies of their subjects, whether their subjects like it or not. Just as the English officer will tell you that if England gave back India

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to the Indians India would instantly be devastated by civil wars ending in chaos, so the Red officers of Russia will tell you that if Russia were abandoned by the Bolsheviks to the hardfisted doers of the counter-revolution and the futile doctrinaire phrasemongers of the Constitutional Democrats, she would relapse into the Tsarism (so deeply regretted by the Grand Duchesses and Princesses in Constantinople and London), under which women spent years in dungeons for teaching children to read (lest they should read Marx), laborers lived in cellars and earned one pound four a month, and the dear princesses could hire a droschky to take them to the Opera for fourpence. They can drive their lesson home by pointing to counter-revolutionary Vladivostock in the far east, and to the great republic of Capitalist freedom in the far west, both of them sentencing girls of eighteen to fifteen years' imprisonment for distributing leaflets uncomplimentary to Capitalism. I do not here pass judgment either on the White British officer or on the Red Russian officer: I merely say that when the so-called class war comes to blows in England (and I am afraid our proprietary Whites will not give in without a fight even if the Labor Party in Parliament comes in 600 strong) the Whites and the Reds will argue in exactly the same way; and the muddled man in the street, without knowledge or conviction either way, will cast his reactionary ballot in vain.

However, the Capitalists may very well take heart for the present. They have on their side the colossal inertia of established institutions; and the souls of the children in the schools are in their hands. They have the *soi-disant* brain workers on their side: has not Trotsky, when foolishly reproached for employing them handsomely (as if Communism meant organizing industry without brains or training), replied "Yes; but we had to give them a good hiding first." Even our university engineers, receiving less than the wage of a common fitter, dread the Communism that would raise their incomes to the level of a common fitter's. This straightforward exposition of mine, which might be

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dangerous (except that it would be superfluous) if men were politically intelligent and the working classes had not been commercialized to the bone by two centuries of wage slavery, will drop into the sea of Labor politics as a pebble drops into the sea when a boy throws it from the cliff. Labor leaders will still brandish the weapon of the strike: indeed already the Trade Unions, having found the Triple Alliance a failure, are organizing alliances of still higher numerical powers, so as to achieve the nearest possible approximation to the General Strike and make failure quite certain. Many of them believe that the Triple Alliance might have succeeded if its organizers had dared to fire the gun they had so carefully loaded. A word in favor of Compulsory service, or of any compulsion except the compulsion of starvation and the miserable eyes of hungry children, would send any Labor leader back to the bench or down the mine, a cashiered and never-to-be-pardoned traitor to freedom. Our rulers do not sing "Curzon's at the Foreign Office; and there's lots of money for somebody in the coming war with America for the command of the seas"; but that is what they mean when they sing, as they occasionally do, "God's in his heaven: all's right with the world." Perhaps it is. It may be that the reason our civilizations always break down and send us back to the fields is that we were never meant to be civilized animals, and that the collapses of empires are not catastrophes but triumphs of sanity, blessed awakenings from fevered dreams. If so, it looks as if we were in for another triumph presently; and then we—or at any rate, the handful of survivors—will enjoy a respite from both Capitalism and Communism until the fever breaks out again. But personally I am no Arcadian; and I should very much like to see Communism tried for awhile before we give up civilization as a purely pathological phenomenon. At any rate, it can hardly produce worse results than Capitalism.

G. B. S.

*Peebles, 10th August, 1921.*

# THE FAMINE IN RUSSIA AND THE CAPITALIST WORLD

By KARL RADEK

**A** GREAT misfortune descended upon the Russian people just at the moment when, having conquered the armies of the counter-revolution and the blockade having been raised, they were preparing to build up anew their shattered economic organisation. The famine that has overtaken the Volga districts, from which a third of the revolutionary supplies were drawn, is the result of a natural phenomenon, of drought. Superstitious peasants credit the Almighty with the drought. The more enlightened capitalist journals of the West make the Bolsheviks responsible. Well, well, both of them are certainly wrong. But if the accusations against the Bolsheviks are taken to mean that the civil war and the revolution have ruined Russia economically—thus making it still more difficult to overcome the effects of the drought—they simply restate the platitude that all war destroys economic life. Only the statement must be supplemented. For in the first place the revolution was the outcome of that glorious imperialist world-war as to whose origins one may differ without disputing on one point: namely, that the Soviet Government was not among the guilty, if for no other reason than because it was non-existent at the time of the outbreak of war. And as for the civil war, its causes are well known. In November, 1917, when Russia was incapable of further fighting and unwilling to shed more blood in the interests of the London, Washington and Paris Exchanges, the majority of the people, a majority such as had never in the annals of history stood

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behind any Government, trampled Kerensky's Government underfoot like a rotten mushroom growth and formed a Government of their own, a Government of peasants and workers. Then the former governing classes would not allow, Entente capital would not allow, German capital would not allow—this Government of workers and peasants to give to Russia peace and bread. The powers of world capitalism and the Russian bourgeoisie brought down on Russia civil war. They waged this war in a manner calculated primarily to encompass the complete ruin of economic life, the annihilation of the means of communication.

Hunger, represented now by the Allies as the outcome of Bolshevik economic organisation, was from the first selected by them as their nearest and dearest ally. "The bony hand of hunger will bring them to their senses," the saying coined in the summer of 1917, was first uttered by the Moscow textile magnate Ryabushinsky. And in order that the talons of that hand might with all speed clutch the Russian people by the throat, the French Ambassador Noulens organised the revolt of the Ukraine Rada that was to deprive Soviet Russia of Ukrainian bread, he organised the revolt of the Czecho-Slovaks that they might deprive Soviet Russia of Siberian grain, and he tried in August, 1918, to blow up the bridges near Petrograd and thus to paralyse that strongly-beating heart of the Revolution. And the representatives of His Majesty the English King and of English capital, Messrs. Lockhart and Messrs. Lindley, gave their Government the advice, "Treat them as pariahs." And the humane English Government, which even clothes the nakedness of the savage in Manchester cotton, and has waged wars simply that the Chinese might enjoy the pleasures of opium, that Government inflicted the blockade upon Soviet Russia, the economic coup de grâce. Whilst Denikin's cannons were laying waste the coal basin of the Donetz, while English troops laid waste the petroleum centre of Baku, while Koltchak laid waste the iron industry of the Urals—supported by Mr. Leslie Urquhart, whose own fac-

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ories suffered in no small measure, and who now makes the Soviet Government responsible—the blockaded Soviet Government had to devote all their means to equipping and maintaining the Red Army that was fighting the White forces armed by the Entente. The whole industry of the country was set aside for the production of arms and other munitions. But the Soviet Government made the mistake—so their stern judges maintain—of forgetting the doctrines of Adam Smith and taking the corn from the peasants without delivering industrial products in return, thus sweeping away the spur to intensified economic activity. But even were the Russian Soviet Government to hold in honour the doctrines not only of Adam Smith but of all the other saints of the City, a hundred times more than do the wisecracks of Versailles, who believe they can sell goods to a plundered world, yet would these doctrines be of no avail in view of the simple fact that Soviet Russia, confined within the borders of Central Russia, was forced to equip and maintain an army of millions in an economically ruined country. “We have exhausted the country so that we might be able to conquer the Whites.” So said Trotsky at the ninth Congress of the Russian Communist Party in March, 1920. And he told the naked truth. We were not able to spare the lives of hundreds of thousands of workers and millions of peasants if we meant to save Russia from the return of White exploiters and plunderers. Much less could we hesitate at the prospect of the economic ruin, which was the price of victory. If the capitalist Press maintains that want in Russia is the result of our policy, we reply: It is the result of *your* policy, of the intervention organised by *you*, of the civil war supported by *you* until to-day. The result of *our* policy is that, in spite of our ruin, we stand an independent State and not a colony, and force you to fear our misery.

As soon as Soviet Russia had conquered the Whites, the question of economic reconstruction took the first place. The path entered upon for this purpose in the spring of 1921 is the best proof that in spite of all victories we have kept

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a cool head, that we have understood that the military Socialist measures which made victory possible could form no basis of economic reconstruction in a country of small bourgeoisie. By abolishing the system of requisitions, by introducing the tax in kind, by introducing free trade in agricultural surplus products, by attempting to attract capital into branches of industry that we ourselves were unable to build up, we adopted the only possible course that would steer the land from ruin. The economic programme of the Soviet Government during the war was to concentrate every force needed for the victorious blow against the counter-revolution. This could only be achieved by the utmost centralisation in the hands of the State of everything essential to carrying on the war. Their reconstruction programme is to develop all independent forces in the country in order that these may support the State in strengthening its own foundation, which is large-scale industry. For only thus can they defend the interests of the proletariat against the peasants, and those of all Russia against world capitalism. Our economic programme is no Communist programme, but it is one that affords the only possible step towards Communism in Russia. That, at the same time, it is the only possible policy corresponding with the interests of the mass of the people (workers as well as peasants) is evident from the fact that our opponents who at least verbally take into account the interests of the masses, are unable to present an alternative programme. Of course, the dispossessed landowners and capitalists have another programme, and it runs: Give us back our land and our factories. But even the Socialist Revolutionaries, who must reckon with the peasants, understand that such a programme involves the increasing misery of the masses and the perpetuation of civil war. And Tchernov's draft programme corresponds in principle with the present policy of the Soviet Government—with the slight difference, that the Socialist Revolutionaries, with their usual weakness and lack of character, confine their programme to paper, and would welcome with open arms the realisation of



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the vulture policy of the junkers and manufacturers. The Soviet Government evolved the necessary measures to ensure military victory over the Whites, and they evolved also the necessary measures for the economic reconstruction of the country. But during the transition period, when the new policy of the Government was finding expression in concrete proposals, and before that policy was in a position to heal the wounds inflicted on the country by the policy of Tsarism, the policy of Kerensky and the policy of Entente intervention, there came the great drought. It threatens twenty million human beings with extreme want, if not with death. For the economically weakened country is not able to give them adequate relief. The Soviet Government have not concealed this circumstance. They have made it known to the whole world with brutal clearness, and they have learnt what the world has had to say. The Russian people has also learnt, and the Russian people will not forget.

### II

The fight of the capitalist world against Soviet Russia was no comedy of errors. It was an attempt to throttle the State which, built up on the interests of the classes that had hitherto been oppressed in this so-called civilised world, had made a breach in the capitalistic system of world States. The fact that this State was overtaken by a famine catastrophe could not, of course, convert the enmity against it into brotherly love, the brotherly love that has been found so wanting, even among the High Allied Powers, who haggle and quarrel over the booty of war like Whitechapel Jews. We know that Brutus was an honourable man, and that all the others, Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Harding and all, are honourable, Christian and humane people in their private lives. With the softened feelings that their speeches arouse in us we are even prepared to assume that M. Briand is an honourable man, although many of his friends hold a different view. But the policy of their Governments towards Soviet Russia is the continuation of the former policy and

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former fighting against Soviet Russia. The differences of the attitude of the Great Powers towards the Russian famine are merely the result of the differences in the methods of fighting they have adopted after the defeat of military intervention.

After the defeat of Wrangel, the last of the rulers of Russia appointed by him, M. Briand is not quite clear how to deal with the hard case Russia has proved to be. At first, like Shylock, he shrieked for his pound of flesh, not a jot less. And he demanded the recognition of the debts of the late Tsarist and Kerensky governments, his eye all the while on Pertinax flourishing his tomahawk and M. Poincaré leading the wild Red Indian dance round the flames, at which Russia, gagged and conquered, alone was missing. But at the same time his eye was on his dear English brothers across the Channel, who, in spite of their faith to their French Ally, had entered into a trade agreement with Russia. When, with the supreme impartiality that characterises them where the gold that is to flow into English pockets is concerned, the English Courts declared the gold of the Soviet Government to be good gold, even fierce Poincaré said to himself: "Our gold is flowing into the pockets of our beloved English cousin, who anyhow is no poorer than we; why should we be more stupid than these toll-gatherers?" And with the Holy Ghost of perception thus rising even into the vacuum that calls itself the head of Poincaré, Briand began to waver. In this situation he received the news of the famine in Russia. He forced back the tears so laboriously produced and said, "the end is near." He demanded of Germany the transit of troops to Upper Silesia. Further, no one was to fancy there was only a question of "acquiring" Silesian coal through Poland, who would share the black diamonds with French capital as faithfully as even now she shares the liquid fuel of Borislav. So a statement was made by the *Times* (July 22), the finest mouthpiece of Briand's mind, that he was not to be interfered with, for the matter was not simply one of a petty Upper Silesian robbery, but of preparing greater exploits

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against Soviet Russia. M. Briand sent at the same time money and arms to Rumania so as to enable the last of the Hohenzollerns to work for the spreading of the ideas of the French Republic in the Ukraine. Should this result in the destruction of the harvest, that was to be one of the most important sources of supply of starving Russia, M. Briand comforted himself with the thought that the end of the Soviet Government would also be that of the famine. Let the ground of Russia once again be ploughed with French shrapnel, and it will bear fruit to overflowing. Then M. Kerensky stepped in, whom M. Briand esteems a great statesman, having forgotten how well he prepared during eight months for the victory of the Bolsheviks; M. Kerensky warned Briand against too open-hearted a manner. Blows below the belt do not win the hearts of the hungry, and M. Kerensky is convinced that the bayonets of counter-revolution should be backed by the sympathy of the people. So M. Briand declared his great sympathy for suffering Soviet Russia, and without for a moment interrupting his preparations in Poland, Rumania and Finland for intervention, he announced in the tragic manner so beloved on the French stage since the days of Corneille and Racine, the coming relief of suffering Russia. But M. Briand, although he has a very good voice, is no artist. He forgot his past. The French representatives he appointed for the relief of the Russian people were Noulens, the stupid and brutal organiser of counter-revolutionary plots in Russia, the monarchist General Pau, and that fine manufacturer, Girand, so well known in Moscow as the reckless exploiter of women, whom he thought to compensate for their low wages by religious rites in the factory. The diplomatic poisoner, the counter-revolutionary general, the clerical sweater—what better helpers in their need could be found to tell the Russian people the truth as to the intentions of the French Government? That truth is that French imperialism, the chief pillar of intervention and the father of the Russian famine, is preparing to exploit the famine for the purpose

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of fresh intervention. The reply of the Russian Soviet Republic is: "We shall be on our guard."

### III

Since the defeat of Denikin England has realised the hopelessness of military intervention, and after a year of wavering has concluded the trade agreement with us. Mr. Lloyd George was so kind as to state openly that this was only another form of war aiming at the replacement of the Soviet Government by one that will forget that it has sprung from the people, at least as quickly as Mr. Lloyd George, who, the son of obscure Welsh parents, now supports the Welsh coal magnates against the miners. Mr. Lloyd George is no admirer of the Soviet Government, as he recently declared in the Supreme Council of the Allies, whose councils are so seldom consistent and so seldom wise. However, neither antipathies nor humanitarian sentiments control the policy of this clever though not far-sighted statesman. He knows very well that if the hated Soviet Government were to disappear, Russia would get another Government, or more than one, that would in no way improve the situation from the English point of view. The Russian Junkers and the Tsarist generals who foregather in Reichenhall in fair Bavaria will then unite with the Junkers and White generals of Germany in order to set up Governments in Germany and Russia after their own hearts. Mr. Trebitsch Lincoln is without doubt a great scoundrel, but the kernel of his revelations as to the activities of Colonel Bauer, Ludendorff's political chief of staff, in connection with the Russian general Biskupski in Budapest, are in accordance with the truth. On the other hand, the Wrangels and Struves, the Nabokoffs and Hessens, the Ryabushinskys and Kokovsovs, are no less allied with France than Kerensky and Company. None of the counter-revolutionary cliques has cause to love England, who has concluded an agreement with Soviet Russia. But quite apart from that, the lines of policy of any counter-revolutionary Russian Govern-

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ment would conflict sharply with those of England. Not only would any such Government find it essential to increase its prestige at home by attempting external expansion along the line of least resistance, namely, towards Central Asia, but all the White cliques that might establish themselves as a Russian Government would raise the questions that are supposed to have been settled by the Treaty of Versailles and subsequent peace treaties. They would do so simply on the grounds that Russia was not present at the conclusion of these treaties, and because they would be anxious to profit from the intensification of the differences between the Allies. Any diplomatic revision of the Treaty of Versailles would be to the disadvantage of England. For England has demobilised her army, Germany is in effect disarmed, and only France and her vassals have at their disposal large land armies in Central Europe. Mr. Lloyd George is as aware of all this as we are, and we therefore believe that, as things are, he will not pursue a policy tending towards military intervention in Russia.

But the English Government, which in its relations with France lives from hand to mouth, and in order not to allow France full freedom of trade swallows nine-tenths of the French moves as accomplished facts, has outwardly begun a policy of half-measures. Instead of at once energetically placing the work of relief in the hands of the State, it gave it a private character, which naturally delays relief and makes it ineffective. It further allowed the appointment of an international commission in which Russian experts of the Noulens-Pau-Girand type could babble without end, in order that the cloud of gas might cover French preparations in Poland and Rumania. Thus, England has lost time and given the German and American Governments the opportunity to take precedence. The Republican American Government has not yet decided to enter into a commercial agreement with Russia, but on one point it is clear: if America ever means to trade with the Russian people she must be on the spot, and that right now, for the relief of

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the starving. Hence the rapidity with which Mr. Liman Brown, Hoover's representative, reached Riga, hence the time Mr. Hoover was able to spare for interesting himself in philanthropy in spite of all his work as Secretary for Commerce. Even German diplomacy—which, heaven knows, derives its politics neither from Machiavelli, nor from Cardinal Richelieu, nor from Bismarck, but merely cooks up the dregs found in the old kettle of Wilhelm's Foreign Office—even Germany has bestirred herself so far as to grant a credit to the Red Cross in order to intervene more promptly. She, too, realises that to support Russia in her need is in the present situation the most important way of fighting for the Russian market.

English diplomacy regards the famine in Russia as a matter for profound study, and Mr. Lloyd George in his speech of August 17 made his contribution to the Commission of investigation. He drew a picture of the difficulties of fighting the famine in Russia. He declared that it was very difficult to transport grain from Europe to Russia. In his opinion, the grain should be fetched from the Russian districts not threatened by famine, English goods being brought into them in return. Just a question here: Why is it easier to introduce English goods into the furthestmost parts of Russia and laboriously accumulate the grain obtained in exchange in a central point of Russia, and then at last to send it out to the famine areas? Why is all this easier than to transport grain via Libau, Riga, Reval, Petrograd, and Novorossisk? The difference in the volume of grain and of industrial goods is great, but it would be compensated by the numerous journeys of the English goods throughout the whole of Russia until by this means a quantity of grain would be collected, quite apart from the fact that direct deliveries of grain would help the starving peasants much more speedily than if they had to await the results of English trade activities in Russia. Yes, but where is the grain to come from, Mr. Lloyd George will ask. And where are you going to find your industrial goods, we ask in return. Mr.

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Lloyd George points to credits. Well, get your credits for grain. If Mr. Lloyd George has failed to hit on this simple device, it is certainly not because he is dull, but because he wants to be very clever. If England grants Russia a loan for the purchase of grain it will undoubtedly yield reasonable interest, but that is an end of the matter. But in the case of a credit for industrial goods, which would be granted by large English concerns, the profits in the first place would be much greater than from grain, since the prices are not so stable and England is to a much greater degree in control of the market. Secondly, the more distant the connection between the kind of credit and the famine, the more easily may philanthropic rhetoric be set aside and the business standpoint adopted. For so humane a man as Lloyd George and so humane a Government as the English, it is very difficult to declare that England will grant no food credits to the dying Russian peasants until the Soviet Government has announced its readiness to pay the debts of the Tsarist and Kerensky Governments. But if the question is one of prolonged and complicated trade operations with firms for selling ploughs, soaps, lamps, etc., then the business is much easier. Then one can say, and Mr. Lloyd George has already been incautious enough to say openly, "You want trade credits. Very well, first restore your credit capacity and recognise the old debts." Then the Bible may go hang with its "feed the hungry and give drink unto the thirsty"; the Archbishop of Canterbury makes way for the City with its commandments of "credit and debit." Then follows the crowning work; through the doors forced open by famine the English merchant marches in to sell and buy throughout Russia to his heart's content; and these innocent activities of his, these are to be the mines laid by Mr. Lloyd George in his war against the Soviet Government. The English merchant is to convert the trade regulated by the Soviet Government into absolute free trade, mocking at all control. Such is the philanthropy of Mr. Lloyd George. It is the form of war against Soviet Russia by which Mr. Lloyd

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George has tried since 1920 to replace military intervention. Just as Briand uses the famine as the starting point for exerting military pressure, so Mr. Lloyd George uses it as a lever for economic disruption. War may be waged in many ways.

### IV

It is the business of the Soviet Government to determine by what means they may repulse both French military attacks and English "relief." In any case it is clear that the fight will take place on the ground of simple expediency, and that the issue is the Russian market. There is one thing that can form no subject of bargaining, and that is the country's political organisation, the right of the front ranks of the Russian proletariat to determine the fate of the country. Whoever cherishes illusions on this point will soon be undeceived. Take for instance the fate of the Relief Committee, which the Russian Government had allowed bourgeois politicians to form under their control. They did so in order to assemble every organising force in the country for fighting the famine. Messieurs the Cadets, and still more members of the political demi-monde, such as Mr. Prokopovitch, believed that under the wing of the Soviet Government they would find the opportunity to establish themselves as an auxiliary Government, and then, with the aid of the famine and the Entente, to set themselves up as a real Government. The Russian counter-revolution saw in this Committee the germ of a bourgeois Government, and bourgeois visionaries and gentlemen of diplomacy were in such a hurry that they were not even able to wait until Messrs. Kishkin, Golovin and Prokopovitch were in any way firmly established. Our friends of the bourgeois Committee risked a conflict with the Government on the question whether they should really help the peasants on the spot or whether they should rush off as soon as possible to Europe in order to take part in the diplomatic negotiations of the Entente with Russia, in which case they could naturally expect to be received by their former



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Allies with open arms. And certain semi-official representatives of some Governments were incautious enough to support this scheme. The decision with which the Soviet Government has crossed it will no doubt raise a tremendous cackling in the frightened poultry-yard for a few days, but it will make it clear to the European diplomats that the grapes are sour. And they may be very sure that the grapes will remain sour.

### V

The want created by the famine is great. The Soviet Government, which in every fibre of its being is united to the mass of the people, cannot regard this misery with the usual indifference of the bourgeois "master class." It will not say in the words of the exponent of English Imperialism, the historian Seely, "if they cannot live they must die." In order to hasten to the aid of the masses in their need the Soviet Government will exert itself to the utmost and will make the concessions to capital that the situation may demand. But the sharp line of distinction to which it has kept in all negotiations about concessions will still be maintained, a limit which if overstepped would mean selling its birth-right for a mess of pottage. And by its efforts it will become even more firmly rooted in the estimation of the peasants, at whose side it stands in their need; side by side they are together fighting the famine, as before they fought the White armies.

*Moscow, August 31, 1921.*

# A PARLIAMENT OF LABOUR

By R. PAGE ARNOT

**N**O one can have followed the recent controversies in the Trade Union movement without a sense of dissatisfaction. They have brought no really fertile criticism; they have led to no reconsideration of methods. The complete re-valuation of values within the movement, hoped for by some and feared by others, has not taken place. The position could be better stated if it were said that amongst all sections of the Labour movement there was a feeling of insecurity, an absence of the old complete trust in existing methods; that while there was frequent perception of details of organisation that could be improved, there was no agreement as to the main cause of weakness; and that finally there was no unified plan, both comprehensive and simple, on which everybody could get to work.

The controversy between Mr. Cole and Mr. Williams in the first two numbers of the *LABOUR MONTHLY* provided an example of the sort of Black Friday discussion which has been common during the summer. Now this discussion was typical. Mr. Cole described and partly analysed; Mr. Williams also described and analysed. Both ended with suggestions as to how a repetition of Black Friday was to be avoided. Mr. Cole brought forward certain rather general suggestions, but did not put forward any new idea or add anything to what he had often put forward in the past. That is to say, there was no sign that the specific disaster of Black Friday had taught a specific lesson. It had merely proved again something which, to Mr. Cole, had been often proved before. Mr. Williams, on the other hand, made suggestions which were so vague as to be, for practical purposes, useless. His final aspirations for international work-

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ing-class solidarity were of no more use, except as an expression of a sentiment, than his earlier "Would to God thou hadst been here!" addressed to Mr. Smillie. Clearly, if Black Friday had generated a definite constructive idea Mr. Williams was bound in some way to give it expression here. But he did not. Now, the whole point of discussing Black Friday lies in this: that, whoever was right and whoever was wrong, the thing itself was an event of such magnitude, involved positively or negatively so many millions of the workers, that any future action must be based on the lessons of that incident. That is, not lessons learned before and applied to this incident, but lessons derived directly and freshly from that incident. Without such a purpose, discussions of Black Friday degenerate into quarrelsome attempts to fix the blame on some one person or set of persons. The objection to washing dirty linen in public can always be sustained if the washing is done to show that the linen was dirty and not simply in order to get it clean.

If we are to understand the lesson of Black Friday, we must have already in mind the perspective of the theories which have contributed their part in the criticism and construction of modern Trade Unionism.

Most of these theories have been discussed for a good number of years, and a knowledge of them, either accurate or vague, but a knowledge of some sort, has been widespread. Even when the more theoretical side of these controversies has been ignored, they have played a part in actual Trade Union problems. Every worker has at least heard of the controversy of "Craft versus Industrial Unionism," and while there was a steady tendency for the sharp theoretical edge of "Industrial Unionism" to be blunted in proportion as it became popularised, at the same time the acquaintance of a large number of Trade Union members with this view gave an impetus to new movements within the societies and deepened the discussions over such questions as "Amalgamation" into wider issues. The "Industrial Unionists" stood for the organisation together of all the workers con-

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cerned in the making of a particular product or the rendering of a particular service. This, of course, was not all they stood for. Those who were thought of as Industrial Unionists had a doctrinal basis for their propaganda derived from the writings of Daniel De Leon, the preamble to the 1905 Constitution of the I.W.W. or the later and more Syndicalistic modification of that Constitution. But to the majority of the Trade Unionists these doctrines seemed to be epitomised in the statement of the structure of an industrial Union which has been cited above. "Industrial Unionism" might not be fully grasped. The concrete scheme of *an industrial union* was easy to understand. It could be argued about: and, according to the stage of development of the industry, it could be cordially agreed with or vehemently repudiated. The whole point, of course, of their discussions rested upon the development of industry. It was this modern development of industry, both in the integration and centralisation of the control of capital and also in the concentration of ever larger productive plants, which had caused the need to be felt for a parallel organisation of Trade Unionism. The need was voiced first in America just because the characteristic developments had first shown themselves in that country. Consequently the formation of the theory of Industrial Unionism bore upon itself the stamp not merely of the new development in capitalism to which it was the answer, but also of the specific American conditions, not only of capitalist production but also of social and political structure (including the existing type of Trade Union organisation) under which it grew up. The country of capitalism *pur sang*, its Northern States dominated by a capitalist idealism so strong, so uncontaminated by any memory of a medieval organisation of labour as to compel the Southern States to pass straight from chattel-slavery to wage-slavery without a suggestion of serfdom or peonage; with its ferocious dictatorship of the employing class concealed indeed but not mitigated by the boat-race rivalry of the Republicans and Democrats; with its Trade

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Union organisation so corrupted, so inexpressive of working-class solidarity that even an acute and sympathetic student like the late Professor Hoxie could conclude that Trade Unionism, far from being the proper description of working-class protective associations, was really a confusing term lumping together four quite separate and unrelated forms of economic organisation; with no political working-class movement worth speaking of and no co-operative movement at all; such a country and such conditions naturally bred despair in the more advanced workers. In the castle of Giant Despair the characteristic doctrines of the I.W.W. took their desperate shape. They abandoned political action because it was hopeless; they abandoned the American Federation of Labour unions because they were hopeless; they well-nigh abandoned organisation itself because it was hopeless. And yet, with the courage of despair, the Wobblies carried their doctrines over the English-speaking world and could often infuse their own spirit of relentless struggle into the most discouraged and outcast sections of the working class. In this country they never attained any real hold. What progress was made with the ideas of Industrial Unionism here was mainly under the influence of those who had retained a belief in the political activity of the working class. But even amongst them there was an echo of the American conditions in which Industrial Unionism was born. Existing British Trade Unionism (in the first decade of the present century) was in their opinion so hopelessly reformist that it seemed to them best for it to disappear and give place to new organisations worthier of carrying on the battle of the working class. This view ran so strongly counter to all the instincts of the workers, who would "stick to their Unions as their Unions had stuck up for them," as to prevent any widespread acceptance of the new doctrines. All that happened was that the notion of *the industrial Union* became the common property of the movement.

This discussion of a revolutionary structure for Trade Unionism was greatly reinforced in the period immediately

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succeeding the unemployment crisis of 1908-9 by the sudden vogue of "Syndicalism." The memory of the bitter bread of charity and the aftermath of movements like the prolonged wages struggle in the South Wales valleys had created an atmosphere favourable to a gospel of revolt. Preached by Tom Mann and others, the new gospel of "direct action," with its distinct anti-Parliamentary bias, rapidly attained a prominence which had been denied to the earlier propaganda of the Industrial Unionists. The Syndicalists paid little attention at first to questions of structure. Action, action, and again action, was their slogan. But it was just this insistence on militant direct action on the part of Trade Unionists and the consequent discovery of the difficulties that beset the path of action which brought the masses up against the problem of Union structure, and in this way furthered the earlier ideas of creating a new type of Trade Union organisation. Meantime the development of capitalist organisation had proceeded apace. The nineteenth century structure of many of the Unions was rendering them more than ever unequal to the struggle against the employers. A powerful body of opinion began to grow within nearly every Union in favour of a drastic reorganisation. In practice, however, this was often limited to propaganda for amalgamation of rival Unions, or of Unions in the same industry. Against this came a counter-proposal for "Federation" as the solution, and for a time the question "Amalgamation versus Federation" became the theme of Trade Union discussions. The "Amalgamationists" had the best of the argument: but in practice their success was limited. Nevertheless it was in the two years immediately preceding the war that there began the building up of great amalgamations, in some cases of combines over the most part of a whole industry, a process which has continued right up to the present. Unfortunately the movement towards fusion had only begun when the war came. Had it been possible to complete it in the major industries in the years 1910-14, the Unions would have been in a position in those

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years to meet the attacks of the employers with a chance of successful resistance. The process was carried on, it is true, over a large number of industries during the war and since. But the war period had proved a forcing time for the employers as well as the Unions and the effectives of the capitalist forces to-day are doubled and trebled in strength.

Not only for the development of employers' organisation but for the awakening of every form of corporate consciousness the war was a forcing time. The scope of Trade Unionism expanded to cover grades and sections hitherto unorganised and novel spheres of work. With this there came an expansion in theory as well, which partly meant a progressive adoption of the already existing theories and partly the prevalence of new theories. Of these the most notable newcomer was Guild Socialism, which suggested to the workers working under the extreme pressure of war-time industry the new claim for an "increase in status" (i.e., abolition of wage-slavery, regarded as a sort of personal chain), for "control of industry" (self-government in industry, to be expressed ideally through "National Guilds," institutions with a structure worked out in detail) and for "functional democracy." It thus renewed 18th century aspirations for liberty and democracy, and claimed that a meaning had once more been given to these ancient slogans by interpreting them as liberty from wage-slavery and democracy in industry (democracy in every functional grouping of society, industry being one) as well as in politics. Guild Socialism, with the same sort of cleverness as Mr. Shaw had displayed in his Ricardian first Fabian essay in Socialism, used the traditional political bourgeois arguments, but turned the muzzle end of these weapons against the bourgeoisie. The slogan of "control of industry" rapidly spread throughout the Unions and became sufficient of a nuisance to cause the Government to appoint the famous Whitley Committee.

Again this new propaganda, with whose later and stranger developments we are not here concerned, worked in favour of a change of Trade Union structure. Clearly, if workers'

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control was the goal of Trade Unionism, that goal could not be reached by the Unions as at present constituted. Before control, before self-government in industry could begin to be exercised, the Unions must be blackleg proof, must be industrial, and this not merely in the sense of uniting rival Unions, but with the full meaning of including everyone, from labourer and office-boy up to manager, in the same organisation. "All the socially necessary personnel of the industry" was a phrase used. It meant everyone except the shareholders: it gave a theoretical justification to the nascent Trade Unionism of the higher grades; and it powerfully reinforced the case for a new conception of Trade Union structure.

The upshot of all these circling theories, and of the industrial development that was the *primum mobile* behind them all, was a considerable tightening up and strengthening of the Trade Unions. There began to be societies calling themselves industrial Unions and later others calling themselves guilds. Of course the theorists of *the industrial Union* could not agree that the N.U.R. or the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation was anything more than an *organisation by industry*, a step on the way to the industrial Union, but not the attainment of it. In this they were right; but, nevertheless, the mere existence of the N.U.R., with its active members regarding it as an Industrial Union, was a challenge to the stereotyped forms of Trade Unionism. Indeed, apart from possible new developments amongst the general labour Unions, the N.U.R. probably represents the furthest advance in Trade Union structure that is likely to be reached for some time along the line of the improvement of individual Unions. Even if all other Unions were to modernise their machinery and every industry were to come abreast of those that are to-day the most advanced it would not rule out the possibility of a recurrence of Black Friday. Factors were operating there that go deeper than questions of Union structure, and that must be coped with by other means.



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The popular interpretation of Industrial Unionism as the one big national organisation in each industry has proved of service; but it will not be a sufficient guide for the future. Consolidated Capitalism calls for Trade Unionism consolidated beyond anything yet reached. To reach this consolidation we need to have a new and deeper understanding by the masses of the theories that are put forward in their interest, a clearer consciousness of the rôle they have to play and the way they have to play it. But this means a re-examination of those theories in order to find their most creative and seminal ideas, to discover how far they fit the facts as we know them and to assemble them into a single and comprehensive scheme. To this re-examination we must now turn.

The first point that emerges is a point of contrast. The popular interpretation of Industrial Unionism took hold of the idea of centralised national organisation. It entirely overlooked the idea of all-grade organisation within the workshop. Yet this was the kernel. Without this change accomplished the other changes were bound to be futile. On this the Industrial Unionists, the Guild Socialists and every other group striving to find a plan, based all their arguments. Yet so little was it felt to be fundamental that societies aiming at being Industrial Unions like the National Union of Railwaymen or aiming at being national guilds like the Union of Post Office Workers, have not merely not insisted on all-grade branches, but have even allowed fresh branches to be formed to represent a single grade, separated from the other members of the Union. This might have been a case of *reculer pour mieux sauter*: but there is nothing to show that it was so. Now without doubt this is the basic condition of effective modern Trade Unionism, that the geographical branch should give place to the workshop branch; and that the workshop branch should include everybody, from top to bottom, without distinction of grade, skill, sex, age or race. The approximation to this in the mining industry was largely the cause of the rapid growth and success of the Miners'

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Federation from 1888 onwards. But, if introduced in other industries as a revolutionary change, its great effect on Trade Union organisation would pass unnoticed in the enormous and incalculable effect it would have on the morale of millions of workers. For the very molecules would be astir in the structure of Trade Unionism.

The second point of importance is the building of a strong local movement. Other questions arise, the relation of the workshop branch to other workshops, to the district committee of the Unions, its work, its degree of autonomy, and so on. But none is so important as this question of building in each locality a strong representative Labour body deriving its authority from the Union branches and empowered to call on the Union branches to carry out its decisions. The comparative weakness of the Trades Councils has been a weakness in the whole Trade Union movement. Their expulsion from the Trade Union Congress twenty-five years ago at the instance of John Burns was a fatal error. Just as in the fifteen years that followed their expulsion the French Trade Union movement gathered its strength, its flexibility and its fighting power largely from the fact that in the C.G.T. (General Confederation of Labour) there were bound together the local bodies (*Bourses de Travail*) with the national sections. It is now high time to realise that a movement which is not strong locally can only make a show of strength nationally. In the creation of strong local Labour bodies, in planning and fighting for their creation, the whole Labour movement will recreate itself. If the coming of the workshop branches with full power to deal with every matter affecting any or all of the men in the workshop will be like a rebirth of each Union, the creation of a plenipotentiary Labour Council in each town will have a no less effect. On this dual basis, of a workshop unit and above it a municipal unit embracing all workers, we have the beginning of a renaissance of Trade Unionism.

Last of all, we come back to national organisation of the whole movement, which is essential for working-class emanci-

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pation just as the workshop branch and the strong local council of Labour are essential to it in turn. Here we meet with a difficulty for which there is no theoretical guidance. The I.W.W. and the original One Big Union solution are out of the question. The German Works Councils organisation, nearly eighteen months ago, had worked out a scheme which, while linking up Industrial Unions in local councils of the whole working-class, gave these local councils no representation as such nationally, but confined the representation on their central national body to the national Industrial Unions. The latest Guild Socialist proposal (in the Report whose general principle was adopted at the special conference of the National Guilds League ten months ago) was to build up a national body with representatives both of national Industrial Unions and also of regional (or local) Labour councils. Seven months ago this, or another of the similar schemes that have been current for the last few years, would have seemed enough. But seven months ago Black Friday had not occurred. After Black Friday it is impossible to consider any of these schemes as effective. Envisage any one of them in working order; imagine it existing in the situation that faced the Unions last April, and at once you are forced to see the disaster overtaking it all the same. This is where the regular critics of Labour gathered no fresh lesson from Black Friday. Yet the lesson is surely plain. It is that any national Labour organisation which is made up solely of representatives of the national Unions will act according to the interests of the sections of the working class enrolled in these Unions and not in the interests of the working class as a whole. This point, the question how exactly the working class are represented, may seem of small importance. Really it is vital. Unless it is understood that the National Union of Railwaymen, plus the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, plus the Amalgamated Engineering Union, plus each other Union in turn, simply make up the sum of these separate Unions, there will never be an effective general staff for the army of

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Labour. These national Unions, in the aggregate, represent the working-class interest not as a whole, not directly, but only as it has filtered through the channels of the sectional organisation. Nor would a body which included the reorganised Trades Councils be the effective instrument that is desired. It is best to be clear on this point. There are municipal interests of Labour, there are national Trade Union interests of Labour, and there are the interests of Labour as a whole. The first of these is imperfectly represented at present; the second set of interests is well represented; but there is absolutely no body at all which stands for the working class as a whole. The sum of the national Trade Union interests is represented by the Trades Union Congress, just as the sum of transport Trade Unions' interests is represented by the Transport Workers' Federation. But, as Mr. Robert Williams pointed out in the *LABOUR MONTHLY* of August, the various transport Unions may not easily agree on what are the general interests of the transport workers. The Trades Union Congress is like the Transport Workers' Federation on a large scale (a fact which will be still more plain when the Congress or the General Council is called to take action), and would continue to be like it even if it were exclusively composed of revolutionary left-wingers. Neither in the Trades Union Congress Parliamentary Committee, nor in the General Council, step in advance though it is, nor in any of the schemes and theories so far put forward, can we find the proper instrument for expressing the will of the working class as a whole. The movement has yet to create a parliament of labour.

Is there any indication of how such a body may be expected to develop? We can see the possibility of a partial reversion to the sort of Congress that existed before 1895, with the representatives from the localities now voicing an experienced and strongly organised local movement. But it must be only a partial reversion. It is necessary not simply to go back and correct a mistake made a quarter of a century ago: it is necessary also to go forward and, just as

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the Trades Councils formerly supplemented the Unions, to bring in a third element to supplement both. Where is that element to be found? The phrase "parliament of labour," may yield us a useful analogy. For just as the British Imperial Parliament is elected by constituencies on a geographical basis, irrespective of what classes the population consists, so it would be possible to elect the major portion of a parliament of labour by direct election from the working class, grouped in their workshop branches to form constituencies that would be each several thousands strong. Thus would be created a body which would represent the very important sectional interests of Labour through the delegates of the national Unions, and also the municipal interests of Labour through the renewed affiliation of the renovated local Councils; and finally, the workers themselves by election of a major portion of the Congress direct from the workshops. The Executive Committee of such a body would have a moral authority denied to the present General Council, whose sectionally elected members must suffer from the same emasculation of power as comes to all federal bodies. They are a conference of ambassadors, representing different interests. It may be said that such a gathering of salient points in existing schemes of reconstruction will not provide us with any better central body than we have at present, and that the delegates from the Parkhead Forge will represent an engineering point of view, just as the delegates from Clapham Junction will give a railway view. Such a criticism, it seems, would miss the point. An election from the workshops would mean, of course, that each delegate would represent his fellows in the same industry; but he would represent not their traditional and customary interests, often as against other sections, but their immediate living interests, which may vary rapidly and of which any truly representative body must nevertheless take account. Further, the delegates from the shops would represent their fellows simply as workers, selling their daily labour for a wage, and by this having interests in common

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with all other workers. Delegates of such a temper would rise superior to a crisis like Black Friday and at once obtain the mastery of events.

The Labour movement is not now in a position to carry on without the most scrupulous and drastic revision of its method and policy. The larger aims that have opened before it demand a wider vision; its new purposes can only be carried through by a concentration of will on a definite plan. The suggestions made in this article may not be the right ones. But some such suggestions must be made, and, when made, acted upon. In any case, they are not the wrong suggestions simply because they may seem to entail changes that are too far-reaching. For boldness in reconstruction at the present time is not unwise. It is in small and tinkering alterations, in short-sighted forecasts of the Trade Union future, that folly lies.

# THE GERMAN SOCIALIST OUTLOOK

**T**HE character of the present situation in Germany, and the expectation of renewed disturbances in the winter, lends a special importance to the plans and policies of the Socialist parties revealed at their Congresses just held.

## I

The Majority Socialists, who represent the dominant Right Wing of the Labour movement together with a number of middle-class supporters, and are still the strongest single party (with over a million members), held their annual Congress at Görlitz, in Silesia, on September 18. At this Congress two questions of considerable significance for the future of the party had to be decided. The first was the question of a programme. At last year's Congress at Cassel the old Erfurt Programme, on which the Social Democratic Party had been built up since 1891, was finally jettisoned, and it was decided to prepare a new programme. This new programme was adopted at the Görlitz Congress: but the suggestion was made that a final decision should be postponed until the hoped-for union with the Independent Socialists had been effected, in which case both sections could prepare a new programme. The second question, which resulted in a decision that is likely to have far-reaching effects, concerned the tactics of the party in the immediate future. In view of the expected disturbances in the winter, it was felt necessary to be willing to enter into a union with non-Socialist parties that were prepared to maintain the existing Republican order; and, in spite of some opposition from a section of the rank and file, a resolution to this effect was carried by 290 votes to 67 in favour of helping in the formation of a coalition government, which might include

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the German People's Party or party of Stinnes and the big industrialists. This means that in the approaching period, following on the murder of Erzberger, the old Socialist question of coalition with the capitalist parties will again be in the forefront. What will be the attitude of the Independent Socialists is not yet clear: but the talk of possible union with the Majority Socialists continues. The Communists will, of course, in any case refuse, even in the event of a Republican bloc, to take part in a coalition with the capitalist parties.

The Majority Socialist position is clearly explained in the following article by Eduard Bernstein, written on the eve of the Congress.

### EDUARD BERNSTEIN ON THE MAJORITY SOCIALIST POLICY

(From the *Prager Presse*, September 18, 1921)

All eyes are now watching the issue which will determine the future position and policy of the Republic. We may say, without presumption, that the S.P.D. (German Social Democratic Party) is the party which deserves above all others the title of Republican Party. No bourgeois party has shown any such determination to fight for the preservation of the Republic, nor has any other Socialist Party decided to grant the Republic what the exigencies of the present demand, if she is to live.

At the present moment Germany does not possess a Socialist majority; voting for the National Assembly showed the party strength to be 13.8 million, in comparison with the 16.6 million votes of the bourgeois candidates; whilst the Reichstag elections resulted in giving 15,000,000 votes to the bourgeois and 11,000,000 to the Socialists. These figures illustrate the impossibility of a purely Socialist government; unless the example of Russia were to be followed, and a terrorist minority government formed—an experiment likely to prove still more disastrous in an industrial country like Germany, than in Russia. Hence the necessity of a coalition government for the German Republic, composed of the Socialist parties, and those of the bourgeoisie prepared to support the Republic.

The German Socialist Party has recognised this necessity and acted accordingly; the suggestions before the Görlitz Congress prove what importance such a coalition has in the eyes of the members of



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the party. The chief obstacle, however, is the question whether the party should lend itself to the formation of a coalition which also includes the German People's Party, that new edition of the National Liberal Party of Imperial Germany. In Prussia the party's disinclination to join such a coalition resulted in the abstention of the party from the government, although the German Socialist Party was the strongest in the Landtag; accordingly that Government is a centrist one, composed of Centrists (the Catholic Party), German Democrats and the People's Party. The party may rejoice in its lack of responsibility for government decisions, yet important business, such as the reorganisation of the administration on a Republican basis, came to a standstill when the party left the government. Demands for the reconsideration of their decision in this matter have come from the members of the party and not from the ministers who retired from office.

From these considerations, the urgency of a coalition with the bourgeoisie becomes apparent; but for many reasons the Social Democrats have hitherto found such a union impossible. Chief amongst them is the fact that the People's Party has not yet definitely recognised the Republic, which would mean not only the renunciation of Kaiserdom, but all that that system implied. On this account the Social Democrats have proclaimed: "Under no circumstances union with the People's Party." The Congress at Görlitz must come to a final decision on this, and agree whether this watchword is to remain part of the Party programme.

Many smaller branches demand that the Congress remain true to this policy; but it is interesting to observe that several larger centres, such as Berlin, Breslau, Frankfort-am-Main, have drawn up demands which would have the coalition with the government depend on the political platform decided on, and not on the parties who form the coalition. In the foremost ranks of these necessary political dogmas stands: Recognition of the Republic. Many go further and stipulate readiness to defend the Republic and its democratic basis; whilst Berlin, Stettin and others make the condition that: "A pacific foreign policy be adopted, the Peace Treaty loyally fulfilled, and the imposition of Property Taxes introduced so as to meet the heaviest burdens."

The Congress will in all probability decide on a policy in conformity with these conditions, and thereby make possible a *rapprochement* with the People's Party; some of whose members have declared themselves for full recognition of the Republic. And yet from the Social Democratic point of view a coalition with this party has its dangers, since the S.P.D. would be faced with three opposing parties in the government, instead of two as at present, and outvoting on fundamental matters would be easy. If the Independents would withdraw from their position of refusing to join a coalition with the

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bourgeoisie, this danger would be diminished. They have 61 votes in the present Reichstag, which added to the 108 of the S.P.D. would mean 169 votes, or a Socialist vote almost as strong as the collective vote of the three bourgeois parties. From a coalition which included the Independents there would not be the same danger of a weakening of the pacifist attitude of the Republic by the People's Party, since the united power of the Social Democrats would have a tremendous moral influence.

There is another matter to be taken into consideration. At the moment the coalition in office is of the Left, composed of Centrists, German Democrats and representatives of the German Social Democratic Party, and whatever its advantages it is still a minority government. The three parties which go to form it command only 220 of the 466 seats in the Reichstag; though its security is in no way menaced, since the Independents and the Bavarian People's Party observe towards it an attitude of friendly neutrality. But security of office and the administrative ability of a government do not merely depend on the relativity of party votes in parliament; those factors play an important rôle which Ferdinand Lassalle, in his memorable speech on Administration, termed the real relativity of power. It is such factors which argue in favour of the German People's Party. The German People's Party represents in a greater degree than any other party that stratum of society known as the bourgeoisie; it includes within its ranks representatives of the world of finance, Big Business, the higher grades of intellectuals and bureaucrats. Hence its greater wealth and great influence on so-called public opinion, and its great importance in connection with the present position of the German Republic. A government may be formed in opposition to the bourgeoisie, laws may be passed against their interests, but there are limits to the power of parliament, especially when laws regulating finance are at stake.

Just on this question of finance depends the life or death of the Republic; in her domestic affairs there is a huge deficit, and means must be found to meet the enormous demands of the Allies. Within the realm of reality a taxation programme to meet these needs seems impossible; but still more difficult will its realisation be if the majority of those on whom it must needs impose burdens are not met with some degree of goodwill. Examples of the results of lack of this goodwill are many. Take the Property Tax, which brings in a far smaller return than should have been the case had the bourgeoisie been inspired with this sense of goodwill; in fact, the amount raised is in proportion to the friendliness of the bourgeoisie towards the government.

There is every possibility of attaining unity if the efforts in this direction amongst the Social Democrats of both tendencies meet with

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general success; already this has been so in various localities. Demands on such lines have been placed before Congress, and are certain to meet with approval. But it is just as certain that the S.P.D. cannot retract from the policy of a Republican Coalition for the sake of this party unity. The life or death of the Republic depends on the proposed coalition; without it there must ensue dissolution, caused on the one hand by the bourgeoisie, and on the other by the proletariat, because of the strife resultant from intensification of the class war. However, unity with the Independents is probable, and much has been attained in this direction; by their tactics of remaining on the fence they have already injured their reputation with the workers more than would have otherwise been the case.

The realisation of this unity is no domestic matter of our movement; the future of the Republic, and the relations of Germany to the neighbouring States are also closely affected by it. Great interest, therefore, attaches to the Congress decisions.

### II

While the Majority Socialist Congress reveals the problems of the right wing, who are finding themselves compelled to step further to the right in defence of the constitution and unite with the representatives of big industry, the Communist Congress held in the previous month reveals the problems of the revolutionaries, who are finding themselves faced with a period in which the revolutionary struggle has fallen to a low ebb. The failure of the attempted rising last March led to severe controversies within the Communist Party. The right wing, represented by the former chairman, Levi (who had already come out in opposition to the prevailing Communist policy by his criticism of the Third International's treatment of the Italian leader, Serrati), entered upon an extremely hostile attack on the whole attempt, even while the trials of those involved were still going on; and this open hostility reached such a pitch that Levi was expelled from the Party. At the same time the left wing, who were in the majority, defended their policy by a line of argument which came to be known as the theory of the offensive at all costs; that is to say, the view that the revolutionary policy lay in attempting repeated offensives in the hope of securing effective support from the masses.

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The controversy came before the International Congress at Moscow in July, and took on an international significance, raising as it did the whole question of the advance or retreat of the revolutionary movement. The theses presented to the Congress by Trotsky and Varga on the international economic situation and the consequent revolutionary policy have already been printed in a previous number of this journal. Trotsky came to the conclusion that a temporary depression had set in, which had an important bearing on the present function of Communist parties; while these parties must still be, essentially and continuously, parties of action, they had before them an immediate task of organisation and winning over the masses in order that their action should be successful. In accordance with these general conclusions the Moscow Congress, while approving the March attempt as justified by the circumstances (and approving, also, the expulsion of Levi), entirely rejected the theory of the offensive and strongly criticised the conduct of the March attempt. At the same time a Pact of Unity was established between the various wings within the German Communist Party; and Klara Zetkin and others, who had been previously associated with Levi, subscribed to this.

The Jena Congress of the German Communist Party, which met on August 22, had to consider the new decisions of the International. The reception of these decisions was awaited with attention, because the Jena Congress was the first before which these decisions came; the German Communist Party (with its three hundred and fifty thousand members) was the principal Communist Party outside Russia; it was the party most directly affected; and it was known to contain a strong left wing. A special letter was addressed to the Jena Congress by Lenin, in which he makes a comprehensive review of the whole situation and enforces a strong plea for unity. The letter is incidentally of great interest for the light it throws on Lenin's estimate of revolutionary possibilities in the future.

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### LENIN'S LETTER TO THE GERMAN COMMUNIST PARTY

COMRADES,—I had decided to write a detailed article to express my opinion on the lessons of the Third Congress of the Communist International, but illness has prevented me from carrying out my intention until now. However, the fact that the V.K.P.D. (United Communist Party of Germany) has convened its congress for August 22 impels me now to write my letter with the utmost speed, so that it may be despatched to Germany in good time.

The present position of the German Communist Party is, as far as I can judge, a particularly difficult one. And this is easily understood. In the first place, and this is the most important point, the international position of Germany since 1918 has caused a very rapid and acute development of the internal revolutionary crisis and has driven the advance guard of the proletariat to attempt an immediate seizure of power. At the same time, profiting by the lessons of the Russian revolution, the bourgeoisie, both German and International, splendidly organised and equipped, and mad with hatred, attacked the revolutionary proletariat of Germany. Ten thousand of the best of Germany's revolutionary workers fell and suffered martyrdom at the hands of the bourgeoisie, assisted by their heroes, Noske and Company, their lackeys, Scheidemann amongst others, and their indirect (and consequently specially valuable) abettors, the Knights of the Two and a Half International, with their lack of character, their vacillations, their pedantry and their bourgeois outlook. The armed bourgeoisie laid traps for the defenceless workers, murdered them in masses, put their leaders to death systematically one by one, utilising very adroitly the counter-revolutionary cries raised in the ranks of the social democrats of both shades—both Scheidemann and Kautsky. In this time of crisis the German workers were without the guidance of a real revolutionary party, a fact due to the influence of the fatal unity tradition of the mercenary and characterless Kautsky, Hilferding and Company—to the whole band of the lackeys of Capitalism (Scheidemann, Legien, David and Company). Every class-conscious, honourable worker, who had pinned his faith on the Basle Manifesto of 1912, was filled with an incredibly bitter hatred against the opportunism of German Social Democracy. This hatred—the noblest and most sublime feeling of the best spirits amongst the masses of the enslaved and exploited—dazzled and deprived them of the possibility of calmly considering the most suitable strategy to use against that of the capitalists, with their splendid organisation and arms; these capitalists grown wise from the Russian experiences and supported by capitalists in France, England and America. It was this hatred that drove them to premature risings.

Happenings such as these account for the difficult and painful

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progress of the revolutionary movement of the German workers since 1918; but yet it has advanced and continues to do so without wavering. No one can deny the gradual leftward tendency of the masses of the workers, of the real majority of the toiling and exploited in Germany, and even amongst those organised in the old Menshevik ranks (that is those organisations which serve the bourgeois cause), or those totally or almost wholly unorganised. The present work of the German proletariat must be carried out with coolness and perseverance; past mistakes should be systematically corrected. It should build up patiently an alert and unwavering Communist Party, composed of the majority of the workers both in Unions and outside, really capable of giving a lead to the masses in all and every situation, of developing a form of strategy on a level with the highly-developed international strategy of the bourgeoisie, attained through long years of experience, and specially by the experience of the Russian events. If the German proletariat works on these lines, victory will be assured. In the second place the present difficult position of the German Communist Party has been aggravated by the splits with the little group of Communists on the Left Wing and with the group of Paul Levi and his paper *Unser Weg*, or the Soviet on the Right Wing. Those of the Left Wing, the K.A.P.D. (German Communist Labour Party), were warned sufficiently at the Second Congress of the Communist International. Yet we must continue to suffer those semi-Anarchist elements to take part in our International Congresses, until the countries of importance in the world revolution possess a steady, experienced and influential Communist Party. To a certain degree the presence of these Anarchist elements is an advantage, for they serve as a concrete "scare example" for inexperienced Communists, whilst they themselves may still learn. Everywhere in the world, not only to-day, but ever since the Imperialist war of 1914-1918, Anarchism has been split into two divisions, viz., Pro-Soviet or Anti-Soviet; for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat or against it. These antitheses in the Anarchist movement must be allowed to take their course and mature. There is now hardly anyone in Western Europe who has been through any revolution worth the name. The Great Revolution is almost completely forgotten there, and the transition from aiming at being revolutionary (discussions and resolutions on revolution) to real revolutionary activity is a very difficult, slow, and painful process. Of course, one can only suffer these semi-anarchist elements up to a certain point, and in Germany we have been long-suffering. The Third Congress of the Communist International issued an ultimatum to them, and should they now secede from the Third International on their own initiative, so much the better. In the first place by this action they would save us the trouble of expelling them, and secondly, this fact serves as an illustration to all undecided workers,

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still filled with hatred towards the opportunism of Social Democracy, and cherishing a certain sympathy for Anarchism, of the patience displayed by the Communist International in refraining from the immediate expulsion of the Anarchists, and of its efforts to understand them and give them a lead in the right direction.

Henceforth we should refrain from devoting so much attention to the K.A.P.D., for by so doing we are only advertising them. They are too lacking in sense to be taken seriously, whilst it would be a wrong policy to be angry with them. Their influence upon the masses is nil, nor will they ever gain any if we take care to commit no blunders; this tendency will die a natural death, for the workers themselves will realise how little vitality it possesses. Our plan must be to carry on a systematic propaganda with a view to realising the decisions, on both tactics and organisation, agreed by the Third Congress of the Communist International, instead of giving publicity to the K.A.P.D.ists by our abuse. The infantile disease of "Leftism" will pass and will be completely overcome with the growth of the movement.

In an almost similar manner we are now helping Paul Levi. It is a wrong policy to give him publicity by our attacks, for he is only waiting for us to pick a quarrel with him. In accordance with the decisions of the Third Communist International he should be forgotten, and (without dispute, invective or recrimination) all attention and strength should be concentrated on the peaceable, essential and positive activity advocated in the Congress decisions.

Comrade Radek, in my opinion, has sinned against these unanimous decisions of the Third Congress by publishing his article entitled "The Third International Congress on the March Rising and Future Tactics." (*Rote Fahne*; July 14-15, 1921.) A Polish Communist sent me this article, which is unfortunately an attack not only on Paul Levi (that would not be of great importance) but on Klara Zetkin—a fact directly harmful to the movement. For Klara Zetkin had herself during the Third Congress entered into a "peace pact" with the executive of the V.K.P.D. with a view to harmonious working with the party; and we all approved this agreement. In the great zeal of his unseasonable attack, Comrade Radek resorts to a direct mis-statement of facts by attributing the thought to Comrade Zetkin "that she postpones every general action of the Party to the day on which the great bulk of the masses rebel." It is obvious that Comrade Radek by such acts renders such a service to Paul Levi that the latter himself could not wish for a better. Paul Levi's greatest desire is to continue the bickerings ad infinitum, so as to involve more and more people, and so that the polemic against Comrade Zetkin, which is a breach of the peace pact concluded by her at the Third Congress and approved by the whole Communist International, may lead to her

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expulsion from the Party. This article of Comrade Radek is the best example of how Paul Levi may be helped by the "Left."

I take this opportunity of explaining to our German Comrades my reasons for defending Paul Levi at such length at the Third Congress: my first reason was because in 1915-16 I met Levi in Switzerland with Radek. Levi was already at that time a Bolshevik, and I cannot shake off a certain feeling of distrust towards those comrades who have become converts to Bolshevism *only since* the Russian victory, and the whole series of victories in the international arena. Of course this reason is comparatively trifling, for my personal knowledge of Paul Levi is but slight. The second reason is of far more importance, namely, that Levi's criticism of the March, 1921, rising in Germany was substantially correct in many points. (Not, of course, in dubbing the March rising a "Putsch"—this argument of Levi's is absurd.) It cannot be denied that Levi has done everything he could to weaken and destroy the effect of his criticism; he introduced many trifling incidents, about which he was plainly in the wrong, and thus obscured, both for himself and others, the significance of the essential point. The form of the criticism is both inadmissible and harmful; Levi preaches caution and well-thought-out strategy to others, whilst he himself behaves like a greenhorn by rushing hastily into the struggle in so blind and thoughtless a manner that he must needs be overcome (and make his work difficult for many years to come) although the fight will and must be won. Levi's behaviour was that of an "intellectual Anarchist" (if I do not mistake, the correct term in Germany is Anarcho-aristocrat) instead of acting as an organised member of the proletarian International. Levi was guilty of a breach of discipline.

Many incredibly silly mistakes prevent Levi from calling attention to the root cause of the matter, which is of great importance, for it meant the consideration and correction of the numerous errors committed by the V.K.P.D. in the March, 1921, affair. It was necessary to take one's stand with the right wing at the Third Congress so as to get quite clear about these mistakes (which a certain section praised as pearls of Marxian tactics) and see to their correction. The line of action of the Communist International would otherwise have been wrong; therefore I defended Levi and was obliged to do so whilst I was faced with his opponents, who merely screamed "Menshevik and Centrist," without realising the mistakes of the March affair, or the necessity of further explanation and improvement. Such people merely caricature revolutionary Marxism and transform the struggle with the Centrists into an absurd sport. People of this calibre constitute a great danger to the cause in general, since "nobody in the world can compromise revolutionary Marxians, if they themselves do not do so." To such people I said: Suppose Levi has become a Menshevik, I will not argue the point should I be given proof,



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because I know him too little; but so far there is no proof of this. The only thing proved at the moment is that he has lost his head.

It is mere childishness to brand a man a Menshevik for such a thing. It is a tedious and difficult task to develop experienced and influential party leaders, without which the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the "Unity of its Will" are but phrases. In Russia we took fifteen years (1903-1917) to educate such a group of leaders. Fifteen years of struggle with Menshevism, fifteen years of Tsarist persecution. In these fifteen years the great and mighty 1905 revolution took place, and still amongst our most distinguished comrades sad cases of "swelled headedness" occurred. We must put up a fight against any such childish idea our West European comrades may cherish that they are proof against these "sad occurrences." We were obliged to expel Levi for his breach of discipline; but it was also necessary to determine our tactics on the basis of the explanation and correction of the mistakes of the March rising. Levi's refusal subsequently to relinquish his former attitude would thereby confirm the justice of his expulsion. This would become more patent, the more convincing the complete correctness of the Third Congress decisions on Levi could be made to the vacillating and unconvinced workers. Just because I dealt so cautiously at the Congress with Levi's errors, I can now with greater conviction declare that he has lost no time in fulfilling my worst expectations. I have before me number six of his little paper *Unser Weg* (July 13, 1921) with an editorial declaration on the title page which clearly shows that Levi is fully cognisant of the decisions of the Third Congress. But what does he say to them? Such Menshevik phrases as the "great ban," the "Canonical Law," and that he will now discuss these decisions with "complete freedom." What greater liberty can you possess than to be free from the Party and the Communist International! And, imagine, Levi will have members of the party writing anonymously in his little paper.

At first the party is undermined, the party work interfered with, and then a "scientific dissertation on the Congress decisions"—splendid! With this Levi sounds his final death-knell.

If Paul Levi could he would prolong the dispute, but it would constitute a strategical error of the first importance to gratify his wish. My advice to the German comrades is to forbid any further polemics against Levi and his paper in the party Press. He should be given no publicity; nor allowed to detract the attention of the fighting party from things that really matter into insignificant channels. Weekly and monthly publications or pamphlets could, where really indispensable, return to the attack, though without giving Paul Levi or the K.A.P.D.ists the pleasure of mentioning them by name, but rather referring to them only as "some rather unwise critics, who profess to

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be Communists." Rumours have reached me that at the last meeting of the Executive, Friesland of the Left Wing was forced to deal sharply with Maslow, who is toying with Radicalism and devoting himself to the sport of "running Centrists to earth." Even in Moscow, Maslow gave token of his rashness, to say the least of it. And had the German Communist Party been wise and looked to its advancement it would have sent Maslow and a few of his supporters, who refuse to keep the peace, to North Russia for a few years; there we should have been able to put them to useful work. We would have absorbed them. At all costs the German Communists must cease this internal strife by eliminating quarrelsome elements of both extremes. Paul Levi and the K.A.P.D. should be left to oblivion, and work, real work, of which there is an abundance, made the order of the day.

The Third Congress resolutions, both on tactics and organisation, signify a great advance, and all our strength should be concentrated on their realisation. It is a difficult task, but it can and will be fulfilled. At the first Congress, Communists made it their business to declare their principles to all the world. The second step was made at the Second Congress, when we determined the construction of the Communist International, and discussed the terms of admission to the International which established the definite cleavage between it and the Centrists, and the direct or indirect agents of the bourgeoisie within the working-class movement. It was at the Third Congress that real work was begun, based on the results of our practical experience in the Communist struggle; there we agreed on the methods of future work. We have now a Communist army throughout the whole world; though as yet poorly developed and badly organised. To forget, or seek to conceal, this fact would be merely to endanger the cause. It is our duty to build up and organise this army, to train it in all sorts of movements and struggles, in attacks and retreats, in which great care should be observed in studying the experiences of each movement. There can be no victory apart from this tedious and hard schooling. The stumbling block in the position of the international Communist movement in the summer of 1921 was attributable to the lack of comprehension of this by some of the best and most influential factors within the Communist International; some exaggerated the fight against the Centrists, overstepped the bounds somewhat, thus transforming the fight into a sport to the point of compromising revolutionary Marxism. The Third Congress was faced with this stumbling block: no great exaggeration exists, but its dangers are untold. To grapple with this excessive zeal was a difficult matter, mainly because it was displayed by those comrades most zealous and ready for any sacrifice, and without whom possibly no Communist International would be in existence. This exaggera-

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tion appears especially vividly in the supplement to the Thesis on Tactics which was published in the paper *Moscow* in French, English and German, and signed by the German, Hungarian and Italian delegates. We confirmed the victory over any danger of excesses by turning down this supplementary thesis and determining the line of action of the Communist International. This tendency to excessive zeal would have doomed the Communist International if no fight had been put up against it; for "no one in the world can compromise revolutionary Marxists, if they themselves do not do so." And, what is more, only the Communists can prevent our victory over the Second and Two and a Half Internationals (which, in other words, means victory over the bourgeoisie). Exaggeration even to the slightest extent is an obstacle to victory; it means new life for the Centrists and the increase of their strength and influence with the workers. Our battle with the Centrists on an international scale we learnt to conduct in the period between the Second and Third Congress; facts prove this. We shall continue this struggle (the expulsion of Levi and Serrati's party) to the finish; but we are not yet adepts in carrying on the struggle on an international scale against uncalled-for exaggeration. But we have recognised our needs in this respect, as the course and result of the Third Congress have shown. Just because we have been able to recognise our mistakes we shall overcome them. And then we shall be invincible. The bourgeoisie of Europe and America cannot maintain their power when once deprived of the support of the proletariat itself (in the ranks of the Second and Two and a Half Internationals, which are capitalist agents). The most fundamental and at the same time important Congress decision was that dealing with the careful and thorough preparation of fresh and ever more decisive methods of attack and protective warfare:

. . . . Communism in Italy will become a powerful force if the Party continues unflinchingly the fight against Serrati's opportunism; and is at the same time in a position to link up with the proletariat in the workshops, in strikes and in its struggles against the counter-revolutionary organisation of the Fascisti, to absorb their movement and to transform their spontaneous coups into carefully prepared struggles. . . .

. . . . The V.K.P.D. will be in a position to carry out its mass actions with all the more success if in future it adapts its weapons more closely to the situation in hand, studies the situations with the utmost care and conducts all action in the most uniform way. . . .

These form the kernel of the Third Congress resolution on tactics. To conquer the majority of the proletariat is the most "important work" (title of Section 3 in the resolution on tactics). We do not interpret the conquest of the majority in the manner of the Knights of the bourgeois "democracy" of the Two and a Half International. An example of the conquest of the majority of the

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working class for our cause occurred in July, 1921, in Rome, when the proletarian masses, including those in reformist unions and the Serrati party, backed up the Communists in their struggle against the Fascisti. But this victory was very far from being decisive, it was but partial, a transient local conquest; yet it was the conquest of the majority. A similar victory is also possible when the majority of the proletariat joins issue with bourgeois leaders, or such leaders who cultivate bourgeois policy (all those in the Second and Two and a Half Internationals are such), or if the majority of the proletariat is still vacillating. Conquests of this calibre are continually taking place in the whole world. Our duty is to make a careful and thorough preparation for the struggle which will lead to victory. And no serious situation should remain unutilised in which the bourgeoisie drives the proletariat to fight. We must learn to estimate correctly the situations in which the proletariat must take their part beside us in the fight. This will assure us of victory, no matter how heavy our losses may be in any single stage of the great campaign.

Our tactical and strategic measures (taken internationally) are still much inferior to the brilliant strategy of the bourgeoisie, who have learnt much from their experience with Russia, and will take good care not to be taken unawares. In strength we are immeasurably richer; the art of strategy is being acquired, and the experiences of the March coup of 1921 have meant a great step in advance for this science. We shall become complete masters of it. In the majority of countries our parties are still far from the reality of a proper Communist party, the real advance guard of a thoroughly revolutionary class, in which every member, to the very last man, joins in the struggle in the movement for our daily needs. But we are cognisant of these defects; the thesis on the methods and work of the party makes no secret of it. We will overcome it.

German Comrades, allow me to close with the wish that your Congress on August 22 will make a final clearance of the petty quarrels with the right and left refractory elements. Let there be an end to internal strife; down with all those who would prolong it, whether directly or indirectly. We can now judge our work much more clearly than before; we do not fear to admit our mistakes and thereby rectify them. We want the entire strength of the party to be concentrated on the improvement of the structure of organisation, the raising of the standard of activity, the formation of greater unity with the masses and the working out of ever better working-class tactics and strategy.

With Communist Greetings.

N. LENIN.

*Moscow, August 14, 1921.*

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The Jena Congress of the German Communist Party was successful in achieving the desired unity. The Resolution on Tactics was passed with the assent of left, right and centre; and there were only seven dissentients. Nevertheless the left wing inserted two passages into it which tempered the acceptance of the international decisions: one protesting in part against Trotsky's criticism, and the other (despite explicit disavowal of the theory of the offensive) coming very near to reasserting it in another form. However, the resolution was accepted by the representative of the International Executive as expressing a successful compromise for unity on the basis of the International decisions. The following is the text of the resolution:—

### RESOLUTION ON TACTICS AT THE JENA CONGRESS OF THE GERMAN COMMUNIST PARTY

The Congress bases itself on the decisions of the Third World Congress and is prepared to organise the Party for carrying them out. According to the thesis of the Congress on the world situation the curve of capitalist development is on the decline, despite a temporary revival; whilst the revolutionary curve is on the upgrade despite all vacillations. The course of development in Germany shows that owing to the after effects of war the decay of capitalism is inevitable; its revival in Germany would only be possible at the expense of the proletariat and its total impoverishment. It is the duty of the V.K.P.D. to mass the workers in their fight of self-defence which has already begun, growing ever more intense, and in which the bourgeoisie employs every means in the power of the State against the worker. It must lead the fight in a spirit aiming beyond the prevention of any immediate deterioration in the economic or political situation, at the setting up of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Congress approves the justice of the thesis criticising the March rising, and purposes to profit by these lessons on future occasions.

The Congress affirms that the Third International recognised the necessity and justification for the March coup, judging it a step in advance, and rejected the revolutionary philosophy of the offensive supported by certain sections of the Party. Comrade Trotsky, in his severe criticism of the March affair, overlooked the fact that the mistakes were due not only to this revolutionary philosophy of the offensive, but also to the earlier passive attitude of the Party.

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Already the Party has made efforts to put into effect the lessons deduced from the March action; it would have had more success had not the "Soviet" group's attacks on the Party and lack of discipline prevented progress in this direction. The lessons to be deduced are :—

(1) Careful preparation of all struggles, and exact analysis of situations as they arise. The Party to enter into the closest relations with the bulk of the masses. Aims of all struggles to be easily understood by every worker.

(2) The spirit of unity in the fight to be fostered and carefully developed within the organisations. Relentless discipline.

(3) All vestiges of opportunism and tendencies towards inactivity to be similarly overcome, together with the policy of revolutionary impatience and radical-sounding phrases.

The discussion and realisation of our present tasks must take precedence at Party debates over all criticism and discussion of the past in view of our exact summing up of our March mistakes.

The Congress takes it for granted that everyone will be drawn into the movement who subscribes to the decisions of the Third Congress, and is prepared to work on the lines of the Moscow agreement and to submit to Party discipline. Because of the process of economic ruin in Germany, because of the employers' offensive, which in every way is backed by the machinery of State power, and because of the terrible want of the mass of the proletariat and the small bourgeoisie, the tasks before the German Communist Party can only be accomplished by directing their work of agitation and organisation to the goal of action. If the pressure exerted by the Party is insufficient to lead the proletariat to battle with united front, it should attempt independently to lead large sections of the masses into action. This policy of protecting the vital interests of the proletariat through its most active and class-conscious part can only succeed and can only stir up the more backward, if the objective of the struggle has grown out of actual facts and is intelligible to the mass of the people, who must recognise in that objective their own. The German Communist Party's imperative duty is to seize the initiative in all campaigns against the increase in the price of bread and cost of living generally, the reduction of real wages and the shifting of monstrous burdens of taxation on to the proletariat. It will only be possible to carry out this programme if every group, industrial, trade union or district, if every single member of the Party, if the whole Party press and the parliamentary groups fully grasp and clearly formulate the duties of the moment, and under firm and consistent leadership start the battle for the general demands of the proletariat, letting every single watchword be based on the actual facts of the day, uniting the masses in a single front against the bourgeoisie, extending and in-

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tensifying the fight, and concentrating on the ultimate goal: the conquest and establishment of power by the proletariat.

While it is essential during the growth of the movement to intensify the struggle, it is also the duty of the Party, if the movement assumes a retrograde course, to secure a close and orderly retreat of the masses. The main point is that the V.K.P.D. should be filled with the spirit of preparedness for struggle and overcome all tendency to passivity.

The V.K.P.D. must not confine itself to defensive tactics against the dangers threatened and the blows inflicted on the proletariat. In the time of world revolution the Communist Party is of its very essence the party of attack in the onslaught on capitalism.

# ENGLAND AND RURAL INDIA

By "I. C. S."

**I**T seems to be an obvious duty at the present time to reconsider all our conventional ideas about the Empire, and in particular about India. Now it is commonly held in England that whatever else we may have done or left undone in India, we have at any rate conferred great benefits on the agriculturists and landlords, who form nine-tenths of the total population. Every apologist of our rule has rightly emphasised the essentially rural character of the country, and few have had the hardihood to maintain that we have benefited either the few Indians who have received a European education, or that other class, the "landless proletariat," which has been brought into existence by the growth of the milling and mining industries.

In 1909 Lord Curzon stated, in his usual dogmatic manner, all that he considered the Indian agriculturist really needs: "To be worried as little as possible for money, to be helped generously in times of famine, to have their disputes settled without fear or favour, and to be protected against money-lenders, landlords, and legal practitioners." In very many parts of India the modern agriculturist wants and expects a great deal more than this from Government; but even accepting Lord Curzon's estimate as correct, it is at least arguable that we have failed completely and signally in all the four points that he enumerates. It will be best to take each point separately—Land Revenue, Famine, Judicial Work, and Protection against Money-lenders.

## I

Though our revenue system varies throughout India, the English usually adopted the method in force when they came to the country. Land taxes remain the chief method of



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raising revenue, just as they did under Asoka. A tax based on the fertility of the soil forms the first claim on all cultivated land. Sometimes it is fixed permanently, but over most of India is liable to periodic revision. The general effect of it is that in areas where there is no irrigation a village has to sell just about a tenth of its harvest to pay the revenue. Grain and straw are usually almost the only marketable commodities, so the land revenue leaves the village in the form of grain; and as revenue is collected at fixed periods, this means grain sold at the bottom of the market. The arrangements for assessment and collection are complicated, but not very efficient, and there is a considerable leakage, especially through minor officials. This leakage has, of course, to be made good by the cultivator.

In irrigated areas the question is more complicated; but every peasant imagines that Government gets its *quid pro quo* for all irrigation works in the form of increased revenue, and on the whole this is correct, as all irrigation works are expected to pay a fair percentage. It is a common mistake for Englishmen to assume that the native population, either in India, Egypt, or Mesopotamia, feels any gratitude for irrigation or railway works. Some years ago Lord Cromer pointed out that there was not the least reason to expect gratitude unless the irrigation works were a free gift, and recent history in Mesopotamia has merely emphasised this obvious truth.

Let us put ourselves in the position of the average villager, who realises that the revenue takes twenty cartloads of grain out of his hamlet, and who tries to think what he gets back in exchange. In the larger villages there are schools, with one or two underpaid masters, but few villagers care to keep their sons at school after they are old enough to start the simplest kinds of farm work. Sometimes there is a Government road near the village, and occasionally some other form of building, but there are thousands of villages which have paid revenue for about a hundred years in which it would be impossible to find any sign of Government work. The

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villager has police protection of a sort, but he is usually too poor to be afraid of robbery, and the only other common serious crime is murder. As regards the latter, practically every Hindu and most Mahommedans object strongly to capital punishment, and our elaborate judicial system seems to them merely ridiculous. I do not think that anyone would be bold enough to argue that our civil courts help the agriculturist.

I fear that the villager must realise that he gets very little in exchange for all that grain, while he probably forgets the chief benefit he receives from Government, which is immunity from war. Indeed, sometimes looking down on a little Maratha village I have remembered that the grandfathers of the present tired and hopeless-looking villagers were the men who watered their horses in the Indus, and terrified Calcutta, and I have wondered whether freedom from war is an unmixed blessing from the agriculturist's point of view.

On the whole, it is difficult to see why the agriculturist should be thankful for our revenue system. It is fixed, rigid, and theoretically equitable, but none of these are characteristics which make for popularity. In many parts of India we have made the additional mistake of leaving the actual collection of land revenue in the hands of men who are of entirely different caste from the villagers.

## II

When any outsider ventures to criticise British rule in India, he is nearly always met by a reference to famine work. Perhaps it is fortunate that very few Englishmen have any practical experience of famine work, so that one of the weakest points in our administration has gone almost unchallenged.

The frequency and severity of famines before the British came to India is a complicated question, which has, unfortunately, become a subject of political controversy. Undoubtedly there were famines, for, besides a certain amount

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of historical evidence, many parts of India are dependent for their year's harvest on certain rains not only being sufficient, but also being properly timed. Of course, it is quite possible that agriculturists used to keep larger reserves of grain in hand, but there is no real doubt that two bad years in succession must always have caused immense suffering, and also practically exterminated the cattle in affected areas.

From the earliest days of the East India Company it was known that India was liable to suffer from famines, and one of the very worst occurred in Bengal shortly after we had undertaken the administration of this country. It is interesting to remember that in France and other parts of Europe this famine was ascribed to the exploitation of the country by the English. Since then there has been a severe famine about once every twenty years, the last being in the year following the war, 1918-1919. At no period during the last century could the English have argued that a famine was so unexpected that a reasonable Government should not have made preparations for it. In spite of this it was not till after the famine of 1900 that any clear-cut schemes were worked out for dealing with famines. It does not require a very high standard of administrative work to realise that all office work necessary for starting relief works, and arrangements for importing grain and fodder into precarious areas, and the hundred and one practical details of famine work, have to be worked out for each district and kept ready in case of famine. This, however, was never seriously attempted till the last twenty years. For nearly a century famine succeeded famine, and on each occasion there was the same story of delay before the declaration of famine, and when it was too late the sanctioning of relief works which had not been properly thought out, and ill-arranged systems of dole which only touched the fringe of the general distress.

In 1877 five million people died of starvation, and the famine of 1900 in the Deccan was completely mismanaged,

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yet no one seems to have realised that tragedies of this sort were anybody's fault; they seem to have been considered as inevitable, like the Irish potato famine. Mr. Kipling's absurd picture of famine work, in which a district officer wanders round the country in charge of what seems to have been an itinerant relief camp, has been accepted by most people in England as something about which we should be proud. As a matter of fact, the history of our famine work is very similar to that of many of our smaller wars. The Englishman is excellent at the elementary practical side of the work, and by dint of physical hard work and energy has managed to gloss over the defects of the system, just as the British soldier frequently has won victories in spite of bad staff work.

Even to-day our famine codes are faulty and ruined by excessive centralisation and hopeless parsimony. The methods of camp organisation, etc., are those which the last war has shown to be wrong, while too little attention is paid to the prevention of famine conditions directly the rains have proved a failure. Although the agriculturist pays the bulk of the revenue in direct taxation, and, as we have seen, gets little enough in return, yet the one time Government might make some recompense, they work out famine codes which aim at just keeping the population on the borders of starvation. It is difficult to avoid forming opinions on chance impressions, but the present writer was much struck by two camps seen in January and April of 1919. The first was a refugee camp in Mesopotamia for the inhabitants of the Lake Van district who had fled in front of the Turks. About 30,000 men, women and children were housed in large tents and looked after so well that they cost about Rs.15 per head daily. The second camp was a famine relief camp in the Deccan, and consisted of rows of huts made from three pieces of matting. These formed a slight protection from the sun, but none from the rains which started towards the end of the famine operations. The cost of the camp per head was about one-third of a rupee daily, and the

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inhabitants worked eight hours a day breaking stones. It should, perhaps, be mentioned that the guard for the Mesopotamian camp was a Maratha regiment, recruited in the Deccan, and that the expenses of that camp were partly contributed from Indian sources. It is, presumably, better to belong to a country upon which an Empire has ambitions than to the Empire itself.

Probably, famines are not a great peril of the future. Railways at first accentuated famine conditions by discouraging the habit of hoarding grain, for, while it was never impossible to get enough grain into a famine district, all the distress was caused by the difficulty of getting it distributed properly. Nowadays people in precarious tracts are learning to use the railways to emigrate in bad years to industrial centres, or to parts which are not so badly hit. Thus, in the Deccan, the "ryot," when he has seen his crop wither past recovery, sells his cattle or leaves them with a less enterprising neighbour, and makes his way down to the mills at Bombay or any other work that may be available.

### III

Although Indian criminal and civil law are based on the English system, yet the actual administration of both is almost entirely in Indian hands. It is a common idea in England that the Indian peasant can always take his case before an English magistrate, and usually prefers to do so. Even if there was once some foundation for this belief, it has not the remotest connection with modern Indian conditions. As long ago as 1840 Macaulay had converted the Indian Government to the principle of adopting the English system of law, as well as English methods of education. He failed to see that a handful of Englishmen would never have sufficient influence to enable these foreign importations to take root in an unsuitable soil. Just as education has never flourished, so law has become more and more divorced both from justice and from the general welfare of the people.

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India has earned an unenviable reputation for the amount of its civil litigation, the greater part of which concerns land disputes, mortgages, and religious trusts, all of which closely affect the rural classes. These cases are tried under a complicated civil code, either before a Sub-Judge, who is invariably, or the District Judge, who frequently is an Indian. Lawyers are almost always employed, even in the smallest cases, and the law is interpreted correctly but pedantically. The final court of appeal is a provincial High Court, with little of the independence or prestige of an appellate court at home, and which consequently tends to administer the strict letter of the law. It is clear that the average peasant has nothing to gain from this system when he becomes involved in a dispute with a wealthy money-lender; in fact, no better method could have been evolved for placing the illiterate mass of agriculturists into the power of the small class who can understand subtle legal points and employ expensive lawyers. The smaller civil courts are not free from the taint of bribery, which is another powerful weapon in the hands of wealthy litigants.

There can be scarcely two hundred English magistrates taking original criminal work in India. A similar proportion per head of population in England would be about thirty for the whole British Isles. Nearly all minor cases are taken by Indian magistrates, who are usually Government servants, as it is almost impossible to get suitable men to sit on District Benches. In these courts, lawyers appear in nearly every case, and they have a well-organised system of touting. In any little village dispute, the parties are urged to take the case into court, and, once there, it drags on for months before some Brahmin clerk, who is an easy prey to a procrastinating lawyer.

As regards the more serious offences, like murder, a villager who is accused of some crime will get a theoretically fair trial before the District Judge, but he gains little by a system which places his defence entirely in the hands of a lawyer, while the case is solemnly thrashed out in a language

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which he does not understand, under a code which means nothing to him.

When Lord Curzon wrote about the agriculturists' disputes being settled without fear or favour, I am afraid he was deliberately playing on a mistaken idea which his countrymen hold about our methods of administering law in India.

### IV

Most English writers on Indian subjects seem to assume that because Government's general attitude is opposed to absentee landlords and money-lenders our rule has therefore tended to protect agriculturists against them. This claim is so preposterous that it could scarcely have gone unchallenged unless most of the Indian nationalist Press was financed by the lawyer and money-lending class. Undoubtedly the two great evils of rural India are absentee landlords and the excessive subdivision of the land into small holdings; but though legislation has been attempted on both these questions, it has proved such a failure that the whole problem has been shelved. In many parts of India it has been decided that such subjects should best be dealt with by the new councils. Very likely this is a sound decision, but it is also a confession that our policy is bankrupt in regard to a side of Indian life in which we have usually posed as the chief defenders of the Indian masses.

Very little thought will show that the legal system we have introduced is such a powerful shield for the money-lender, or "buniah," that any ordinary legislation aimed against him is bound to fail. As the land systems in India vary a great deal, it will be best to take a specific area to show how complete our failure has been. In the Deccan, as in most of India, the Government is theoretically the sole landlord. In practice, about a fifth of the area has been permanently alienated during early days of the East Indian Company, and given to the families of various landowners who assisted the English. The remainder of the land has been allowed to be alienated by the original holders, and the only result of the State being

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landlord is to make the land revenue the first claim on land, which is liable to be forfeited on failure to pay. In early days the Company naturally encouraged the larger land-owners, as the only possible way in which a foreign power can keep a hold on a large semi-civilised population.

Undoubtedly the village "buniah" was a feature of village life before we came to the country, but he lent his money without real security, and his despotism was based on the comparative good will of the inhabitants, and was tempered by a very real fear of robbery and assault.

The English administration gave him police protection and civil courts, with Indian judges interpreting civil law pedantically and with little regard to equity. With this assistance the "buniah" could afford to smile if the revenue officials were unsympathetic, for he knew that he must win in the end. Even if the English revenue officer took such opportunities as came his way to help the agriculturist against him, yet most of the revenue work, the improvement of land records, and the registration of documents, etc., all played into his hands. He has never flourished as he does to-day, and he has been reinforced by other classes, especially practising lawyers. Every year when the harvest is below average the "buniahs" spread their tentacles over more land, and it is the exception to find any land within reach of a town which is free from encumbrance.

About 1916 Dr. Mann undertook a careful analysis of a typical Deccan village. It was a small hamlet of about 100 families, mostly cultivators working on about 800 acres of unirrigated land. The Government revenue came to Rs.1,600, or about two rupees an acre. The indebtedness of the village was Rs.13,000, at interest varying from twelve to seventy per cent. The yearly interest charge was over three rupees an acre. This is not abnormal, and many villages would show a higher rate. During the famine of 1918 I collected some figures for an ordinary village inside the famine area, and a long way from the nearest town. The village had an acreage of about 1,000, and was assessed by



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Government at about two rupees an acre. During four famine months the villagers had mortgaged land for a nominal Rs.12,000, of which, following a common custom, they had actually received less than Rs.10,000. All these transactions were mortgages with possession made out in proper form, and entered in the village records, and will undoubtedly be enforced by civil courts. Co-operative societies have been started, but they have done practically nothing to release the average cultivator from this burden of debt, and frequently these societies get into the hands of the old "buniahs."

Some attempts have been made to deal with this state of affairs by legislation, but the only result has been to provide the lawyers with new sources of income. Thus the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act gave a civil court the right to inquire into the actual terms under which land was mortgaged, and to grant relief in the case of exorbitant interest being charged. In a few months the "buniahs" had discovered the method of "false sales," where a mortgage with possession is made out in the form of a sale. For this and other reasons the Act has proved a complete failure, and no attempt has been made to replace it.

Quite possibly the problem is insoluble. The first effect of foreign rule is to upset the natural balance between classes, and we must look on the present ascendancy of the "buniah" and the lawyer as a necessary consequence of our occupation; but it seems incredible that anyone, even a retired Viceroy, should be so ignorant of actual conditions as to claim that the English have held the "buniah" in check. As a matter of fact, the first result of our withdrawal from the Deccan would be the hasty retreat of the Marwadi and the other rapacious and cowardly castes who batten on the agriculturist.

The other great rural evil, the excessive subdivision of land holdings, has grown steadily worse during the last fifty years, and no attempt has been made to deal with it. Under the present Hindu law a man's estates are usually divided

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amongst his heirs, field by field, instead of by taking the property as a whole. The result is that an enormous proportion of land, especially in the Deccan, is divided into uneconomic small holdings, so that a man owning ten acres will usually have them scattered about the village in plots of one or two acres, frequently of an awkward and unworkable shape. No one disputes the importance of this evil, but the local Governments realise that any legislation would probably offend some portion of the people, and as the problem is not one that endangers our rule, the whole subject has been left untouched.

A century of British rule has now ended in a confession of failure, and the measure of our failure is not the amount of agitation against our government, but the hopeless condition of the Indian cultivator, and his poorer brother, the coolie. It is too early to consider the effect of the new Councils, but their powers are limited, and they represent the middle classes rather than the actual cultivators. Their institution does not relieve us of a fearful responsibility.

A COMMISSION OF INQUIRY



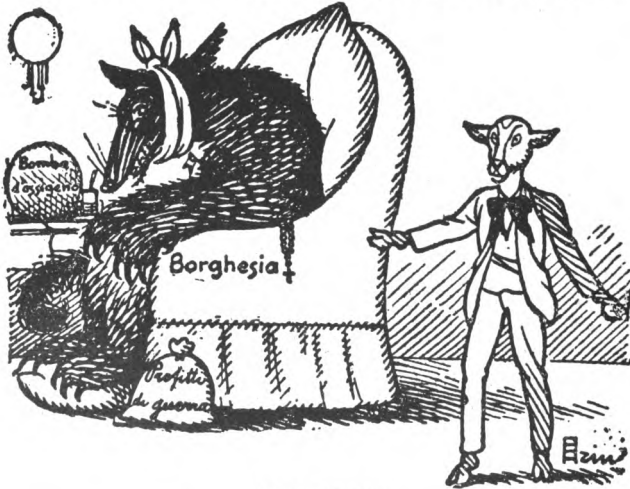
"Mercy! Food!"

"Don't be unreasonable. We must find out first if you really are hungry."—*Les Hommes du Jour*.

## REACTION IN ITALY



THE FASCISTI: "And now let us make peace."—*L'Ordine Nuovo*.



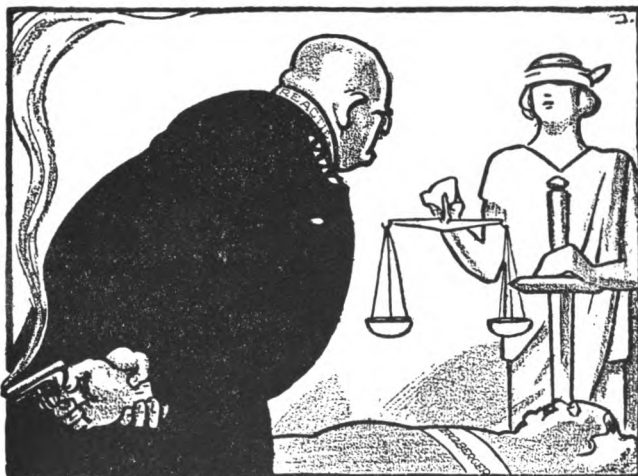
### COALITION

'I must come in—there's no other way of saving the wolf!'—*Avanti*.  
[The bourgeois wolf sits with his war-profits on one side, and an oxygen cylinder on the other.]

## REACTION IN GERMANY

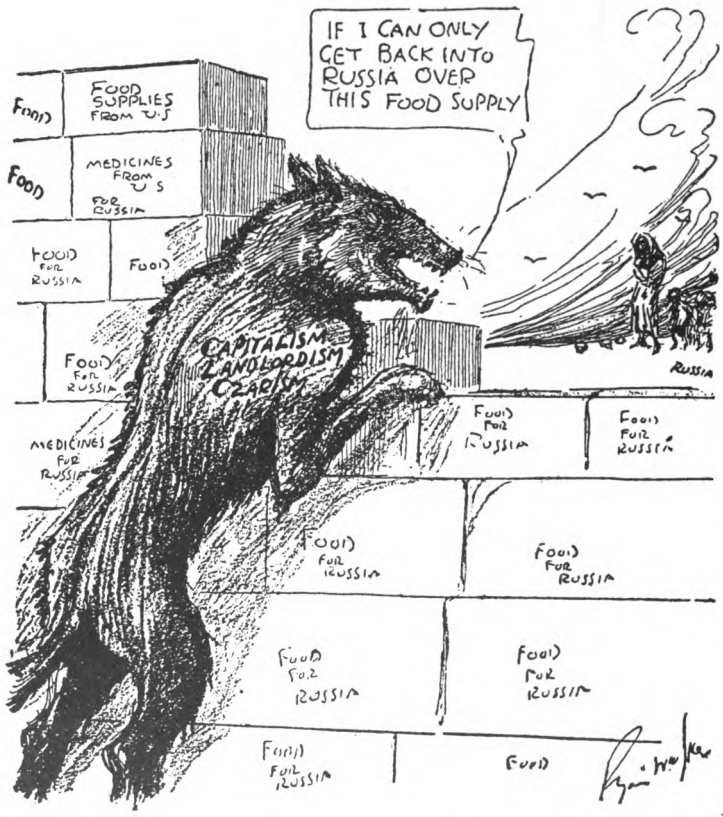


"The three hundredth. Who comes next, John?"—*Notenkraker.*



"We did not do it! We only oppose the proletariat and democracy, and always by constitutional means."—*Notenkraker.*

# THE ALLIES AND RUSSIA



—The New York Call.

# SHORTER NOTICES

## THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY IN RUSSIA

**T**HE principle of the new economic policy, involving a change from "military Communism" to a form of State Capitalism, was agreed upon at the last All-Russian Congress of Soviets. The formulation in detail is a series of decrees issued by the Council of People's Commissaries and All-Russian Central Executive Committee; and their gradual realisation in practice is resulting in modifications of the economic structure of Soviet Russia. The new policy is the result of the paramount necessity of the most rapid possible development of all the productive resources of the country, together with the adaptation necessary to commercial intercourse with capitalist Europe. To this end large-scale nationalised industry is being organised in the form of State trusts covering only those concerns which are most suitable for administration on a national scale, with the advantages resulting from such concentration, while the remaining enterprises are being handed over to co-operative and other societies or to private enterprise by home and foreign capitalists.

The fundamental decree of the Council of People's Commissaries lays down the rôle of the Trade Unions in production, defines the basis on which the Supreme Economic Council will divide the large-scale factories and enterprises into those which will remain under its control and those which are to be given on lease. It fixes the relation of the State organs to the "home" and petty industry and the reciprocal relation of those with large-scale industry. Definite payment is fixed for all the economic services of the State. The Committee of Labour and Defence acts as the leader in carrying out the policy of the Supreme Economic Council. With regard to home industry and peasant economy the object aimed at is the creation of conditions under which "home" workers and independent craftsmen can most speedily develop industry on right lines, freely controlling the products of their own labour. The conditions of workers in leased enterprises have been formulated separately by the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions on a basis of collective contract. To develop the State co-operative exchange of goods a money form of exchange is necessary.

The new policy is now taking effect. State trusts are now coming into operation, such as the linen, cotton and woollen trusts in the textile industry, the railway construction trust, &c. The scheme of "collective provisioning" is applied to the workers in these industries under which the total remuneration for a given concern is fixed, not in consideration of the number of workers, but according to the fulfil-

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ment of a "production programme." As the total remuneration is independent of the number of workers, the men themselves are interested in increasing production and getting rid of useless "ballast." Favourable results are everywhere reported, allowing a considerable curtailment of staff, while at the same time output is maintained and even increased.

Leasing of enterprises is generally fixed on a basis of guaranteed production with a definite percentage accruing to the State as rent. In many cases applicants for leases have been the former possessors of the factories. One of the recent large concessions is that given to the Northern Telegraph Co. for the construction of submarine cable and overhead telegraph communications between Sweden, Russia, Siberia and the Far East. In the case of the Russo-German Transport Co. the Soviet Government is itself a shareholder, holding a half of the shares.

Payment has been introduced for State services and products at prices fixed by the Value Committee of the Commissariat of Finance. Payment is not allowed to the latter for feeding of children, articles issued as rations or in wage payment, or for articles of "Social Insurance" and medical treatment. Payment is now in force for railway and train services and foreign postage. Special attention has been given to the question of housing and room rents have been fixed for lodgings, offices, warehouses, &c.

Development of the free market has proceeded rapidly. Under the regulations children under 16 are not allowed to take part in this trade. Many co-operative shops have been opened and at these perishable eatables are sold even to non-members. Freedom has been given to the co-operative societies to carry on operations on their own account and at their own risk. They are allowed to attract loans by offering interest, with responsibility of members for co-operative obligations. Regulations are fixed for State loans from the Co-operative Section of the Commissariat for Finance. This section has begun the reception of deposits on current account on which a percentage is given. The whole amount can be withdrawn at will.

### CANADIAN LABOUR AND THE U.S.A.

**T**HE last Canadian Trades and Labour Congress, held at Winnipeg at the end of August, illustrates in an interesting way the peculiar relation of Canadian Trade Unionism and the United States. The majority of the Canadian Unions are branches of the "international" Unions of the American Federation of Labour, with their headquarters in the United States. Of the 373,000 organised workers in Canada, 267,000 are in "international" Unions; though this last figure includes "international" (i.e., American)



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Unions outside the American Federation of Labour, and also the "One Big Union" which was started as an opposition industrial unionist movement in Western Canada and spread over the United States. The Dominion Trades and Labour Congress is a subordinate body of the American Federation of Labour, from which it holds a charter, and has no independent executive power. The nature of this relation was illustrated by a particular case which was decided at the Congress. The Canadian Brotherhood of Railroad Employees was held to conflict with the sphere of an American "international" Union, the Brotherhood of Railroad Clerks, which claimed to organise railway workers of this type in Canada. Consequently the Canadian Trades and Labour Congress proceeded to expel the Canadian Brotherhood of Railroad Employees by a vote of 395 to 151. On the other hand, this strict "international" discipline solely regards America: the American Federation of Labour refused at its last Congress to have anything to do with any existing form of international Trade Union organisation. In this respect the Canadian Congress at Winnipeg has broken away from the policy of the American Federation of Labour, and decided to adhere independently to the International Federation of Trade Unions.

### THE K.A.P.D. AND THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

**T**HE Congress of the Communist Labour Party of Germany (K.A.P.D.) was held on September 12. The K.A.P.D., which was originally formed in April, 1920, as a left-wing secession from the Communist Party, has never been affiliated to the Third International, but was accepted by the Executive of that body for representation in a consultative capacity. The last Congress of the Third International called on the K.A.P.D. either to accept the Communist policy as laid down at the International Congress and to unite with the Communist Party, or else to end its connection with the Third International. The K.A.P.D. has decided at the Congress now held to break with the Third International, and the following resolution was passed:—

This Congress declares that our attitude towards the Russian Soviet Government has been brought about by its present policy. The Soviet Government in its *rôle* of fighter for the proletarian revolution must receive the most active support of the K.A.P.D., but when it deserts this post and acts as manager of the bourgeois revolution, then the K.A.P.D.'s duty is to oppose it. By taking this line of action the K.A.P.D. is also acting in the interest of the Russian proletariat, and purposes to carry on the fight in the light of the experiences gained from the Russian revolution, and with the recognition of its tremendous attainments.

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The Congress declared in favour of starting a new or Fourth International (which would be on the basis of left-wing communism and express anti-Parliamentarian tendencies), and prospects were held out of linking up with similar groups in Holland, Bulgaria, Jugo-Slavia and England. The strength of the K.A.P.D. has recently been given as about 36,000 members.

A statement concerning the proposed International has been made in the organ of the K.A.P.D., *Der Proletarier* (No. 8), of which the following is the gist :—

By the tactics adopted at the Third Congress of the Third International, the Third International has become an instrument of the Bourgeoisie against the Proletariat—the twin brother of the Second International.

“The Soviet Government of Russia has ceased to be a Proletarian Government by reason of its concessions to the peasants. This Government draws with it the fate of the Third International, has robbed it of its independence and made it dependent on the Bourgeoisie.”

The Third Congress of the Third International betrayed the Proletariat by handing over the leadership of the Proletarian International to the Russian State and its leaders.

The Soviet Government, forced by economic circumstances to introduce Capitalism into the country, becomes itself the representative of Capitalism.

The Third International is working for the construction of the Russian State: the Second International for the reconstruction of the several capitalist states—that is the line of demarcation between the two.

“The Third International is lost for the proletarian world revolution. . . . Betrayal is all that can be expected from it. Hence, the absolute necessity of founding a new Communist Labour International.”

The work of the new International will be the realisation of the Proletarian Communist Era. Just as the Second and Third Internationals have their methods of International relationship, the K.A.I. (Communist Labour International) will be obliged to establish centres and build from below upwards a real Soviet International.

One of the first duties is to establish an International Information and Organisation Bureau.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## THE TRUE LIBERALISM

*Socialism and Personal Liberty.* By Robert Dell. Leonard Parsons, Ltd. 4s. 6d.

“PERSONAL liberty in the Socialist State,” the publishers’ note tells us, “is an old controversy.” It certainly is. The controversy used to be carried on between Liberals and Socialists. The Liberals who didn’t like Socialism used to tell the workers that however much they might benefit from Socialism economically, life simply wouldn’t be worth living under the regimentation of a Socialist system. Mr. Dell must have been greatly perturbed by the controversy: his opening remark is that “One of the greatest obstacles to the progress of Socialist ideas is the fear that Socialism would destroy personal liberty.” Perhaps this is true of the circles in which Mr. Dell moves; but few members of the working class have ever worried much about it. And the reason is not far to seek.

In the mass, the ideology of any section of the people is determined by the economic position of that section. There are exceptional individuals, no doubt; but it is a sound instinct which makes the working class suspicious of the middle-class Socialist. Socialism, as Mr. Dell recognises, is not a panacea, but a system devised to remedy certain economic evils. And it is the working class, not the middle class, which primarily suffers from these economic evils. The middle class, at least the section to which Mr. Dell belongs, suffers from other evils—in Mr. Dell’s case, for example, the passport regulations seem to cause him acute suffering, and he argues forcibly that “every individual should be free to move about the world as he pleases and to settle anywhere without let or hindrance, provided he conforms to the local laws and regulations.” But Mr. Dell endures even more acute suffering from the fear that, under Socialism, he may be made to go to church on Sunday, or that Musigny or Romanée-Conti (which are, apparently, the finest of red burgundies) may be lost sight of in a Socialist society. Mr. Dell may think it unfair to select these examples; but, after all, they are the essence of the matter. The proletariat has nothing to lose but its chains; Mr. Dell’s section of society has other things to lose—the rights and privileges which it enjoys under the existing system. And now that it realises that Socialism is inevitable, it begins to be anxious, and to write books showing how valuable its personal liberty is, and what a loss to the world it would be if Socialism swept away its trips to Paris, Switzerland, and Italy, or its favourite wines.

No Socialist underestimates the value of personal liberty, of the

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freedom of the Press, of the right to stay away from church on Sunday, and of all the other privileges which some sections of society enjoy under the Capitalist system. But the value of some things is greater than that of others; and the working-class Socialist values light and air and life higher than these abstract liberties. It is particularly noticeable in Mr. Dell's book that, apart from a few perfunctory references to economic conditions, the sort of thing that he really feels about the present system is that the land is not free, and that "A system that makes it possible for a Rockefeller to have an income of £1,000 an hour needs changing." Hence it is that when, in arguing his case for liberty, Mr. Dell deals with Soviet Russia, he joins Mr. Bertrand Russell in assuming that the Russian experiment has failed or must fail. He says nothing of what has been done; he is only concerned with what has not been done. He tries hard to be very just, even generous; he points out that Allied intervention has been a great hindrance, and that probably the greater part of the present disorganisation of Russia is due to intervention and blockade. But he carefully avoids any discussion of fundamentals; he points out the danger that the existing Government may try to keep itself in power at all costs; he does not mention the danger that the one Socialist Government in the world may lose power. All through the book he gives the impression that personal liberty means more to him than Socialism.

Personal liberty, according to Mr. Dell, is "the minimum of constraint. And it is possible to define the minimum of constraint. The irreducible minimum is such constraint as may be necessary to prevent an individual from so using his liberty as to interfere with the liberty or the rights of others." It is an old definition; it is an old controversy as to what the definition means. The Liberal Party used to take it very seriously.

And when Mr. Dell, in a final chapter headed "Libertarian Socialism," tries to explain what he really means, it all comes down to the expropriation of the economic rent of the land (with compensation; but Mr. Dell has Communist leanings: he proposes that compensation should only be half the real value); universal free trade; and internationalism; plus red burgundies and incomes up to but on no account exceeding £2,000 a year.

It has been pointed out that the whole question of Socialism and Personal Liberty used to agitate the Liberal Party. Nowadays it seems mainly to agitate members of Socialist parties. The true Liberal always knew that Socialism was inevitable; in his more exalted moments he was even prepared to welcome it. But he hoped that, when it came, it would have the decency to come quietly and respectably, and, above all, that it would involve the "minimum of constraint" over his privileges. But the more certain he was that

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Socialism was coming, the more anxious he became about his own prospects.

Now that Socialists themselves are beginning to realise that Socialism is imminent, the outbreak of early Liberal principles among them is assuming epidemic proportions. E. B.

### A RUSSIAN PHILIPPIC

*The Defence of Terrorism* (Terrorism and Communism): A Reply to Karl Kautsky. By L. Trotsky. With a Preface by H. N. Brailsford. The Labour Publishing Company. 3s. 6d.

“**T**ERRORISM AND COMMUNISM” was written sixteen months ago, in the midst of the Russo-Polish war. It is a strange spectacle to see a Minister for War, in the midst of a military crisis, engaged in a bookish controversy. But the explanation is not difficult. The whole driving force of the revolution depends on the belief of the Bolshevik theorists that they have been and are theoretically right and that the other Socialist theorists are wrong. Now of the other Socialist theorists by far the best known on the Continent is Karl Kautsky. For many years he was the High Priest of Marxism, and from the editorial chair of *Die Neue Zeit* spoke as *ex cathedra*. He was considered the orthodox exponent of Marxism, and many a working man learned his theoretic Socialism from his book on the Erfurt Programme. For the Bolsheviks it is, therefore, of great importance to show that at any rate the later utterances of Kautsky are an abandonment of the correct Marxist position. Another reason is furnished by Trotsky himself in his introduction, when he answers the question, “Is it still necessary to refute Kautsky theoretically?”

It may be said that the will of the working masses of the whole of the civilised world, directly influenced by the course of events, is at the present moment incomparably more revolutionary than their consciousness, which is still dominated by the prejudices of parliamentarism and compromise. The struggle for the dictatorship of the working class means, at the present moment, an embittered struggle with Kautskianism within the working class. . . . This book must serve the ends of an irreconcilable struggle against the cowardice, half-measures, and hypocrisy of Kautskianism in all countries.

The effect of this reply, however, goes far beyond any mere purpose of answering Kautsky. Indeed, in future Kautsky may be remembered only for his having provoked one of the most brilliant pieces of polemical writing in Socialist history. This book is written in the grand style: and, whichever way it is judged, will keep a place amongst the masterpieces of political argument.

The book answers Kautsky, it is true, but not in the somewhat plodding way, which makes such heavy reading, of Marx's “Philosophy of Poverty” or Lenin's “Proletarian Revolution.” Trotsky himself generates the necessary excitement by the bravura of his style

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for appreciating the intensity of the fight and for understanding the sword-play. Marx here and there turns from the analysis of the errors of Proudhon to a statement of the correct view-point: Trotsky turns from the sweep of his enunciation of the correct view-point to deal with the errors of Kautsky.

He deals first with "the balance of power," then turns to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Here, more than once, there suddenly emerges the scorn of the practical man who is also a theorist (the Philosopher-King) for the philosopher who has never had to apply his theories. For Kautsky, reliance on persuasion is the best weapon of the proletariat. Trotsky rallies him, asking brutally:—

Is it possible that Kautsky is leaning to the idea that the bourgeoisie can be held down with the help of the categorical imperative, which in his last writings plays the part of the Holy Ghost? . . . Every White Guard has long ago acquired the simple truth that it is easier to hang a Communist to a branch of a tree than to convert him with a book of Kautsky's. These gentlemen have no superstitious fear, either of the principles of democracy or of the flames of hell.

He leaves it at that and the argument proceeds with the most brilliant chapter in the book, the chapter on "Democracy." The chapter on "Terrorism" deals with all the revolutions of modern history up to and including the time of the Bolsheviks, up to the time of the revolutionary terrorism in Russia. The German savant's comparison of the Paris Commune with Soviet Russia is traversed in a closely-reasoned chapter which shows a full knowledge of that episode in proletarian history. Thereafter in the chapters entitled "The Working Class and its Soviet Policy" and "Problems of the Organisation of Labour," Trotsky achieves a miracle of compression and propaganda. Within its compass it is probably the best short statement and defence of Soviet Russia that has yet been written. The temper and tone of it suggest a man turning aside from the highest and most exacting form of administrative work to write, not with a tired brain, but with a mind at concert pitch. In short, Trotsky is in "top form." At times he rises into a gaiety of invective, of which one example must be reproduced:—

In this connection, Kautsky asks: "Would Trotsky undertake to get on a locomotive and set it going, in the conviction that he would, during the journey, have time to learn and to arrange everything? One must preliminarily have acquired the qualities necessary to drive a locomotive before deciding to set it going. Similarly the proletariat ought beforehand to have acquired those necessary qualities which make it capable of administering industry, once it had taken it over." This instructive comparison would have done honour to any village clergyman. None the less, it is stupid. With infinitely more foundation one could say: "Will Kautsky dare to mount a horse before he has learned to sit firmly in the saddle, and to guide the animal in all its steps?" We have foundations for believing that Kautsky would

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not make up his mind to such a dangerous purely Bolshevik experiment. On the other hand, we fear that, through not risking to mount the horse, Kautsky would have considerable difficulty in learning the secrets of riding on horseback. For the fundamental Bolshevik prejudice is precisely this: that one learns to ride on horseback only when sitting on the horse.

This book, with its well-proportioned argument and its turns of phrase, affords a literary pleasure not provided for in the usual Bolshevik literature. But to many readers there is another pleasure in the reading of it, in that it recalls a memory of the great controversies of the past. Surely the situation is unparalleled in the last two hundred years, that a new order of society, challenged to defend itself against the hostility of other nations, should also have to justify its existence on a European forum. For any parallel we have to go back to John Milton's "Defensio pro Populo Anglicano." The translation, as is obvious from the extracts I have quoted, is singularly well done, a thing for which we have reason to be grateful, particularly in translations from the Russian. The English is vivid and easy. There is, so far as I have noticed, only one mistake—in the passage where the Russian "Subbota" is given its normal translation of "Saturday" instead of, as it should be in this particular place, "the Sabbath." The printing is also good. But this praise for the auxiliaries of an author cannot be extended to the publishers, at least in one respect. The change of the original title "Terrorism and Communism" to "The Defence of Terrorism" seems likely to be confusing to the bibliographer in the future, and positively misleading as to the contents of the book.

R. P. A.

### PSYCHO-ANALYSING THE BOLSHEVIK

*Psycho-analysis and Sociology.* By Aurel Kolnai. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

THE appearance of a new translation from the busy pens of Eden and Cedar Paul will always win for the author they have selected an attention he might not have otherwise received from the small band of Labour students. They may lead us sometimes into strange paths; but they have a *flair* for the original and the arresting, and they are almost our only link with some of the movements of thought on the Continent.

This time, following a familiar bent, they have chosen the "new psychology" for their subject, and show us its relation to Bolshevism. Unfortunately, they have given us no information of the nature of their victim (for we assume that Professor Kolnai has been chosen by them as a victim to afford us a fascinating study of the professorial mind confronted with what in its own original terminology it calls "red ruin"); but from internal evidence certain facts can be gleaned. Professor Kolnai, it would appear, has had some personal experience

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of the Hungarian revolution and was in Buda Pest during the Soviet regime; and this is no doubt what set his mind thinking about the subject.

In addition to this, Professor Kolnai has views of his own. He believes in something that he terms "Liberal Socialism." What "Liberal Socialism" is he does not deign to explain; but he brings it in occasionally in the course of his studies of the noxious varieties of black and red, much as a student of demonism might occasionally introduce the divinity to point a contrast. From one passage it would appear that "Liberal Socialism" means that typical professorial dream—small proprietorship. But of its divinity he has no doubt. "The place of psycho-analysis," he tells us firmly, "is by the side of 'Liberal Socialism.'"

Professor Kolnai has a very pretty imagination. In one passage he says finely: "The womb is the prototype of all prisons and the umbilical cord is the prototype of all chains." He applies all the correct psycho-analytical formulæ with the deftest touch. Thus, the idea of salvation of the world by the proletarian class he discovers to signify "the wish fantasy of the son, who is inferior in power to the father, and longs to gain possession of the mother (earth, land, the world)." Red and White, he observes, as symbolising Bolshevism and counter-revolution, simply "express the contrasted pair, man and woman, and the contrasted pair, blood and bone." And in a charming passage on the British national character he comes to the conclusion that "the peculiar hypocrisy of the British (not wholly antipathetic), the hypocrisy which is so manifest in British foreign policy, becomes unquestionably more comprehensible to one who is acquainted with the manifestations of British prudery"; he further observes acutely that "there is a point of contact between navalism and sexual symbolism; the 'ship' is of the feminine gender."

The solid Marxian student will not lack matter to chew. Thus he may learn that Bolshevism is "a retrogressive dissolution of paranoiac rigidity, to enable the adherents of the movement to draw nearer to their goal," or, if he prefers a simpler definition, it is "a peculiar feudalist middle course between the direct regression of anarchism and the paranoid regression of Marxian Socialism." And he will not fail to appreciate the ready accounting for his powers of reasoning that are so disconcerting to his opponents by the simple explanation that "the shrewd dialectic of paranoiacs is familiar."

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that Professor Kolnai is lacking in a keen perception of the everyday realities of life. Thus he has a penetrating analysis of the position of the proletariat, in which he calls attention to the fact that "very important in the case of the proletarian is his poverty." This is very true.

There are some good chapter headings in this book: for instance, "Infantile El Dorado Fantasy of Communism." R. P. D.



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# NOTES of the MONTH

*Nothing about Washington—Three Years of Peace—The  
Collapse of a Civilisation—America and Japan to  
the Front—A Century of Progress—The End of  
Moderate Labour—Reparations and Debt—  
America Colonising Europe—Rebuffs  
to Russia—International Labour  
Marks Time—The Indian  
Trades Union  
Congress*

IT will no doubt be a relief to our readers to learn that we propose to spare them the infliction of any disquisitions on the Washington Conference in the current issue. Those persons who may be excited on the subject by the short-lived clamours of the Press are recommended to read a little history. We have already dealt with the underlying issues of Washington before, and will return to them in the light of the facts next month. Meanwhile we believe it will be of greater value to survey the governing factors of the world economic situation to-day which lie behind the trappings of the scene upon the stage.

THE third anniversary of the armistice has brought an increase, and not a decrease, in the world's chaos. The facile hopes of 1918, and the more sober hopes of a possible recovery during 1919 and 1920, have given place to the black outlook of the coming winter. It is now a year and a half since the Supreme Council issued its Economic Memorandum, in which it declared that it looked with confidence to the "clear sign of renewed prosperity." Like Mr. Lloyd George to-day, the Supreme Council tried to find comfort in the fallacious parallel of the Napoleonic Wars, and thought that it could regard the worst crisis as over and look forward to better times ahead. Since that date British trade has fallen in values of exports from £130,730,738 to £63,842,222, and unemployment has increased from under half a million to two millions. Twelve months ago the Brussels Financial Conference was sum-

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moned to survey the situation. It found in the leading European countries which it surveyed a ninefold increase in debt, an expenditure on the service of debt of one-fifth to nearly one-third of the whole national expenditure, an expenditure on armaments of one-fifth of the total national expenditure, budgetary deficits in every country but two, and an adverse balance of trade in every country. It recommended as the only hope of salvation the balancing of expenditure and revenue, the limitation of armaments and the reduction of debt. To-day the British National Debt has increased since the beginning of the current financial year by £143 millions to a total of £7,787 millions; the budget shows a deficit of £60 millions; the expenditure on armaments continues and new programmes have been laid down; and the French Chamber Finance Commission has recently issued an ultimatum to the Government on its inability to make the budget balance. On the general situation the *Manchester Guardian Commercial* writes: "There is little that can be done but await events. If the ruined countries can in the course of the next year or two screw up their courage to meet expenditure out of taxation, the position perhaps is not so desperate, though all hope of reverting to pre-war parities has now disappeared. If not, the ultimate result can hardly be imagined."

**W**HETHER there are any who still believe that we are only witnessing a passing storm after the disturbances of the war, and not the slow cumulative collapse of a whole system of civilisation, would seem a question unnecessary to ask were it not that the last speech of Mr. Lloyd George reveals him still clinging to the parallel of the Napoleonic Wars. Historical parallels are dangerous things, and they will not help us much in the practical difficulties of the present. The post-Napoleonic Europe was an essentially agrarian society; England was a country with a population of ten millions; and the whole condition of things bore no relation or analogy to the vast helpless industrial populations of to-day and the delicate industrial mechanism of twentieth century society. To-day the war has shattered a Europe that was the customer of one-third of British trade abroad; England finds herself the debtor of an America

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whose emergence into world politics is an entirely new factor in the situation; the awakening industrialism of Japan and Asia is threatening already to curtail the extra-European markets; and in Russia the revolutionary challenge of a new power constitutes a standing breach in the system of capitalist States. All these are novel factors which constitute a situation without parallel. And they are factors which cannot be counted on to pass away in the course of a few years. We need to adjust our calculations to a condition of things in which the pre-war world is gone for ever. Whoever uses analogies from the pre-war world is living in an idle dream. Before the war British exports amounted to six hundred millions, and of these two hundred millions or one-third went to Europe. In 1920 this proportion rose to 40 per cent., owing to losses in the extra-European markets. The European market has become of paramount importance to British trade. And the European market to-day has been shattered by the policy of the Government, a policy that, in spite of platonic aspirations after better trade and economic recovery, is still being continued, maintained and extended, as in the latest instance of the decision over Upper Silesia with its disastrous effect on the German exchange. The total of British exports in the third quarter of 1920, calculated in money values of 1913, stood at 81 per cent. of the total for the same period in 1913. To-day the figure for the same period is 46 per cent. British export trade, on which the industrial life of Britain is maintained, has fallen to under half the pre-war size. And in this condition Britain has to provide a budget which would have been staggering before the war, and to find interest on debt amounting to four hundred millions a year.

**E**VEN more important in the general situation is the rise of power of America and Japan. The war enabled America to come to the forefront as a world industrial and financial power: the tremendous profits of her war trade, the intensification of production without the destructive effects of a prolonged struggle, the development of a merchant marine by a twentyfold increase in shipbuilding, and the transference from a position of debtor to that of the world's creditor, left her far in front of the war-worn

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European countries and able to extend her economic influence and financial penetration to every quarter of the earth. In 1913 Britain still led the world's trade, and America came second with a total export 97 per cent. of the British total. In 1920 the value of American exports was 126 per cent. of the British figure. This was in 1920, the boom year of British post-war trade. What the figure will be in 1921 can only be guessed, for the full returns are still to come. No less important, because of its potential significance for the future, is the industrial development of Japan and India. In 1905 the paid-up capital of industrial and commercial companies in Japan was £97 millions; in 1914 it was £206 millions; in 1918 it was £414 millions. Moreover, the expansion of Japanese trade has been above all in the direction of the British preserves—India and Australia. Between 1919 and 1920, although Japanese exports as a whole decreased in money value, her exports to British India increased by 60 per cent. and her exports to Australia increased by 90 per cent. Finally, in India the average new capital per year during 1910-1914 was £12 millions; in the year March, 1919, to March, 1920, it was £183 millions. All this new industrial development inevitably breaks down former British monopolies and positions of predominance; and meanwhile Britain is saddled with a war debt and an imperial expenditure that leaves little strength for effective competition. These factors in the situation cannot be exorcised by the wizardry of Mr. Lloyd George; nor are they temporary factors of an abnormal disturbance. They are there, and they are likely to continue and to increase. To repudiate the war-debt would be to break the basis of capitalist finance. The question slowly forces itself upon us: *While capitalist production continues, will there ever be full employment in this country again?*

ONE hundred and seventy-six thousand miners are stated to be out of work. If they were on strike, how freely they would be scolded for robbing the country of its life-blood! But to-day it is capital that can find no use for their services. How many of them will ever go down the pit again? Mr. Lloyd George has pointed to emigration as the way out. But of what use is emigration

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to countries no less stricken with unemployment? The workers may change their country; but they cannot emigrate from capitalism. Two years ago, when the Peace Treaties were drawn up, Mr. Hoover declared that ten or twelve millions of the population of Germany and Austria would no longer be able to find maintenance in their homes and would have to emigrate or die. When that prophecy was made, how many thought that it would so shortly rebound upon this country, and that this country, too, would find its millions whom it could not employ and to whom it could only offer the spurious hope of emigration? This is the pass to which capitalism has brought two of the richest countries in the world after a century of development and intensified production. In the midst of wealth, in the midst of the myriad appliances and inventions for multiplying twentyfold the productive power of every worker, the populations cannot find the means of life. It is not that they are too many for the wealth that can be produced, as the birth-rate theorists try to make out. During the past century the increase of wealth has been far greater than the increase of population: the production per head has increased and not decreased. It is that the system of capital is unable to organise the work of production, and the workers have to walk the streets instead of producing the goods they so bitterly need.

**T**HE effects of this situation on the labour movements of Britain and of other countries are likely to be greater than can be easily foreseen under the present depression. For it means the end of all hopes of adjustment under the present system. Of what use to be moderate, if moderation can bring no reward? To-day the trade union movement is beaten and without hope. The latest cut in wages, the engineering reduction, has been accepted by a ballot in which the greater part of the members abstained from voting. The trade unions are financially desperate and faced with the phantom of bankruptcy. Recently the National Union of Railwaymen confessed to an overdraft of a quarter of a million and the continued paying out of six thousand pounds a week. This cannot go on for long. The old machinery, the old politics, are broken down. But "reasonableness" and the acceptance of cuts in wages

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will bring no improvement, for to this process there is no end. It is not a question of wages that is the determining factor in the present situation. Wages may fall, as in many cases they have already fallen, to the 1914 level and below it. This will not get rid of the war-debt, the ruin caused by the war and the peace, and the destruction of markets. Mr. W. L. Hichens may declare to the members of the Coal and Iron Exchange that wages and prices must come down to a "competitive level." But it is Mr. Hichens and his friends who have created that competitive level by the impoverishment and starvation of Central Europe. After reducing the workers of their rivals to the coolie level, they now call upon their own workers to come down to the same level. The policy of Mr. Hichens means that the workers of the world are to chase one another down the gulf of misery without end. And the end to that will not be what Mr. Hichens and his friends may expect.

**T**HERE is no sign or prospect that America is prepared to forego one inch of its present economic advantage. The repeated appeals of British representatives for the cancellation of the debt, of which the most conspicuous recent example has been Mr. Churchill's speech, have fallen on stony ground. The latest suggestion has been more subtle in character. Mr. McKenna, speaking at Chicago, began by making the familiar point that the effect of the German indemnity on British trade has been ruinous. "We lose more in our country," he said, "by the existence of two million unemployed than we shall ever get in value from German reparations over a period of thirty years. . . . When we see these things we really begin to doubt whether it is for the benefit of the United Kingdom that reparations should be paid." This is in itself a sufficiently interesting picture to compel a moment's pause. Here is a simple financial point which was made years before the war by Mr. Norman Angell and was familiar to every Socialist. And here is Mr. Reginald McKenna, ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer and Chairman of the London Joint City and Midland Bank, who after three years' ocular demonstration of the terrific consequences of the reparations policy "begins to doubt" whether reparations may not after all have been a mis-



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take. So much for the intelligence of our financiers and statesmen, who are supposed to be practical men. It has needed a world in ruins for a glimmer of light to pierce the heavy "practical" brains of the Churchill-McKenna type. The operation is too expensive to be repeated.

**B**UT to return to the immediate point of Mr. McKenna's speech. He pointed out that the argument as to the effect of reparations might equally be applied to the payment of debts. It was open to question "whether the debts of the Allies to us, if paid, might not prove rather a curse than a blessing." Personally he was in favour of cancellation. (It would be interesting to know if Mr. McKenna has thought of applying this point of view to Russia.) And then came the suggestion of the conclusion. In speaking of cancellation, he assured his American audience, he was not of course thinking of the American debt. The American debt would, of course, have to be paid; and it would be paid "in the form of commodities, as that is the only way in which foreign debts can be paid if they are to be received at all." And with that subtle appeal to American self-interest in favour of cancellation he left it. But America shows no signs of being moved. Only a short time ago the United States Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Mellon, brought before the Senate proposals for the funding of the foreign debt, which amounted to ten billion dollars, nine-tenths of this being European, and professed his expectation that interest could begin to be paid in about a year. It is clear that the fear of the fate of the creditor and indemnity-receiving country is not held by America. What, then, is the American policy? It cannot be the desire to break down her tariff walls by an influx of cheap goods. It cannot be the desire to add to the mountainous pile of gold already shipped over during the war and since. It cannot be the desire to lose by the impoverishment of Europe a market which, if not absolutely essential, is at any rate of major importance. There is only one line of explanation of American policy. The impoverishment of Europe may damage America in many ways, but it gives her the world economic supremacy which she is seeking. The low exchange may prevent trade; but it places the industries of the European countries at the

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mercy of American finance. How far American financial penetration of Europe has already gone it is impossible to say. Every day brings news of fresh deals and concessions, and the formation of subsidiary companies or affiliations in one country or another. A recent issue of the *Stock Exchange Gazette* gave warning to its readers, who were still obsessed with the German peril in industry, that the true direction to look for the alien grip over British industry was the United States of America. Not long ago an article by Mr. Philips Price in our pages spoke of Germany as the coolie plantation of Europe. But this process is itself only part of a still bigger process overshadowing everything else to-day, by which Europe is becoming the coolie plantation of America. And that is the direction in which Mr. Hichens' policy of "competitive wages" is helping to take us.

**M**EANWHILE, what of the direction in which Europe might find its economic balance to face America—the direction of Russia? Here the past month has shown an unhappy reversion to the original policy of negative and fruitless hostility, with even some suspicion of attempts to revive again active hostility. When the Brussels Conference for Russian Famine Relief met in the beginning of October, the British representative, Sir Philip Lloyd-Graeme, was the first to demand that no concession should be made to the Bolsheviks until they had formally recognised the debts contracted by the former Russian regime. The proposal was adopted, Italy dissenting; in this way relief was effectually blocked; and so was completed the sorry tale of the Allies' action in relation to the Russian famine. A week later Sir Robert Horne, Chancellor of the Exchequer, came out with a speech which was an open attack on the whole Russian trade agreement. With considerable candour he revealed that the whole object of the Russian trade agreement had been to destroy Bolshevism, and that that object had failed. "The best way to break down Bolshevism in Russia was to penetrate that great country with honest commercial methods. . . . But that plan has been defeated by the Russian famine and also partly by the fact that the extremists in Russia have been more anxious to spend their gold on propaganda than to ex-

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change it for the goods that they require." He considered that it was useless to send goods to Russia: "It is perfectly certain that they have got nothing to give in exchange." This outburst was too much for the British Government, which has no intention of breaking the agreement on the eve of an election: and on October 19 Mr. Lloyd George delivered a speech in the House of Commons which was a virtual reply to his own Chancellor of the Exchequer, in which he declared that the value of trade with Russia from January 1 to August 31 of this year had been £3,150,000, and that he anticipated that trade by the close of the current year might amount to £5,000,000 or £6,000,000. On October 28 the Russian Government issued a Note to Britain on the subject of the debts, in which they reaffirmed their old position that they would be prepared to recognise the pre-war Tsarist debts in return for general peace and recognition and a due consideration of counter-claims.

**T**HE economic situation at present overshadows the International Labour movement, which has still to re-awaken from the lethargy of depression. The opportunity has been taken by the British Labour Party Executive to carry out the instructions of the Geneva Congress of the Second International and hold a Conference with the Executive of the Vienna International in the hope of unification. But these hopes were destined to be defeated, not so much from any sign of serious difference of opinion, as from the consciousness that so large and vital a part of the Labour movement was outside in the Communist ranks. The Vienna International felt that it would be impossible to hold a general conference without the Communists; the British Labour Party felt that it would be impossible to hold one with them. So the Conference ended without result. The Italian Socialist Party Congress at Milan has been equally unproductive of results. Serrati still dominates the Party, and was able to defeat the proposals of Turati and the reformists for coalition with the capitalists; but the demand of the Third International for the exclusion of the reformists was still refused, though powers were taken for their exclusion if occasion should arise. The Italian Socialist Party thus remains outside the Third International, though still

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professing its adhesion to its principles. The most noticeable change was the growth in power of Turati and the reformists, who now secured a vote of 19,916 against 47,628 for Serrati.

**T**HIS month will see the second meeting of the Indian Trade Union Congress. Indian Labour organisation is still so recent that many in this country are not yet aware of the existence of the Indian Trade Union Congress, and there is indeed heavy work in front of it before its organisation can be regarded as on a sound footing. The Congress was founded in the autumn of last year; and the contributor of the article on Indian Labour, which we print in the present issue, claims that at that time 600,000 workers in India had already been organised. This may possibly seem a too generous estimate; but it is important to remember that organisation in India cannot in the nature of things mean the same as organisation here. The wretched conditions make the financial basis of benefit trade unionism impossible; but the Indian workers have already shown their ability for combination in mass-strikes and prolonged resistances of as heroic a character as any in Labour history. There is now talk of introducing measures for legalising Trade Unionism. At the opening session of the Legislature at Simla in September the Viceroy foreshadowed legislation to this effect. But the most wary eye will need to be kept on the actual legislation proposed. The phrasing of the Viceroy's statement is ominous. He said: "The question of giving actual protection and legal status to those Unions, which are genuine Labour organisations, is at present under consideration." It is impossible not to be conscious of the veiled threat in this statement. If the object of the new legislation is to give legal status and protection to tame "company unions" to the exclusion of existing militant union organisations, then the real effect of the Bill will be, not to make Trade Unionism legal, as will be widely trumpeted abroad, but to make genuine Trade Unionism illegal. Therefore it is essential that the British Labour movement shall watch with the utmost care the proposed legislation in India, in order to insist that it shall give genuine Trade Union protection.

# A CRITIQUE OF GUILD SOCIALISM

By W. MELLOR

SOMEWHERE about 1911 Guild Socialism was born. Who were its parents is to this day a matter of considerable debate. Some authorities declare that it was the sole child of the united genius of Messrs. Orage and Hobson, whilst others affirm that its father was State Socialism of the Fabian blend and its mother French Syndicalism. Personally I incline to the view that both the former and the latter claims fail to hit the mark.

Guild Socialism, or, to give it its more respectable title, National Guilds, was thrown up as a theory of reorganisation in this country at a time when, through the operations of capitalism, the machine-like character of work was beginning to change the psychology and attitude of the workers. There were stirrings inside the economic world and certain Utopians, conscious of this movement, took hold of it and attempted to give it a philosophy.

The Fabians had recognised and utilised for their own needs the growing concentration of capital, adapting such little bits of Marx as seemed to them useful. They had declared that the consolidation of private enterprises into trusts and cartels was a necessary and salutary process in the development of society, and that capitalism was in this way preparing the ground for State Socialism. The more the organisation of business became concentrated in the hands of a few the easier, they argued, would be the transference of that undertaking to the community as represented by the "democratic" institutions within any given society. But the Fabians, being by nature economic chess-players of an inferior kind, always forgot the pawns. Now the pawns happened to be workmen, who wanted to know where they came in in this reorganisation. Had they no rights? They

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knew they had got duties. The reply of the Fabians was simple—"You look after your duties and we will look after your rights."

Naturally enough the workmen did not like this simple method of dealing with them. They began to claim for themselves what became known in the jargon of the day as "status in industry." Industrial unionism and, in a lesser degree, revolutionary syndicalism, became popular. Over against the organisations of capitalism, over against the organisation of the consumer (the "state" of the Fabians) men began to work for the erection of organisations of the producers, though the Soviets had not yet been born. The advanced sections of the working class, tired of being used both by capitalists and reformers, began to reorganise their own defensive organisations. Their motto was changed from "A fair day's work and a fair day's wage" into "All power to the producer and all surplus value to its creator, the worker."

Now the Fabians disliked this movement as much as they professed to dislike capitalism. The Guild Socialists, most of whom had been reared on the confines of, if not actually within, the Fabian nursery, disliked Fabianism more than they hated capitalism, and so they welcomed the new movement and proceeded to use it for their own ends. They wrote books and pamphlets, delivered lectures and were generally busy. They wanted to find a midway position between the idea of a democratic state representing the consumers as the sole authority and the idea of democratic industrial organisations representing the producers as the real machinery of non-capitalist society. They began as compromisers and they have been compromising ever since. By a curious irony of fate, Guild Socialists are really the Fabians of the Twentieth Century.

Anyone who has been closely associated with the inner workings of the National Guilds' League (as I have) must recognise that, from the very start, ineffectiveness has been its lot. Never on any fundamental issue of practical poli-

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tics has there been any unity of thought, let alone action. Always the desire to avoid a "split" has been greater than the will to recognise errors and mistakes or the will to declare either for or against the new formative revolutionary impulses loosed by the Russian revolution. At the best of times National Guildsmen were always a small coterie attempting (and in a measure successful in the attempt) to wangle the working class movement; at the worst they have been representative of nobody but themselves.

There can, however, be no question that between 1911 and 1917 Guild Socialism grew and waxed fat. Every respectable reformer, every bourgeois Labour Party candidate, hailed with delight this new doctrine, which seemed to promise revolution without revolt. They were all Guild Socialists then. The Press began to be full of talk of the need for "bringing the workers into partnership," the need of "control," "the human side of labour," and all the other clichés produced by the prolific writers in the *New Age* and elsewhere. It was *the* doctrine of the middle-class man. Fabianism was dying and the Russian Revolution had not come. Here was a theory which seemed to have taken the best out of all the existing proposals, and that seemed to hold out, if not to the worker, at any rate to the workers' advocates, hopes of kudos and ultimate power.

Then came the Russian Revolution, and since 1917 Guild Socialism has been constantly and progressively waning in power. Its only prophet to-day is Mr. Cole, for both Mr. Orage and Mr. Hobson have, in their various ways, repudiated their offspring. The one now seeks his El Dorado hand-in-hand with Major Douglas, the other, apart from his practical activities as an exponent of the Building Guild, is a Communist.

It is no mere chance that the beginnings of the Russian Revolution coincided with the decline of Guild Socialism. The fundamental weakness of Guild Socialism always was that it had the very vaguest idea of how it proposed to get to the beautiful goal that its theorists had sketched. The

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Russian Revolution did, at least, point one way of achieving a fundamental change in the organisation of a great country. Guild Socialism was concerned with the hereafter; the Russians were concerned with the present. Guild Socialists spent their time painting pictures; the Bolsheviki used their energies in organising revolution.

Inherently, the Guild Socialist movement, whether as expressed through the *New Age* or through the National Guilds' League, was weak and ineffective, because it had no practical answer to the question, "And how are we to get the things you say we ought to have?" Obviously, it would be nice to live in a world in which there was freedom in the workshop. Obviously, no one but a fool (or a Chesterton) would question the fundamental merits of a society in which the word "master" was no more heard, for every man in his heart of hearts really wants to live in something like Morris's Utopia. But hereafters cut no ice with the ordinary workman. He has no time to dream, and the pressure of capitalism brings home to him every day the feeling that something must be done. That something the worker feels must be done immediately, and whatever else the Utopia building Guild Socialism was, or is, it cannot pretend to be immediate.

Ever since the formation of the National Guilds' League there have been three fairly clearly defined tendencies within that organisation. First, the really respectable people who wanted either to go back to the Middle Ages or to form an alliance with orthodox Christianity, but, above all, to avoid anything "nasty." At the other end were those who, being middle class by chance or by education, were yet really cognisant of the gradual extinction of the section of society in which they had been born. They accepted Guild Socialism because they felt that it was, at any rate, an advance on previous ideas, and was fundamentally revolutionary in its aim. They were more concerned about smashing the wage system than they were about attempting, under the present system, to erect organisations to withstand the



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shock of a revolution. The industrial ideas which the Guild Socialists had taken from the Industrial Unionists seemed to offer a method by which, through the organisation of the working classes, capitalism could be broken down.

But even this section (to which I belonged) still had hankerings after the old Fabian gods. They liked democratic institutions, parliament, town councils, etc. They thought them fine and enduring, and destined to play a great part in their future Utopia. Like the respectable section of the movement, they were very strong upon "function." Every organisation was to be judged according to the function it performed, and quite arbitrarily they divided the two main functions of man into eating and working—it was the consumer and the producer who were jointly to rule the roost. They have lived to see the error of their ways.

In between these two came another section—the real middle class of the Guild Movement. Unlike the respectable Guild Socialists, they really were concerned about the position of the worker, not from the sentimental but from the revolutionary point of view. They did hate capitalism; but they were under no illusions about the necessity of machine production. Emphatically they did not want a society in which everybody made their own boots, but equally they wanted to avoid a society in which most bootmakers only made eyelet-holes. They were very insistent upon the need for freedom in the workshops, and, in their effort to exalt freedom and to retain mass production, they swayed between the mediævalists and the revolutionaries. They are still swaying. To this section belonged the strongest theoretical influence—Cole.

No one will deny the capacity displayed by Mr. Cole, nor the nimbleness of his mind—a mind which, by the way, is not nearly simple enough—and even at the risk of seeming unduly personal I must stress the part played by Mr. Cole in Guild Socialism; for if one can understand his psychology, one can understand the real failure of the Movement to which he belongs. Like him, it is neither revolutionary

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nor reformist. It is neither Utopian nor realist. It hovers in a state of uneasy equilibrium between the mediævalists and the revolutionaries. It likes the idea of home-spun clothes in its heart, though intellectually it is convinced of the absurdity of a world in which home-spuns are the only wear. Equally it likes to contemplate the idea of a break, sudden and definite, with capitalism, but it hates the thought of the suffering and trouble entailed in the process of that break. In short, it is fundamentally pacifist, and therefore is constantly up against the difficulties of that school. One moment it is prepared to do anything to get rid of the things its intellect and emotions alike condemn; the next it halts because to get rid of them means the utilisation of force.

This contradiction between action and theory the middle section of Guild Socialists has never been able to resolve. It has always sought to reconcile irreconcilables. It has sought for harmony at the expense of effectiveness.

How clearly this is the case can be shown by the various changes through which the "objects" of the National Guilds' League have gone. It started with the idea of a partnership between the State (more or less as it is) and a re-created trade union movement. Pressure of events and pressure from the revolutionary element inside the organisation began to create doubts as to the inviolability of the State, and, as a result, the word "democratic" made its appearance in front of the word "State."

This was a concession to the left wing elements of the movement, which the centre was cute enough to devise, but which really left untouched the fundamental disagreement. What was really at issue was not the question as to whether the "State" in the future was or was not to be democratic but as to whether there would in the future be any "State" at all. The left kept up the pressure. As a means of overcoming this further difficulty, the centre propounded the theory that the State was really a functional organisation representing certain of man's activities, but not, in itself, all inclusive. What was wanted was many organisations, all of them repre-

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senting some particular function. Once again the objects of the League, from being comparatively simple—the ending of the wage system and the establishment of a partnership between the organisations of the producers and the State—became highly complicated, and to-day the National Guilds' League stands for the abolition of the wage system, the establishment of freedom in industry through the industrial organisations working in conjunction with other democratic functional bodies.

This was a concession to both the right and left wings. It was a concession to the right because it put down in black and white the acceptance of their mistrust of centralisation; it was a concession to the left because it recognised their criticism of the validity of the "State" as a permanent machine. Naturally enough, it satisfied nobody except its author. Both the left and right had gone to the limit of compromise. Inevitably the break began.

The revolution in Russia forced a discussion, not on the question of exactly how many organisations there would be in future society, but how an organisation that called itself revolutionary proposed to achieve any change at all. It was the failure of the National Guilds' League to give a definite and clear reply to this problem that hastened its decline. Both the left and right were too strong to prevent either of their attitudes being adopted by the League, and the centre was too hesitant to throw its weight either to the left or right. The result was another compromise.

The eyes of the National Guilds' League are still fixed on what is going to happen the day after the revolution; how exactly it proposes to work for the revolution it has not made up its mind. It talks of soviets, but is careful to explain that soviets are probably not applicable to Great Britain. It has dropped its whole-hearted support of the State, but still clings to democratic institutions. It still advocates the reorganisation of trade unionism on industrial lines, but hesitates to recognise the fact that, if once those industrial organisations are really used to end the domination

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of private capitalism, nothing can prevent a revolution in which victory will go to those who have the greatest power. It still thinks in terms of peaceful change, and advocates proposals that involve war.

Guild Socialism, in so far as it has any standing at all, has answered the needs neither of the left nor of the centre—though it has tried to placate both. Always its propaganda has failed to arouse any enthusiasm among the men in the workshops or at the coal-face, and it has depended for its success entirely upon the skill of its advocates in persuading the “heads” of the movement to adopt phraseology without in the least adopting Guild Socialism. Like Fabianism, its public and advertised power is out of all proportion to its real and substantial power inside the movement. Middle-class ingenuity gave to it—especially by an adroit manipulation of the Press—a fictitious strength during the war period. That strength has been proved illusion since the stress of war ended.

No one will deny that the ideas of the Guild Socialists are interesting and of value to the theoretical side of the Labour movement. Doubtless in the future many of their less complicated proposals will be put into operation. But to say this is not to destroy the truth of the central criticism. Guild Socialism is essentially Utopian in its outlook and unsuccessfully Fabian in its methods. Fabianism flourished when the Labour movement had no real substance, and when the only people that mattered were the few leaders. It captured the leaders and so collared the movement. Guild Socialism, in its attempt to apply the Fabian doctrine of permeation, has failed, because whilst it appealed apparently to the rank and file, it was really only concerned with the leaders—and the leaders have ceased to lead.

# AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

By SCOTT NEARING

**T**HE surge in the direction of a new world order, which was felt so generally during the closing months of the war, has met with a number of stupendous obstacles. One was the Peace Conference; a second was the disorganisation of the workers; a third is the United States. Perhaps, in this case, the last should be mentioned first.

American history is full of imperial rumblings, and the conduct of public affairs in the United States since the War with Spain (1898) has been such as to give the lover of freedom many an uncomfortable moment, but the paralysing universality of the malady did not unmask itself until the election of November, 1920. Then even the dullard could not fail to realise how completely the imperial madness had gripped the country.

The 1920 Election was a record breaker. Never before had a Presidential candidate received so large a plurality over his chief opponent. Mr. Harding was a man little known outside of his home State (Ohio); he had made a negative record in the Senate; he was openly acceptable to the chief business interests of the country. Unlike Roosevelt, Mr. Harding had little personality, and equally unlike him, he had never attacked a vested wrong, nor taken a boldly unpopular stand; yet when the votes were counted, Harding had a total of 16,138,914, as against 9,142,438 for his nearest opponent. The greatest plurality previous to this election was two and a half millions, given to Roosevelt in 1904.

The Harding vote of 1920 was not, in any large measure, a repudiation of Wilson, although that element was unquestionably present in the returns; nor was it merely an index of the general reaction which later elected Lewis as

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President of the Miners and Gompers as President of the American Federation of Labor. The election of Harding was an imperial affirmation. It was a mandate to the Republican leaders and their big business backers to continue the policies of McKinley and Roosevelt. It was a response to the toast that had been uttered so loudly and so frequently during the war, "God's country! America! Greatest among the nations!"

This point of view still dominates the thinking of that portion of the American public which is able to make its voice heard above the strains of the Star-spangled Banner. The psychology of imperialism has survived two years of war and more than a year of the severest industrial depression that has been experienced by the present generation.

The easy explanation of this imperial psychology, which has so completely carried away the people of the United States, is that the economic masters of the country have been able to mould public opinion through their control of the Press, the schools and the cinema.

And in one sense the position is well taken, since the United States is supplied with papers and films about as completely as the human body is supplied with capillaries. There are no comprehensive figures on cinema attendance. The leaders of the industry boast that fifty millions of people see a film each week, though obviously many of them are repeaters. Ayers' Newspaper Directory gives some detailed facts on the Press. There are 20,941 newspapers published in 10,160 cities and towns of the United States. Of these papers, 2,374 are dailies with a combined issue of 31 millions of papers per day—12 millions of morning editions and 19 millions of evening editions. This provides one and a half daily papers, on the average, for each family in the country. No figures are given as to the circulation of the 18,567 semi-weeklies, weeklies, bi-weeklies, monthlies, etc., nor is there any definite information concerning the host of weekly and monthly magazines, some of which—like the *Saturday Evening Post*, the *Cosmopolitan*, and the *American*—print a million or more of each issue.

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The propaganda that is not put over to the twenty-two millions of children who attend the public schools is assiduously ladled out in the film and through the Press to the tens of millions who spend a part of each day looking and reading. This immense network—school, films and Press—controlled in almost every town and city by the local board of trade or chamber of commerce, and dominated nationally by the more influential banking syndicates, forms a channel of communication through which the masters of economic life speak incessantly to the people.

The school, the Press, and the film are potent factors in selling imperialism to the American people, but they would be useless were there nothing at hand to sell.

American imperialism is built on deep-laid economic foundations, whose presence was scarcely suspected by most students of nineteenth century economic history. Occasionally someone like Senator Lodge, of Massachusetts, made a speech in which he insisted that the United States, by the mere force of its economic position, must become the leading world power, but there were few who took such comments seriously. It was not until the World War that a sense of imperial virility and a yearning for imperial prestige began to spread among the rank and file, even of the economic masters of American destiny.

There are three extensive and homogeneous economic areas in the temperate zones. One is in Eastern Asia, the second is in Central and Southern Europe, and the third is in North America. In each one of these areas, the climate is suited to the development of a modern civilisation; resources are sufficiently varied and sufficiently abundant to make a semi-economic independence possible; the food areas are adequate to maintain an industrial population; transportation is relatively easy, and it would therefore be possible for the people occupying one of these areas to remain isolated for some time from the remainder of the world without suffering the acute hardships that are incident to a blockade.

For the moment, the North American area is the one most

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available for the development of a civilisation. The Chinese are not sufficiently advanced; Europe is too much divided by lines of nationality, race, etc. The American people feel this as one of the great sources of their strength and independence.

Who are the "American people"? The bulk of the early immigrants to the United States was from Great Britain and Germany. The records of immigration, kept officially since 1820, show that between that year and 1840 the immigrants from Europe numbered 594,504, among whom there were 358,994 from the British Isles and 159,215 from Germany, making a total from the two countries of 518,209, or 87 per cent. of the immigrants arriving in the twenty year period. During the next twenty years (1840-1860) the total of immigrants from Europe was 4,050,159, of which the British Isles furnished 2,386,846 (over half), and Germany 1,386,293, making, for these two countries, 94 per cent. of the total immigration. Even during the years 1860-1880, 82 per cent. of those who migrated to the United States were reported from Great Britain and Germany. American immigration from 1820 to 1880 was Anglo-Teutonic, and the "true American" of the present generation is, in the great majority of instances, descended from the two most imperial peoples of Europe.

If there is anything in heredity, the "real Americans" should be imperial to the bones.

But there are other and far weightier reasons for American imperialism. These descendants of empire builders, occupying three millions of square miles of homogeneous territory in one of the garden spots of the world, have already established themselves as one of the chief producers of the "good things of economic life." The country is amply equipped with coal, petroleum and water power; iron, copper, zinc, tin, silver, and other metals are found in abundance; from coast to coast, but particularly in the Mississippi valley, there is opportunity for the raising of food, cotton, and other agricultural supplies, and the climate from North to South is sufficiently varied to permit of a great range of vegetation.



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Then there are the transportation facilities that have been established—more than a third of the world's railroad mileage is in the United States; there, also, is more than a quarter of the world's telegraph mileage, and one-sixth of the post offices of the world. The United States has only 6 per cent. of the world's population and 7 per cent. of the world's land, yet the country produces :

- 20 per cent. of the world's gold,
- 25 per cent. of the world's wheat,
- 40 per cent. of the world's iron and steel,
- 40 per cent. of the world's lead,
- 40 per cent. of the world's silver,
- 50 per cent. of the world's zinc,
- 52 per cent. of the world's coal,
- 60 per cent. of the world's aluminium,
- 60 per cent. of the world's copper,
- 60 per cent. of the world's cotton,
- 66 per cent. of the world's oil,
- 75 per cent. of the world's corn,
- 85 per cent. of the world's automobiles.

Perhaps the most striking of the recent economic phenomena in the United States is the growth of the automobile industry. The industry had its start at the time that the United States was just beginning to forge to the front—in the years following the Spanish War (1898). In 1900 there were 13,524 automobiles in the country, 5,000 being produced in that year. By 1910 the number of cars had risen to 444,349, with an annual production of 178,557. In 1920 the annual production had grown to 2,200,000, and the total number of cars in the country had increased to 9,118,000. At the present time it is estimated that there are over ten millions of motor-cars and trucks in use in the United States—or 90 per cent. of those used throughout the world. The existing plant equipment is capable of producing 2,500,000 cars each year. This huge industry and this immense capital equipment have been created during the past twenty-five years.

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These economic strides have been made possible by just one thing—the presence, in the country, of an annual economic surplus, which, in 1918 and 1919, amounted to something like twenty-five billions of dollars. The mere fact that the total annual income of the United States rose from 9 billions in 1890 to 74 billions in 1920 gives some idea of the rate at which the surplus has been piling up. The standard of living has risen during that time, particularly for the well-to-do, but it has not increased nearly so rapidly as the volume of capital engaged in transportation and manufacturing.

No matter what degree of isolation the traditions of a country may impose, no matter how anti-imperial a people may be, the presence of so huge a surplus under the present economic system leaves the ruling class no choice—it must follow the path of imperialism or wreck the home machinery.

The American ruling class has been following an imperial path for a very long time. Little has been said about it, but the leaders of public policy have acted with true imperial understanding—substituting deeds for words.

The descendants of European imperialists, who constitute the “real Americans” of the present generation, have been engaged in the practices of imperial policy ever since their entrance into the North American continent. The history of the American Colonies and of the United States is a history of imperial undertakings and imperial triumphs.

The first imperial venture of the white men in North America was the conquest and subjugation of the American Indians. Numerically the Indians were never a great menace. They were inadequately armed and widely scattered in non-co-operating groups. Still, they had developed a standard of culture and an outlook on life that made them clash sharply with the widely differing social standards of the whites. Then, at the root of all of the difficulties, was the fact that the Indian was in possession of the land, which they would not sell because they regarded it as a gift from the Great Spirit. Like the air and the sunshine, the land was

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considered a common heritage—the possession of the tribe.

The newcomers did not take kindly to this idea of common property in the common means of livelihood. Their standards of individual possession made them insist on buying the land outright, and in response to the simple Indian comment that “there is land enough for both,” the white man shrugged his shoulders and plied the Indian with whisky.

When the whites came to the territory that is now the United States, the three millions of square miles belonged to the Indians. It required only about three centuries for the whites to gain possession of the whole area. Most of the transfers were made as the direct or indirect result of military victories, as the white tide swept across the continent.

The Colonists had a second grievance against the Indians. Not only were the natives unwilling to part with their land, but they were equally unwilling to work. From the earliest years, the labour problem had been acute in the colonies.

The hardy, venturesome types that made up the bulk of the early settlers were not willing to bind themselves to labour for others. Why should they, when the streams were filled with fish, the forests abounded in game, and land was to be had free for the asking? Indentured servants were tried, but their number was not adequate to meet the demand. The Indians were looked upon as a likely source of labour supply, but they consistently refused to work. They were sold as slaves, tortured, killed—still they remained obdurate. Their standards of life taught them that labour was degrading, and they adhered to these standards in the face of the fiercest coercion.

The Indians held the land. The Indians would not work. But one thing remained for the offspring of European imperialists—they took the land and wiped out the Indian civilisation.

The elimination of the Indians gave the Colonists land. The importation of African Negroes supplied them with labour. It is unnecessary to go into the history of the slave trade or of slavery. Suffice it to say that from 1619, when

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the first black slave was landed in Virginia, until 1863, when the last slaver was fitted out in New York Harbour, the trade was carried on by the ships of every great commercial nation, and with immense profit to the traders. In order to secure the necessary supply, a whole civilisation on the West Coast of Africa was destroyed, and the unfortunate victims of the trade were carried over the ocean to labour in the rice swamps and the cotton fields of the United States.

By taking the land from the Indians and by destroying a civilisation in Africa, the Americans put themselves in possession of resources and labour. Thereafter the exploitation of the continent became a matter of mechanical detail.

Other difficulties remained, however. One of the finest portions of the continent, the "South-west," was in the hands first of Spain and later of Mexico. As the demand for new land grew more emphatic, eager eyes were turned to this rich territory. The matter was settled by the Mexican War (1846), which General Grant, who fought in the war and later became President of the United States, characterised in his Memoirs as "one of conquest in the interest of an institution," and as "one of the most unjust ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation." As a result of this war, the United States secured more than eight hundred thousand square miles of territory, including some of the finest agricultural and mineral land on the continent.

Twenty years later (1865) the slave power was destroyed, and from that time until the end of the century the newly-empowered capitalist class was too busy with the building of railroads and factories to make any demonstrations against weaker neighbours. In 1898, however, as a result of the Spanish War, the United States acquired the Philippines, Porto Rico, Guam and Cuba. The last was granted a pseudo-independence, under the supervision of the United States. Article I. of the Treaty of 1904 reads, in part:—"The Government of Cuba shall never enter into any treaty or compact with any foreign power or powers which will impair or tend to impair the independence of Cuba. . . ." Article

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III. of the same Treaty provides that : “ The Government of Cuba consents that the United States may exercise the right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property and individual liberty. . . . ”

The opening years of the new century found the business interests of the United States reaching out for markets and investment opportunities. With the growing volume of surplus in the hands of American business men, and the appropriation of the best of the continental resources, the attention of the business world was turned to Latin America, to Asia and to Europe.

Latin America was already protected by the Monroe Doctrine—a sort of “ no trespassing ” sign that carried with it the implication that if there was any exploiting to be done in Latin America, it was the United States that would exploit. The World War gave the Americans their first opportunity to apply the doctrine, and they proceeded with the military occupation of Santo Domingo, Hayti and Nicaragua in the most approved imperial fashion. The manner in which the Department of State intervened in the recent unpleasantness between Panama and Costa Rica is typical of the domineering position taken by the United States in its dealings with its weaker Latin neighbours.

At the moment, the centre of imperial attention is the Pacific. Most of the business men who have returned from Europe during the last few months have spoken pessimistically about the outlook there for American enterprise. On the contrary, those who have gone to the East have come back with glowing accounts of the possibilities there offered to the American exploiter. Then, too, the Philippines, lying so close under the heart of Asia, give the business men of the United States a sort of “ natural ” claim to a share of the Asiatic booty, and if the Japanese do not see the matter this way—so the argument runs—why, so much the worse for the Japanese! Throughout the country the feeling against Japan is covert; in the West it is very strong, and it would

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take little urging to raise this anti-Japanese sentiment to the pitch of war-madness.

The United States is as imperial in its foreign policy as any other capitalist country that has attained a corresponding stage of development. Its people are imperialists by heredity and by tradition. Thus far the conquest of territory and the subjugation of weaker peoples has been largely confined to North America. Therefore it has attracted little attention. Then, too, the ruling class has been so much occupied with the mechanical detail of subjugating the material forces of the great stretch of country taken from the Indians and from Mexico that it has had no time, until very recently, to turn its attention to outside matters. Hence the "splendid isolation" of recent years. The War turned the tables, however, and the leaders of American business are engrossed with the familiar problems of imperialism—markets, trade, investments and battleships.

The position occupied by the United States is unique. No other united people possesses so great an expanse of territory, with an equal endowment of resources. Generations of comparative isolation from Europe and its conflicts have enabled the American people to build up the machinery of production with such good effect that the United States is practically without a peer among the producing capitalist nations. The dramatic entrance of the country on the stage of world trade is the best index of the relative importance of this producing capacity. In 1870 only 8 per cent. of the world's trade was done by the United States; by 1913 the proportion had risen to 11 per cent., and in 1918 it was 14 per cent. Before the war, the United States supplied only about one-sixth of the manufactures entering into world trade. The proportion for 1920 was about one-third. As a result of this expansion in productivity, surplus in immense quantities has been accumulating, and is now being expended to perfect the machine abroad and to entrench it at home. The Great War, which weakened most of the empires of Europe, strengthened the American Empire as it strength-

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ened that of Japan. Add to these facts the imperial background of the American people, and there appears the completed picture of the United States as the super-dreadnought among the capitalist nations.

Here arises the inevitable question, How much imperialism will the American people stand?

The answer is easy. They will not stand so much as the people of pre-war Germany, or Great Britain, or France, because the world has moved ahead since those empires were founded. But at the same time it must be remembered that the American imperialists have a number of powerful arguments to aid them in their efforts to sell imperialism to the American people. First, there is the tradition of the "American Standard of Living," which is supposed to be higher than that of any other people. Then there is the sense of security that comes from the consciousness of thorough "preparedness." Again, there is the appeal to the pride of those who have an opportunity to live in the "greatest country on earth!" Last, but by no means least, there are the promises of material rewards for those who serve the system faithfully. Office boys are still becoming corporation officials, and country editors are still becoming Presidents of the United States. Millions are made by "movie" stars, and the small manufacturer or trader can still creep into the ranks of the great and the wealthy. To be sure, there are the six millions of unemployed at the present moment, and there are the farmers—particularly the renters—weighed down with the heavy costs of farming and rendered bankrupt by the fearful drop in the values of all farm products. There are the slums in the cities and the children at work in the mills. These things all must be weighed in the balance, but there is still the fond belief, lingering in the hearts of millions, that they or at least their children will get out of the tenements into the avenue, and the hope is fed by every device of the advertiser's art.

There is no sign, even in the midst of this staggering industrial depression, that the American people have lost faith in their Empire. On the contrary, the elections of Harding

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and Gompers; the general acceptance of wage-cuts; the bitter opposition, particularly in the smaller communities, to any radical ideas; and the fervid nationalism that one encounters everywhere, lead inevitably to the conclusion that the American people are still on the up-grade toward nationalism and imperialism. How long it will be before they reach the top and get a wider outlook, circumstances must determine; but in the meantime it behoves the leaders of thought in all of the other great countries to look upon the United States as the centre of capitalist power, and the centre from which will be financed and directed those more ambitious projects looking to the conquest of new territories, the division of the spoils among the victors, the crusades against Communism and Socialism, and the organised effort to stabilise and preserve the present order in all its primitive ferocity.



# THE REVIVAL OF ANTI-MARXISM\*

By MAX BEER

## I

THE news in the London *Times* of Marx's death (March, 1883) consisted of a few lines, printed in brevier, and conveyed to it from Paris by M. De Blowitz. London itself was oblivious of the "red doctor" who had shocked some of its citizens in the days of the Paris Commune. About a dozen people, mostly foreigners, were present at his burial in Highgate Cemetery, so that "the most impressive demonstrations," which Mr. Salter states (p. 4) to have taken place on that occasion, are but figments of a rather fertile imagination. But things have changed since that time and British writers are contributing their quota to the swelling Marxist literature, the rise and fall of which run parallel to the curves of the modern Socialist, Communist and Labour movements. The urge and surge of social revolutionary currents in any period or country since about 1880 has been accompanied by the growth and intensification of the controversy about Marxism.

Marx is the philosopher of the dissolution of the trading and commercial society which took its origin, in the latter part of the Middle Ages, in the cities and towns of Western and Central Europe, and which has reached its culminating point in the capitalist large-scale, centralised and concentrated industry. Marx, for all his philosophy of dissolution, was neither a woe-begone prophet, as Professor Nicholson asserts (p. 136), nor the author of oracular sentences, as Mr. Salter is fain to believe (pp. 248-49), but a social student of penetrating vision, of *savoir pour prévoir*, and buoyant with

\* J. Shield Nicholson, *The Revival of Marxism*, London, 1920. (John Murray.)

J. R. Salter, *Karl Marx and Modern Socialism*, London, 1920. (Macmillan and Co.)

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optimism, since his Hegelian dialectical or evolutionary conception of human history led him to think that the dissolution was organically linked up with the rise of a new system of society, whose conditions, laws, and modes of emotion and thought will be shaped in accordance with the interests of Labour; the coming society, the birth-throes of which we are now witnessing, will be increasingly controlled by the possessors of productive capacity and skill; those who make the goods will make the laws, as the Chartists used to say.

Marx, early in life, discarding all the current ideological pretensions, penetrated into the social foundations and found them to consist, neither of brute force nor feudal chivalry, neither of monarchical authority nor middle-class legal contrivances, but of productive agents. Nowadays, after the shock of the world war has laid bare the foundations of society, even the solitary idealist and romantic poet is anxiously asking for production and more production, perceiving that without it, without the effort and labour to produce utilities, the whole structure of society, from the shrinking and crumbling of its foundations, would tumble about his ears. But in the 'forties, when the problem of production appeared all but solved and the attention of the economists and statesmen was concentrated on exchange (free trade), it required no small amount of generalising power and realistic thinking to reduce the context and colour of the operations of the mind in all fields of human activity to the evolution and forms of organisation of material production. The successive ideological and political predominance of the various social classes in State and society depended, in the last analysis, on their respective functions in production. Any class that is able to set production in motion and keep it going in accordance with the general needs of a given phase of civilisation, will, sooner or later, govern society. This is, according to Marx, the real title to headship in the affairs of the polity. As long as any class is performing that function it is promoting the general advance of civilisation.

Professor Nicholson, in asserting that "Marx omits alto-

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gether any consideration of these beneficial influences (of capitalism) in his historical picture" (p. 82) merely proves that he has not studied, with due care, the author at whom he is running full tilt. The "Communist Manifesto" leaves in this respect nothing to be desired by any advocate of the capitalist system. It declares that capitalist industry "has achieved greater miracles than the construction of Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, or Gothic cathedrals. . . . The middle class has created more powerful and more gigantic forces of production than all generations put together"; furthermore, it has created national government, international trade, etc., etc. This eulogy in memory of capitalist achievements excels even the famous Disraelian rhapsody on Manchester. But the Marxian sentences read like an epitaph.

No less unjust is Professor Nicholson's censure that "Marx, in his critique of orthodox political economists, left out of sight the elements of truth and strength in their teachings" (p. 83). The same remark applies to Mr. Salter's charge that Marx "concealed his great and for the most part unacknowledged debt to the English Socialist writers" (p. 18). This severe attack on Marx's literary ethics appears to be the effect of Professor Nicholson's and Mr. Salter's lack of familiarity with Marx's "Theorien über den Mehrwert," a work in four volumes, written by its author in 1863-65 and published posthumously in 1905-11 by Karl Kautsky. In those four volumes, which, in my judgment, are the best extant history of British, French and German economic theory on labour, capital, wages, profit and rent, Marx does full justice to Petty, Dudley North, James Stewart, Quesnay, Adam Smith, Ricardo, the Mills (father and son), Ravenstone, Hodgskin, George Ramsay, Richard Jones, etc., etc. The orthodox political economists whom Marx delighted to honour were Petty, Stewart, Quesnay (with his famous *Tableau économique*), Smith, and particularly Ricardo. Of the anti-capitalist writers, it is Hodgskin whose theories he analyses at length and with the utmost care. This

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extensive history of economic theory was intended by Marx to form the fourth volume of "Capital" and to show the sources and authorities of his exposition of the economics of the capitalist system.

### II

Marx, as political economist, had before himself the following theoretical results. The classical political economy of Great Britain had, up to the end of the eighteenth century, dealt with the problem of production more and more in the sense of natural freedom and natural rights as against the obsolescent State and police restraints of trade, and proceeded, through Ricardo, to the problem of distribution from the point of view of manufacturing, trading and commercial interests as against the landed interests. The conflicts and antagonisms which those economists had to deal with were either between the progressive, freedom-loving individual and the retrogressive, police-ridden State, or between manufacture and agriculture. On the other hand, the conflicts between Capital and Labour, though by no means of rare occurrence, were easily quelled and had no effect on the process of production. Adam Smith, in a somewhat prolonged fit of compassion, characteristic of the advocates of natural rights, took sides with Labour, as the producer of all wealth, deplored its helplessness, tried to moralise Capital, and passed on ("Wealth of Nations," Book I, Chapters 6-9). Ricardo, who had a clear notion of the opposing interests of the various classes—his is the formula of the inverse ratio between wages and profits, and between both and rent—ascribed the whole mischief to the land-owners, whose rent-income was swallowing up the greatest part of the proceeds of labour in trade and manufacture. But on the heels of Ricardo came the anti-capitalist and Socialist critics (Ravenstone, Thompson, Hodgskin, etc.) who, on the strength of Smith's and Ricardo's own theories, claimed the whole produce of labour for the working classes, arguing that the accumulated wealth was the result of unpaid labour or surplus value.

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Sociologically speaking, in the time of Ricardo, British society was on the point of entering into a class struggle. The Industrial Revolution had done its work in bringing the potentially antagonistic classes into clear relief. The middle classes, led by the Ricardians, marshalled their forces for free trade and Parliamentary reform, or for the capture of political power, while the awakening working class demonstrated for universal suffrage, factory legislation, freedom of combination, and finally set the Chartist movement on foot, for since about 1820 anti-capitalist and Socialist writers appeared on the scene, directing their shafts against the profiteers and demanding the whole produce of labour for the worker as the producer of all wealth. Periods of class struggle are generally prolific in great writers, and the years from 1776 to 1844 produced a host of political economists of great originality or boldness of thought, or painstaking commentators and popularisers of the leading minds. Smith's "Wealth of Nations" (1776) marked the beginning; Ricardo's "Principles" (1817) the middle; J. S. Mill's "Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy" (1844), the end of that period. All questions of labour and capital, production and exchange, were thrashed out, and for the most part, especially till about 1820, without conscious bias, without apologetic tendencies. The leading minds looked upon society as a natural phenomenon, whose underlying principles and the operating forces had to be found and defined by science, while the classes fought with their gloves off against one another.

Into this atmosphere came Marx, with his Hegelian dialectical, antagonistic evolution of society, for the first time in 1846, then in 1849, permanently to settle in London. He, likewise, had been busy with a book on political economy, but after having made acquaintance with its vast literature at the British Museum, he destroyed his manuscripts on which he had been working in Paris and Brussels and settled down to study anew all that he found of British researches and disquisitions on the subject. Although a great admirer of the

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naturally prolific mind, vast learning and historic sense of Adam Smith, he was mainly attracted by Ricardo, whose scientific bent of mind, generalising capacity, grasp of the antagonistic character of society, and concentrated style of writing, particularly in the first chapter of the "Principles," were so much allied to those of Marx. Indeed, what Ricardo accomplished for the British middle classes, Marx set himself to perform on a vaster scale, with greater learning and revolutionary energy, for the proletariat of the world. And we shall never be able to do justice to Marx, as an economist, unless we connect him with the achievements of British political economy from Petty to Richard Jones, for on them he built up his social criticism, his critique of political economy. There is not in Marxian economics a single proposition on labour and capital, production and remuneration, value and surplus value, which in one form or another could not be found in the works of the leading British economists. And had Professor Nicholson and Mr. Salter but studied them a bit more carefully, their objections to Marx might have been of a more serious nature. Let us sample them.

Professor Nicholson is indignant at Marx for having said that "capital seeks to provide only commodities for sale. It cares nothing for their social uses. To make anything that will sell at a profit. . . ." (p. 86).

That the only purpose of capital is to make profit is an opinion expressed by Adam Smith, when he states as a matter of course that the employer would have no interest in employing the workmen if he didn't "expect from the sale of their work something more than what was sufficient to replace his stock to him" ("Wealth of Nations," Book I, Ch. 6). And where does that "something more" come from? Smith replies: "Profit comes from the labour added to the value of the materials. The value which the workmen add to the material resolves itself into two parts, of which one pays the wages, the other the profit to the employer upon the whole stock of materials and wages which he advanced" (*ibid.*).

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Here we have also the source of what Marx calls surplus value. Profits may be justified and are justified by the post-classical British economic writers on the ground of the labour of inspection and direction by the capitalist. Professor Nicholson actually employs this argument against Marx (p. 137), not knowing that his famous countryman had dealt with it some 150 years ago. For, Adam Smith, anticipating the objection, declares that profits have nothing to do with services. "They are regulated by quite different principles and bear no proportion to the quantity, the hardship, or the ingenuity of this supposed labour of inspection and direction." They are regulated by the amount of capital invested in the business. "In many great works, almost the whole labour of this kind (inspection and direction) is committed to some principal clerk. His wages properly express the value of this labour of inspection and direction" (*ibid.*). Even Mill was constrained to admit that, strictly speaking, capital had no productive power; the only productive force was labour, assisted by tools, machinery, etc., applied to raw material ("Essays on Some Unsettled Questions," 1844, pp. 90-91).

Professor Nicholson further believes that the argument most fatal to Marx's attitude towards capitalism is that he paid no attention to demand, for there could be no profit unless there was a demand for the goods made to sell. "The goods must be got into the hands and the stomachs of the consumers" (pp. 86-87, 106). Well, I suppose that nature has taken pretty good care of that. The appetites and needs of the masses are not specially created by order of the capitalists. And in case of need, a clever advertiser can be got for a moderate salary to make the goods known to the public. Besides, Marx did pay attention to demand. He distinctly pointed out that individual and social demand determines the amount of exchange values to be produced, and if, through the anarchy of capitalist production, the supply is larger than the demand, then the superfluous commodities lose their exchange values; labour has been wasted.

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Mr. Salter, who appears to have read little of Marx and still less of the classical economists, but a good deal of Boehm-Bawerk and other opponents of Marx, harps upon utility as the essence of value. Well, Smith and Ricardo knew something of utility, likewise Marx. All of them regarded utility as essential, but they could not accept it as the measure of exchange value, since, as any manufacturer could tell them, it was cost of production that determined exchange values or prices. And cost of production consisted of prime cost (wages, raw material, etc.) *plus* profit. Marx's particular question in economic theory was, How did surplus value or profit arise? And he answered (1) by hiring labour on the basis of use-value and making it create exchange-value; (2) by producing utilities. To the immediate consumer the main object is utility, but for the manufacturer the main consideration is the means, i.e., labour, living and stored up—by which the goods are produced. And it is in the manufacturer's office, where the prices (or exchange values) are calculated and fixed, and not in the consumer's kitchen. Mr. Salter's criticism of Marxian theories arises largely from the confusion of value and price, believing them to be identical. Marx follows here, as in most concepts, classical political economy, which clearly distinguished between natural price and market price, the former corresponding to Marx's exchange value, the latter to price. The natural price was with Smith, Ricardo, Mill, etc, the real measure, based on labour, while the market price, influenced by supply and demand, etc., sometimes rises above, sometimes falls below, the natural price, but always gravitating towards it.

Marx's main contribution to political economy consists in this,—he started where his predecessors left off. Smith inquired into the concept of value in order to show the source of wealth and how it could be made to flow more copiously; with Ricardo, value was the right principle which ought to regulate distribution; Ravenstone, Thompson, Hodgskin, Bray, regarded surplus-value as mere robbery, and they



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condemned any society which rested on robbing labour. With Marx, value and surplus-value became the key with which he unlocked the inner workings of capitalist society, moreover, showing capitalist society to be one of the many stages of social evolution. Marx dissolved the mechanical view of society, held by his predecessors, into an evolutionary conception of human history.

It is all so elementary. And it is deplorable that one has to deal again and again with economic categories which were so well defined by the greater minds in times when people really searched for knowledge of industrial life, and not for apologias. Indeed, no opponent of Marxism deserves any reply unless he first directs his criticism against Smith and Ricardo. Marx is, of course, more technical, at once more analytical and more synthetical, welding the various categories into a chain of evolutionary causation of the rise and dissolution of the capitalist industrial system; but, in the main, he stands on the shoulders of classical political economy and the theorists of cognition of modern times. He holds strictly to the view that behind the empirical movements and appearances there is a law, a principle, underlying and controlling them, and to which, despite all deviations and refractions, they conform. And science consists, not in describing empirical sensations, but in finding their law and causation, of grouping and interpreting them accordingly.

Marx, in adopting the results of his mental precursors, uses them in the light of his sociological theories. He sat down as a revolutionary Socialist to write his critique of the capitalist system from the point of view of dialectical evolution, materialist conception of history, and class struggle theory, which taught him also that in the domain of social and moral branches of knowledge the intellect is often swayed by class instincts, desires, and interests, that, therefore, even the greatest minds are not exempt from the danger of being influenced in their interpretation of facts and scientific findings either by their attitude towards the

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various classes or by general considerations, so that the same facts and findings will lead the non-Socialist and the Socialist to different conclusions, or might even induce them to stop short at drawing conclusions at all, if they instinctively, unconsciously fear lest the logical process might result in conclusions destructive of their general conception of what is good for their class or for society as a whole. There is, for instance, from the point of view of pure logic, no valid ground why Adam Smith, after having written the very remarkable Chapter 6, Book 1, should not have adopted the Socialist position, why he stopped short at condemning any society based on private property. And yet he did not draw any such conclusions, because his general disposition, born of the circumstances of his upbringing and surroundings and associations, led him to think that private property was more favourable to the development of production, to the growth of wealth. On the other hand, Marx came as a revolutionary Socialist, as a Communist, to study political economy, and saw at once where the results of classical political economy would lead him. And as soon as his teachings proved an effective force in the proletarian movement, they became the object of attacks, while Smith is left alone. I am not an unqualified admirer of Marx's economics; but this I make bold to say, that he must be counted among the greatest economists of all nations. He sometimes stumbled, but, like a noble horse, striking the most sparks when stumbling.

### III

Mr. Salter attacks also the sociology of Marx. He censures him for having failed to give any detailed forecast of the future society (pp. 248-49). This censure has no greater strength than any criticism of a scientific pioneer and discoverer for having omitted to describe the technical possibilities of his discovery. The scientist finds a new physical or chemical or biological law and leaves it to experiment and technology to apply it. This consideration is all the more

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valid in the domain of social science, as the requirements, proceeding from the conditions of life themselves, will sooner or later, in the storm and stress of controversy and conflict, bring forth the organs and organisations capable of performing the new functions. Certainly it is an expensive way, involving as it does sacrifice and martyrdom; but that is the way of organic life, and has so far been the way of social evolution. What practical good did Plato's "Politeia," or even the more moderate "Nomoi," to Athens, More's "Utopia" to England, Campanella's "Civitas Solis" to Italy and Spain, Fourier's, Proudhon's and Louis Blanc's constructive schemes to the French proletariat? Compare the barrenness and futility of the so-called constructive schemes with the results of Marx's so-called destructive and negative teachings. The theories of class struggle, surplus value, economic and political action, socialisation of the means of production, have stirred and inspired the masses all over the world, everywhere moving forward, striving to translate them into practice, filling the forefront of the political stage. Professor Nicholson is quite astonished at the effect of the negative teaching of Marx, and he cries: "And yet he (Marx) moves—and just now moves more than ever—in spite of his arid hypothetical arithmetic and his old massive learning and his overbearing conceit" (p. 13). Does that not remind us of the exclamation of the French sculptor in Rome, when comparing his anatomically correct marble horse with that of the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, "*Et pourtant cette bête-là est vivante, et la mienne est morte!*"? The lesson to be drawn from this outburst is surely that the old learning of Adam Smith proves to have been of greater solidity than the new learning of Professor Nicholson. The old Scottish massive learning and love of theory appears to have taken refuge under the wings of the Scottish proletariat.

# THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY IN RUSSIA

By J. LARIN

**T**HE decrees of the Council of People's Commissaries of April 7 concerning the food tax and free trading, and of May 13 concerning domestic industry and co-operation, were the practical expressions of what latterly it has been the fashion to call the new economic policy.

The accumulation of these measures and regulations have called forth in the anti-Bolshevik camp the conviction that the Communists are abandoning the very foundations of their policy, and consequently have themselves become disillusioned in the October revolution of 1917. Our enemies affirm at public meetings that the three main features of the economic policy of Bolshevism in its very essence had to be the following:—

- (1) The complete nationalisation of all industrial productions.
- (2) The complete suppression of private trading and even of co-operation, leaving the co-operative movement the duties only of the distributive apparatus of the food commissariat.
- (3) Complete State monopoly of all agricultural products (levies).

Our enemies justify these assertions by referring to the practice prevalent in the years 1919 and 1920, still fresh in everyone's memory, and say: What was the use of the hopes and programmes of the Bolsheviks, why should the great mass of workers still follow them, when the Bolsheviks themselves have renounced their fundamental aims? It is not essential to have Lenin and Trotsky in power in order to abandon the Bolshevik programme: both the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries will do quite as well.

These affirmations are absolutely incorrect. In reality,

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what is taking place now is the straightening of our line of action, a return to that programme which prevailed amongst us in the period of the October revolution and nearly all the first year of our power. Under the influence of various causes, about which we shall speak later, deviations were afterwards made from the old correct path, which filled the years 1919 and 1920. Now, when the end of the war has given the party the possibility of quietly summing up the situation, and when the food and fuel crisis of the beginning of 1921 has given an impetus to the summing up of the problem in the clearest possible way—to-day there is taking place the elimination of all excrescences on the old correct policy which grew up in the stress of war, and a straightening of our path is taking place.

The programme of Bolshevism consisted, and still consists, in the overthrow of the power of capitalism, in the establishment of political and economic dictatorship of the working class until complete attainment of Socialism, and in the gradual reconstruction, after the shattering effect of the world war, both of Russian economic life and of the world revolutionary movement of the proletariat. The nucleus of our economic policy is nationalisation—i.e., transference into the possession of the party of the working class organised as the public authority. Nationalisation of the former capitalist industry and transport, in order with its help to guarantee the proletariat an economic basis for its political action: later of so reorganising and extending the technical basis of production as to afford the possibility of socialising the *whole* of economic life (including agriculture) and considerably improving the lot of the population.

Such was, and remains, our programme of action and the corresponding principal line of policy (the nationalisation of industry and transport and placing them at the disposal of the workers' Government). This bed of the proletarian stream we have had to beat out (in the temporary conditions of Russia) in a country where the majority of the population is composed, not of workers, but of small and middle peasants,

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who constitute four-fifths of the population. The peasant is an owner of private property, working on the basis of individual, not of social, production. He requires profit from his *private enterprise* in order to develop it on a wider scale than is necessary to feed his own family (i.e., so that there should be enough food for the workers and raw material for industry). In order to bring about this state of things he requires a certain liberty of action, and even a partial freedom in dealing with his produce, and by utilising them to secure the necessary crafts and auxiliary trades required for peasant enterprise (smiths, millers, wheelwrights, etc.). Consequently he requires freedom for *small industry*.

This characteristic of the economic conditions of the principal mass of the population was perfectly well known to our party, even at the time of the October revolution of 1917; and consequently the forms and methods by which the dictatorship of the proletariat was to be achieved in the economic sphere were marked out very firmly.

They were deliberately limited to what was actually essential to allow us to proceed along the path to our principal aim, and they did not attempt to eliminate those factors, the existence of which was essential if the peasant class were to continue as a class of petty proprietors: and consequently if there were to be peaceful co-operation between the Workers' Government and the peasant majority.

In the sphere of industry this meant the nationalisation of only large and medium sized capitalist industries. We do not attempt to proclaim anything approaching "the *complete* nationalisation of *all* industrial production." Indeed, at the beginning of 1918 I made a proposal, and it was accepted, altogether to forbid the nationalisation of enterprises by any local or central organ whatsoever, except the Council of People's Commissaries and the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council.

In the summer, in June, sending a draft decree concerning the nationalisation of Russian industry (adopted on June 28) from Berlin with Comrade Krassin, I included in it a special

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provision that only undertakings with a capital of not less than half a million roubles were subject to nationalisation. This point was adopted. Craft, domestic, and every other form of small industrial activity (i.e., all that was of *immediate* importance for the peasantry) was *deliberately* avoided both by the legislation and the practice of the first year of our power. The writer was one of those who inspired the economic policy of that day, and therefore is able to insist, not on the accidental but the deliberate nature of this caution. It is sufficient, for example, to refer to the introduction to my pamphlet published by the Petrograd Soviet on December 27, 1917, entitled "Workers and Peasants under the Russian Revolution."

In relation to trade (i.e., the so-called "freedom of disposal"), in exactly the same way neither in intention nor in practice during the first year of the Bolshevik administration was there complete prohibition either of co-operative or of private trading, which is absolutely inevitable when many millions of small privately owned firms exist in the State. Private trading is powerless to prevent the growth of Socialist economic life when conditions exist for the development of large-scale industry and transport, which have been nationalised and are in the hands of the proletarian Government. Summing up our year's work and our plans for the future, we published the decree of November 21, 1918, concerning the organisation of supply. This decree directed the opening of shops which had been independently used by local authorities, and laid down that the task of the State, as such, was to trade in the products only of the nationalised factories. Trading in the products of domestic, craft, and small private industry remained free both for individuals and for the co-operative societies. Our policy in this respect also was a consistent policy, based upon a Marxian (scientific) understanding of the petty bourgeois economic conditions, in the midst of which we had to beat out the road to Socialism, based on large-scale industry. But here we met with political reasons which para-

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lysed our policy in practice — and these reasons must be sought for, not amongst the peasantry, and not amongst the workers. The town bourgeoisie itself simply refused to trade, and refused to carry on its small undertakings. The laws remained, but the stores and workshops became empty, as the owners would not any longer “risk their capital under the Bolsheviki.” During the first months after the October revolution of 1917 the petty bourgeois trading and production continued by force of inertia. The owners hoped that the Bolsheviki were every moment on the point of falling. The Bolsheviki did not fall, and the owners one by one ceased their organising activity. Let us wait until the collapse, they said, before taking any risks. This was the time when shipowners on the Volga almost ceased to repair their vessels, timber merchants ceased to cut wood, etc. (to this day we are forced to burn seasoned wood instead of dry, because, in the case of a considerable portion of our stores, a whole year was lost, and the regular practice of the fuel industry was infringed, by which the wood was left to dry in the forest for a whole year after being cut).

It is quite another matter now, in 1921, when the middle class has become convinced of the stability and strength of the Soviet Government. To-day they will trade and re-open workshops as much as you like, once they are given permission. Then it was otherwise, and willy-nilly, or, more accurately, unwillingly, the State was forced gradually to take on to its shoulders an immeasurable and unnecessary burden in the shape of the replacement of the entire distributive apparatus, and of the direct organising of nearly the whole of industry, let alone private workshops with a few tens of workers and employees. Only with the autumn of 1920, after the final defeat of the counter-revolution (Wrangel), after the idea of the stability of Bolshevism had been definitely hammered into the brains of the man-in-the-street, did conditions arise under which the Government of the proletariat could again relinquish all these duties, and not be afraid of coming up against that economic sabotage of the



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middle class which took place before (when it preferred to register in mass as employees in Soviet institutions, there to await the collapse of the odious new order, instead of continuing the organisation of its own commercial and industrial enterprises). The self-elimination of the bourgeois middle class from its share of organising participation in Russian economic life began in 1919, and particularly in 1920, to take legal shape as well.

By the irony of fate, the last step in this direction—the nationalisation of all enterprises with more than five or ten workers—was undertaken by the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council (more by inertia than after reasoning thought) only when the possibility of straightening the line and of returning to the programme of action of the years 1917 and 1918 had begun to become clear—as late as December, 1920. This decision of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council has now been set aside by the decree of the Council of People's Commissaries of May 13, which restores those relations with small-scale industry that existed in 1917.

In this way, as far as the first two "main features" are concerned—nationalisation and trading—all the time there have been doubts as to theory; and, even if the practice of 1919 and 1920 deviated from the theory, this was called forth by the unfavourable turn of events, and brought us only harm. Our business is to nationalise only the factories, large works, mines, railways, and shipping—and not to make a monopoly out of every home-made wooden spoon and every boat on the river, every flower-shop, every fashionable hat shop, *for the dictatorship of the proletariat does not at all consist in the imposition on the proletariat of the obligation to carry out all the work of organising for the whole of the community.* On the contrary, a sensible dictatorship will display itself incidentally just in this: *that it is able to utilise and force into the fundamental economic current the organising forces and efforts of other social layers and sections of layers.* In the present case, it is quite clear that

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the direction of the economic life of the country will be determined by those who have in their hands transport, industry, and political power, and not by those who control home-made wooden spoons or small timber, and the senseless disintegration of millions of scattered small farms. The establishment of accurate limits for the nationalisation of industry, and for trading in the products of industry during the whole period evoked no hesitation, and the deviations from the true path were brought about by necessity imposed upon us from outside. With food, on the other hand—with the levy on the products of peasant agriculture, with the form of our relations to that same method of agriculture—matters stood a little differently and were more complicated. In reality here, too, in 1921, there is taking place only a decisive return to what was intended and partly achieved as early as 1918. Here, too, in a word, there is taking place only a straightening of the line. But in this connection the party of the proletariat, as a whole, has only gradually grasped the practical meaning and rôle, in these years of transition, of the internal tendencies of peasant agriculture, and, consequently, the necessary relations to be maintained with it. Speaking more simply, it has only gradually realised that “military Communism,” in the words of Comrade Lenin, “was not and cannot be a policy answering to the economic problems of the proletariat; it was a temporary measure, forced upon us by war and ruin.” (See his pamphlet, “The Food Tax.”) Having grasped this, the party decisively returned to the programme which was laid down by the October revolution, and which was temporarily left on one side later owing to the influence of the war and economic collapse. The period of deviation was the more prolonged owing to the insufficient grasp, in very wide circles, of the thought which Comrade Lenin expresses in the words: “The true policy of the proletariat carrying out its dictatorship in a country of small peasants, is to procure corn in exchange for the products of industry necessary to the peasant.”

# THE FARMERS' MOVEMENT IN AMERICA

By G. J. PYLE

**T**HE American farmer has always been looked upon as the bulwark of national conservatism. Whatever popular fads might sweep the country, the farmer, we used to say, might be counted upon to resist change, and, for better or worse, uphold the present order. And although we have grown used to surprises of late—with prohibition and woman suffrage suddenly establishing themselves among us—when we first heard that the farmers of North Dakota had organised the “Non-Partisan League” with the avowed intention of having the State engage in the business of marketing farm products, we asked what could be happening in the north-west to bring about anything so startling.

The members of the League were ready with their answer. For years, they said, the farmers of North Dakota had suffered from the conditions under which they were obliged to market their grain. Companies in the neighbouring cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul owned nearly all the “grain elevators” or buying centres in the State. These companies, the farmers complained, treated them unfairly in grading the quality of the wheat and even in weighing it. Reports of the companies’ sales showed that they had disposed of more wheat or better wheat than they had bought from the farmers. Furthermore, since the local banks were owned or controlled by the same city interests, a systematic policy prevailed of having notes fall due immediately after harvest, and so forcing the farmers to sell their crops then when prices were lowest. Year after year, in order to meet their obligations, they had been compelled to sell for what they could get, only to see the market quotations rise after the wheat was safely in the hands of the buyers.

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Among the various reform measures that were proposed, the most popular proved to be the plan for a State-owned elevator, which would give the farmers fair weights and grades, and finally, by a vote of more than four-fifths of the people, the State legislature was instructed to build one. The legislature replied that the State constitution forbade such an enterprise. This was in 1907. At the next election the citizens ordered the constitution amended, and although the legislature obeyed the mandate, they again failed to build the elevator, making the excuse that they were not sure whether the electors wanted it within the State or in Minneapolis. At the next election the farmers tried again and were again put off with an excuse. Gradually it became evident that they must develop their own political organisation and elect their own candidates to the State offices if they hoped to accomplish the objects which they had sought in vain from the regular politicians. But it was not until after ten years that the Non-Partisan League was organised in response to this need. As in so many similar cases, the work of one man proved to be a match set to the waiting tinder.

Mr. A. C. Townley, a North Dakota farmer, was the founder of the new organisation. Its "platform" was simple and familiar: grain elevators owned by the State, a State bank to make farmers loans on more favourable terms, State insurance for crops against damage by hail, encouragement of farm improvements by tax exemption, and a system of grain-grading laws to be executed by State inspectors. The organisation was called Non-Partisan because it was not to constitute a new political party, but was to nominate its candidates on whichever of the old party tickets seemed more favourable for local conditions—which generally meant the Republican Party. This programme proved so popular that organisers were soon busily canvassing the State, and in less than six months the League had more than twenty thousand members.

At a farmers' convention held in the spring of 1916 Mr. Lynn Frazier was nominated for Governor of North Dakota.

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Oddly enough, Mr. Frazier was not a delegate to the convention, and when its representatives called on him to announce his nomination he was found, like another famous historical character, ploughing his field. In the fall elections the League went before the people with its list of farmer candidates and won by a large majority. Two more years of waiting were necessary before its programme could be carried out, for North Dakota, like many of the American States, has a constitutional provision that only half the State Senate is elected at the biennial polling, and the "hold-over" senators—that is, those who had been elected two years before the League entered the list—blocked the new measures. But in 1918 these senators were displaced and the League was in absolute control of the State.

Since the League plans had been prepared long before, the new Congress lost little time in writing them on the statute books, and in two months the whole programme had been enacted into law. The State Mill and Elevator Association was created and authorised to buy or rent the necessary equipment for marketing grain and manufacturing flour. This was followed in quick succession by the State Home-Building Association to lend money at low rates, the State Hail-Insurance Department to protect against grain losses at lower premiums than had been charged by the private companies, and, most important of all, the State Bank of North Dakota. A bond issue of \$17,000,000 was authorised to finance the projects. Then, in order to extend the reform benefits to other classes than the farmers, the Congress supplemented their work with a number of laws for the protection of organised labour: a workmen's disability compensation Act, an Act prescribing an eight-hour day and a minimum wage for women, a mine-inspection law, and an Act limiting the power of the State Courts to issue injunctions in labour disputes.

The work of administering the State industries was assigned to the Industrial Commission, which was to consist of the Governor, the Attorney-General and the Commis-

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sioner of Agriculture and Labour. The Commission was given full authority to employ subordinate officers, acquire properties, and determine buying and selling prices. It was the intention of the legislature, in conferring such powers, to avoid hampering the work of the Commission with the restrictive "red tape" that has stifled so much Government business. But the critics of the League have attacked this concentrating of authority more than any other feature of the programme, and urged that it imposed too heavy a weight of administrative business on a small group whose time was already well taken up with their regular political duties. The spirit that has animated a great deal of this criticism is of a sort, however, to make one suspect that the critics would have been just as indignant if exactly the opposite course had been followed. Whether or no these three particular men happened to be capable of directing so many enterprises with success, their responsibilities were certainly far less than those which the officers of large corporations feel able to shoulder.

With its laws enacted the new Government went vigorously to work. The State Mill and Elevator Association bought a flour-mill which was operated successfully until the late autumn of 1920 brought a sudden fall in the price of wheat and caused it a considerable loss by shrinkage of assets. Its loss, however, was no more than that sustained by most of the private mills, and meanwhile it had been paying better prices for its wheat and selling cheaper flour. The Bank of North Dakota began operations as soon as enough bonds were sold to make it possible, and advanced loans for farm improvements and home-building with interest payable at 7 per cent. on a thirty-year amortization plan. Several crop failures in the midst of the general financial depression which came after the war put the bank in uncomfortable straits and some forty banking houses throughout the State were obliged to close their doors. The same conditions existed through all the North-West, but it was an unfortunate time for the working out of a novel programme of State-owned industry, and the Conservatives were not slow

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to point a moral. In fact, the angry tone of so much of the comment on the League has made it difficult for most outsiders to form a just idea of its achievements or failures. It would not be surprising if such an experiment had a somewhat chequered career, but much of the counter-propaganda is obviously unfair, stubbornly opposed to any unusual or progressive reform, and allowing nothing for the really trying conditions which the League has had to face.

But whether fair or not, the counter-propaganda has had a far-reaching effect. Unhappy attempts at State ownership from the early days of American history have left a prejudice, and it was not hard to create a general belief that the new programme was a piece of dangerous Utopianism. Although the League's membership now extends through more than a dozen States, its organisers have often encountered furious opposition. Not long ago two of them in the State of Kansas were tarred and feathered by a mob of citizens determined to protect their homes against these supposed emissaries of Lenin. Even in North Dakota the elections in the fall of 1920 considerably reduced the leadership in the State Congress which had been won two years before.

But in spite of all, the League is still a going concern. Governor Frazier was re-elected and is now serving his third term. The State Mill and Elevator Association is building a new mill, the Bank of North Dakota is pushing the sale of its bonds, and the banking houses are opening again. The League headquarters, now at Minneapolis, Minnesota, is urging its campaign vigorously. With the return of normal conditions in business it will have a fair chance to try out its plans under more favourable circumstances. Whether the high hopes of its founders can be realised is a matter for the next few years to determine.

# INDIA IN THE LABOUR WORLD

By SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA

**T**HERE is a vague idea that India is an agricultural country, is industrially dormant, and is only slowly awakening to modern industrialism.

But fifteen per cent. of a population of three hundred millions makes up a number of forty-five million people in India living by industrial and commercial activity. The case of Great Britain as a standard is misleading. Each group of industrial workers producing outputs in immense quantities at a very rapid rate, with the assistance of scientific appliances, requires a large group of human beings employed on large tracts of land and sea, near or far, for the supply of raw materials. In all large countries, therefore, the ratio of 80 per cent. of peasantry to 20 per cent. of industrial workers is a necessary factor of modern industrial life.

Modern imperialism makes up for Great Britain what cannot be provided by nature in her island bounds. Thus alongside of the political imperialism, which can always be altered or abolished by a stroke of the pen in the legislature, there has now grown up an economic inter-relationship between Britain and the East which cannot be given up without disaster to the industrial workers of Britain. Political imperialism of Britain artificially prevented India from manufacturing her own raw products. The growing strength and demands of Labour in Great Britain created an interest for the British manufacturers to start manufacturing a limited amount of output in India. This in the course of years opened the eyes of the Indian bourgeoisie, who adopted modern industrialism for their own gain and in direct rivalry against the European concerns. This in process of time brought about a mutual understanding between the foreign and Indian exploiters, who jointly decided to speed up in-



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dustrialism. The European owner of small factories in India was soon reduced to the necessity of extending and consolidating his concerns in India to keep pace with the local rivalries. He now finds that with a wise manipulation of his affairs by becoming the owner of factories and mines in India, ostensibly as a foreign rival of himself and his own concerns in Great Britain, he can obtain a controlling advantage over British Labour at home, by creating a rival cheaper group of Labour in India.

This development of the economic significance of India and England can be observed in the exultant and self-congratulatory speeches at meetings of companies registered in England which have their places of industry in the East. The new concerns registered annually in India from 1910 up to the outbreak of the war in 1914 were 245, 334, 289, 356, for each year respectively. Then came the war years with the consequent scarcity of European and American machinery and Government control over investments in private companies. Thus during the years 1914 to 1918 the above figures of new concerns in India shrank to 112, 121, 184, 276, 290. As soon as the artificial barriers of war years had been raised, the number of new companies registered in India, March, 1919, to March, 1920, was 905, and 1920 to 1921 was 965. The average total capital of the new companies registered in India year by year was approximately £12,000,000\* per year for the years 1910-1914. In the first three years of the war this average fell to £6,000,000 per year. With the revival of war industries it sprang up to £18,000,000 per year during the last two years of the war. In 1919 it assumed the enormous figure of £183,000,000, and 1920 to March, 1921, owing to the extraordinary disturbances in the exchange rate, it came up to £100,000,000. From these figures one can imagine the accelerated speed with which industrialism is growing in India. As if this was not sufficient to satisfy the ambitions of the Indian as well as the

\* For facility of European readers all money figures are reduced from Indian Rupees to British £ sterling at the normal rate of Rs.15 to the £.

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British company promoters, the cry of protective duties has not only been theoretically advanced, but is practically pushed forward by 11 per cent. and 20 per cent. duties on imports of manufactured articles.

The following are up-to-date figures of the position in leading lines of industry :—

### INDIAN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, 1921.

	Companies.	Total Capital.
Cotton .....	264 ...	£19,000,000
Jute .....	76 ...	10,000,000
Iron and Steel .....	4 ...	20,000,000
Coal Mining .....	236 ...	6,000,000*
Tea .....	300 ...	22,000,000

All the above concerns can produce goods under advantageous conditions of native raw materials close at hand and docile labour, at least as it was before the war and before serious attempts at Labour organisation were made. Further, with cheap labour and by ignoring mass claims to education, insurance, etc., the manufacturers obtain advantages of cheap transit, cheap postage and light taxes. The selling prices of articles produced in India are always regulated by the selling prices of rival articles imported from Europe, which have to pay transport charges, sea freight, marine insurance, Customs duties. In the commercial world India had once attained fame on vague reports of her diamonds and pearls and gold and silks, but to-day, amongst the investing world, India is gaining a very substantial reputation for high dividends. Take her cotton mills. In good years Indian cotton concerns as a whole have in a single year earned fully 100 per cent. of capital as dividends, considering the earning to be made on original bona-fide investments and disregarding the bonus and presentation shares given to the shareholders out of the profits. Taking the Central India Mills—which is un-

\* A considerable number of mines being private proprietary concerns, their capital is not registered and is not included in the above figures. Similarly, leather works and oil mills are not to be found in official registers.

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doubtedly one of the most successful firms in the cotton world—its published dividend for the year 1920 has been 160 per cent.; but one has to realise that this percentage is on an inflated figure of capital of over £300,000, whereas it actually works out at 500 per cent. on the original investment of £100,000, which was all that the shareholders ever had to find for this concern. The Bombay Dyeing Mills and the Century Mills both show a dividend of 128 per cent. in 1919. The Swadeshi Mills of Bombay had a dividend of 120 per cent. each for the years 1919 and 1920, and so did the Dunbar and the Muir Mills of Calcutta divide 120 per cent. in 1920. The Phoenix Mill, the New City of Bombay Mill, and Madhowji Mills had a dividend of 100 per cent. in 1919. The Fajulbhoy Mills declared a dividend of 168 per cent. in 1920, and the New City of Bombay and the Phoenix Mills also declared 160 per cent. each in 1920, but the New Ring Mill, under Messrs. Kettlewell, Bullen and Co., of Calcutta, beat the above records by declaring a dividend of 365 per cent. for the year 1920.

Dozens of cotton mills may be cited which declared dividends between 50 per cent. and 100 per cent. in the years 1919 and 1920. And these are the concerns that after mouthfuls of talk of “reform” and “charities” for the workers still insist upon 60 hours a week and barely a shilling a day average wages, and plead poverty and shout at injustice if ever anybody offered a mild suggestion of an eight-hour day and a minimum wage of at least £3 per week.

Opening the dividend sheets of jute mills, where not only wages but the general treatment of workers can both be described as a disgrace of modern mankind, the following dividends are publicly recorded either for the year 1919 or for the year 1920:

Albion Mills .....	125 per cent.
Alexandra Mills .....	150 ” ”
Alliance Mills .....	175 ” ”
Auckland Mills .....	150 ” ”
Budge-Budge Mills .....	132 ” ”

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Caledonian Mills .....	140	per cent.
Clive Mills .....	160	" "
Dalhousie Mills .....	150	" "
Delta Mills .....	150	" "
Empire Mills .....	200	" "
Fort Gloster Mills .....	225	" "
Ganges Mills .....	180	" "
Goure-Pore Mills .....	260	" "
Hoogly Mills .....	400	" "
Howrah Mills .....	130	" "
India Mills .....	220	" "
Kamar Hatty Mills .....	250	" "

and following the concerns further down the alphabetical list from the letter K to the letter W, I can assure the reader of quite a dozen concerns which have during one of the three years 1918, 1919, or 1920 earned dividends between 150 per cent. and 330 per cent.

The Dundee jute workers do not yet realise the urgent need of making the Bengal jute workers, as well as the Bengal jute growers, a part and parcel of the British Jute Workers' Federation, demanding a six-hour day and £5 a week minimum wages, whether the factory be in Dundee or in Calcutta. The wages in Bengal jute factories are registered by the Government Commission at 14s. a *month* up to 38s. a *month* in various departments. The Dundee jute workers, to maintain this rivalry against themselves, have got to contribute not only in money towards the maintenance of the British Navy, but even in men, by supplying Scottish Highlanders to terrorise over the jute growers, as well as the jute workers, in Bengal, and to teach them obedience to a law and order which insists on maintaining the right of the masters to extract 200 per cent. and 300 per cent. dividends from the misery of the people.

To continue the list of profits from industry to industry would be an endless task. The Bengal coal mines, which are mostly under the ownership of British masters, and where the miners work from 60 to 72 hours a week on an average wage of under 8d. per day per head, show dividends rising to 120 per cent. In one case the average dividend

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per annum steadily for fifteen years from 1906 has been 95 per cent. Tea plantations have given average earnings between 1913 and 1919 of 20 to 27 per cent.; and this does not include the private companies' profits, which are not published. The Bengal Paper Mills have given a dividend of 52 per cent. for the last four years, the Bengal Timber Trading Company 40 per cent. for two years, and 75 per cent. for three years. The Cawnpore Sugar Works gave 40 per cent. in 1919 and 60 per cent. in 1920. The Hoogly Docking Company has given dividends of 80, 150, and 100 per cent. in the last three years of the war. The Bombay Flour and Oil Mill Company has given 100, 70 and 140 per cent. during the last three years. Thacker and Company, a publishing firm, has declared an increasing dividend of 40, 60, 80, 80 and 100 per cent. during the last five years.

The British worker desires his wages to be increased and safeguarded, and he would even like on this account to see the product of his toil to be a little higher in price if necessary. So far, unfortunately, he has failed to realise that the customer of the product of his toil should also be able to respond to this economic adjustment, and if the Indian workers' wages do not rise appreciably, and the British wages aspire to rise continually, the Indian worker cannot be the customer of the British worker. If the Lancashire worker will look at the trade figures from 1905 up till 1920 he will perceive that the total money value of his goods sent to India was for the first five years £23,000,000 to £24,000,000; for the next four years it averaged £31,000,000 per year, and in the war years with the help of high prices it maintained an average of about £25,000,000 a year; and in the period 1919-1920, with booming profiteering, the value nominally was £46,000,000, but the bulk of these goods still lie unpaid for in the Indian ports. The value of woollen goods for all these fifteen years kept between £800,000 and £1,000,000. But these are figures of *values*, which are of interest to the

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profiteers, and the workers have got to study the figures of *quantities*, because it is the quantities that represent employment or unemployment. In the pre-war years, the cotton goods sent to India ranged from 2,000,000,000 yards to 3,000,000,000 yards a year, and during the war years this quantity fell to about 1,800,000,000 yards per year. But with soaring prices of British goods and with miserable wages of Indian peasants and workers, the quantity of Lancashire piece goods fell to below 1,000,000,000 yards per year for 1919 and 1920. Similarly, woollen goods, which were for ten years before the war about 12,000,000 yards per year, fell to 3,000,000 yards last year. This represents shrinkage of employment in Great Britain. With this shrinkage of employment in Great Britain, the consumption of the working classes in Great Britain herself must needs fall below the normal line. The report of the Co-operative Wholesale Society for this year reveals this doleful tale, where the working-class families had to buy 8 per cent. less food, 50 per cent. less clothing, 60 per cent. less draperies, and 35 per cent. less furniture and household articles during the last year owing to widespread unemployment. The part that has been played in this by the destruction of the markets of Central Europe and of Russia has already been widely pointed out; but the part that has been played by the impoverishment of the Indian workers is less generally realised. In either case the neglect of effective working-class solidarity abroad has reacted ruinously on the home position of the workers.

One of the reasons of the very long continuance of the miserable condition of Labour in India alongside the rapid strides of Western industrialism was the overlooking of the importance of Labour organisation by the Indian leaders of thought, who for a generation were completely swayed by the hypocrisies of the British Liberal Party. At a certain period the Indian National Congress officially prided itself in being the representative of the aristocracy

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of wealth and talent. When the question of Indian Labour was first taken up by an official committee in England, the millowners of Bombay secured the most brilliant and promising Parsi politician (whose career was cut short by his untimely death), Dr. Bahdoorji, as their delegate, and sent him to England to fight for Labour conditions in India to be left as they were.

The first ostensible serious champion of Labour as such was Mr. Lokhandé, of Bombay. He was, however, widely denounced as set up by wire-pullers, not for the purpose of fighting *for* Labour, but for the deliberate purpose of discrediting the demands of Indian politicians. Later on, during the Montagu Reforms agitation, a similar rôle was attributed to Dr. Nair, of Madras. The action and methods adopted by both these gentlemen did not disprove the charge against them, and they had less of a programme of Labour rights and more of a reactionary propaganda against India's political rights. However, both were persistent Labour agitators, whatever their ulterior motives may be, and Lokhandé, of Bombay, remained in very intimate touch with the daily life of the Bombay cotton mill operatives, and at times he did expose certain conditions of Bombay labour life which commanded public attention. Whatever the direct purpose of Lokhandé, the very rôle that he undertook to play did a measure of good in the early stages of the first Factory Act for India, and perhaps in a lesser degree, Dr. Nair's activities also contributed their share in the acceptance of a semblance of rights for the workers in the Montagu Scheme. Lokhandé's agitation, and his familiarity with Bombay workers, produced another good result, in that the consciousness amongst the Bombay mill workers of their wretched conditions, and a desire for united action, were definitely created in them.

The genius of uniting together within a certain trade has always existed amongst the Indian people. For instance, the particular caste that gives hall porters and night watchmen to commercial offices and banks in large cities has

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been always united together in its own way for the last thirty years and has at times even put forward joint action against some grievous wrong. It was in the commencement of the present century that the European railway guards working on the Great Indian Peninsular Railway, though not possessing any regular Union, combined together temporarily and carried out an organised strike and won their point. The Indian signallers in the same railway company, following this example, but forgetting that they were not the blessed bearers of the white man's burden, organised themselves into a regular Union and went in for a strike, with the disastrous result that the railway company, using the British Army signallers to blackleg them, broke the strike and finally dismissed them all. The Bombay cotton mill operatives have for thirty years been organised under some benevolent committee, as a society for the protection of the workers. This society has at times functioned with fair success, and it left a slight impress of its power on the Factory Commission and the Factory Act of 1911.

In 1911, a systematic effort was made in London to draw the attention of prominent Trade Union leaders here to their duty to assist in organising Indian Labour along British lines, for the mutual protection of Indian as well as British Labour; but, after a couple of enthusiastic meetings, the British Trade Union leaders decided to drop the whole matter and preferred not to arouse anger amongst the India Office authorities. From 1912 to 1915 the younger Indians in England took various opportunities to arouse an interest amongst the leaders of public opinion in India on the question of mass rights and Labour organisations. The early years of the war prevented any active operations being launched out. However, as the war developed into an unending campaign of European international jealousies, definite measures were taken in 1916 to found in London a joint body of Indian and British Trade Unionists and Socialists (the Workers' Welfare League of India of London), with the definite



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object of bringing about a working connection between the workers of India and the workers of Britain in the same industries, and of demanding an approximation of legislative and economic standards for workers of both countries.

Meanwhile, on another side, an impetus was given to Labour organisation in India on European lines by the activities of Mrs. Annie Besant and those associated with her. Taking timely advantage of a strike that was being carried on by certain cotton mill operatives in Madras, Mr. B. P. Wadia, Mrs. Besant's staunch adherent in Theosophy, and a loyal lieutenant for a long time in all her activities, headed the cause of the Madras workers and formed the strikers into a Union, after the pattern of a British Union. Mr. Wadia then came over to England and supplemented the political propaganda of Mrs. Besant with a Labour propaganda in British Labour circles. Mr. Wadia's efforts and work for the first time aroused a general interest amongst the British Trade Unionists in questions of Indian Labour, and indirectly solidified the floating opinion that was aroused in this matter by the Workers' Welfare League of India working from its headquarters in London.

Organisation rapidly extended, particularly in the Punjab and in Bombay, under the direction of Joseph Baptista, Chaman Lall and Lajpat Rai. Unions were formed of railway workers, post office workers, printers, clerks, textile workers, tramway drivers, gasworkers, and other trades. After a period of effort, during which some 600,000 workers in different trades were organised in some fashion or another under most difficult circumstances, the definite step was taken of establishing the All India Trade Union Congress. The first meeting of this congress took place in Bombay in the autumn of 1920, and its second meeting is now announced to be held in November of this year in the centre of the Bengal coal fields, in a colliery town called Jharria, round about which 400,000 miners are grouped.

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The future of Trade Unionism in India will depend in its early stages upon the close co-operation of British Labour. The formal legislation legalising the right of the workers to combine is not yet forthcoming. To secure the necessary continuous co-operation between Indian and British Labour is the task of the Workers' Welfare League of India, which has been duly accredited by the Indian Trade Union Congress as its representative. The interests of Indian and British Labour are bound up by their economic relations. If by any chance continued unwisdom, apathy or arrogance on the part of British Labour drives the Indian Labour or mass movement into open hostility against them, British Labour will have to be prepared for evil days. The extent and rapidity of the development of the movement in India will at the beginning depend upon the sincerity and support which the British workers give to the Indian movement, but very shortly afterwards the united and full strength of the organised Indian masses will play no small part in the British Labour struggle for its economic emancipation and independence.

The spirit of the international movement is conspicuously in front of the Indian organisers. At considerable cost to their popularity they have steadfastly differentiated between the international solidarity of Labour and the non-co-operative movement as a temporary political weapon in India against the imperialist exploiter. The question of international affiliations is already much agitated among the active leaders of Indian Trade Unionism. In Indian eyes the Amsterdam International is largely discredited by its imperialist associations; and at present the balance of opinion leans towards the Red Trade Union movement. It is doubtful, however, whether the movement is yet ready for international affiliation. In the meantime the present breakdown of political imperialism throws a great part to play on Indian Labour. Any set of conditions that would allow this imperialist political fight to lead to the partition of nations into water-tight national compartments, even in

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the realms of economic inter-relationship, would be a disaster to all the small countries like Great Britain who must economically depend upon the outside world for raw materials as well as for markets for finished products. The only solution for the workers would be to let the political disruption take its own course as a side issue, and to take immediate steps for an economic consolidation of interests of the working classes of all nations and countries.

# THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST CONGRESS AT MILAN

**T**HE Milan Congress of the Italian Socialist Party was the first Congress since the split last January. The Italian Socialist Party is the principal party outside any International, and its decisions were awaited with general interest. At the Bologna Congress in 1919 the Party had been one of the first to join the Third International, and it had joined by a unanimous decision. Immediately after came the general election of December, 1919; and the Party swept the country on its new Communist programme, and came out the strongest single party, with 156 seats out of 508. At this point, the position of the revolutionary movement in Italy was very strong: the town workers, the peasants and the soldiers were all permeated with unrest, and the Government was very doubtful of support. The revolutionary movement reached its height with the metal workers' seizure of the factories in the autumn of 1920; and from the failure of that attempt the movement declined. Thereafter came the organisation of the Fascisti or anti-Socialist guerrilla forces, and the reign of terrorism against every form of Labour activity.

The autumn of 1920 was the turning point of the Italian Labour movement, and it is from that period that the present discussions take their rise. The Third International attributed the failure of the metal workers' attempt to the reformist elements among the workers' leaders, who accepted a compromise from the Prime Minister, Giolitti, instead of continuing the struggle. The Twenty One Points of the Third International, drawn up in the summer of 1920, had already demanded the expulsion of the reformist leaders from the Italian Socialist Party, and this demand was now

COALITION  
A SOCIALIST VIEW



“Throw out a plank to the sinking bourgeoisie? Never!”—*Avanti*.

COALITION  
A COMMUNIST VIEW



SERRATI: "All tactics are good in the cause of Socialism."—*L'Ordine Nuovo*.

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pressed. But Serrati, the principal leader of the Party, opposed this demand, and at the Leghorn Congress, in January, 1921, he and his followers, styled "Unity Communists," carried their point by 98,028 votes against 58,783 for the "Pure Communists," who accepted the decisions of the Third International. The latter therefore broke away to form the Italian Communist Party. Thus the Italian Socialist Party passed outside the Communist International, though still professing adhesion to it, and Serrati and his followers found themselves cut off from the Communists and in unity with the small reformist section led by Turati.

The reformists within the Italian Socialist Party had not so far been a large section, though influential in the Parliamentary group; and at the Leghorn Congress they had not mustered ten per cent. of the votes. But they now came to the front, and pressed the policy of a return to regular Parliamentary tactics and the promotion of a coalition with bourgeois parties. Thus, at the Milan Congress, the followers of Serrati, who still felt themselves to be Communists, were faced with the demand of the reformists for a policy of Parliamentary collaboration, while the Communist International insisted on a complete break with the reformists as the condition of the Party's return to the International.

The Milan Congress opened on October 10, and was attended by 1,000 delegates, representing a membership of 106,845. Four sections revealed themselves at the Congress: the Concentrationists (reformists), under the leadership of Turati, who favoured collaboration with the Government without reservation; the United Maximalists, led by Serrati, who opposed support or collaboration with the Government, but were not prepared to advocate immediate expulsion of those favouring this policy; the Centrists, under the leadership of Alessandri, who, whilst opposing any collaboration with the Government, advocated influencing the Government in certain directions; and, finally, the Maximalist section of the Third International, led by Lazzari, who

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demanding the expulsion from the Party of those supporting collaboration with the Government.

The final voting was as follows :—

United Maximalists (Serrati) .....	47,628
Concentrationists (Turati) .....	19,916
Centrists (Alessandri) .....	8,080
Third International Maximalists (Lazzari)..	3,765

The effect of this vote leaves the Italian Socialist Party still outside the Third International, but still refusing to adopt the proposed policy of Parliamentary collaboration. On the other hand, the increase in the strength of Turati is very marked. But the Executive elected comprises only Maximalists : Baratonio, Corsi, Domenico, Parpagnoli, Serrati and Vella; and the Serrati resolution gives this Executive power to exclude individuals guilty of indiscipline in pursuing a collaborationist policy.

A survey of the resolutions put forward will reveal the opposing policies, which form the centre of controversy in Italian Socialism.

### RESOLUTION OF THE UNITY MAXIMALISTS (SERRATI)

I. The Socialist Party of Italy is a revolutionary party which has for its aim the integral substitution of the Socialist régime for the individual one. Its methods of action must therefore be based on the class struggle without compromise. Upon this criterion of the ends and means, already traditional, and made more definite since 1912 and in all other congresses preceding the present one, must be based the union of the Party, which ought to join its members in a real agreed unity of thought and of action, that is of purposes and their practical realisation, excluding all tendencies to collaborate with and participate in the government.

Therefore the Congress again declares, as it did in 1912, the inconsistency with the principles and methods of the aim of Socialism, of the inclusion in the Party of those who approve of participation of Socialists in the government, and of all the others who agree to the conception of a new social democracy which has been applied with disastrous results in other countries, tending to the collaboration of all classes in the political and economic sphere and in assisting the bourgeoisie in their reconstruction plans in the present crisis;

And declares also, as contrary to Socialist principles and the



## The Italian Socialist Congress at Milan

interests of the proletariat, every support given to Government programmes, whilst claiming for the Party the right to demand from all its members, including the members of Parliament, the rigorous adherence to the resolutions of the Congress.

II. The Parliamentary Socialist Group is an organ of the Party, whose duty it is to bring pressure to bear from outside on the bourgeois Governments, using its numerical strength and moral value to compel the Executive power to respect the power of public bodies (local authorities) which we have already captured by the strength of our own votes; and for the protection of our organisations, and on the other hand to force the bourgeoisie to recognise the new rights of Labour and to sanction all new laws which the activity of the Group must prepare and formulate, in this way performing also an actual and concrete action, but purely based on the class struggle. The Parliamentary Socialist Group ought to be strictly subordinate to the Party Executive, and ought to be advised and directed by it.

III. The Congress must appoint a Party Executive with extensive powers and chosen, not on the basis of selection prescribed by the old rules, but in view of the activity and capacity of individuals. If amongst those elected to the Executive there should be some deputies, they will not take part in Parliamentary life, except in divisions of exceptional importance, so as to be able to devote themselves exclusively to the duties of their new office. The directorate thus composed, which numbers seven, including the representative of the Parliamentary group and the Editor of *Avanti*, will meet as Executive Committee of the Party, and will incorporate in it, with consultive votes, representatives of other organisations which adhere to the Party. The new Executive should unite in thought and action with organisations and individuals on the Maximalist programme, having the power of purifying, when the necessity and opportunity presents itself, the Party from every action which is opportunist and collaborative in tendency, and penalise immediately, and in a direct manner, every case of open indiscipline and violation of Congress resolutions.

The Executive should direct and co-ordinate the legislative activities of the Parliamentary group; reorganise Provincial Federations so that they give a better result, and make provision for the South of Italy having ample powers of using deputies in these works; reorganise the Socialist members; make provision for the financing of the Party; and try to make agreements with the parties in foreign countries based on the last paragraph of this resolution.

The Executive will summon the National Council regularly every three months and extraordinarily every time it is thought necessary; the National Council will be composed of eighteen regional members, which will be elected by the Congress.

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IV. The Socialist Party of Italy, after its undeserved expulsion from the Third International of Moscow, still declares that it will maintain its full adhesion to it and conform its action, within the ways and limits permitted by its particular sectional and historical contingencies, to the action of the said International: to that International for which we must work with the purpose, that all the revolutionary groups and parties of the whole world adhere, which agree with us in the Maximalist programme.

SERRATI, BARATONO.

### RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRISTS (ALESSANDRI)

The Congress recognises that there are different currents and tendencies of Socialist thought based on the principle of the class struggle which are natural and legitimate in a united party; it affirms, however, that the existence of individuals and groups, acting contrary to the Congress resolutions and party discipline is incompatible in the Party, and, consequently, statutory rules, actually in force, will have to be changed in such a way that, with necessary guarantees of impartiality, such acts are immediately dealt with and rigidly punished.

The Congress, whilst considering that in the present political and social conditions, Parliamentary action has been most prominent, reaffirms that it is only one of the many forms of the complex activity of the Party. The Parliamentary Socialist Group is strong in so far as it represents the powerfully organised masses, fully conscious of their historical mission; and the Parliamentary Socialist Group acquires an ever-increasing influence, not from subtle Parliamentary stratagems or a purely negative meaningless opposition; but from the continuous material and spiritual development of class organisations (Socialist branches, Trade Unions, Co-operative Societies), and the strengthening of power on public bodies (Town Councils, Provincial Councils and Parliament).

On the question of Parliamentary action, the Congress deprecates every form of participation in the bourgeois Cabinet. Individuals and groups who infringe this resolution adopted by Congress (and which can only be rescinded by another Congress) will be expelled immediately from the Party.

The Congress prescribes an uncompromising attitude as a rule for the Parliamentary Socialist Group, but in certain circumstances and in agreement with the Party Executive, the Parliamentary Socialist Group may adopt tactics, likely to enhance its political and numerical strength, becoming itself an active organisation able to procure the realisation of those economic and political fundamentals, necessary to the conditions and requirements of proletarian organisations.

The Congress finally records its firm decision to limit and control

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the individual action of Socialist representatives on public bodies, so that this action, however justified by legitimate interests, may always be in accordance with the general policy of the Party and directly responsible to the Parliamentary Socialist Group.

ALESSANDRI.

### RESOLUTION OF THE MAXIMALIST GROUP FOR THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

I. *Home Politics.*—This Congress maintains that according to the resolution adopted in 1912 by the Congress of Reggio Emilia, and reaffirmed at the following congresses, the revolutionary and class-conscious character, and hence the anti-collaboration character, of the Party has been affirmed; that it has been decided that it is incongruous for those to remain in the Party who approve participation of the Socialists in the government, or in any form of collaboration with the bourgeoisie; it acknowledges that, after the Congress of Leghorn (January, 1921), the fraction constituted at Reggio Emilia, which is called the "fraction of concentration," has taken its stand undoubtedly with the policy of Socialist democracy, and accordingly has affirmed, and still reaffirms, the utility rather than the necessity of participation in the government with open violation of the fundamental principles and effective unity of the Party; therefore, it declares that in this way they have put themselves outside the ranks of the Italian Socialist Party.

If re-admission to the Party be requested by individuals explicitly repudiating the principles of reformism and accepting the uncompromising revolutionary principles and tactics, or if re-admission of these individuals should be requested by a political or economic organisation of the Party, the new Party Executive will be empowered to examine these requests and to determine their merits.

II. *International Policy.*—The Congress solemnly reaffirms its adhesion to the Third International as unanimously acclaimed at the Congress of Bologna and Leghorn, and in fulfilment of the pledge taken with the Bentivoglio resolution; it declares its acceptance of the resolution concerning this Party passed by the last Moscow Congress; it considers also that the Executive Committee of the Third International has expressed harsh opinions on the work of the Italian Socialist Party, which, because of their harsh form and the criticism contained, should undergo some impartial revision; it invites the Executive of the Party to bring to the next Congress of the Third International the documentary report of the action taken up till now by the Party and, above all, to give by its acts concrete proof of its loyalty to the principles of the Third International, working continuously and consistently according to the resolutions of the national and international congresses.

LAZZARI—MAFFI—RIBOLDI.

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## RESOLUTION OF THE CONCENTRATIONISTS (TURATI)

This Congress

Considering that, as a result of the split at Leghorn, which freed the Party from the Communist dissentients, and laid aside the old and time-worn dispute on the imminent dissolution of the bourgeois regime and the organised and systematic use of violence in expectation of the miraculous advent of Socialism, there no longer remains any objective reason—beyond fatuous prejudices, purely verbal equivocations or mutual misunderstandings—which can offer any pretext for fresh splits or expulsions from the Party on theoretic grounds;

Being convinced that the so-called “collaborationist” policy, adherence to which it was desired to make a reason for disqualification, and against which was opposed that policy of unswerving opposition, which once fulfilled a protective function for the Party in its timid beginnings, is but the practice—imposed by necessity and adopted equally by all the fractions—of temporary agreements in order to facilitate, consolidate or defend (as in the case of the agreements that conclude industrial battles) the conquests of the proletarian class-struggle, in order to secure with exclusive Socialist ends, the functioning of the local bodies and institutions which the Party has captured to such a large extent, or in order to obtain in the Parliamentary field—as was decided by the recent resolution of the Maximalist Party Executive itself—the formation of governments less hostile to proletarian aspirations; thus avoiding a purely mechanical unvarying opposition, which deprives Parliamentary action of all value and transforms it into a previously assured support for all the reactionary forces of the nation;

Recognising that participation in economic reconstruction in the post-war crises is not intended by anyone to be a help to the bourgeoisie, but in fact is intended by everyone—rejecting the anti-Socialist idea, “the worse, the better”—to be an indispensable defence of the general interests of civilisation, of the utmost importance to the future of the workers, and a watchful intervention so that reconstruction does not proceed, in the absence of the workers, against the interests of the workers, which require rather to be reinforced by fresh and stronger protection;

Recognising further that the heated controversies concerning participation in the government reduce themselves to differences in calculations and prophecies as to the greater or lesser proximity or inevitability of that event, and it being unanimously granted that participation in government could never be undertaken for reasons of personal ambition, or without the express consent or, rather, definite command of the Party, which, either directly in Congress or through

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its National Council, shall decide in every case as to the advisability of the step, the conditions and the methods;

Considering that any new split, besides constituting a gratuitous weakening of the Party for the benefit of the most reactionary bourgeois sections, would react in a disastrous manner on the economic organisation of the proletariat, by smashing, or completely severing from the Party, that vast Trade Union movement, which up till now followed its lead, thus depriving the Party of its most vital support and favouring the birth of that non-political and anti-Socialist "labourism," which the Party has always deprecated, so that consequently every attempt in this direction ought to be considered as an act of treason both to the Socialist and proletarian cause;

Proclaims that to-day the inviolable unity of the Italian Socialist Party is not merely an instinctive ardent desire of the masses, but an actual fact; and is based on the spontaneous and conscious unanimity of opinion as to the methods and aims of Socialism (the class struggle and the abolition of capitalist property), on the most ample liberty of criticism and of discussion as to the tactics (always subject to expediency and liable to alteration) suitable for the movement, without which freedom of criticism the Party would degenerate into a brainless sect which has abjured all thought and reflection; and that the unity of the Party is based on that thoughtful division of Labour according to temperaments, the conditions of the moment and local necessities, which is a primary essential of real Socialist activity and efficacy.

The reaffirmation and safeguarding of such inviolable unity becomes more vital in view of the fact that in the Italian post-war crisis, reflecting the general crisis of capitalistic society, the Italian bourgeoisie, downcast because of the historical results and disillusionment of the war, crushed by the failure of demagogic promises made to the proletariat to spur it on to further resistance, forced to attempt its own salvation by means of the great protectionist compromise which strengthens the parasitism of privileged groups and increases in an exorbitant manner the prices of the necessities of life, bound in the international field by a policy of sterile servility to the Allies, and incapable of facing the increasing State deficit and the financial ruin of the local bodies, reveals every day more and more its lack of power as a ruling class. Hence, it is of the utmost urgency that the proletariat, organised as a class party, intensifies the work of preparation and technical, moral, intellectual and political training, which may enable it to take its place at the earliest moment, by accelerated penetration and growth in all the organs and all the departments of the State, on the basis of a well-determined programme of the gradual reconstitution of the present political and

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economic institutions. With which intent, and given the momentary weakening, caused by the industrial crisis of the direct action of the Trade Unions, and the resultant strengthening of the hope of the workers in Parliamentary action, the Congress recognises the necessity of extensive liberty for the Parliamentary group (under the control, naturally, of the whole Party), in the development of Parliamentary action towards the other parties and the Government, with the purpose of profiting by every favourable circumstance to facilitate the increase of working-class political power.

The Congress affirms the sterility of all the reconstruction attempts on the bourgeois-nationalist-protectionist basis, and substitutes for them the conception of an essentially international free trade action, of world peace and solidarity, for which it counts only on the work of the internationally organised proletariat.

But, although paying homage to the work of the Third International, inasmuch as it gave expression to and expresses the live and implacable protest of the Russian revolution against the crimes of the Entente and the fatal imperialist hegemony of the Western Alliance of Powers, victorious at Versailles, the Congress places on record the historical, psychological and economic impossibility of a mechanical application, in an identical manner, of the methods and principles which circumstances imposed on that revolution, by other peoples of a totally different civilisation and in a different stage of economic and political evolution; and calls for the establishment of an international organisation more real and more comprehensive, more active and creative, and not tied down to the political necessity of the defence of only one State, and situated more centrally to enable quicker co-operation of all attempts of the Socialist proletariats of the West, as well as of the East, so as to counter-attack one by one the actions and manœuvres of the diplomacies of the dominant European States; in this it sees the only means of overcoming the dangerous dualism between the Trade Union International and that of the Socialist Parties.

So as to carry out this vast and urgent task in both the national and international field, the Congress finally proclaims the necessity of reconstructing the Party Executive for quicker action, and admitting into its ranks the permanent representation of delegates of all organisations forming part of Socialist proletarian life: the Parliamentary Group, the Confederation of Labour, the Socialist Press, the League of Municipalities, the Co-operative Movement, etc., so that the Executive, keeping itself in more immediate contact with the various aspects of complex Socialist action, can at any moment and from any sphere bring light to bear on its work, and instil in a more direct manner into all the organisations the lofty spirit of the Party and the live inspiration of Socialist ideology.

TURATI—BALDESI.

## *The Italian Socialist Congress at Milan*

After the vote on policy had been taken, a statement from the Executive of the Third International was read to the effect that the decisions of the Third Congress clearly showed that the Italian Socialist Party should expel the reformist element if it desired admission to the Third International. As it had failed to do this, the only party in Italy affiliated to the Third International was the Communist Party. The Socialist Party replied with a letter reaffirming its adhesion to the Third but refusing to support the demand made.

### MESSAGE FROM THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL.

After the Congress vote on the policy of the Italian Socialist Party, the delegation sent from the Executive Committee of the Communist International to the Milan Congress declares:

That the Congress, by a large majority, has rejected the Lazzari-Maffi-Riboldi motion which called for the immediate expulsion from the Party of the reformist fraction, the Centrists, formed at Reggio Emilia in 1920;

That on the contrary the Congress has voted for a motion which, whilst condemning in words collaboration with the bourgeoisie, actually accepts and recommends it, thus constituting a capitulation to the reformists;

That this vote is in direct contradiction to the resolution on the Italian question, voted unanimously at the Third World Congress of the Communist International, and constitutes a flagrant violation of the unanimous and solemn undertakings contained in the Bentivoglio resolution, voted at Leghorn, to accept and carry out the decisions of the Communist International Congress;

In view of this fact the delegation of the Executive Committee declares that the Italian Socialist Party has definitely excluded itself from the Communist International.

The delegation is convinced that the transfer of the Italian Socialist Party to the reformist camp, and its collaboration with the bourgeoisie, as well as its rapprochement internationally with the enemies of the Communist International and Soviet Russia, will open the eyes of many workers, who up till now remained in its ranks, deceived by the revolutionary phrases of leaders and their appeals for unity, which merely meant unity with reformists and with the bourgeoisie, and spur them on to join up with the Communist International.

The spontaneous formation, in the very heart of the Congress, of the Lazzari-Maffi-Riboldi group is the first symptom of this.

The delegation puts on record that, in view of the decisions of

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the Third World Congress, the only section of the Communist International in Italy is that of the Communist Party of Italy.

*The delegates of the Executive Committee.*

CLARA ZETKIN, HENRI WALESKI.

*Milan, October, 1921.*

### REPLY OF THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY TO THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE.

You have already demanded once before the immediate expulsion of the Reformist Section from our party; to attain this object you have used every means of persuasion, including that of sending her for whom we have the greatest respect because of the laurels she has won in the struggle to defend the rights of the proletariat. But despite your exhortations, the Congress has, by 75,000 votes to less than 4,000, decided in favour of the unity of our movement; and even the opponents (that is Lazzari, Maffi, Riboldi) have declared—perhaps at your express wish—that they will not leave us. All this proves that a split in the Socialist Party at the present moment and under existing conditions is viewed by everyone as a most serious blow.

But at the same time—with an equally large majority—and contrary to your statements, the Congress has denounced collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and has excluded it in most definite and clear terms by its programme and by our Party tactics, depriving our adversaries and enemies of all hope and making the position of the Social Democrats clear.

By this vote we also wished to confirm our implicit adhesion to the general principles of the Third International, which the misconception of the Executive Committee and the violent polemics after the Leghorn split have rendered platonic up till now. Still, we cannot be held responsible for the fact that the Leghorn vote has failed to be realised. Tell us if a Party which respects itself and which is conscious of having done its duty can be well disposed towards an organisation which, completely failing to realise its interests, treats it as you have treated us?

*The Executive of the Italian Socialist Party:*

BARATONO, G. CORSI, FIORITTO, PARPAGNOLI, SERRATI, VELLA.



# SHORTER NOTICES

## THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY AND THE VIENNA INTERNATIONAL

**I**N London, on October 19, representatives of the British Labour Party Executive and the Committee of the Working Union of Socialist Parties (the "Vienna" International) met to discuss the possibilities of forming a single International. The initiative for these negotiations was taken by the British Labour Party in accordance with the recommendations of the Geneva Congress of the Second International in 1920, and the resolution passed by the Brighton Conference of the British Labour Party last June:

That, in view of the present position of the Labour Movement throughout Europe, and the changes in the International Socialist Secretariat, this Conference instructs the Executive to take steps to secure that the position of the Second International shall be strengthened, that its democratic foundations as opposed to dictatorship shall be accepted, and that invitations shall be sent out to all Labour and Socialist bodies throughout the world inviting them to attend a Conference from which a comprehensive International may arise; this Conference also calls for a consultation between the Vienna International Committee and the Executive of the Second International Committee to promote unity and prevent further division.

The Conference was without result, and at its close the following Notes were exchanged, expressing the divergent positions.

### THE WORKING UNION OF SOCIALIST PARTIES TO THE EXECUTIVE OF THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

We recognise with great satisfaction the complete agreement of the Labour Party Executive and our own Executive with regard to the present unsatisfactory conditions of the International organisation of the class-conscious proletariat.

We are at one with the representatives of the British proletariat in the keen desire to put an end to the present humiliating weakness of the international proletariat by constructing an all-inclusive International.

The goal is a common one. The difference lies in the estimate which we make of the actual possibilities and in the methods of reaching the goal.

Unlike the Labour Party, we are of opinion that under present conditions it is impossible to deal with new forms of organisation, but rather that international unity must be sought through common action and in the common class struggle.

We are, therefore, not of the opinion that the summoning of a general conference at an early date would serve to strengthen international relations. On the contrary, we think that it would rather hinder a subsequent advance towards international organisation.

But even if such a conference were opportune, we should be unable to

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accept, as we regard the basis as much too narrow. The aim of the Vienna Working Union is a much more far-reaching one than that which is expressed in the Labour Party's plan.

Our desire is to unite at the appropriate moment *all* the forces of the class-conscious proletariat in an international union, while the proposal of the Labour Party not only leaves out for the present the parties affiliated to Moscow, but it would not, for example, even enable the Italian Socialist Party, indispensable as it is for international action, to take part in the conference.

We must, therefore, continue to pursue, with determination, the much higher aim which the Vienna Conference of February, 1921, has set before us.

The representatives of the Labour Party have declared that the members of the Executive Committee of the union of parties known as the Second International are prepared to resign provided that the Executive of the Working Union would do the same, and even that they are prepared to dissolve entirely the Second International provided the union of the world proletariat can be facilitated thereby.

The representatives of the Vienna Working Union have no mandate to make a similar declaration, nor are they of opinion that under present circumstances a step of this kind on the part of the Working Union would serve the purpose of international unity.

We are rather of opinion that the hope of creating an International which will embrace the whole revolutionary proletariat is rendered more possible of fulfilment by the existence of our Vienna Working Union, which we regard only as a means of creating an all-inclusive International.

Our standpoint on the question of possibilities and methods with regard to the creation of an all-inclusive International is laid down without ambiguity in the resolutions of the Vienna Conference of February, 1921, and in the letter which we sent to the Labour Party on July 11, 1921.

It is true that we regard the difficulties in the way of the creation of a true International as being more serious than the Executive of the Labour Party, which takes as its starting point the conditions prevailing in England, conditions which are far less complex than those on the Continent.

Nevertheless, we are convinced that the union of all proletarian forces in definite common action, especially in the fight against counter-revolutionary reaction, imperialist warmongers and imperialist exploiters, against the growing misery of the working class and the famine in Russia, will develop in an ever-increasing degree.

The union of the proletarian forces which took place in Germany after the Kapp Putsch, and after the murder of Erzberger, appears to us as an example of common action of the kind referred to.

We are convinced that such common action can be promoted in a high degree through discussions for purposes of information, such as that which we have had to-day with the British Labour Party.

As we have already made clear to the Labour Party in our letter of July 11, 1921, we are always ready for such discussions with any parties to whatever international grouping they may belong.

We recognise that the important position occupied by the British Labour Party in the world proletarian movement entitles it to promote such

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discussions, and therefore the Vienna Executive will be interested to hear from you respecting any further proposal you may make.

### REPLY OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

To the Bureau of the International Working Union of Socialist Parties.

Dear Comrades,—We are in receipt of your communication following upon the discussion we had with you yesterday, and we regret that you have decided to refuse co-operation in an immediate attempt to bring together the disrupted sections of the International Working Class movement, but rather that you will continue to put obstacles in the way of such a meeting.

We must point out to you that it is not correct to suggest that we intended to place difficulties in the way of the Italian Socialists attending the proposed Conference; in fact, we had already extended to them an invitation.

We did not propose, for the moment, to invite the Communist parties because their methods are so diverse as to make co-operation impossible.

Your own declaration contains evidence of our strong desire for unity, but we would again remind you of the position as stated at the conference on our behalf.

The present position of the Socialist and Labour Movement in Europe is an extremely painful one.

We have warring sections, no unity of effort, division of energy, sections working against each other instead of helping each other; and the desire of the British Labour Party is, if at all possible, without recrimination, to bring together all the parties who are seriously desirous of having a united movement in order that they may work out a basis on which we can have one International.

We proposed to send invitations to all the Socialist Parties to meet together, without prejudice to their existing international relations, to work out this basis for a unified International, and we requested the Vienna Union on its part to recommend its affiliated organisations to come together and by coming together try to bring about a solution of the difficulty. The Vienna Union declined to make that recommendation.

It has always been the intention of the Executive of the British Labour Party to make the basis of the proposed conference as wide as possible, and to endeavour to secure that any agreed basis for the future Socialist International would secure to each Socialist group freedom to work in its own country in accordance with its own means towards its Socialist goal, but with the common determination to bring about Socialism.

As further evidence of the desire for a unified International the officials of the "Second" International, as your declaration shows, were prepared to recommend the dissolution of the "Second" International immediately the new basis of agreement had been accepted, and provided the Vienna Union were prepared to take the same steps in order to secure unity.

What we have stated is complete evidence of our anxiety to attain whatever concentration of Socialist forces is possible at the present moment. It is clear from your declaration that the object of the Vienna Union is

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to prevent any substantial progress towards International Unity until the Communists have so modified their position as to make their co-operation with all other Socialist Parties in the world possible.

This indefinite postponement is indefensible, and the Executive of the British Labour Party therefore regrets that its efforts towards an all-inclusive Socialist International which had succeeded so far as the "Second" is concerned to the extent stated in this communication should have been prevented from coming to a satisfactory conclusion by obstacles presented by the Vienna Union.

On behalf of the Executive of the British Labour Party,  
(Signed) ARTHUR HENDERSON, *Secretary*.

### TRADE WITH RUSSIA

**S**INCE April, 1920, Russia has been gradually resuming trading relations with foreign countries, and as each new trade agreement was signed the imports increased.

During 1920 the total import trade reported was 87,000 tons; of which £1,970,000 worth was purchased in Great Britain. Up to the end of July, 1921, a great increase in trade is reported with a total of 278,000 tons; £3,650,000 worth was purchased in Great Britain, if including August purchases. These figures show that the money value of imports into Russia from Great Britain is gradually attaining the pre-war standard, which was an annual average of £14,000,000.

Chief amongst countries exporting goods to Russia: Great Britain, Germany, United States, Esthonia, Sweden, Holland; prior to July Great Britain headed the list, but in July the exports to Russia from the United States were the largest.

Russian exports have not as yet assumed large dimensions; the available figures show that for the first six months of 1921 the total tonnage was 43,000. Exports to Great Britain to the end of August of the present year amounted to £300,000, and of this £168,000 was for flax alone.

### THE FRENCH TRADE UNION CRISIS

**T**HE conflict within the French trade union movement has been carried a stage further by the decision of the National Executive Committee of the Confédération Générale de Travail, held on September 19—20. The history of the dissension between the official majority of the C.G.T. and the revolutionary left wing section organised in the C.S.R. (Comité Syndicale Révolutionnaire) has been already fully dealt with in the issues of the **LABOUR MONTHLY** of July and August, so that it is only necessary to recall that at the Lille Congress in June the expulsion of the C.S.R. was approved on principle, but no actual split took place, and the

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minority showed a very great increase in strength. The National Executive Committee has now approved a resolution which calls definitely and by name for the expulsion of the C.S.R. and all elements associated with it; and the C.S.R. has replied with a manifesto in favour of trade union unity. The Executive resolution was carried by 63 votes to 56, with 10 abstentions. A Minority Congress has been summoned, to be held in December.

### RESOLUTION VOTED AT THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CONFEDERATION GENERALE DE TRAVAIL, SEPTEMBER 20, 1921.

The National Executive Committee draws attention to the fact that the decision of the National Congress at Lille had for its objective the maintenance of Trade Union unity by respect for matters of discipline, necessary both for action and all preliminary preparations.

The National Executive Committee is specially anxious to ensure complete liberty of opinion, and maintains that this liberty can only find real force in the strict observance of the decisions and principles expressed by the Congress;

Further, that the meeting of the Minority Congress on the day following the National Congress, with a view to strengthening the organisation of the C.S.R. (Comité Syndicale Révolutionnaire) on the basis of national and departmental bodies, thus forming a C.G.T. against the C.G.T., was a demonstration against the decisions arrived at by the Congress;

That the process of replacing trade union action and propaganda by that of the C.S.R. and that of the Federations by the federal sub-committees, has led to a disintegration of working-class forces which cannot be disguised;

That this disruptive and separative tendency is the work of the C.S.R. which justifies its action by declaring for liberty of opinion;

The National Executive Committee; however, is resolved to explore every possible means of arriving at the useful collaboration of all elements and tendencies for our common objective, and affirms that such collaboration is only possible by denouncing the C.S.R. organisation responsible for the present deadlock;

It therefore authorises the National Bureau and the Executive Committee to insist on strict obedience to the resolution carried at Lille from all affiliated organisations which are empowered to proceed against indiscipline of the nature stated.

It therefore decrees :

That organisations which refuse to bow to decisions made and cooperate in carrying them out deliberately put themselves outside working-class organisation. The C.G.T., however, will admit into its ranks, the minorities of such bodies prepared to accept the decisions of the National Congress.

The National Executive Committee reiterates the substance of the resolution voted at Lille as follows :—

1. The C.G.T. has always stood for full and complete liberty of

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opinion within its ranks, without either limitation or restriction. This liberty does not extend to trade union regulations.

2. The C.G.T. being above all a working-class fighting organisation, can only fulfil its purpose on condition that in all action a minimum of discipline is observed.

Such discipline is to take the form of respect for all decisions and statutory regulations by the various national and international trade union organisations.

All breaches of discipline may result in expulsion.

3. Trade Union Organisations may not adhere to any non-trade union grouping, whether it be philosophical or political, without constituting a breach of discipline. Above all they cannot adhere to the C.S.R.

4. Trade Union unity, more essential now than ever, can only be maintained through courtesy in discussions and criticisms and by the mutual respect of the militants.

The C.S.R. held a meeting on September 27 to consider the situation arising out of the vote taken at the National Executive meeting; and in a declaration to the French workers it deplored the adverse decision arrived at by the C.G.T. and stated its position as follows:—

## REPLY OF THE COMITE SYNDICALE REVOLUTIONNAIRE TO THE CONFEDERATION GENERALE DE TRAVAIL.

The C.S.R., which is firmly devoted to Trade Union unity, for which it has made as many sacrifices as revolutionary Trade Unionism could permit, has been expelled from the C.G.T. by a vote procured by a relative majority. . . .

In view of the present position the C.S.R. fully intends to shelve the whole responsibility for this criminal action, together with its consequences on to the National Majority, which did not hesitate, in conjunction with the forces of reaction, to sacrifice the splendid movement of the strikers in the North and the Vosges, who, over the heads of their leaders, united for action.

The declaration then enumerates various previous independent movements on C.S.R. lines within the C.G.T. which were not thought conducive to indiscipline or splits, and concludes:—

The Central Committee of the C.S.R., having fully considered the course of events, takes cognisance of the National Executive Committee vote, in itself a declaration of the dismemberment of the working-class movement as organised in the C.G.T.

Being fully prepared to face any eventualities which may arise, it invites the Trade Unions, the Minority Unions and Federations which have been expelled, or could be, to observe strictly all instructions which they may receive in the course of events from the Bureau of the Central Committee.

*No organisation whatsoever should be formed before the Central Committee has given full instruction of its nature and methods.*

## Shorter Notices

It will be the duty of a minority-congress to make definite decisions on the course to be taken in view of the split which is certain to take place.

The Central Committee, in this difficult time, counts on the voluntary discipline of its supporters (the unity of individuals and societies) to maintain intact the revolutionary minority Trade Union, and to overcome this painful situation, which creates a split that it has always fought against, and which it still rejects with all its strength.

### FRENCH SOCIALIST CONGRESS

**T**HE Congress of the French Socialist Party met in Paris on October 29—November 1. About 300 delegates attended, representing the present party strength of 55,000 members. In December, 1920, at Tours, the Congress decided by 3,208 to 1,022 votes for affiliation to the Third International, with the result that the majority formed itself into the Communist Party—present strength 130,000—whilst the minority remained as the French Socialist Party, which now held its first congress in its truncated form. Again the International position was fully discussed, and in conjunction with the numerous foreign delegates present it was decided to form an International Committee of Action, the preliminaries for which would be carried out by the Bureau of the “Vienna” International in conjunction with the British Labour Party. The resolution was passed unanimously, and is as follows:—

#### RESOLUTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

This Congress, at the joint instigation of the representatives of the Socialist Parties of Germany, England, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, Sweden, Poland, Spain, Czecho-Slovakia, and Georgia, who are all agreed on the necessity of a regrouping of the world proletariat, invites the Bureau of the Vienna International to get into touch with the British Labour Party so as to decide on what lines an appeal could be addressed to the various political bodies constituting the world proletariat (Vienna, London and Moscow) and to those parties actually unattached to any International, with a view to the establishment of an *International Committee of Action*.

It would be the duty of this committee of action to organise the world proletariat for united action in both political and economic crises; in the case of war, resulting from capitalist, national and international dislocation, and imperialist issues necessitating instant and united action.

In making this proposal the Socialist Party is acting in the spirit of the Strasbourg Congress, which decided in favour of the reconstruction of the International on the basis of Marxian Socialist principles.

This Congress suggests that the Vienna Bureau, in conjunction with other international organisations, should consider the advisability of establishing an international information service to make all such action effective.

This Congress further invites the Parliamentary groups of the Socialist Parties within the Vienna Union to establish an inter-Parliamentary com-

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mittee for the interchange of documents, suggestions for laws, and collaboration in drafting a common basis for laws to be launched simultaneously in the different Parliaments.

### LABOUR GAINS IN SWEDEN & NORWAY

**D**URING the latter half of September a general parliamentary election took place in Sweden. The election was held on the new franchise, which trebled the electorate by the adoption of women's suffrage, the reduction of the age limit, and the removal of other disqualifications. The result of the election shows a striking advance in the vote of all the Socialist parties at the expense of the capitalist parties. For the purpose of the election the three sections of the political Labour movement in Sweden, the majority Social Democrats under Branting, the Left Socialists and the Communists, combined their lists on a single Labour ticket. This policy brought gains for all three sections, the figures being :

	Votes.		Seats.	Gains or Losses.
Conservatives .....	449,000	.....	61	..... -9
Peasant Union .....	192,000	.....	22	..... -8
Liberals .....	332,000	.....	41	..... -7
Right Socialist .....	633,000	.....	93	..... +18
Left Socialist .....	45,000	.....	6	..... +1
Communist .....	89,000	.....	7	..... +5

At the Norwegian General Election at the end of October the results reported show 29 Communists and 8 Socialists returned. This is a striking advance on the previous election in May, 1920, when the combined Labour Party before the split only obtained 18 seats. The Labour Party became the Communist Party at the end of last year, when the small Right Socialist section broke away to form the Social Democratic Labour Party.



# BOOK REVIEWS

## THE WORLD IN REVOLUTION

*La Révolution Mondiale.* Charles Rappoport. La Revue Communiste, 17, rue Grange Batélière, Paris.

*La Révolution ou la Mort.* Raymond Lefebvre. Clarté, 16, rue Jacques Callot, Paris.

*La Loi des Riches.* Jean Rostand. Bernard Grasset, Paris.

**F**OR at least two of its intellectuals—Charles Rappoport and Boris Souvarine—French Communism is indebted to Slavonic Jewry. Both men have brought to the movement the immense industry, the piercing logic, the Oriental patience and that terrible scorn of polite sophistry that distinguish Lenin, Zinoviev and the other master-artisans of the Third International. The enormous facilities for dramatic epithet that the seizure of the Moscow wireless station gave the leaders of the Bolshevik revolution during the war could not but create writers in the Olympian style, hurling thunderbolts like Jove, and truths that illuminated and blasted like the lightning. Charles Rappoport, though no Olympian figure in the flesh, has caught something of this celestial manner. He rushes through print like a meteor through space, shedding epithets like sparks. He has an epithet for everybody and everything; and each fits better than a fool's cap. It was he, I believe, who first applied to the Vienna Reconstructors that devastatingly simple label of the "Two and a Half International." That label stuck fast, and since then, in the hard wear and tear of time, the word "half" has become more and more indistinct. Rappoport's prophecy was shrewd enough.

One never forgets the remarkable physical personality of this philosopher of French Communism, as he has been called—short and broad with thick spectacles and a formidable beard, and an accent harsh and atrocious in all the twelve languages he speaks. Even in this remarkable book on the World Revolution (a collection of essays written during 1919 and 1920), his body and mind are but one unity in the mind of the reader. Always he is—as I saw him on the platform of the historic Tours Congress—that aggressive and menacing figure of a Marxian, shaking the fist of logic relentlessly in the face of a capitalist world, chuckling with a grim and sardonic good-humour, pitiless and unanswerable in argument, and brilliant and audacious in epithet.

Nowhere is Rappoport more grimly effective than in his exposure of the Marxian who daily betrays Marx. Himself one of the most scholarly and documented exponents of Marx in France, or even in

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Europe, he retorts on the Reformist interpretation of Marxian action with Marx's own exclamation—"Whatever I am, I am not a Marxian"—and with Proudhon's impatient derision of the Proudhonians—"What fools!" Rappoport looks out through his thick spectacles with sparkling eyes on a world in revolution. Those Socialists who talk reassuringly of a day on which Capitalism shall founder suddenly like a leaking ship are for him either mendacious or blind. There is no golden day of Revolution. The Revolution is here, and the tiller of it swinging aimlessly with the tide, waiting to be grasped by strong hands and held steady. And until the masses are ripe for Communism, that tiller must be left in the hands of "the dictatorship of the proletariat," which—Rappoport does not conceal this from himself—may mean for a time the *dictators* of the proletariat.

For the detractors, the little cold critics, the calumniators, the faint-hearted, the traitors and the renegades of the Russian Revolution, Rappoport has a general and genial scorn. Merrheim, that bitter little dark man of the French Metal Workers' Federation, he describes as attacking the Revolution daily with quotations, and making war on it with press-cuttings. Martoff, Adler, Longuet, Crispin and the other innkeepers of the Vienna Half-Way House, are "the martyrs of opportunism." Hervé and Bourtzeff—that strange and malevolent combination—are one with Briand and Viviani and Millerand—marooned on their barren island of abandoned ideals, and shouting execrations at the vanishing sails of the only adventure that might have saved them from their own desolating ambitions.

The title of Raymond Lefebvre's little book—"Revolution or Death"—seems now like a premonition of the epitaph that his friends might afterwards have chosen for this tragic and brilliant young man's grave—if his grave were not to be lost forever in the wild dark waters of the Gulf of Finland. The nascent Communist Party in France suffered no worse blow than the death of Lefebvre, even though his death should come to prove an inspiration. He was one of the most ardent of the younger Communists, an intellectual tempered—like Barbusse—by the fire and terror of the war, a poet of distinction, and in all a very pure spirit. In this booklet, one of the slender stock of political writings he left behind him, he cries out upon the men who betrayed the peace, but is grateful to them nevertheless. "For had Capitalism had, at Versailles, the wisdom of being humane, it might have lived to reach an intolerable old age."

Some day somebody will write the story of the young men in all the belligerent countries who, though in the war, were not of it, and before its end turned violently against it. England had its Siegfried

## Book Reviews

Sassoon; France its Barbusse, its Vaillant Couturier and its Lefebvre; Germany and Russia had their young men of the same poetic and rebellious temper. When that book is written it will serve to recall, like the life and death of Raymond Lefebvre, that the Revolution is the Revolution of the Young.

Jean Rostand, one of the two brilliant sons of the dramatist, and a very fair Socialist, has written in "The Law of the Rich" a satire on social relationships that reminds one irresistibly in its manner of the inimitable "Letters from a Self-Made Merchant to his Son." M. Rostand's character, dispensing paternal counsels of perfection to his own impatient offspring, recalls that memorable declaration of M. Lépine, one of the most famous of Paris Prefects of Police. Said M. Lépine one day in a great passion: "There is too much philanthropy about." And improving on that moral, the wise parent impresses on his son the necessity of being always on the aggressive in one's relations with the poor. "Instead of extending our hand to them, let us rather shake our fist!" But in England, it seems, the rich have no need of that lesson.

G. S.

### NEW WORDS FOR OLD

*Proletcult.* By Eden and Cedar Paul. Leonard Parsons, New Era Series. 4s. 6d. net.

THE movement for Independent Working Class Education is not—was not at any rate until quite recently—well known even among Labour people. It is, however, of fundamental importance, and during the next few years is destined to become more and more a force to be reckoned with. Present dissatisfaction with the results of industrial action and the enforced idleness of huge masses of the workers tend to increase the demand for classes. It is a striking fact that many unemployed workers, instead of walking the streets endlessly and hopelessly, are setting themselves to carry out definite research work in the public libraries. The more serious minded workers turn to "education" now, not as an anodyne or even a "stepping stone to higher things," but as a stimulant.

This book is a very useful one and should be read by opponents as well as by sympathisers. It gives—for the first time in anything like detail—a general survey of the movement, outlines its gradual development from less clear-cut organisations, and emphasises its special aims.

Its chief fault lies in the fact that the authors are inclined to let their own mannerisms and pet phraseology get in the way of a straightforward account. One feels that the history of Independent Working Class Education—of all things—should have been phrased

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rather more simply. A plain message to ordinary people is a necessity in these days, and Eden and Cedar Paul should be clever enough psychologists to know the importance of not irritating your audience. We could wish that they would cultivate the lighter side of their style, as, for example, on p. 52, after quoting the *Spectator*—"Along the broad highway of congenial study, postman and professor, manual labourer and university graduate, journey in complete amity"—they remark, "but whither is your highway to lead? Round and round the mulberry bush?" That comment sticks in the mind, whereas a sentence like—"Primarily, as has been said, ergatocratic culture, workers' culture, proletarian culture, Proletcult, is a fighting culture, aiming at the overthrow of capitalism, and at the replacement of democratic culture and bourgeois ideology by ergatocratic culture and proletarian ideology"—merely sticks in the gullet!

W. H.

### THE DYNAMICS OF INSECURITY

*The High Cost of Strikes.* By Marshall Olds. Putnam's Sons. 15s. net.

*The Labour Movement: Its Conservative Functions and Social Consequences.* By F. Tannenbaum. Putnam's Sons.

SOME persons hold a brief, but are cunning enough to conceal the fact from themselves and others by an assumed air of impartiality. Other more naive persons hold a brief and make no attempt to conceal the fact. Mr. Olds, whether to his credit or his discredit, must certainly be classed among the naive rather than the cunning pleaders.

Mr. Olds is a "100 per cent. American"—the sort of American who delights to make out that his political opponent is an unnaturalised alien. This accounts for a great deal. It partly explains why he expounds in this book a view which in England to-day one seldom hears outside the senile grumblings of the *Morning Post*, and which even among the Federation of British Industries is regarded as a mere historical antiquity. To Mr. Olds all Trade Unions are bad "in se." They are instruments of destruction disturbing the tranquil beauty of a best of all possible worlds. All strikes without exception are indulged in merely through sheer "cussedness" on the part of the workers; while the "scab" is his ideal of the free American workman, to be protected at all costs from the "tyranny" of the Unions. His panacea for all ills is "100 per cent. Americanism," Democracy, and legal prohibition of strikes. The crudeness of his case can be seen by the following propagandist slogans with which he prefaces most of his chapters, and of which his book mostly consists:—

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“ From February to June, 1920, you paid about twice as much as you would otherwise have paid for your fresh vegetables on account of a strike.” “ When you had to pay 55 dollars for a suit of clothes during 1919, 20 dollars of that price was due to strikes.” “ Strikes made potatoes cost 4 dollars more and rent 32 dollars more.”

As it happens, the whole of Mr. Olds' case is answered by two short sentences of Mr. Tannenbaum's book, which dives deeper into the problem of the dynamic tendencies of the present system than Mr. Olds, being a special pleader, dares to do. “ The strike,” says Mr. Tannenbaum, “ is evidence of the weakness of the workers, of their being in a subordinate position. . . . With the disappearance of industrial autocracy will probably come the elimination of the strike.” In fact, the substance of Mr. Olds' book, when one has probed to its foundation in fact beneath its propagandist crudities, merely lends weight to Mr. Tannenbaum's main contention. The latter's thesis is that the characteristic feature of the machine age is insecurity. This insecurity affects most powerfully the propertyless worker, who is a slave to the machine. This inevitably forces upon the worker a struggle to obtain greater security. This struggle inevitably takes the form of a struggle to control the machine, not through the conscious volition of the worker, but from the nature of his environmental relations. But Labour can only do this by putting more and more restrictions on the “ freedom ” of the employer, and so on the efficiency of the machine. As inevitable is the further tendency, resulting from this fact, for the worker to take over the complete control of the machine as the only way of ultimately solving the problem of his insecurity under Capitalism. Thus, whether it is conscious of it or not, this end—control of industry—is immanent in the Labour movement even in its earliest and most conservative phase. This conception in its totality is a valuable one; and Mr. Olds, in showing the increasing social cost of the industrial friction generated by the relations of the machine age, is merely lending concreteness to Mr. Tannenbaum's conception.

Mr. Tannenbaum has an aptitude for summarising very neatly profound truths in a few words, such as the following:—

“ Just as to the farmer all things have a sense of permanence, so for the worker all things are transitory.”

“ Men are both more equal and more unequal than ever before in the history of the world. They are more equal as men, and less equal as possessors of wealth.”

“ Men who have been on strike, who have been clubbed by the police, and who have been persecuted, know something about the facts of the class struggle, if they know little about its theories.”

“ A Labour Union is revolutionary in fact. It is not the expressed desire to change the world; it is the change already embodied, if not completed.”

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His definition of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is as follows :

“ Its real contribution to political practice and ideas lies in the fact that it has drawn the simplest distinction between man and man and made that distinction the basis of citizenship. The requirement for citizenship is Labour. Governments have at all times determined the conditions upon which they admitted the individual to citizenship.”

Mr. Tannenbaum's style is simple and lucid. He writes in a succession of short vivid sentences which succeed one another in an easy flow. On the other hand, his book suffers several of the deficiencies of the “ popular ” work. While it presents old truths with an epigrammatic precision, it contributes little that is new in ideas. An exception to this, however, is his chapter on “ Producer and Consumer,” which is well worth study, as giving the reasons for rejecting the distinction between consumers and producers in a Workers' Community. Another defect is that its descriptive side is tinged throughout with a too facile optimism, which causes him to gloss over important points with the assurance that all is working for the best. Mr. Tannenbaum's optimism has something in common with Mr. Olds' pessimism, when he tries to show that Labour Leaders of the Gompers type are really in their unconscious selves revolutionary.

But although there is little in this book for the student of sociology that he has not already thought of before, it makes easy and instructive reading for the ordinary person; and in this capacity it would be invaluable in dissipating some of those crude illusions of persons whose knowledge of the Labour Movement is confined to such books as those of Mr. Olds.

M. H. D.

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# NOTES of the MONTH

*The Bursting of a Bubble—Washington and the Worker—  
Submarines instead of Battleships—Chemicals—  
France's Rôle—Britain, America and Japan—  
The Fate of China—China and  
Russia—Other Conferences*

**W**HEN we announced last month that we could safely leave the Washington Conference to comment on itself, we calculated on a certainty in which there was no pretence of risk. But we did not calculate on the dramatic speed with which the inevitable would happen. It took fourteen years for the mummy of The Hague Conference to be finally relegated to the museum of history. It took three years from the time when the name of President Wilson was on the lips of men like the name of a new Christ, to the present day, when his pathetic figure survives for the pity and the oblivion of the world. But it has not taken as many weeks for the bubble of the Washington Conference to burst, and for the very journals and statesmen who were painting it in colours which would have made the millennium look indecent to be now already uttering the words of failure and disillusion. Nor has the final evidence of failure been wanting. Already the hopes of the credulous are fixed on a Second Conference which will repair the omissions of the first. Satire could not devise a more effective summing up of the eternal story.

**T**HE problems of the world cannot be solved by a meeting together of capitalist governments, since it is the existence of capitalist governments that creates the problems. That is the lasting lesson of the present epoch, that has only been re-inforced by the Washington Conference. The particular issues, the particular stumbling-blocks that have upset the present attempt to reach a settlement of the dilemmas and contradictions of world Capitalism to-day, are examined in detail in the article of W. N. Ewer

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in the present issue. No one who reads that article can fail to see that the atmosphere of Washington is only the atmosphere of Versailles in a new form, that we are still living in the same world of veiled rivalry and economic bargaining, and that the appearance of agreement in one quarter is only the signal for the outbreak of fiercer competition in another. This general lesson, just because it is so general, is the easiest to be forgotten. In the chess-board tactics of diplomacy and finance Washington may mean much: to the worker it can mean nothing but the shifting of the form of his burden and not the changing of its nature. It may limit battleships, only to transfer the rivalry to submarines and aeroplanes. It may seek to limit submarines and aeroplanes, only to transfer the rivalry to the more secret work of preparation in the laboratory. It may even cancel the international debts that stand in the way of the resumption of trade, but only to make possible the payment of the far more gigantic national debts that weigh upon the worker and the still heavier private tribute of investment and speculation. It may even condemn the indemnity imperialism of Versailles, but only to maintain the rival economic imperialism of Britain and America. Whatever the change, the situation only becomes intensified; and the Washington Conference, that was hailed as the inauguration of a new era for humanity, will remain only to be remembered as another landmark in the road to the next war.

**T**HAT the Washington proposals for the limitation of armaments have not even a remote and hypothetical connection with what President Harding has called the "perfectly futile" notion of abolishing war, has now become generally understood. The limitation of armaments could not in any case be more than an attempt to standardise the existing relations of power; and even that attempt could not succeed, because the weapons of the future are never the weapons of the past. The actual significance of the naval limitation proposals of Mr. Hughes has been expressed with terse simplicity by Admiral Sir Percy Scott. "The policy of building battleships," he declares, "is a policy of the insane, for the conditions of naval and aerial warfare have wholly changed. . . . No nation is making sacrifices

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by scrapping capital ships. It is only economising: it has suspended the process of wasting money in great and costly weapons that are of no fighting value. . . . The proposals put forward at Washington are not so much a measure of disarmament as of economy in armament." If this contention is true, then the significance of the Washington naval programme lies, not in its proposals as regards battleships, but in its proposals as regards submarines. Now what are the proposals as regards submarines? Is it yet generally realised that the proposed figure of 90,000 tons for submarines, so far from representing a limitation of building, actually represents an *increase* on the largest tonnage at present possessed by any Power? The significance of such a proposal coming from America to Britain after the experience of the last war was not lost on the British delegates. "Reading hastily," writes Colonel Repington, "one might derive the impression that the main idea of the American and Japanese delegations is agreement or regulation of the capital ships question, in order to substitute submarines as a cheaper and more effective method of warfare. This, of course, is not the British idea, and certainly misrepresents the lofty motives of President Harding." Whether the appeal to the lofty motives of President Harding will change this proposal in committee remains to be seen: but in the meantime America has given it to be understood that the reduction programme stands or falls together, and that, in the event of rejection, orders have already been given for the immediate acceleration of new building. Well might Lord Curzon utter his warnings, before the Conference had been in existence a fortnight, against "premature hosannas" on the result of Washington.

**I**F we turn from the naval aspects of the question to the other spheres of modern warfare, the position is still more striking. The war of the future, we are told, will be a war of aeroplanes and of chemicals. In neither of these directions is there, so far, any proposal of limitation; nor if any proposal of limitation were made is it likely that it could be made effective. The manufacture of commercial aeroplanes, and the commercial chemical industries, are alike

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capable of rapid conversion in the event of war. What the chemical warfare of the future will mean has already been depicted with sufficient sensationalism by the experts of the various countries. "The next war," declares the Chief of the Chemical Research Development Division of the United States, "will kill and injure women and children hardly less than men, and may even destroy civilisation itself." And in regard to this, the real spectre of the warfare of the future, Washington is of necessity silent. Mr. Lloyd George spoke with his accustomed insight when he called the Washington Conference a rainbow. It is a rainbow in the sense that it is a mirage.

**A** TOUCH of reality was introduced into the discussion on armaments by the intervention of M. Briand. M. Briand came to make the familiar French speech to show why France, for the sake of civilisation, must conscript Africans to police Europe. His speech was received with the tactful consideration and sympathy that it deserved. America at once forbore to press the question of land disarmament, and M. Briand was able to return, well pleased with the success of his mission. America's treatment of France was in marked contrast with her treatment of Japan, when the latter attempted to plead for a seventy per cent. position of inferiority in place of a sixty per cent. position, and was met with insistent refusal. But Britain's indignation was immediate and without bounds. For France to maintain her army and to contemplate the building of a navy and an equality in submarines was to menace the existence of Britain. Such a prospect was to make the whole limitation of armaments a fraud. "It is not for Great Britain," declared Lord Curzon, "to accept or submit to sacrifices while others pass them by. . . . If we who are the greatest naval Power in the world, whose sea communications are the longest in the world, who have to defend coasts infinitely longer and more exposed than any other Empire in the world, who are dependent for our daily existence as a nation on the command of the sea—if we are willing to reduce our naval strength, let not other Powers be allowed to build up other engines or instruments of attack, either in the air or

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under the sea, which may render our sacrifices nugatory, and which, so far from leaving us in the proud position of having set the example, may leave us in the perilous position of having incurred undue risk." The outburst of the Foreign Secretary was followed by the most ferocious anti-French diatribes in that faithful reflex of British governmental opinion, the Sunday Press. This storm has served to reveal a little where the land lies through the fog of platitudes. Why should Britain be so disturbed at the armaments of her Ally, France? Why should America be so apparently undisturbed at French militarism and submarine pretensions? Is it possible that Britain is calculating on France as a potential member of a hostile combination? And is it possible that American capital, already in so many ways financially interested in France, is beginning to look on France as a potential Ally? And in that case are we to conclude that in the event of an Anglo-American war France is to be the base which will solve the problem of the three thousand miles of the Atlantic?

**T**HE hypothesis of an Anglo-American war is the only basis which will explain the schemings and counter-schemings of the Washington Conference. It is not so long ago that Lord Derby told us that "war in the immediate future" between Britain and America would be "inevitable" if the Washington Conference failed. On the same day President Harding declared that war between Britain and America was "unthinkable"—which is the best evidence that he was thinking about it. But the prospect of an Anglo-American war pre-supposes as much manœuvring for position before the opening of the war as did the preliminaries of the Anglo-German war in the fifteen years that preceded it. On the one hand, Britain is far too exhausted by her last encounter to be ready yet for the next and is therefore compelled to seek American friendship for the time being at almost any cost. On the other hand, the United States is anxious to separate Britain from Japan before the contest, and for this purpose to make some show of acceptance of British overtures for peace in order to isolate Japan. It is noticeable that the British overtures for peace, so soon as they attempt to include Japan in the understanding or to

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propose a formal alliance, have been repeatedly met with sharp rebuffs (see the Imperial Conference Report and the speech of Colonel Harvey at Liverpool). It is just this measure of limited coincidence of aim at the moment between Britain and the United States that is the measure of "agreement" possible at the Washington Conference. The test of success at the Washington Conference for the United States will be the effective and material isolation of Japan. The test of success at the Washington Conference for Britain will be the maintenance of friendly relations with the United States without having openly and finally to break with Japan. The rôle that Britain is being compelled to play of forswearing her old ally, Japan, is not a pleasant one. She is compelled to swear that the Anglo-Japanese Treaty does not involve the remotest possibility of conflict with the United States; and America expresses polite scepticism. She protests that there are no secret clauses in the treaty; and American opinion recalls the secret clauses of the apparently harmless Entente with France that led to the German war. She even proceeds to bespatter Japan in her Press with all the abuse that was formerly reserved for Germany in order to show the completeness of the break; but America, too, is familiar with Press campaigns. She may in the end be driven to submit to the formal abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance; but even that will not be more than a formal victory for America. Nothing less will fulfil America's end than the actual material isolation of Japan, the relegation of Japan to a visibly inferior position, and the driving out of Japan from the expansion in China that Japanese capital needs far more than British or American. And so America's diplomatic aim comes to coincide with her own aim of economic expansion: both demand the driving out of Japan from China.

**T**HUS China becomes the visible crux of the Conference (just as much as the Anglo-American war is the real and invisible crux). The rich resources, the docile labour and the vast markets of China offer the material stakes of the Conference. The past policy of the Powers in China has been the usual policy of violence and robbery, in

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which partition has only been delayed by jealousy. Britain has played the chief part in this policy, ever since the triumphs of British arms in the Opium Wars "opened" China to Western commerce and won Hong Kong for Britain; and to-day Britain controls more concessions in China than any other Power, she dominates the shipping trade of China, and she has the largest proportion of any nation of the coal output of China. Nevertheless during the years of opportunity of the war Japan was able to push her "special claims" in China to the alarm of the other Powers. Now, however, a new factor enters the situation. Up to the end of the war the Powers concerned with China were the Powers of Europe and Japan: America was too busy with opening up her own resources to concern herself with what happened abroad. But to-day American capital is ready to expand; and in a moment all the old schemes of carving up China are swept off the Board. Mr. Harmsworth announces in the British House of Commons (October 31) that the old policy of "spheres of influence" has been thrown on one side and "superseded by one of international co-operation." Amid clamorous protestations of devotion to the "independence and integrity" of China (ominous phrase), schemes are put forward of international co-operation and international boards of control to "help China on her feet." Emboldened by the dissensions of the Powers, China issues notes of defiance to Japan, and puts forward a series of Ten Points embodying her claim to independence and sovereignty in a memorandum which is whispered to have been drafted under the guiding hand of the American State Department. The new position is now clear. The old schemes of partition are out of date; Japan is to be made to relinquish her special position and at best be satisfied with compensation "north of China," and the new scheme is to control China as a whole through the forms of international benevolence. But no forms of international concord and supervision, no proclamations of Chinese sovereignty, can diminish the reality of the fight over the body of China. Japan may be compelled to relinquish her formal claims in public: but her work of penetration will continue none the less. International committees may be set up: but the fight for concessions will still be a fight between nationals. The body of China may be kept in a state of sus-

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pending dissolution : but the infection of that body will spread over the world until it breaks out in open war.

**T**HIS is the one certain fact about the settlement of the Far East, that it will not settle the Far East. Whether agreement is reached at Washington or not, the biggest factors will have been left out of account. And the first of these factors is the Chinese themselves. Whatever settlement may be reached in Washington, will it settle the Chinese? Let it be assumed that Washington is successful beyond the most sanguine dreams of its promoters: that its "open door" brings all China under the beneficent sway of modern capital, and that its international concord enables China to appropriate the benefits of such a condominium as Egypt knew of old or Turkey. Will this settlement be the last word? Or will it not mean simply the concentration of the Chinese struggle into a single struggle against the forces of the foreigner and of capital at once, so that in China, too, as in region after region of Asia, the national consciousness becomes re-inforced by a social consciousness into one gigantic movement of insurrection. This, and not the paper settlements of Washington, will be the force of the future of China. And when that time comes, there will be another element to be remembered that is now left conveniently out of consideration, and that element is Soviet Russia. Soviet Russia to the Chinese, as to the rest of Asia, represents the new force that has shown the way in the fight against imperialism: it represents the strange new Power that began its relations with China, not with fresh demands and extortions, but with renouncing simply and without conditions all the concessions and extortions of the Tsar. That in itself would be sufficient to give the Chinese an impetus hardly needed to look to Soviet Russia as their natural Ally. But Russia, whose former coastal frontier extended for thousands of miles along the Pacific, has been left out of the Washington Conference. The Washington Conference might even be regarded as the formation of a bloc against Russia. What is the inference? The inevitable inference is that the vast peoples of Russia and China (constituting close on one-third of the world's population) form at

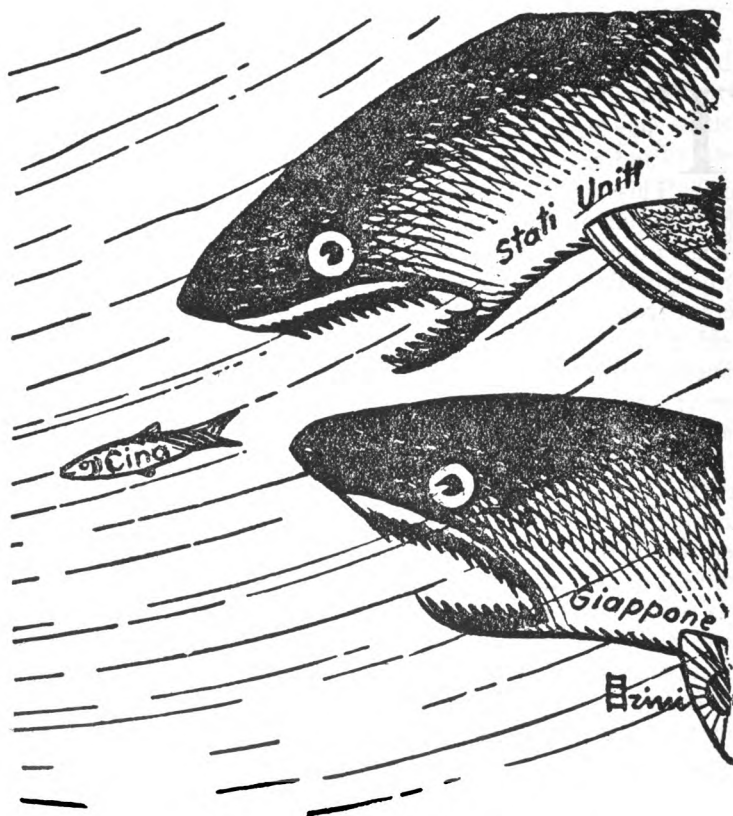


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once the natural basis of a movement of the common peoples of the world against the schemes of parcelling out by the diplomatists and the financiers. The Washington Conference has tried to settle the fate of the world in general, and of the Far East in particular, without Russia. That is the final comment on the destiny of its decisions.

**T**WO other international conferences have been meeting at the same time as the Washington Conference, and one of them took its original shape in Washington. This was the International Labour Conference under the League of Nations, which held its third meeting at Geneva during the end of October and November. But the atmosphere of the Geneva Conference was noticeably different from the first Conference of the same body, which was held at Washington in 1919. The fine promises of 1919 had vanished with the revolutionary situation that gave them birth; the conventions that were then so generously passed had since been openly flouted; and even the sacred Treaty of Versailles had in this respect been disregarded with impunity. At the Geneva Conference the attitude of the employers was unconcealedly obstructive: it took long debates for a convention to be passed on the subject of restricting the use of white lead in painting interiors, and even then its operation was postponed to six years hence: while the subject of agricultural hours, for which the Conference had been mainly called, was postponed to another time. It is the old story of the Industrial Conference in this country. In time of danger the capitalists will make any promises to trick the workers from using their advantage. When the danger is over the instrument is contemptuously thrown aside, and the pledges are left unhonoured. Is there any Trade Unionist left who has not learnt the lesson? The other Conference which met at the same time as Washington was the Conference at Amsterdam of representatives of the International Federations of Miners, Transport Workers and Metal Workers. This Conference met to pass resolutions in favour of international strike action against war. If there were any reasons to believe these resolutions were seriously meant, there would be some hope for the future.

## THE PACIFIC ISSUE



The Sharks (the Great Powers) and the Fish (China)

—Avanti

# REALITIES OF WASHINGTON

By W. N. EWER

A MONTH ago sentimental Liberalism was in full song. The Washington Conference was destined to bring that long overdue millennium without tears. Mr. Hughes was to redeem President Wilson's failure as Messiah.

"America," cried the *Daily News*, in an ecstasy of enthusiasm, "has shown a despairing world the way of salvation."

"This," said Mr. Lloyd George, "is the greatest event for nineteen centuries."

An American Liberal outdid him:—"It is the greatest event for nineteen hundred and twenty-one years"; thus abruptly dismissing the Crucifixion to the second grade.

That was a month since. To-day even sentimental Liberals (of whom, by the way, there are not a few in the ranks of Labour and Socialism) are feeling a little chilly about Washington. The vision has faded very rapidly. Mr. Hughes, it seems, is no Messiah: not even a magician: just an able but unimaginative New York lawyer, not fitted either by training or temperament to cope with the clever exponents of that old European diplomatic game which no American has yet learned to play.

The glamour has gone. That is good. It enables us to talk of the realities without chiding from some touchy romantic who resents every fact that disturbs his pleasant dreams.

## THE ORIGINS OF THE CONFERENCE

Mr. Hughes is no Messiah. Let us do him justice at once. He never thought he was. He does not suffer from the "Gottmensch" delusion that afflicted poor Mr. Wilson.

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He called that conference, not as a Saviour of Society or a purveyor of millenniums, but as a hard-headed American statesman.

The Washington Conference was the logical, foreseeable development of American policy after the Wilson fiasco and the Republican triumph at the polls.

By that gesture the United States drew out of world politics. The Washington tradition, the world-unconsciousness of the Middle West, the election tactics of the Republican Party, dictated the withdrawal.

But economic facts forbade it. And neither sentiment, nor tradition, nor political opportunism, can resist economic pressure. America was bound to re-enter world-politics, because America was *in* world-economics. Economic entanglement made political isolation impossible.

On the morrow of President Harding's election he sent Senator Medill M'Cormick on an inspection tour of Europe. I wrote then that this was the first sign: that within a year the Harding administration would be in conference with the European Powers, possibly discussing revision of the Treaty of Versailles, certainly discussing international politics in relation to America's international economic associations.

That was not a particularly clever prophecy. The thing was inevitable.

Two outstanding facts were bound to dominate and determine American policy:—

- (i) The gigantic debt of the chief European countries to the United States.
- (ii) The insistent need of American capitalism for foreign markets.

### DEBTS AND DISARMAMENT

America before the war was a debtor country. She emerged from the war the creditor of the world. Europe is in her debt to an extent scarcely realised. Government

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liabilities alone total a fantastic sum of over \$11,000,000,000.\*

And in addition there is a huge private debt. Before the war millions of American securities were held in Europe, and particularly in England. To-day British and European securities are held in America.

Yet American exports still exceed American imports by \$5,000,000,000 a year. America is not receiving full payment for her goods. She is still giving credit.

Therefore, the financial stability of Europe is a matter of intense and direct concern to the United States. The solvency of a debtor is of prime importance to his creditor.

Here, then, was one urgent problem which American statesmanship was bound to tackle. Europe must, if possible, be preserved from bankruptcy—for European bankruptcy would mean a gigantic loss to American capitalists. Europe must not merely be saved from bankruptcy. European governments must be enabled to balance their budgets—must be able to pay regularly, at least, the interest on these colossal loans.

Else that dangerous talk of a mutual cancellation of debts—very attractive to harassed Ministers of Finance—might grow; might reach the point where for “cancellation by consent,” “repudiation” might be substituted. Suppose Europe were to repudiate—were to announce, regretfully, inability to pay. No coercion, military or economic, would suffice for debt collecting. The imposition of “sanctions” on the German model would be a costly and futile folly. American capital would have to cut its losses and make the best of a bad job.

If the European Governments (I include Britain, of course, in the category of “European” States) are to remain solvent, European Governments must economise.

Economy—limitation of armaments—the line of thought

\* Leaving Russia out of account, the chief items of this enormous liability are :—Great Britain, \$4,166,318,358 ; France, \$3,350,762,938 ; Italy, \$1,648,034,050 ; Belgium, \$375,280,147 ; Poland, \$135,661,660.

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is obvious. America could do nothing to secure economies on domestic expenditure. But she could do something—or try to do something—to secure a reduction of expenditure on armaments.

*Europe must cut down its military and naval estimates in order that Europe may be able to pay its debts to America.*

That is the quite simple genesis of the “armaments” side of the Conference. No idealism, no pacifism, no millennium-mongery. Just a hard common-sense business proposition.

### THE LURE OF CHINA

Let us turn from the question of debts to the question of fields for exploitation—the second influence that made impossible the continuance of the isolation policy so dear to the heart of Senator Borah and his colleagues.

America is no longer self-sufficing. Her Capitalism has reached the phase at which it must expand beyond its own political borders.

Said William C. Redfield to the American Manufacturers' Export Association in April of last year\* :

“We cannot be foreign merchants very much longer in this country excepting on a diminishing and diminishing scale—we have got to become foreign constructors ; we have got to build with American money—foreign enterprises, railroads, utilities, factories, mills, I know not what, in order that by large ownership in them we may command the trade that normally flows from their operation.”

The inevitable processes of American Imperialism—the conquest of a Continent followed by expansion into the world, has been sketched brilliantly by Scott-Nearing : † “The logical goal of the American plutocracy in the economic, and, incidentally, the political, control of the world.” ‡

\* Scott-Nearing : *The American Empire*, p. 219.

† In outline in last month's LABOUR MONTHLY ; in detail in *The American Empire*.

‡ *The American Empire*, p. 222.

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North and South America are already conquered. The Union Jack flies at Ottawa. But \$555,943,000 of Canadian securities are held in the United States; only \$153,758,000 in Great Britain.\* The Monroe Doctrine is no longer a "doctrine." It is the expression of an economic fact.

But the Continent is insufficient. American Capitalism is looking—is bound to look—across the oceans for new territory to exploit.

There is not too much available. Most of the non-European world has been already carved up by the capitalist States which entered the competition a couple of generations ago—while American finance was still busy with the development of its own West. Africa is partitioned almost to the last rood.

Southern Asia is nearly in the same condition. When America—in the reaction against Wilsonism—refused the mandate for Armenia, she gave up her chance of any big share in the exploitation of the former Ottoman dominions. Britain and France have now pegged out all the claims from the Levant to the Gulf of Cambodia. Only the influence of Russia has prevented annexation of Persia and Afghanistan. Siam is doomed.

There remains only one great field, the richest, that (unless the Soviet Republic were overthrown and Russia turned into a Tom Tiddler's ground) invites world Capitalism to-day. China, in spite of quarter of a century of concession-hunting, is still virtually untouched. It seems to predatory American Capitalism its destined sphere of plunder.

Here, then, is the second great economic need of America—the securing of opportunity for the exploitation of China.

And even here Wall Street has come late into the field. America took little or no part in the "war of concessions," which began about 1895. England and France, Russia, Germany and Japan, scrambled for railway concessions and mining concessions and trading concessions and territorial

\* *The American Empire*, p. 207.

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concessions. America held aloof; made one or two futile protests against the establishment of privileges and monopolies; came into a financial consortium and withdrew again; began to fall behind in the race—mainly because her dominant interest for the moment was trade and not investment, commerce and not exploitation.

At the close of the war American financiers realised what had been happening. Not only had the other capitalist countries established themselves here and there in China during the two pre-war decades, but during the war itself Japan had begun to assert a domination over all China: had begun to claim a position of priority and “special interests” as against all other countries. Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia were well on the way to becoming Japanese protectorates. The “Twenty-one Demands” of 1915, if China had conceded them, would have made her definitely a Japanese dependency. Even those that were conceded gave Japanese Capitalism extraordinary advantages over its competitors. And apart from concessions and treaty privileges Japan was exercising an overweening control over the Peking Government and the Generals who are its real masters.

That exceptionally incapable diplomatist, Mr. Lansing, had been tricked by the astute Viscount Ishii into a formal admission that Japan had “special interests” in China on account of her geographical position. And his equally incapable chief—thinking of nothing but of saving his precious League of Nations—signed the Versailles Treaty, which gave Japan virtual sovereignty over Shantung.

American Capitalism was stung to action by that last final folly. The “Shantung clauses” did far more to bring about the Wilson débâcle than is generally realised here. The refusal to ratify a treaty containing those clauses was the first declaration to the world that America meant to fight for her position in the Far East.

American Capitalism is going to exploit China, and



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the first step to that must be the ousting of Japan from the privileged position she has attained.

Again, therefore, America must emerge from her brief isolation. She must take steps to secure the annulment of those "Shantung clauses"—which are in operation, though neither ratified by the United States nor as much as signed by China. She must secure the revocation of the treaty of 1915. She must prevent Japan from using her influence at Peking to extort similar concessions in future. She must break down that influence itself.

Also, since this economic and diplomatic struggle may at any time lead to actual war, she must make quite sure that war with Japan would not involve war with Great Britain. The Anglo-Japanese alliance must be broken. Japan must be isolated in order that she may be coerced.

There is the equally simple genesis of the second part of the Washington programme. Again, no idealism (though much chatter about Chinese sovereign rights and about the "open door"). No idealism, but just hard economic facts.

*The European debt dictated a Disarmament Conference. The ambitions of American Capitalism dictated a Far Eastern Conference. The two blended easily and naturally.*

And there was the Washington programme ready-made for the fooling of sentimental Liberalism.

### MR. HUGHES' PLAN

Mr. Hughes' plan of campaign was simple and obvious.

First, the discussion of the limitation of naval armaments.

Then the isolation of Japan by the dissolution of the Anglo-Japanese alliance.

Then—her naval superiority in the Pacific definitely safeguarded—America could dictate the terms of a Chinese settlement.

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The question of the limitation of military armaments could be taken later.

Simple—all too simple. That last decision (with certain others closely related to it) was the fatal blunder that has upset Mr. Hughes' calculations entirely.

Those associated blunders were:—

- (i) The undervaluing of the importance of France.
- (ii) The ignoring of Germany and Russia.

Quite rightly, Mr. Hughes calculated that he could rely on the support of Great Britain.

For Great Britain is now in somewhat the same position in face of America as was Germany ten years ago in face of Great Britain. She has the choice of being, as Prince von Bülow phrased it, "her satellite or her antagonist."\*

Germany chose the rôle of antagonist. She refused to be "towed in the wake of English policy."† But England to-day dare not make that choice. She is too economically dependent on America. She cannot fight her. She dare scarcely offend her. Economic dependence implies political dependence. Willy nilly, we must be "towed in the wake of American policy."

Very definitely this is true of these two questions of naval armaments and of Far Eastern policy.

Germany entered upon a competition in shipbuilding with England. It was not altogether an unequal contest. But Britain to-day dare not enter on such a competition with America. Her resources will not allow it. Offered a position of equality, she must gratefully accept it, foregoing her old claim to a paramount navy; its relinquishment being the only alternative to an exhausting conflict, resulting in definite inferiority.

So in the Far East. A British Minister might dream of leaguings with Japan against the menacing power of the United States. But to do this would be to destroy the

\* Prince von Bülow: *Imperial Germany*, p. 28.

† *Ibid.*, p. 31.

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British Empire. Race feeling is too strong. Neither Canada nor Australia would stand for such a policy. Both would secede rather than fight with Japan against the States.

Therefore, Mr. Hughes counted, and counted rightly, on British support.

### THE NAVAL SCHEME

He launched, with a fine dramatic sense, his plan for the limitation of capital ships, at the first sitting of the Conference. The British delegation supported him enthusiastically. The world rang with applause. And sentimental Liberalism felt happy. The millennium was at hand.

But in that dramatic declaration, Mr. Hughes committed one incredible folly. *He ignored France. He contemptuously—or with an off-handedness that gave the impression of contempt—relegated her with Italy to the category of second-rate naval Powers.*

It was a crass blunder, which no European statesman would have made.

France has a long tradition as the first naval Power on the Continent; the old maritime rival of England. Even when her battle fleet has been evidently weaker, she has never been content to accept a status of definite inferiority. She has sought other means of redressing the balance. In the nineties the *guerre de course* was the favoured French strategy. Jean Bart and Duguay-Trouin were the admired models. The Great War has revived French naval hopes. The battleship is no longer what it was. The *guerre de course*—waged not by light cruisers, but by submarines and aeroplanes—is again being talked of; not lightly by journalists, but very seriously by admirals. It may still be possible to challenge England on the seas.

And the Entente is visibly in ruins.

Yet, with an almost incredible stupidity, Mr. Hughes left France out of the reckoning of the Big Sea Powers.

The folly brought a swift retort. The French Press began to demand that in any battleship agreement France

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should at least be accorded the same strength as Japan. The French delegation, in better touch with French naval opinion and the French admirals' plans, did not worry about battleships.

But at the very moment when Britain, for obvious reasons, was beginning to suggest very stringent limitations on the size and number of submarines, M. Briand dramatically announced that France would object to any limitation of her rights of building and using submarines—and then went home.

*That declaration has blown sky-high all chance of a real limitation of naval armaments.*

Limitation of battleships there may be: though even here the French attitude may bring a breakdown. Will Great Britain accept a ratio of ten against a possible French seven and Italian five? I doubt it. You will soon hear the old murmurs of "two keels to one."

But battleships are of subsidiary importance. Mr. Hughes concentrated on them overmuch. It is the light cruisers, the destroyers, the submarines, the aircraft and their auxiliaries that we count most in the future.

France has declared definitely against limitation of these. Britain must follow suit. "We are not building against Britain," says M. Briand, "we are building against X." That is in the authentic vein of Ministers explaining the old pre-war armament competitions. But its result must be that Britain, too, must build "against X."

The naval millennium is off.

### LAND ARMAMENTS

M. Briand had another and even deadlier riposte. Mr. Hughes had chosen to disregard France as a naval Power. He could not disregard her as a military Power. But he did want to postpone all military matters until a later stage of the Conference. M. Briand refused to allow this.

He forced the question of land armaments to the front at once. And he did so by another dramatic declaration.

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France would under no circumstances consent to a reduction of her present military strength—the minimum compatible with her safety.

With perfect timing the French Press—and, of course, the faithful *Times*—told of Germany's preparations for building up her army anew.

“We will not reduce our army,” said M. Briand. “We dare not, because of the German menace: because also of the Russian menace.”

An incredibly insolent stroke this last. With cool effrontery the French Premier told the Conference that eighteen months ago Russia “hurled herself against Europe.” Nor did anyone give him the lie or recall the real beginnings of the Russo-Polish war.

German menace. Russian menace. Poor Mr. Hughes found himself caught again in the toils of those tiresome European politics.

He had not invited either Germany or Russia to Washington. Russia, indeed, his Government—thanks to insistent pressure from Mr. Hoover—still obstinately refused to recognise even as a *fact*.

Yet here it was undeniably a fact, and not only a fact but an essential *factor*. Germany, too, was a factor. Poor Mr. Hughes had hoped to get along by ignoring them. Here they were refusing to be ignored.

*For the real significance of M. Briand's declaration was that it was idle to talk about military disarmament in Europe unless Germany and Russia were consulted.*

There were three courses open. One was to retort to the French Premier by cabling immediate invitations to Moscow and Berlin. That bold stroke might have saved the situation. But it was probably impossible. Anti-German and anti-Russian prejudices are still too strong inside the the American Cabinet itself. To invite a Russian delegation would be to recognise the Soviet Government. Mr. Hoover is inflexibly against

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that. And Mr. Hoover stands for very powerful forces.

The second alternative was to fall in with M. Briand's hint that France might reduce her armies on condition of the renewal of Mr. Wilson's ill-fated project of a Triple Alliance between Britain, America, and France. But no American administration—certainly not that of President Harding—dare entertain such an idea.

The third course was to throw up the sponge and abandon, at any rate for the present, all idea of securing a limitation of European land armaments.

That course Mr. Hughes seems to have taken. The speech in which he accepted M. Briand's position as a reasonable one is an admission of the total failure of his plans.

### AMERICA v. JAPAN

There still remains the Chinese question. Here it is just possible that Mr. Hughes may have more success.

The Anglo-Japanese alliance is dead, even though not formally abrogated. Japan is isolated: and as a result she is already showing signs of readiness to yield something. *But if she yields it will only be a tactical withdrawal—a retreat, not a capitulation.*

Her strategy in the next few weeks will, I think, be based on two calculations.

Firstly, she will rely on American preoccupation with Shantung. She will give way there, in the hope of saving, by that temporary sacrifice, her privileged position in the rest of China. *She will play the Shantung gambit.*

Secondly, she will try to alienate China itself from America. The United States has been posing as China's protector against Japanese political penetration. Japan will pose as China's protector against American economic penetration. *She will try for a Yellow Alliance.*

China is asking for the freeing of her Customs from

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foreign control. She is objecting to the demands of the Four Powers' Financial Consortium for effective control of her railways. She is taking at their face value American statements of principle about her "political and administrative independence," and is asking that those principles be put into practice in a manner that does not enter into Wall Street's calculations.

What if she gets Japanese backing in this attitude?

American finance aims at an international control of the "development" of China—quite confident that it would have the dominant voice in any such international scheme. *What if Japan pits against this international control (which would be really American) Chinese control (which would be really Japanese)?*

Either Mr. Hughes will again collapse, and his Conference will break up, content with having given utterance to a few pious generalities about the building of battleships and the relationship of China to foreign Powers; or else we are going to see played at Washington in the next month one of the prettiest and most complicated games of diplomatic intrigue that the world of politics has seen for some years.

If that game is played, my money will *not* be on Mr. Hughes. He has revealed himself already as a clumsy fellow. His adversaries are as adroit and experienced as he is raw and clumsy. Also they have the big advantage that the game will not be limited to Washington. It will be played also at Peking. And at Peking the Japanese have a thousand advantages.

In intrigue the Japanese will win. But Mr. Hughes, though he may be an unskilful diplomatist, has behind him the resources and the power of the United States—incomparably the strongest nation in the world to-day.

*The Japanese may outwit him. But he may turn the battle from one of Quick Wits into one of Big Sticks. The Roosevelt tradition is not dead.*

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*In which case the Washington Conference may be the prelude to the Pacific war.*

Poor sentimental Liberalism!

Poor Mr. Hughes!

Poor President Harding!

They will have to try again, or American Capitalism will find itself in difficulties.

### **SIBERIA**

Let me add a postscript.

I have not mentioned Siberia.

Nothing that the Conference may do—or leave undone—with regard to Siberia or to any territory of the Russian or of the Far-Eastern Republic, is of the slightest consequence.



# THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY AND THE TASKS OF POLITICAL ENLIGHTENMENT

By N. LENIN

*(Being a Speech delivered to the Congress of Local Organisations for Political Enlightenment, in October, 1921.)*

I WILL deal with the new economic policy in broad and general terms. Everyone cannot but be aware how radical has been the change made by our Soviet power and Communist Party in passing over to that economic policy which has been called new—i.e., new in its relation to the preceding economic policy, but in the nature of things containing more of the old than our former economic policy. For with the latter, if one cannot say we calculated (for, in those circumstances, we in general calculated very little), at least to a certain extent we proposed an immediate transition from the old Russian form of economy to State production and exchange on a Communist basis. But if one recalls our previous economic literature and what our Communists were writing before the taking of power in our hands or in the short period after taking power (e.g., in the beginning of 1918, when our first political attack on the old Russia had ended in huge success, when the Soviet Republic was founded, when Russia had just emerged from the imperialist war, although in a mutilated condition, still with less mutilation than if she had proposed—in accordance with the advice of the imperialists, Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries—to defend the Fatherland), it will be seen that in this first period, when we had not finished the first task of building up the Soviet power and had only just emerged from the imperialist war, we talked of our tasks of economic recon-

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struction much more guardedly and circumspectly than during the second half of 1918 and during the whole of 1919 and 1920. One may refer, for instance, to such decisions as the decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of April 29, 1918, which pointed out the necessity of reckoning with village economy, dealt with the rôle of State capitalism in the construction of Socialism, and underlined the significance of individual, one-man responsibility in the matter of the administration of the country as distinct from the tasks of the structure of political and military power.

### *Our Mistake*

In 1918, after the conclusion of the Brest peace, the danger, we thought, was removed, and we calculated on a definite period when peaceful constructive work would be possible. But we were deceived. In 1918 the real war danger began, with, first, the Czecho-Slovak rising, and then the beginning of the civil war which continued right into 1920. Partly under the influence of the military tasks with which we were suddenly overwhelmed, and partly owing to the desperate position, as it seemed, of the Republic, we made the mistake of trying to bring about an immediate transition to Communist production and distribution. We decided that the peasantry should by requisition (in exchange for goods) provide us with the necessary quantity of food which we would distribute to the factories and workshops, thus arriving at Communist production and distribution. I cannot say that we had envisaged the above plan so definitely and obviously, but we acted approximately in that spirit. That, unfortunately, is a fact. I say unfortunately, because a not very long experience served to convince us that this structure was a mistake and in contradiction to what we had formerly written as to the transition from Capitalism to Socialism, and that if we did not pass through the period of Socialist accounting and control it would be impossible to pass even to the lowest stage of Communism.

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In the theoretical literature of the early part of 1918, when the tasks which lay before the Bolshevik Party were just being realised by the whole people, it was definitely asserted that a long and complex transition was inevitable from Capitalist society through Socialist accounting and control to even the first grade of Communist society. This is the essence of what was forgotten by us when we were compelled, at the height of the civil war, to take unavoidable steps in the matter of reconstruction. Our new economic policy consists essentially in this, that having suffered a heavy defeat in this policy, we have begun a strategic retreat; while we are still not finally beaten we will retreat and construct everything anew, only on a more lasting basis. There is no manner of doubt that we have suffered a defeat on the economic front, and as Communists we cannot permit a heavy defeat, so in full consciousness we turn to deal with the question of a new economic policy.

### *We Must Act as in War*

It is, of course, inevitable that some of our comrades will fall into a very bitter frame of mind, amounting almost to panic; on the occasion of a retreat there are always some who give themselves over to panic. When the Red Army was forced to retreat it had to conquer first of all the tendency to run before the enemy, and every time and on every front this panic period was to be observed among certain people. But every time, whether on the Koltchak, Denikin, Yudenitch, Wrangel or Polish front, it turned out that after we had been once, or sometimes more than once, properly beaten, we learned the truth of the proverb that "one tried man is worth two untried." After being once defeated we began to advance slowly, systematically and cautiously.

Of course, tasks on the economic front are many times more difficult than those on the military front, but a general relation of elementary strategical principles may be made out. On the economic front, from the attempt to establish Communism up to the spring of 1921, we suffered a more serious

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defeat than any inflicted on us by Koltchak, Denikin, or Pilsudsky, a defeat indicating that the superstructure of our economic policy was not built on a firm foundation and did not give rise to that volume of creative force which was laid down in our party programme as a fundamental and urgent necessity. The requisitions in the villages, and the attempt at immediate Communist construction in the towns, hindered the development of productive forces and proved the fundamental cause of the deep economic and political crisis which overtook us in the spring of 1921. This, then, has been the cause of what, from the point of view of our general policy, can only be described as a severe defeat, and the cause of our retreat, which, like some of the retreats of the Red Army, can hardly be described as a retreat in good order and to previously prepared positions. The positions were, in truth, prepared beforehand, as can be shown by a comparison of the decisions made in the spring of this year with those of April, 1918, already referred to; but the retreat to these positions which has taken place, and in some places in the provinces is still taking place, has been accompanied by a considerable and even an excessive degree of disorder.

It is a task for the organisations for political enlightenment to struggle against this disorder. The fundamental question from the point of view of the new economic policy is the question who will be able to make the first use of the new position?

### *Who Will Get the Upper Hand?*

The new economic policy with its agricultural tax in place of requisitions denotes the re-establishment of Capitalism in a significant degree. To what degree—we do not yet know. Concessions to foreign capitalists (though it is true that so far very few have been concluded, especially in comparison with the proposals which we have made) and leases to private capitalists represent a direct re-introduction of Capitalism and are radically connected with the new economic policy.

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For the abolition of requisitions means for the peasant free trade in the village surplus not taken by the tax; and the tax takes only a small fraction of the produce. The peasantry constitutes an enormous part of our whole population, and consequently on the soil of this free trade Capitalism cannot but grow.

This is a fundamental economic truth, an elementary lesson of economic science, and indeed taught us by every landowner independently of the theories of economic or political science. And from the point of strategy the root question remains—Who will be the first to get the benefit of the new position? The whole question is—Whom will the peasantry follow, the proletariat striving to construct a Socialist society, or the capitalist who says, “Let us go back, for that is less dangerous; these Communists have still some sort of Socialism in mind”?

Our present struggle will have for its result either a victory for the capitalist, to whom we are opening the door, and even several doors, or a victory for the proletarian State power. On what economic support can this latter depend? On the one hand, on an improvement in the position of the population. In this connection one must remember the peasants. It is absolutely incontestable that, in spite of such a huge misfortune as the famine, an improvement in the position of the population (not counting the actual famine) has followed precisely as a result of the change in economic policy.

On the other hand, if Capitalism benefits, industrial production will grow, but together with it the proletariat will also grow. The capitalists will profit as a result of our policy and will create an industrial proletariat such as amongst us, thanks to the war and the desperate destruction and ruin, has been declassed, i.e., struck from its class line of development, and has ceased to exist as a proletariat. By proletariat is denoted a class occupied with the production of material values in the enterprises of large-scale capitalist industry. In so far as large-scale capitalist industry has been destroyed, in so far as factories and workshops are at a standstill, the

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proletariat has vanished. It has on occasion been formally numbered, but it was not connected with its economic roots. If Capitalism is revived, the class of the proletariat will also be revived, a class occupying itself with the production of material values useful to society, occupied in large machine industry and not engaged in speculation, in making lighters for sale and such like "work," not especially useful, but quite unavoidable in the circumstances of the breakdown of our industry.

The whole question is as to who will forestall whom. Should the capitalists succeed in organising themselves first—they will drive out the Communists without more ado. It is necessary to look at these things dispassionately. Will the proletarian State prove itself capable, relying on the peasants, to hold Messieurs the capitalists in proper check, in order to direct Capitalism along the State path and to create a Capitalism subordinate to the State and serving it?

### *The Enemy in Our Midst*

It is necessary to consider this question seriously, leaving aside all ideologies, all prejudices about political freedom. Of such prejudices it is possible to find many examples, especially if we look at Russia abroad, the Russia No. 2, where they possess tens of daily papers of all political parties, where these freedoms are sung of in all tunes and with all the musical notes known to nature. All this is mere chatter, empty phrases. It is necessary to be able to reject these phrases. During the last four years we have been through many serious battles, and we have learned that serious battle is quite a different thing from the chatter that arises on such an occasion, arising especially on the part of those who stay at home. It is necessary to look at the heart of the matter. And the heart of the matter is just this—that there is a struggle and that it will be even more desperate and bitter than the struggle with Koltchak or Denikin. For this reason, that military struggle is a customary thing. For

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hundreds of thousands of years men have always fought. As far as the art of killing people in war is concerned, enormous successes have been achieved.

In spite of the S.R.s and Mensheviks, siding with the landowners, who have raised an outcry about popular rights, about the Constituent Assembly, and the way in which the Bolsheviks have destroyed all freedom, yet all the same it has been easier to carry through our military tasks than the one which now confronts us. It is possible to carry through a military task by onslaught, by sudden attack, by enthusiasm, above all by the physical force of that large number of workers and peasants who have seen the landowners advancing against them. Now it is not a case of unconcealed landowners. As for the Wrangels, Koltchaks and Denikins, part have gone to join Nicholas Romanoff, part have hidden themselves in the safety of regions abroad. The present obvious enemy the people do not see as they saw the landowner and capitalist before. This enemy is already in our midst; the revolution stands before a kind of precipice against which all former revolutions have come to grief and gone to destruction. This is a picture the people are not able to understand because they suffer from a great darkness and ignorance. And it is difficult to say how much time will be needed for all the extraordinary committees, acting in an extraordinary way, to liquidate this ignorance.

The task of our Party is to develop the knowledge that the enemy in our midst is anarchic Capitalism and anarchic trading. It is necessary clearly to realise this essence of the struggle and to secure that the widest masses of the workers and peasants realise it also. It is still a question who will get the upper hand. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a most merciless and embittered struggle in which the proletariat has to contend against the whole world, since the whole world has gone against us in supporting Koltchak and Denikin.

At the present time the bourgeoisie of the whole world supports the bourgeoisie of Russia, and is many times

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stronger than we are. Yet this does not throw us into panic. Their armed forces were incomparably greater than ours, yet they failed to crush us in war, although with their forces it should have been very easy to do so. It would, perhaps, have been sufficient if they had mobilised in time a few army corps from one or other of the capitalist Powers who went against us, and had not hesitated at lending a few millions in gold to Koltchak. However, they failed because the knowledge of their guilt and of our righteousness penetrated even to the masses of the English soldiers who arrived in Archangel, and to the masses of the sailors who forced the French fleet to leave Odessa.

Now again we are encountering forces which, as usual, are much more powerful than we are. In order to conquer we must rely upon our ultimate source of strength, i.e., the masses of workers and peasants, their consciousness, and their power of organisation. If only the organised proletarian power, and the leading workers and peasants, take up this task and are able to organise a popular movement around them, then we will emerge victorious. But if we are not able to do this, then the enemy, possessing greater forces in the way of technical equipment, will inevitably defeat us.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is an embittered warfare. The proletariat has conquered in one country, but remains much weaker on an international scale. It must unite all workers and peasants around it in the knowledge that the war is not yet finished. Though we may have sung "to the last fight let us rally," that is not quite accurate. Unfortunately it is not the last and decisive fight. Either we succeed in rallying the workers and peasants to this struggle or we will not win through.

Although, more than once, beginning with the early period of slave rule, there have been wars of peasants against landowners, never until now has history seen such a struggle as that in which we are engaged. Never until now has there been a war of the State power against the bourgeoisie of its own country and against the united bourgeoisie of all



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countries. The issue of the struggle depends upon whether we are able to organise the petty peasantry upon the basis of the development of their productive strength, supporting this development by our proletarian power, or whether the capitalists can subordinate this development to themselves. With no former experience to guide us we must create it for ourselves, and in this we can only rely on the consciousness of the workers and peasants. That must be our watchword, as it is also the greatest difficulty of our task.

### *Personal Initiative and Responsibility*

We cannot calculate upon an immediate transition to Communism. We must build upon the personal interest of the peasant. People will say to us: "The personal interest of the peasant—that means the re-establishment of private property." But that is not the case; personal property in objects of use and in implements has never been a hindrance to us in our relations to the peasants. We destroyed private property in land, but the peasant can carry on agriculture without private property in land, e.g., on land that has been leased. This system has obtained in many countries, but here it is not economically possible at all. Our difficulty has been to create the personal interest. It is necessary, also, to see that every specialist has an interest in the development of production.

We have not yet been able to do this. We thought that at our Communist bidding production and distribution would develop in a country with a declassed proletariat. We shall have to change this, for otherwise we shall not be able to acquaint the proletariat with the process of transition. When we tried to carry through this task directly, i.e., by a frontal attack, we suffered defeat. Such mistakes have occurred in every war and they are not considered as mistakes. Our frontal attack not having succeeded, we shall pass to the flank and act by siege and by undermining.

It is necessary to build every branch of national industry on personal interest. Deliberation should be social, but

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responsibility personal. From our failure to realise this fundamental we are suffering at every step. The new economic policy demands that this division be carried out with absolute clearness and sharpness. When we passed to the new economic conditions there was an outburst of discussion among the people as to what would arise, and as to how the new order should be constructed. This is as it should be. We must not allow anything to be begun without going through a general discussion, because the people for hundreds of years have been forbidden to discuss anything, and the revolution cannot develop in any other way than through a period of holding general meetings on all questions.

This has largely created confusion. It was inevitable, but it is not dangerous. Only by learning in time to distinguish what is necessary for discussion at meetings and what is necessary for administration, shall we be able to reach the height of our position as a Soviet Republic. Unfortunately, we have not yet learned this, and the majority of our congresses are far from proceeding in an active fashion. In the abundance of our congresses we exceed all other States in the world. Not one of the democratic Republics holds so many as we do, nor would it be feasible for them to attain to this. But we must remember that our country is a country greatly despoiled and impoverished, and it is necessary to teach how to discuss at meetings without confusing the requirements of discussion and administration. Hold meetings, but administer without the least hesitation, administer more firmly and severely than ever the capitalist did before. Otherwise you will not be able to conquer him.

In the Red Army, after many months of discussion at meetings, discipline reached a degree which was never attained in the old army. Severe, harsh measures were applied, extending to death by shooting, such as had never occurred under the former Government. The bourgeoisie have cried out that the Bolsheviks have re-introduced the death penalty. We must reply that we have, and with full consciousness.

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## *The Alternatives*

Either we must destroy those who have wished to bring us to ruin or our Soviet Republic will perish. In our impoverished country the alternative rests between those who will not co-operate with us, or the whole workers' and peasants' Republic. For us there is and can be no choice, just as also there is no room for any kind of sentimentality. Sentimentality is no less a crime than cowardice in war. He who shrinks now from the rule of discipline lets enemies into our midst.

The new economic policy has thus a significance also from the point of view of instruction. This congress is discussing what it is necessary to teach. We shall have to arrive at the point of saying that we have no room for the dilettante. When we have Communism, then teaching will be milder; at present it cannot but be hard under pain of destruction. There has been desertion from the army, and also from the Labour front; working for the capitalist, for the exploiter, has naturally meant working badly. But now the question has to be solved whether we are able to work for ourselves, for the workers' and peasants' power, or otherwise the Republic will perish. This is one of the reasons for the introduction of our new economic policy.

Let us industrialise everything. Capitalists will be amongst us, foreign capitalists, concessionaires, and lease holders: they will wrest from us hundreds per cent. of profit, they will flourish around us. Let them flourish; we will learn from them how to carry on industry, and then we shall be able to construct our Communist Republic. From the point of view of learning quickly any kind of slacking is the greatest crime. It is necessary to adopt this apprenticeship, an apprenticeship burdensome, severe, sometimes even cruel, for there is no other way forward.

We must remember that our Soviet country, impoverished by many years of trial, is surrounded by non-Socialist France and non-Socialist England, whose advanced technique and industry could help us but that it is at present in the hands of capitalists who are acting against us.

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In our uncultured state we cannot by a frontal attack achieve the destruction of Capitalism. At a different level of culture it would have been possible to accomplish the task more directly, and perhaps other countries will be able to do so when the time comes for the construction of their Communist Republics. But we cannot solve the problem by the direct method.

The State must learn to carry on trade so that industry can satisfy the peasants, so that the peasants by trade can satisfy their needs. It is necessary to put the matter so that every worker will devote his powers to strengthening the workers-peasants' State. Only then can a large-scale industry be created.

### *Experience Must be Mastered*

It is necessary that knowledge should penetrate to the masses, and not only penetrate, but be practically realised amongst them. From this follow the tasks of the Political Enlightenment Sections. After each deep-seated political change the people need much time to master the change for themselves. It is deeply to be regretted that it is possible to say that the people have not yet learned the lessons which have been afforded them. For if they had we should come much more quickly and directly to the creation of a large-scale industry. After accomplishing the greatest political change in the world, new tasks have come before us—cultural tasks, which it is possible to call “minor matters.” It is necessary to digest this political change, to make it accessible to the masses of the people, and to ensure that it does not remain a mere declaration.

All these declarations, notices, manifestoes, and decrees were necessary in their time. In their time all these things were indispensable in order to show people in what way and to what new goal we were advancing. But it is impossible now merely to go on showing the people what we wish to construct. The simplest worker in that case will scoff at us. He will say: “You are always showing us what you wish to con-

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struct; show us actually that you know how to construct. If you don't know how, then it is no good to us—go to the devil! ” And he will be right. The time has gone by when it was necessary to outline politically the big tasks before us; the time has come when it is necessary to realise them in practice. We are faced with either the destruction of all the political victories of the Soviet power, or their establishment on a firm economic foundation.

### *Make Use of Our Good Laws*

In connection with our new economic policy it is necessary unceasingly to press the idea that political enlightenment demands at all costs a higher development of culture. We must secure that knowledge, how to read and write, shall serve for the heightening of culture, so that the peasant has the possibility of applying the learning of reading and writing to the improvement of industry and his State.

The Soviet laws are very good, for they afford the possibility of fighting bureaucracy and dilatoriness, a possibility which is not afforded by any capitalist state to the workers and peasants. But this possibility is hardly being made use of at all. And not only the peasants, but a huge percentage of the Communists do not know how to make use of the Soviet laws in the struggle against delay, bureaucracy or that truly Russian phenomenon—bribery. The reason for our failure in this struggle is because it is impossible to achieve success by propaganda alone, but only if the mass of the people themselves help. Not only do half our Communists not know how to carry on the struggle, but there are some who actually hinder the struggle. The latter are now being dealt with by the committee for the revision of the party, and there is a hope that 100,000, some say 200,000, will be deprived of membership.

That we cleanse our party from these hangers-on will be useful, but it is only an insignificant fraction of what we have to do. We have to struggle with illiteracy, but literacy alone is insufficient. We need also that culture which knows

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how to struggle with delay and bribery. These are diseases which cannot be cured by any kind of military victories or political transformations. They can be cured only by increase in culture. We are carrying on propaganda against barbarousness and such diseases as bribery, but the task of political enlightenment is not exhausted by this propaganda. We must demonstrate to the people the necessary measures, not as members of an executive committee, but as rank-and-file citizens, who being themselves politically more enlightened than others, know not only how to swear at dilatoriness—this art is widespread amongst us—but to show in what way actually this evil can be conquered. This is a very difficult art which cannot be achieved without a general raising of the level of culture on the part of the workers and peasant masses. And it is to this task of the Political Enlightenment sections that I should most of all like to direct attention.

### *Summing Up*

In summing up I wish to set out in a practical form the main tasks now confronting the Political Enlightenment sections. As I look at it there are three chief enemies which threaten every person independent of the extent of his or her knowledge, and in consequence three chief tasks which as Communists we have to achieve. The three great enemies are as follows: Firstly, Communist conceit; secondly, illiteracy; and thirdly, bribe-taking.

By Communist conceit I mean that a person, being a member of the Communist Party and not yet expelled from it, imagines that all his duties can be fulfilled by issuing Communist decrees. While such a person remains a member of the ruling party and of some State organisation, he imagines that this gives him the right to talk about the results of political enlightenment. Nothing of the kind. It is merely Communist conceit. To learn to carry out political enlightenment is the thing that matters, and this is a goal which we have not yet reached.

With regard to the second enemy, illiteracy, while such a

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phenomenon exists in the country it is very difficult to talk of political enlightenment at all. It is not a political task that we have to deal with, but a pre-condition without which it is impossible to talk of politics. The illiterate person stands outside politics, he must first be taught his A B C. Without this there are only rumours, gossip, tales, prejudices and the like, but there can be no politics.

And finally, while such a phenomenon as bribery is possible there can be no talk of politics. Here is not a question of a pre-condition. In the presence of bribery it is impossible to carry on politics, for all measures are suspended in mid-air and remain absolutely ineffectual. No good can come from any law if its application in practice is at the mercy of a system of tolerated and widespread bribery.

In order to be able to outline to the people our political tasks, and to convince them of what we have got to achieve, we must understand that what is required is a raising of the general cultural level of the masses. And we must achieve this definite level of culture or it will be impossible to accomplish our tasks.

Cultural tasks cannot be accomplished so quickly as political or military ones. We must realise that the latter are not now the barrier to our progress. Politically it is possible to conquer during a period of acute crisis in a few weeks. In war it is possible to conquer within a few months. But it is impossible to achieve a cultural victory within any such period. By the very nature of things a much longer period is necessary, and we must adapt ourselves to this longer period, calculating our work in advance, and exhibiting the greatest possible perseverance, steadfastness and orderliness. Without these qualities it is impossible even to approach to political enlightenment. And the results of political enlightenment can only be measured by the improvement of industry. It is not only necessary that we destroy illiteracy, and bribery which thrives on the soil of illiteracy, but we must see to it that our propaganda and our guidance are in fact accepted by the people and that as a result there should be shown an improvement in our national industry.

# A GUILDSMAN'S REPLY

By MALCOLM SPARKES

(General Secretary of the Guild of Builders, London, Ltd.)

An appeal to free service may still be regarded as a leap in the dark, but I prefer to regard it as a "tremendously big" but splendid adventure. . . . Moreover, we must adventure boldly and at once. Time is against us and the old order is dissolving into anarchy and chaos much faster than we are at present building the new. . . . I believe that men will work for an ideal as they can no longer be made to work for fear. And if I am wrong, then who is in the right, and what hope is there for Society at all?

G. D. H. COLE, "Chaos and Order in Industry."

**M**R. MELLOR'S "Critique of Guild Socialism" might have been more truly entitled "A Critique of the National Guilds League," for no less than five of his eight interesting pages are devoted to an examination of the shortcomings of that organisation rather than the great principle for which it stands. He seems to have overlooked the superb quality of the goods in his preoccupation with the behaviour of their accredited representative.

I am not concerned with the internal debates of the National Guilds League. Every live organisation has its cross-currents of theory—they are the symptoms not of weakness but of exuberant vitality. My object is to try and present a living picture of the Guild idea as it stands to-day and to bring out its central motive—which, curiously enough, Mr. Mellor ignores entirely—the organisation of industry for service and not for gain. I am profoundly convinced that the real drive of the Guild idea—the power that draws men of every grade in industry so strongly to its side—is far more than a claim for status or for surplus value. That is only a part and a comparatively trifling part.

The real call of the Guild is based on the conviction that



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here, at long last, is the beginning of an industrial system that is worthy of our best and gives full scope to those creative faculties that have been crushed for generations.

It has seldom been better stated than in the words I have quoted at the head of this article. Cole is one of the few men who have seen the real greatness of the Guild idea—have realised that, given a fair hearing, the proposal is inspiring and creative, and is big enough and fine enough to win upon its merits—that it needs no threats to help it through, and may even be retarded by such methods. Mr. Mellor declares that this attitude is “fundamentally pacifist and is therefore constantly up against the difficulties of that school.” He suggests, further, that the Guild movement at one moment “is prepared to do anything to get rid of the things its intellect and emotions alike condemn; the next it halts because to get rid of them means the utilisation of force. . . . It still thinks in terms of peaceful change and advocates proposals that involve war.”

This raises the whole issue that I am now examining. Mr. Mellor believes that force is the only way to secure the end in view. I believe that an attempt to force men to work under new ideas they neither understand nor approve would set back the clock for a generation. My main criticism of the advocates of change by force is that their method is far too slow. I am convinced that it is far more important to build up the foundation of a new system than to set about the destruction of the old. To argue that we must destroy before we build is quite misleading, because the present social and industrial system is not a rigid thing of bricks and mortar that must be disintegrated before it can be changed. It is much more like a whirlpool of conflicting currents that may be deflected and even reversed by a powerful stream of new ideas properly directed and assisted by experimental demonstrations. I may be wrong and they may be right, but I am prepared to race. For that is what the contest really is. Industry organised for service must show a clean pair of heels to industry organised for gain. The moment

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that happens, the struggle will become a battle of ideas and not of classes, and it will become increasingly possible to secure for the best idea the services of the best men.

Before dismissing this conception as fantastic, let us examine a little more closely the real meaning of the phrase "Industry organised for service." It means clearly that industry must be organised to *give* service and not to *get* it. We have tried organisations controlled by shareholders to get dividends—by customers to get commodities, as in the Co-operative movement—by citizens to get Municipal or State services. But in every one of these forms of organisation the service is finally controlled, not by those who serve, but by those who are being served. Labour is merely a commodity, and the shareholders, the customers or the citizens have the power, not only to decide the conditions of employment, but also to terminate it at any time. Contrast this with the Guild conception of an industry as a self-governing democracy of organised public service—a great union of science and skill to do the work better than it has ever been done before. Add to this the knowledge that the Guild intends to guarantee its workers against every contingency, believing that the moment the fear of unemployment is removed, enthusiasm will replace it as the driving force of industry. Supplement it with the transformation of management into leadership, deriving its authority, no longer from shareholders, but from bodies elected by the whole personnel of the service, with all the possibilities of comradeship that that embodies. Add to these the provision that all surplus earnings must be devoted to the improvement of the service by way of increased equipment, reserves, technical training and research, and must never be distributed as dividends. Add finally the call of the greatest task in history—the transformation of industry from a sordid scramble for material gain into a great and splendid adventure—and you have got a glimpse of an industrial system beside which every other form seems dull and unimaginative.

It is, of course, true that many of the Guild assumptions

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are unproved. They cannot be proved by argument or indeed by any method except that of a full-dress trial. This is why the rise and progress of the Building Guild is of such vital importance for the future of Guild Socialism. It is a trial run of the principles in action. If it succeeds in building better houses in less time and at lower cost than is obtainable under any other system, then it will have laid the foundation of a swift and scientific industrial revolution big with promise for the future of civilisation.

Already there are many little signs that the Building Guild experiment has been launched on the right lines and that it is at last going to be possible for a real self-governing public service to give the community a taste of its quality.

The Board of the London Building Guild is an Industrial Society whose members are elected by the Trade Unions of the Building Industry. The Manchester organisation is similarly constituted. Both Boards include also the representatives of Local or Area Guild Committees, so that the final control rests with the whole of the Building Trade Workers grouped both regionally and vocationally. It is this broad basis that makes the Guild so different from any self-governing workshop, for the men appointed to administrative posts become responsible, in every case, to a much larger circle of Guildsmen than the actual group they lead. With this foundation the Guild can undertake an ever-increasing share of the work of the industry without having to widen its electorate every time it augments its pay-roll.

Already the technical side of the industry is awakening to the possibilities of the new experiment. A group of architects and surveyors has secured representation, and it is quite evident that in the matter of staffing its technical services the Guild will encounter no difficulties.

Mr. Mellor's criticism that Guild ideas have failed to arouse the enthusiasm of the rank and file certainly does not apply to the Building Guild. An organisation fostered by leaders only must inevitably develop from the centre outwards. The reverse will be the case with any really rank

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and file movement. The Building Guild is developing inwards from the outer fringe. The movement began, early in 1920, with the formation of local committees of Building Trade Unionists scattered all over the country. These were linked together by means of Regional Boards, of which the London Board is the first complete example—and the regional boards are now united upon a national board which is holding its first sittings as I write these words (November, 1921).

As is natural in any organisation so tremendously alive as the Building Guild, there are very many portions of the framework still to be filled in. But its main outlines are becoming fairly clear. At the centre stands the National Board, concerned with the arrangement of credit for the whole of the building operations—with the supply of building materials both by purchase and by manufacture—with all forms of Guild insurance and publicity—and generally with the centralisation of just those things that need it for efficiency. Briefly, the National Board is a combine of self-governing units designed to secure for the service of the public the great advantages of industrial combination. Around it are the Regional Boards, probably ten in number, all equipped with the necessary technical staffs and acting as contractors for all the larger building operations. Round them are the District or Area Guild Committees, which staff the contracts in their areas and generally control the conduct of the work. Many of these will probably run jobbing and repairs departments of their own. Each of these three types of Committees has its own work to do and does not overlap the functions of the others. Like the forwards, half-backs and full-backs of a football team, they constitute, together, a combination that instinctively works in unison.

I have developed this at some length in order to bring out the real value of this great experiment in new methods of industrial control. Men are learning at great speed many important lessons in administration and control of policy. They are building a machine that can work quickly and has

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great creative possibilities. Of course mistakes are being made—and as a rule they are new mistakes—but the only way to get the system right is to keep on trying different ways. There is no charted path. But already it is possible to say that a great crisis would not find the Building Guild unprepared to extend its operations right and left throughout the country

That is the great achievement of the Guild idea. It has actually launched the first instalment of a new industrial system based upon creative service. It has called for volunteers from every grade of the industry and has brought them into action upon contracts valued at £2,000,000. Several of the Guild theories have already proved themselves to be true in practice. Probably the most striking of all is the revival of real craftsmanship. Housing authorities on every hand are agreed that on Guild contracts the quality of the work in all trades is better than that obtainable under the ordinary contractors. The roughcast at Walthamstow is said to be the best in England. The scullery brick-work at Greenwich is considered by some to be superior to the outside facing work on many other housing schemes. Carpenters have declined to build defective timber into the houses and have secured better material. This keen supervision by craftsmen over their own work is, of course, far more effectual than any kind of outside control that could be devised.

Although Mr. Mellor talks of an uneasy equilibrium between the mediævalists and the revolutionaries, there is certainly no serious conflict between the individual craftsmen and the mass productionists. Both have their undoubted place to-day. One is an artist—the other an engineer. The scientific production of well-designed standard fittings of real quality will not displace, but will actually make more possible, the purchase of individual pieces of craftsmanship; and Guild developments of this kind cannot be far away.

Another very important piece of Guild theory is greatly strengthened by the fact that the policy of continuous pay

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in sickness, accidents, bad weather and holidays—which is in force on all Guild contracts—has not increased the cost of production. Although the actual liability under this heading is equal to  $11\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. upon the pay-roll, the total costs of completed work reveal a saving of approximately 5 per cent. upon the Guild estimates, which in turn were below competing tenders. It is admitted that this scheme of industrial maintenance is only partial and must remain so until the Building Industry as a whole is prepared to follow suit and establish unemployment pay in every contingency as a first charge on production. But this, too, cannot be far off. Indeed its revival will be greatly hastened by the extent to which the Guild is able to set the pace. Already the Building Trade Unions—fired by the Guild's example—are putting full industrial maintenance at the head of their national programme. Industrial maintenance secured in one industry, must spread with great rapidity to others. It is in many ways the key to the whole position, for it will bring an entirely new status to the industrial worker and will set him free to devote himself to the rebuilding of his industry upon the lines of self-governing public service.

The plan of Industrial Revolution by consent must not be dismissed until it has been really tried. To all men of creative ability the Guild idea makes an almost irresistible appeal, and wherever the creative impulses are stronger than the possessive—the Guild will win support. We may be told that this hope is groundless and that the employers will never abdicate. But employers who have the courage to volunteer for Guild service will not regard it as abdication. They will be men who have caught a glimpse of new industry in the making and are keen to offer their experience and skill to help it forward. For the old industrial system is breaking down before our eyes. It is not good enough for human nature, because it does not appeal to the best.

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF INDEMNITIES

By M. PHILIPS PRICE

“Not that which is counts, but the tendencies which control that which is and so lead up to that which is to come.”—J. J. RUEDORFFER.

**F**OR their services in “making Germany safe for democracy” the Socialist leaders of the November Revolution, relying on Wilson’s 14 points, expected and firmly believed that they would be received into the League of Nations. They were deceived. Bethmann Hollweg’s necessity in August, 1914, knew no law. Nor did that of Clemenceau and Lloyd George in June, 1919. And the necessity of modern capitalism demands that the losses caused to victors in wars for the domination of the raw materials of the earth, the destruction of wealth, the killing of manhood, and the consequent loading of finances with paper debt, shall all be thrown on the defeated nations. And so the merciless logic of economic forces under capitalism swept aside the pious wishes of the 14 points and condemned the population of Central Europe, defeated in arms, to make good by modern slave labour the cost of the conflict between the two great alliances in the world war.

Now, in order to understand the crisis in Germany, one must look not only at the immediate causes—German war finance and the military and economic pressure of the Allies—but at the objective forces which stand behind them. It is then possible to discover certain well-defined tendencies in the development of the capitalist system in all countries during and since the war. In my article, “Europe’s Coolie Plantation,” last August, I showed how German war finance and the collapse of the Empire had certain distinct social and

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historical causes behind them. In this article I will attempt to show that the policy which created the Versailles Treaty is only explicable in the light of the new developments of world capitalism, and that consequently the crisis in Germany is only a part of the crisis of capitalism everywhere.

Now of all the Allies the one that suffered most from war destruction, and at the same time followed most closely the example of her enemy in financial profligacy, was France. If eight milliard sterling was the figure estimated at the Versailles Peace Conference for the total war damages, pensions and allowances of the Allies, about three and a half milliard sterling, or nearly half the total, was the amount incurred by France. Now by far the greater part of this was covered by short- and long-term loans taken up at home, in England and America, and by the inflation of the currency. And here the new development of capitalism begins to show itself. French capitalism during the war, like German, strongly developed its finance side. That is to say, by the excessive issue of paper obligations of all kinds the banks, which at the commencement of the war had considerable industrial holdings, decreased the value of their liabilities to their creditors and increased enormously the value of their own assets. These being material values, like factories, mines and blast furnaces, alone retained their gold values. The banks and heavy industries, therefore, were able during the war not only to pay off debts and mortgages, but were able to become monopolists of the nation's natural wealth by annexing the difference between the gold and the paper values of the small investors' savings. Thus the impoverishment of the petite bourgeoisie and the enrichment of finance capital went on apace in all belligerent lands. And as long as the existing system remains, the only way to bring about an equilibrium again and to restore the gold value of the *rentier's* holding in Government stock and bank investments, both in France and Germany, is for the Government to secure, if it is victorious, a *prior lien* on the material assets of the defeated neighbour. This, then, is the psychology of indemnities. The rapacious



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demands of France on Germany are nothing else than a normal phase in the development of finance capital.

The fact that the London ultimatum provisionally fixed the German liability at 6,800 million sterling, which nearly equals the figures estimated as the Allies' war losses, is a proof that the Allied demand for indemnities is in direct relation to Allied financial embarrassments. The debates in the French Chamber show this also very clearly. In introducing the Budget for 1922 the French Finance Minister said: "The financial convalescence of France depends entirely upon the punctuality of the German indemnity payments for 1922. Only then will it be possible for us to avoid new loans." And the French banker, M. Raphael Georges Levy, in the *Times* French Supplement for October 4, 1921, wrote: "The great problem of French finance is a problem of providing for capital expenditure extending over a period of at least another four or five years. We are in exactly the same position we were in during the war: in fact, from a financial point of view, we are still at war. But, instead of living foes, we are now fighting ruin and destruction. Of course this expenditure is theoretically and eventually to be met out of German payments for reparation. But whatever these amounts may ultimately prove to be, should they even cover a larger portion of our damages than now appears likely, it remains necessary to find money to spend in the next three or four years, which will only be made good to us thirty or forty years hence." The voice that here speaks is the voice of modern finance capital, restlessly seeking gold values for its impoverished small creditors and new monopoly powers over production outside its national borders.

It is now gradually becoming understood that the payment of indemnities can in the long run only be made in goods. Germany is to sell in the foreign markets materials to the gold value of the figures printed on the paper debts, which the Allied Governments have issued to their own subjects during the war. The money values obtained by the sales are to be handed over to the Allies. Since 1918,

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therefore, the whole of German industry has been reorganised for the export of peace products. And, with the aid of cheap labour, depreciated currency and technical skill, it has been possible for Germany to recapture many of the markets which since 1914 had been closed to her. But the whole tendency of Germany's foreign trade has altered since the Armistice. In 1913, 76 per cent. of Germany's foreign export went to European countries, and 16.9 per cent. to areas outside Europe. In 1920, 82 per cent. went to Europe and 10 per cent. to areas outside. Now, if we examine the figures in more detail, we see that Germany's exports to the Near Eastern countries (the Balkans and Turkey), which in 1913 were 3.1 per cent. of her total exports, in 1920 were 1.1 per cent.; to Russia and the Far East, which in 1913 were 8.9 per cent., in 1920 were 2.5 per cent. On the other hand her exports to Holland, which in 1913 were 6.9 per cent. of her total exports, in 1920 were 16.2 per cent.; to Switzerland, in 1913 5.3 per cent., in 1920 9.2 per cent.; to Scandinavia, in 1913 6.7 per cent., in 1920 16.2 per cent.; to the United States, in 1913 7.1 per cent., in 1920 7.2 per cent. In other words, Germany's exports after the war tended to increase to European countries (especially former neutrals) with a high currency, and to decrease to countries with a currency as weak or weaker than her own in Eastern Europe, the Near East, and Russia.

Similar tendencies have been observed in Germany's foreign trade during the first five months of 1921, although full figures are not yet available. In spite of the protective duties set up by the Allied countries after the London ultimatum, which caused the export trade to England to drop from 6.4 per cent. of the total German exports in 1920 to 4.6 per cent. for the first eight months of 1921, and from 3 per cent. to 2.2 per cent. for the same period in France, nevertheless Germany's export continued to expand in other regions. To the United States it has kept at the same percentage level for the first eight months of 1921 as against 1920, while to the South American Republics it has risen

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from zero in 1920 to 5.1 per cent. in 1921 (first eight months), and to the Dutch and British Indies from zero to 3 per cent. for the same periods.

Now these figures go to show that German Capitalism after the war has been compelled to change the nature of its operations. Formerly exporting goods to the economically weak Colonial areas, where it received payment in concessions, mines and railways, it is now strengthening its exports to the economically strong countries, which least of all need its goods. Moreover, for a large part of its exports it receives directly no payment, except from its own Government, which immediately passes the burden of the indemnity on to the consumer, the small *rentier* and Labour. Germany's exports, therefore, which formerly used to act as capital applications to Colonial areas, are now becoming tribute paid to the highly industrial lands, who are in danger of serious indigestion, as the result of the tribute. For Germany has become herself Colonial; and her Capitalism, adjusting itself to changed circumstances, can now only live in the shadow of victorious Entente Capitalism.

The chaotic nature of the post-war world economy, in which Germany is involved through the indemnities, is well seen by studying the money exchanges in given countries and comparing them with the volume of trade passing between them. Thus the currency of the United States and of the South American Republics has not appreciably fallen since the war in their relation to gold. One would expect therefore that trade exchange would be active. In actual fact, however, American exports to the Argentine for the years 1919-20 and 1920-21 have fallen from 17 million dollars to 8 millions, to Brazil from 14 million dollars to 4, and to Chili from 4 million dollars to 1. Meanwhile the goods of Germany, whose currency has lost its gold backing, have begun to penetrate to South America and even to the United States.

But the process does not concern Germany alone. Italy and France, with their relatively low currencies during the

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same period, increased their exports to the American Continent. If one looks at the other end of the scale, one sees highly depreciated currencies all over Central and Eastern Europe. These areas are all suffering from extreme economic exhaustion, dearth of goods on the home markets, urgent needs of credits and imports from the West. This is, of course, reflected at once in the currency. The American dollar in Soviet Russia was worth in October, 1921, 32,000 times what it was worth before the war, the pound sterling 25,000 times, the French franc 8,000. With such a state of affairs obviously a scheme of import credits is urgently needed to re-establish an economic balance. Yet the lands with high currency, from whom alone assistance can come, not only do not help with import credits, but by the whole tendency of their policy act in exactly the opposite direction. Their representatives demanded in Brussels last month the recognition of the obligations of the loans of the Tsar's Government as the first step to the granting of import credits to Russia. As these debts of the Tsar's Government can only be paid, like the German indemnities, in goods, the prospects before Russia are the same as the prospects before Germany. An exhausted land is to be still more exhausted by the imposition of a tribute in material, which shall be exported from the land in liquidation of paper bonds. The demand on Germany for indemnities is part of the same phenomenon as the demand on Russia for the liquidation of the Tsar's debts. In the latter case the debts represent the tribute levied on the Russian peasants for the privilege of acting as cannon fodder for that instrument of French finance capital, the Triple Entente. In the former case the indemnities represent the tribute, levied by the same finance capital, for the ravages of the war, which the Triple Entente helped in inciting. In both cases the "economy of tribute" is preventing the "economy of exchange."

Thus Germany, whose currency has only risen 300 times in relation to the Russian rouble since the war, the Baltic

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States, whose local currency is about 100 times above it, and Poland, whose mark is about on the same level, are all prevented by blockades, political restrictions, treaties and the sabotage of bondholders, working through diplomatic channels, from opening up exchange of commodities between Central and Eastern Europe. The recent conference of the Baltic States with the representatives of Soviet Russia at Riga shows the strong natural tendencies at work to bring about more active exchange of commodities and to redress the disturbed balance in the economy of the impoverished Continent of Europe. Germany has for months been trying to break the sabotage of direct railway transit between herself and Russia, which is persistently carried out by the agents of French militarism in France's satellite States in Eastern Europe. Even in Poland during the last six months tendencies have been at work which, consciously or unconsciously, aim at emancipating the country from the spell of the French alliance, with its veto on trade and demand for tribute.

The Versailles Treaty is thus only one aspect of the post-war attempt of the victors to throw the burden of inflation on the vanquished and to sacrifice the exchange of real values for one-sided contributions, thus upsetting still further the economic balance between countries. The vanquished in the war, however, consist not of Germany only. They include also Russia, the Baltic States, the new satellites of France, arisen from the ruins of the Austrian Empire, and even Poland herself, that proud lackey of the Banque de France in Eastern Europe. And can even France, with her tribute, as yet unpaid, on the war loans taken up in America and England, be regarded strictly as victorious? She is like a profligate, speculating heavily, in the hopes of paying off a huge debt. Can England, with her debt unpaid from Italy and France, with America pressing for her interest, and with Germany threatening to undersell her on every neutral market, be called victorious either? The only victors have been the bondholders, particularly in America. The van-

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quished have been Labour and the small middle classes of all countries, particularly of the European mainland. Their defeat can only be undone if they now take up a relentless struggle against the international bondholder. This fight can be fought in Germany by abolishing the load of the indemnities on the German masses. But that is only one part of the front. The fight must be taken up in every country for the cancellation of the war debts, for the deflation of currencies by levies and requisitions on finance capital, and finally for the acquisition of control over production by producers and consumers. How far developments in Germany are moving in this direction we will consider in another article.

# POLAND

By JACK MILLS, M.P.

**A**MONG the many blunders of the tragic Treaty of Versailles the method of the creation of the Polish nation stands out as one of venomous statecraft, actuated by two motives—revenge and fear; to tear apart the territory of the German Empire, where coal and steel might aid its recovery, and by the erection of a “buffer State,” to prevent the spread of Bolshevism in the East. No question of the principle of self-determination or the rights of small nations actuated these statesmen who, but for a revolution which none foresaw, had already handed over Poland to a Russian Tsar, by the pre-war secret treaties.

This policy of expediency might have had some justification if the nation so formed was one of a peaceful and phlegmatic character that could have led the European peoples, by example and precept, to seek peace in harmonious and constructive effort; for the state of Europe was indeed desperate. Great States had been riven asunder; subject peoples who had been absorbed in the greater European States were suddenly called upon to undertake the responsibility of self-government, without any administrative or political apprenticeship; and one of the most crowded areas of the world was faced with a complete breakdown of the machinery of production and transport. Dense industrial centres which had relied upon a delicate organisation of which the foundations were supported by coal and iron, transport, and an unbroken supply of imported food and raw material from other continents, were faced with the responsibility of finding food and raw material from their own resources, and the task of repairing a shattered system of transport which for five years had been run for military purposes, added to which was the spirit created by five years of war. It is in the light of these facts that one must view the policy of Britain and France, and review the instrument which they had fashioned

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for their purpose; for the speeches of the Allied orators and the Allied Press prove only too clearly that Poland was to be the third in a military convention of the Powers of the Entente.

Polish history is one long record of conquest and domination wherever possible, governed by nobles who would permit no middle class to develop. The country accordingly possessed no active and organised trading interest, nor any fixed revenue, and was obsessed by a crude nationalism intolerant of other creeds, because of an intense Catholicism, unrelieved by any general culture or tolerance. Its incapacity for administration or even national unity is attested on the pages of history, where individual ambition wrecked the national prospect times without number; a nation which never attained a true national consciousness, or possessed a capacity to assimilate the peoples it conquered to form a united nation; a country in which the governing class alone had rights, the rest of the people being treated as slaves, precisely as the Poles treated the peoples whom they conquered. The historian Lelewel has written: "The nobles regard the cultivator and the plebeian as dogs; that is the expression used by these abominable men, who, if they kill a peasant, whom they call the rubbish of the earth (*chlop*), say they have killed a dog."

During all the vicissitudes of Polish history down to the final ruin of the Polish cause in 1863, the peasants remained serfs, unlettered and untaught.

The Russian revolution affected Poland as it did every other country, and thus we find Poland after the Armistice without an owner, its fate awaiting decision at the Peace Conference. We have now to view the new combination in another light. The social upheaval which began in Russia had repercussions all over the world, and not least in the starving countries of Europe—the Ukraine, Hungary, Austria, Georgia, Finland and Bulgaria. All had adopted a Socialist or semi-Socialist form of Government, and the Allies were faced with the problem of counterbalancing the



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spread of a new and, as some of them held, more dangerous force—revolutionary Socialism. From the Volga to the Rhine the leaven was working; even Poland adopted a Socialist Government by election, with Moraczewski as President. But the many and varying forms of the new social upheaval had this in common—that all alike were frowned upon by the statesmen in Paris.

They were part of the rebellious and dangerous forces against which the new Balance of Power was directed, and the blockade was imposed upon all, for owing to their special economic position the Allies were enabled to exercise a power which they were not slow to use. The Allied Governments controlled nearly all the exportable surplus of food, coal and raw material, and nearly all the means of transport. They could dictate their policy by starvation, or even by the mere threat of starvation, far more effectively than by force of arms, and this weapon, greater than any conqueror in history ever wielded, they used to enforce their will. The threat to withhold supplies to the Ukraine, Lettland—in fact, all the Border States of the former Russian Empire—was to enforce the war against the Bolshevist Government, or to prevent the rise of any other Communist Government to power.

In Poland it was used to bring down the Socialist Government, although that Government had shown its hatred of anything Russian by refusing to negotiate with Russia, and by the murder of the Red Cross Mission in December, 1918, and there emerged a Government Chauvinistic, anti-Semitic, and altogether pliable to the plans of the Allies. From that date we have Poland thirsting for conquest, chafing at the Curzon line, invading, and inevitably suffering the fate of the presumptuous. Proposals for peace from Russia were submitted to France and ignored, and to this day hopes of the overthrow of the Russian Government are openly expressed. To walk through Warsaw in 1921 is to be reminded of 1916 in Britain, when every other man was in uniform. For Poland, even in 1921, is still a nation in arms. When the Great War ceased, and Poland, which had fought on the side

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of the losers, was given its nationhood, not because of its sacrifices, but in spite of its record, it speedily responded to Entente pressure and the grandiose plans of its own Jingoës. Within four months of regaining her freedom, Poland was at war with all the countries on her four frontiers.

General Pilsudski, who had commanded an Austro-German division during the war and up to the Armistice, became the hero of Poland, and incidentally of the Yellow Press of Britain and France, who were careful to suppress the fact that the massacre of Jews was an everyday affair in Poland, where every Jew was a Socialist, and every Socialist a Bolshevik, according to the Polish Press.

Politically and culturally an immature and backward people, they have the power to make their land a hell for its three millions of Jewish population, and open brutality is a common sight in the streets of Warsaw to-day, even as in the days of the Tsar. The streets provide a pitiful contrast—civilian men and women in rags, beggars everywhere, no sign of any municipal administration, filthy roads and decaying houses, and yet a military show which for variety of uniform and pomp is unequalled in any European city. The Polish sailors are resplendent and plentiful, although there are no ships, except a small gunboat on the Vistula.

In spite of all the material granted from the surplus war stores of the Allies, the thousands of German locomotives, carriages and goods waggons, motor-cars and waggons, transport is in a state of chaos, and the traveller soon learns to lay in food and candles for any journey, however short. During the German occupation the agricultural land was exploited to the utmost by them to provide food, and upon evacuation they left huge areas well-tilled, fertilised and ready for food production.

Yet the Society of Friends, who are doing noble work in relief and re-settlement, are the only people engaged in clearing the other areas of barbed wire and in rebuilding the devastated areas. They have asked repeatedly for a release of horses from the army for clearing and ploughing purposes,

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but without success; and the returning peasantry, coming back from Russia, have to wait in camps until the services of a Friend can be obtained to take them to their former homestead. Such is the economy of the Polish Government, whose last budget realised one-eighth of its expenditure, and whose army now exceeds that of Great Britain.

In Warsaw alone a mission of French officers exceeds 1,600 in number, and the notorious White Russian General Savinkov was in open command, with headquarters in the same street as the Soviet Embassy. The papers were reporting the quarrel between Savinkov and General Balakhovitch as to who was responsible for the massacres of the Jews (which before the quarrel had, according to official reports, never taken place). The catastrophe towards which the notorious slovenliness of Polish administration is leading, is advancing with gigantic steps. In August last the value of the Polish mark had sunk to less than a third of the Austrian krone. The paper currency in July exceeded 100 milliard marks, of which only 13,000,000 is backed by gold.

The Polish national debt amounts to about 250 milliard marks, although Poland entered upon its new existence free from debt. Now that it is on the verge of economic ruin, the Polish Press begins to realise where Imperialistic megalomania is leading. Poland is suffering from hypertrophy of militarism and bureaucratism. For the 25,000,000 inhabitants there are 420,000 officials.

In Warsaw every thirteenth inhabitant is a State functionary. Its industries are stagnant, and production not a ninth of pre-war productivity.

Petroleum production in 1914 equalled 64,000,000 cisterns; in 1920 it is less than 64,000.

Surrounded by enemies owing to its foreign policy, Poland is proving a costly experiment for the Entente, and a menace to the resettlement of Europe.

# THE FERMENT IN AMERICAN UNIONISM

By GEORGE SOULE

**T**HOSE who gain most of their information from the printed page suffer from a habit of taking too seriously the resolutions, speeches, and pronouncements of a Labour movement (as, indeed, of any political organisation), and not looking carefully enough into the structure, personnel and tendency which function silently underneath. The American Labour movement in particular is misapprehended among those who do not know it intimately, on both sides of the Atlantic. because its peculiar form and an accident of titular leadership have encouraged this weakness. On account of Mr. Gompers' attitude towards the war and its aims, towards the Peace of Versailles, towards the Russian Revolution, towards almost everything, in fact, which contains a large admixture of the political and has a comparatively small bearing on the immediate problems of the American Trade Unions, observers have inferred that the Labour movement in the United States is hopelessly reactionary, and that there are in it few elements of healthy growth. Is not Mr. Gompers President of the American Federation of Labour? And is he not re-elected year after year with little serious opposition? But in order to understand how much weight is to be given to his utterances, and how indicative they are of the Trade Union movement in general, one must look a little closer at the organisation of which he is the head.

The American Federation of Labour is in reality a federation, and one of the loosest sort. In spite of the fact that it has executive officers, it really has little more power over the industrial affairs of its affiliated bodies than has the British

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Trades Union Congress. Its funds are comparatively small. Its executive has no authority to endorse or to refuse to endorse or to call or set in motion any machinery for calling strikes. From the internal affairs of its affiliated Unions it holds strictly aloof—"craft autonomy" is its shibboleth. Its annual convention passes innumerable resolutions, but most of these concern political matters or subjects having to do with the general welfare, such as the Union label or the Labour Press; none of them actually sets in motion any machinery which directly affects industry. Just one power this convention has which really matters and is feared—the power of deciding disputes between Unions about jurisdiction or demarcation. The penalty for failure to obey this sort of decision is first suspension and then expulsion from the Federation—a punishment which has been from time to time borne without serious inconvenience by numerous strong Unions. In fact, it is sometimes asserted that the ruling political machine of the Federation will not decide an important jurisdictional case against any of the more powerful Unions and in favour of a smaller one, for fear of having to execute the penalty. Whatever be the truth of this assertion—and it is one which Mr. Gompers would indignantly deny—it is certain that many lesser Unions are held in line on matters of broader import but of small immediate concern by fear of offending the powers who will decide on their jurisdictional cases. There is an enormous amount of log-rolling about these matters in the annual conventions, and it is partly because of his unequalled skill in riding these troubled political waters that Mr. Gompers has so long remained in the ascendancy. The delegate is conscious that the real industrial power lies in the constituent Unions, and as long as the administration does not disrupt his Union by giving its membership to another, he is willing to let Mr. Gompers make almost any high-sounding statement he wishes about Russia or Germany. It must also be remembered that Mr. Gompers, in spite of his age, is unrivalled as a Parliamentarian and as a speaker. Delegates who re-

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member his long and undaunted service, and honour his evident sincerity, hesitate to vote against him until some outstanding and unexceptionable candidate appears to compete with him. So it happens that although the majority of the convention often disagree with Mr. Gompers on broader issues—they have in fact passed important resolutions against his opposition in the last two conventions—they continue to elect him President.

In order to discover the reality behind this deceptive stage-curtain it is necessary to look at the great "Internationals." (So our national Unions are called, because most of them cover the United States and Canada.) In their treasuries are accumulated the bulk of the funds of the Labour movement; in their conventions are fought out the issues that matter; it is they which have the power to direct strikes and to affect industry. Progress in the Labour movement first shows its head in their affairs, and when they have been sufficiently transformed, their pressure will transform the American Federation itself. The Federation was not organised to lead, but to bind together, and it may after all be argued to be fortunate for the American Labour movement that its officers are not of the hot-headed type who leap over the top without making sure that the army is solidly behind them.

Perhaps in nothing is the difference more marked between the stereotyped attitude of the Federation and the actual behaviour of the Internationals than in the attitude towards industrial Unionism. Officially, this term, with its usual implications, is taboo. Yet the largest International in the Federation—the United Mine Workers—is industrial in form, resorts to nation-wide industrial strikes, and has been held back only by conservative officials, who now face a strong internal opposition, from pressing actively for nationalisation and democratic operation of the mines, for which its convention declared two years ago. The railroad Unions furnish an even more striking example of the tendency. Jurisdiction over the various occupations of rail-

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road workers is held by no less than twenty separate Unions, nominally of the craft type. Four of these, ordinarily spoken of as "the Brotherhoods," include the engine drivers, firemen, conductors and trainmen, and are not affiliated with the Federation at all. They are the oldest and strongest of the group. Of the rest, four have members only on the railroads, and twelve others, such as the machinists, the boilermakers, the blacksmiths, etc., extend into many industries. Obviously it would be impossible for such a miscellaneous group of Unions to deal with the united power of the railroads in the old-fashioned separatist manner. As a result of a process of gradual growth, the railway workers of the sixteen A. F. of L. Unions are now joined in the Railway Employees' Department, which functions as far as they are concerned exactly like an industrial Union, both nationally and locally. This Department has its executive, its research staff, its legal counsel and its publicity bureau. It presents the cases of these sixteen Unions before the National Arbitration Board, it publishes a weekly newspaper with a circulation of something like a million copies, and if a strike should come, it would direct the hostilities. The Railway Employees' Department works hand in hand with the four Brotherhoods, which also are closely affiliated with each other. The last strike on a railroad in the United States called out at the same moment every employee of every occupation without regard to his Union. The organisation of the railroad workers is complicated in detail and is by no means so smooth and efficient as that of the British National Union of Railwaymen, but it gives a remarkable illustration of how close so-called "craft Unions" can approach to industrial Unionism without ever using the word. This group is now recognised even as a political bloc in the A. F. of L. Convention, and formed the centre of the opposition which succeeded in defeating Mr. Gompers on the issue of nationalisation. Yet during the years in which it was being built, hundreds of paper plans for transforming the Federation into a group of industrial Unions were submitted to the conven-

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tions by the debating type of radical, and were almost unanimously defeated. It is developments such as these that show progressive Trade Unionists where their efforts are most likely to bear fruit.

The largest as well as the most radical of the "railroad group" in the Federation is the International Association of Machinists. Its scope may be imagined if the English reader will suppose the Amalgamated Society of Engineers to extend also over the railways, covering there the same occupations as in manufacturing industry. It is the third largest Union in the Federation, following the Miners and the Carpenters. It is committed to industrial Unionism, already in process of achievement on the railways through the Department scheme, and less thoroughly practised elsewhere through the Metal Trades Department of the Federation. The fact that a number of the most powerful Unions, such as the Machinists, favour industrial Unionism while themselves extending into numerous industries, gives promise of achieving an inter-industrial alliance with some real force not long after the machinery for industrial action is set up.

The Machinists, in this strategic position, have adopted a thoroughgoing radical, if practical, policy. They are on record by resolution of their convention as opposing well-nigh every debateable administration policy of the Federation, foreign and domestic. They desire the recognition of Soviet Russia, they favour international affiliation, they believe in independent political action, and they are back of a general policy of nationalisation and democratic operation of basic industry. By instructing their last delegates to the A.F. of L. Convention not to vote for any candidate for office who is a member of the National Civic Federation—a non-Labour body with a highly questionable record—they prohibited their votes being counted for Mr. Gompers and most of the rest of the Executive Council. The Machinists are also conducting a number of interesting experiments, looking to workers' control. They own a ship repair yard in Norfolk and a printing plant in Washington,



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in which they are applying shop-committee methods. They also own an important bank, which as fast as it secures credit and opportunity, loans to employers of their members at a lower rate than can be obtained from capitalist banks, and is thus acquiring a rapidly growing actual control of their industry. They have the purchasing agency from Mexico for machinery and metal goods of all kinds in the production of which their members are employed. No one should make up his mind that the American Labour movement is reactionary without taking a close look at this Union.

Even among the printers, who are usually thought of as the oldest and most conservative of the Unions, the ferment is at work. The International Typographical Union is the oldest extant national Union in the United States; it antedates the formation of the American Federation of Labour by nearly thirty years. Although it originally had jurisdiction over all the employees in printing plants, it failed to organise many except the compositors, and gradually let go the pressmen and other less skilled operatives, who formed Unions of their own. For years it has occupied the right wing of the Federation. Recently, however, a rank-and-file movement has arisen in the Typographical Union which has achieved marked results. A number of industrial Unionists formed a political party within the Union, with the intent of capturing its control from the reactionaries and bringing about industrial Unionism in the printing industry. This organisation calls itself the "Progressive Party," it publishes an organ, *The Industrialist*, it maintains headquarters, and even sends out organisers to the smaller locals scattered throughout the country, which are usually, because of their remoteness and dependence on the national executive machinery in case of trouble, counted as supporters of conservatism. By dint of these efforts the Progressive Party has succeeded in electing its candidate to the Presidency of the Union, and hopes to follow soon with a clean sweep of the officials. Meanwhile it is not idle locally. It has organised unofficial "closer affiliation leagues," containing

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active spirits from the various printing Trades Unions in several important cities, and through these leagues aims to prepare the way for industrial Unionism by securing uniform termination of contracts, and uniform action in strikes. The members of the leagues, deciding upon a common course of action in their meetings with each other, disperse to their several Unions to spread their gospel, and bring about the action they wish through the regular Union machinery, and have already succeeded in dispelling a good deal of the jealousy and ill will which normally arises between separate craft Unions operating in the same shops. Only those who have been close to the detail of Union action know what a necessary step this is toward real solidarity.

Movements of this sort are the more remarkable because they are without nationally known leaders. They depend entirely upon what the Syndicalists used to call the "militant minority" within every local and district council—the same group of activists who can, if they adopt well-conceived policies, assume leadership in any situation. There has been a decided change lately, however, in the tactics of these minorities. They used to make all sorts of trouble for the Union organisation by their precipitateness, which was mistaken for radicalism, and often deserved the appellation of disruptionists bestowed upon them by the conservatives. Lately, however, they seem to be thinking their way more carefully, and are winning their way by virtue of the appeal that they are engaged in strengthening the Union organisation. To this no Trade Unionist can object.

The philosophy which lies behind their present tendency owes its acceptance as much to William Z. Foster as to anyone else. For years, since he left the I.W.W., he has been going about the country preaching his doctrine in season and out of season to everyone who would listen. His thesis is that the curse of the American Labour movement has been the failure of the radicals to work within the established Union organisations. These active spirits have

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in the past left the old Unions to found competing bodies, or while remaining in them have regarded them as hopeless, ceased trying to improve and strengthen them, and dissipated their energies in political or other agitation. Foster regards the Trade Union movement as a great historic process which will eventually, in the course of its natural growth, furnish the industrial machinery of the new State. But he is no believer in automatic evolution, and he calls upon the radicals to be good Union members, to learn how to work within the regular organisations, to act so that there is no possible excuse for their expulsion, and at the same time to leaven the mass and to build up industrial Unionism within the old bodies. He has recently founded, for the purpose of propagating this strategy, the Trade Union Educational League, which aims to duplicate in many industrial groups what has been going on among the railroad men and the printers. The League will eventually have a national organ, which will discuss the problems of the various industries, build up a public opinion among Trade Unionists, work out problems of tactics, and contribute to the construction of something like a real solidarity in the movement. If Foster is successful in gathering together anything like a majority of the active spirits within the several Unions and imbuing them with a consistent philosophy and practice, the American Labour movement will before long have a motive power which cannot help bursting through the surface in such a way as to be easily recognisable by all. But whether he succeeds or not, much the same process is taking place spontaneously, and the future is not entirely hopeless.

# SHORTER NOTICES

## GERMAN LABOUR & THE FEDERATION OF GERMAN INDUSTRIES

**T**HE financial crisis in Germany has brought the German Labour movement face to face with a situation without parallel in any country. The open demand of the German Federation of Industries for the virtual abdication of the State in return for coming to its financial assistance has confronted German Labour with the problem of power in its most naked form. The Trade Union organisations, which had at first actually supported the proposal of a loan from the Industrialists, have been compelled to come out in opposition with a series of demands of a confiscatory character. The nature of the proposal of the Federation of German Industries may be gathered from the resolution in which the conditions of granting a credit were embodied.

### RESOLUTION OF THE FEDERATION OF GERMAN INDUSTRIES

The Federation of German Industries authorises the Committee, specially appointed to deal with the matter of credits, to continue negotiations with the Government of the Reich, in conjunction with German banks, on the question of extensive financial support to meet the Reparations demands; the following conditions, however, are obligatory:—

It is essential that the Government and Reichstag introduce an economical financial policy into all departments of State, and that restrictions injurious to free activity and development be removed from industry. Above all, the present enterprises under State control, or that of public bodies, must be so conducted that instead of being a burden on the national resources, they relieve them. It should be the aim of our home economic policy to employ in productive work all those available who are not fully occupied. The Industrialists must have the certainty that by means of their collaboration unproductive enterprises are so conducted that they will be in the position of not only paying the interest on the proposed loan, but in time the capital, thus relieving the Industries that now voluntarily give temporary help.

The Trade Unions, which had welcomed the suggested help of the Industrialists, protested immediately against the threat to the liberty of the workers contained in the above resolution; they pointed out that any loan advanced to the Government was but an advance on taxation, and that the Government possessed full powers to *take* all the money it required. The protest resolution is as follows:—

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### JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE EXECUTIVES OF THE GERMAN FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (A.D.G.B.) AND THE FEDERATION OF CLERKS AND TECHNICAL EMPLOYEES (AFA-BUND).

The Executive Committees of the German Federation of Trade Unions and the Federation of Clerks and Technical Employees regard the conclusions of the Federation of German Industries, on the question of granting credits to the Reich, as highly provocative to the whole working-class population. The organised Industrialists impose conditions on the proposed taxation advances which must necessarily result in material injury to the workers, employees, and State clerks, whilst depriving them of their rights both in political and economic matters. They demand political guarantees from the Government on behalf of business enterprise which imply at least a limitation, if not the abolition of the workers' right to a voice in industrial control, the denationalisation of the railways and other State enterprises, and the dissolution or abandonment of the eight hour regulations. The tone of the decision makes it only too clear that the granting of these credits will condemn the State and with it the large mass of the population to an ever-growing and insupportable dependence on capitalist enterprise. The proposed grant of credit from the Federation of German Industries was first announced as a great deed on behalf of the nation, and was therefore supported by the Trade Unions. But now the decisions arrived at betray it as a new instrument of power to be used by the organised employers. The United Trade Unions expect the Government to reject unconditionally the demands made by the Industrialists in respect of the granting of the said credits.

After further meetings held to consider the situation the Trade Unions decided that no mere refusal on the part of the Government of the financiers' terms would suffice; but that the State should resort to legal regulations to protect the country. They therefore drew up the demands printed below, which they urged the Government to translate into practice without delay.

#### DEMANDS OF A.D.G.B. AND AFA-BUND, NOVEMBER 15, 1921.

1. Participation by the State in real values. Transference to the State by limited companies of 25 per cent. of their share capital; smaller businesses and agriculture to be subject to a tax of equal proportion regulated according to the change in money values.
2. Socialisation of the coal industry as a means of raising the State credit.
3. New regulation of the means of transport with a view to putting them on an economic basis as soon as possible.
4. The strictest control of export of money by development of the control of foreign trade.
5. Imports to be restricted to daily necessities.
6. Increase in the export duty so as to equal the amount of profit made by the exchange discrepancies.
7. Rapid collection of the State emergency levy.
8. Immediate collection of all usual taxation, especially income-tax.

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Those liable to taxation should be compelled to deliver at once the amount of their taxes to the finance offices. Should their contribution be 25 per cent. below their estimated income-tax returns, they should, in accordance with the Finance Minister's decision, pay the balance, plus 5 per cent. interest. If, however, the income-tax paid falls below 25 per cent. of the obligatory sum, interest to the extent of 30 per cent. must be paid on the missing amount. Business taxes should be paid monthly.

9. Taxation of profits accruing from traffic in bills of exchange and stocks.

10. Control of all private trade monopoly.

The seriousness of the situation created by this recent move on the part of the Industrialists and its far-reaching effects have caused the Communist Party to make a further effort to establish a united front composed of the whole proletariat, and at a special executive meeting the Party tabled the following resolution stating its desire to co-operate with the A.D.G.B. and Afa-Bund in obtaining the realisation of the demands they have made to the Government:—

### RESOLUTION OF THE UNITED COMMUNIST PARTY EXECUTIVE, NOVEMBER 16, 1921:—

. . . The duties of the Party coincide with those which face the whole body of workers on account of the increasing misery of the masses and the supremacy of Big Business. The Communist Party is in agreement with the vast masses outside its own Party, who are lining up in increasing numbers to form a united front to attain their aims. The announcement made by the General Federation of German Trade Unions, demanding the seizure of real values, is the result of the pressure of the initial movement of the masses against the Stinnes coalition and the slavery under the wealthy bourgeoisie.

The German Communist Party will strain its influence to the utmost to mobilise the last worker in this struggle and to prevent the unavoidable conflict between the workers and the bourgeoisie from meeting with renewed failure.

The workers cannot possibly carry this struggle through to its logical conclusion, either under a Stinnes government or any other bourgeois government. For this reason the Party must conduct the struggle against the Stinnes coalition by every possible measure (mass demonstrations, general strikes, and eventually dissolution of the Reichstag).

The Communist attitude towards any new government (Socialist or Workers' Government), which may result from any such struggles whether parliamentary or extra-parliamentary, will depend on the political position arising, and on the political tasks which any new government may set itself.

*The Communist Party wishes to dispel any doubt as to its attitude towards a Socialist Government which adopts the demands now put forward by the masses; such a government, pursuing a proletarian policy, will be sure of the complete support of the Party. The Party will exert itself to the utmost, by the mobilisation of the masses, to urge on the Socialist Government to keep the interests of the proletariat to the fore. This*

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policy must eventually result in the dissolution of the parliamentary machine because of the continuously increasing struggles between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The immediate preliminary to such a development must be the support of the whole working class, outside parliament, in this struggle for their demands. Only in a struggle on these lines can the workers' united front be realised to the full.

### INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFERENCE ON WAR

**A**T Amsterdam on November 15-16 a Conference of the International Federations of Miners, Metal and Transport Workers was held to discuss the immediate danger of war and the best measures to be taken to prevent any such outbreak; the Conference was convoked by the International Federation of Trade Unions. It was decided to set up a provisional committee to take any action necessary to prevent war, as shown in the following agreed resolution:—

#### A COMMITTEE OF INITIATIVE

The Conference between the Bureau of the International Federation of Trade Unions and delegations from the International Secretariats of Miners, Transport and Metal Workers at Amsterdam, November 15—16, 1921, decides:—

That, whilst awaiting the meeting of the International Conference, due to take place at Rome in April, 1922, which will come to a definite decision on the measures to be adopted to prevent new wars;

That the increasing danger of war necessitates the creation of an organisation with the power to proclaim and bring about a general strike, in case of an immediate war, in collaboration with all the organisations interested in the various countries and all the workers belonging to the different organisations affiliated to the International Federation of Trade Unions.

For this purpose a provisional international committee has been set up, composed of the Bureau of the I.F.T.U. and a representative of each of the three International Secretariats of the Miners, Transport and Metal Workers' Unions.

This committee will take all necessary measures to meet any danger of war until the next International Congress.

### GENEVA INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE

**T**HE Third Conference of the International Labour Organisation under the League of Nations was held at Geneva from October 25 to November 19. Four hundred delegates attended, representing the 40 nations affiliated, 100 being Labour delegates.

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The principal subject before the Conference concerned the conditions in agriculture and, in particular, the question of agricultural hours. However, the active opposition of the French Government to any discussion of agricultural hours led to a resolution postponing the question of hours to a future conference: this was carried by 73 votes to 18.

Conventions were passed on the right of the agricultural worker to organise; the extension to agricultural workers of laws on workmen's compensation; the prohibition of children of school age working in agriculture during school hours; the establishment of a weekly period of rest of not less than twenty-four hours for all workers. In addition recommendations were passed covering the subject of raising the standard of living of agricultural workers, providing adequate housing, regulation of night work for women and children, and the extension of maternity protection to women agricultural workers, provided for at the Washington Conference in 1919 for other women workers.

A further convention on the question of the use of white lead restricted its use in painting interiors of buildings after November, 1927.

Labour delegates complained that the conventions passed at the first conference had not been ratified or even submitted for ratification in accordance with the terms of the Versailles Treaty, and that in consequence the negative character of the results reached was having a bad effect on the attitude of the workers.

### BELGIAN ELECTIONS

**A** GENERAL Election took place in Belgium on November 20. This was the first election according to the New Constitution, which gives a vote to every man over twenty-one who has a six months' residential qualification; the election was carried out on the principle of Proportional Representation. The results showed a strengthening of the conservative forces. The Clerical Party, which was already the strongest party, secured 81 seats, a gain of 8; the Socialist Party secured 66 seats, a loss of 4; the Liberal Party secured 33 seats, a loss of 1. The Socialist vote totalled 671,445, an increase of 26,324 on the last election in 1919. The Communist candidates obtained 3,300 votes, but failed to gain any representation.

### ITALIAN TRADE UNIONISM

**T**HE depression in Italian Trade Unionism was reflected in the Congress of the General Confederation of Labour (C.G.L.), which opened at Verona on November 6. In Italy, as



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elsewhere, the present period has been characterised by a general attack on wages and widespread unemployment: the most recent figures show 463,108 totally unemployed, 32,899 workers on short time, and 185,418 partially unemployed or working in rotation. This situation led the C.G.L. to approach the Government on October 12, with the request that an inquiry be held into the whole economic and industrial position without delay. The Government agreed, and by a decree of October 20 authorised the formation of a Commission of Inquiry, consisting of 24 members: 8 to represent the employers, 8 the Trade Unions, and 8 experts appointed by the Government. The functions of the Commission were laid down in Section I. of the decree as follows:—

To proceed to examine the conditions of industry in relation to general market conditions (the exchanges, financial situation, exports and imports, prices, cost of living) and the cost of the various factors in production, instituting at the same time a comparison with competing foreign markets. The Commission shall also indicate measures which may be taken in order to facilitate the resumption of production in Italy.

This policy of the C.G.L. of entering into co-operation with the Government and the employers to meet the economic crisis became the centre of controversy at the Congress at Verona. The action of the Executive was finally approved by a vote of 1,426,521 for the Executive motion, against 415,712 for the Communist motion, which advocated a policy of a general strike against wage-cuts: there were 18,340 abstentions.

The Executive resolution took powers of expulsion against members and organisations guilty of indiscipline. The text of the resolution was as follows:—

The National Council, having discussed the disputes, the rise in the cost of living, unemployment and the other problems arising from the economic crisis, and having considered the two resolutions passed by the Executive Committee of the C.G.L. in agreement with the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party, endorses them and requests the Executive Committee to continue the campaign started to safeguard the interests of the workers, threatened by the employers, who aim at a solution of the crisis to their advantage and injurious to the interests of the community in general; it also requests all confederated organisations to carry on energetic agitation for the realisation of the said resolutions, by methods calculated to succeed, whilst rejecting all propositions from irresponsible elements.

The Council makes it obligatory on all organised members and organisations to maintain the strictest discipline in the field of industrial action; this discipline is all the more necessary because of the difficulties of the present struggle against the employers, and as a means towards that end it authorises the Executive Committee to take any steps necessary to maintain discipline.

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The Minority resolution condemned the formation of the Commission composed of representatives of the employers, the C.G.L. and the Government as an abrogation of the intrinsic rights of the Trade Unions as the fighting bodies of the proletariat against capitalist injustice. It further laid down that regulation of wages on the individual merits of each case, in connection with the financial position of the industry, was equivalent to disarmament in the face of the bourgeois offensive; and put forward as the solution for the present crisis the weapon of the general strike. It therefore demanded that the united efforts of the proletariat should be directed towards the maintenance of the following minimum claims which represent the conditions necessary for the very life of Trade Union organisation :—

- (a) Eight-hour day;
- (b) Effective fulfilment of the agreements in force both for the industrial and agricultural workers; no changes in wages except in proportion to the real changes in cost of living;
- (c) Maintenance for the unemployed workers and their families, the burden to be borne by the industrial class and the State;
- (d) Full safeguards of the right to organise, and recognition of the Unions;
- (e) Trade Union control on appointments and dismissals, so that the fulfilment of all the above points cannot be circumvented.

The Congress decided to retain affiliation to the International Federation of Trade Unions at Amsterdam.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## FORTY YEARS OF EUROPE

*Empire and Commerce in Africa: a study in economic imperialism.*

By Leonard Woolf. Labour Research Department and George Allen and Unwin, Ltd. £1 1s. net.

*My Diaries, 1888-1914.* By Wilfred Scawen Blunt. Martin Secker. Two volumes. £1 1s. each.

*The Black Man's Burden.* By E. D. Morel. National Labour Press. 3s. 6d.

*The End of General Gordon* [Eminent Victorians]. By Lytton Strachey. Chatto and Windus. 10s. 6d. (cheap edition, 7s. 6d.).

THE most important subject of historical study for Labour is the forty years before the commencement of the European war. It can be studied the more freely because the war, which swallowed up whole generations of men, has placed a gulf like the lapse of a century between that period and our own times. Without an understanding of this recent history it will be impossible for Labour to grasp the present trend of events; and, on questions of what they call "foreign" affairs, Labour will remain the sport of the writers in the daily newspapers until once more, "like flies, they will kill us for their sport."

The significance of this period appears immediately in one thing, namely, that Europe during these forty years is best studied by going outside Europe. It is in Asia and Africa that we find the real meaning of what is happening to Europe. The wars that fill these years are colonial wars; and when there are no wars, there are raids and armed expeditions in all the unexplored or unexploited territories. Europe may seem at peace; but all the time outside Europe the rivalry of the great Powers continues in the struggle for annexations, protectorates, spheres of influence, and extensions of prestige. It is no quarrel in the English Channel that makes bad blood between France and Britain in the 'eighties or the 'nineties. It is a quarrel over Africa and the mastery of the Nile from the battle of Tel-el-Kebir to the affair of Fashoda. And when Egypt ceases from troubling, Morocco becomes the bone of contention between France and Germany. The war of Elizabethan England with the Spanish Armada was preceded by English buccaneering raids on the Spanish colonies. The war of 1914-1918 was preceded by buccaneering of every Great Power amongst the lands of Asia and Africa. Capitalist concessions in other continents are both the prelude and the explanation of the European conflict.

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The history of Asia and Africa (the inner history of Europe) from 1875 onwards is not known. It is not even written. But some of it can be learned from the books whose titles stand at the beginning of this review. Apart from Mr Morel's books (which are so well known as to require no further comment here), their present price makes them inaccessible to the ordinary worker; but in public libraries, or, one hopes, in cheap editions, they may be available. From them we can find out something of the story. From Mr. Woolf's narrative (which deals only with the Northern and Eastern coasts of Africa) we learn of the seizure of Tunis and Tangiers by the French, the Italian assault upon Abyssinia and the later seizure of Tripoli, the marauding expeditions of Lugard upon Uganda (Lugard, now sedulously praised as the ideal administrator of Nigeria), of the triple struggle of the British, French and Italians in Somaliland. The partition of Africa is traced by maps which show in 1880 a few coastal strips in the occupation of the Europeans, up to 1914, in which year the whole continent was parcelled out amongst the rival Powers. The narrative is cold and bare of any appeals to Liberal emotion. Simply, and in most cases out of their own statements, Mr. Woolf records the actions of the pioneers of Empire.

The most remarkable feature of the story of imperialism is the revelation of the way in which the politicians, clinging to the policies of the past, were reluctantly forced along the path marked for them by finance capital. Bismarck, until a few years before the end of his rule, was against the overseas expansion of Germany. It was not until Gladstone was dying that the triumphant advance on the Soudan could take place and Kitchener be enabled to desecrate the Mahdi's tomb and so "avenge" the death of Gordon. But once the tide turns definitely in favour of imperialism, then all the politicians, the Press (Liberal papers included), the poets, and the other parasites of the governing class swim valiantly with the tide. Egypt is occupied in 1882 under a solemn promise of speedy evacuation. It is nigh forty years since, and there is still a British Army of Occupation. Almost alone amongst the governing class one man stands out against the new policy of imperialism. A country gentleman, unable to learn the new language, clings desperately to the idea of Britain without the British Empire. When all others acclaim "the civilising mission" and the "white man's burden" he obstinately refuses to bow the knee to the new doctrines. More, he spends his winters in Egypt, and by his encouragement of the growing Nationalist movement proves a thorn in the flesh to Evelyn Baring (Lord Cromer). His summers he spends in England, again proving a thorn in the flesh to the Foreign Secretary and the other politicians in whose circles and dinner parties he

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freely moves. At last, however, this Wilfred Scawen Blunt seems to be defeated. The dismissal of Cromer after the Denshawai atrocity of 1907 was his temporary success. The proclamation in 1914 of a protectorate over Egypt seemed his final defeat. But, fortunately for those who study the governing class, Scawen Blunt had kept a diary, in which his conversations with the promoters and pro-consuls of Empire were carefully noted down. And in the years following the peace these diaries are published. No more devastating propaganda could be imagined. If the Empire is maintained by a conspiracy of lying amongst our ruling families, then Scawen Blunt's truth-telling is the most effective form of sabotage.

Another remarkable feature of imperialism besides the subordination of nearly all articulate opinion to its progress is the growth of myths and legendary reputations. Lord Cromer and Lugard we have already mentioned. But they are lesser lights beside the serene orbs of Cecil Rhodes, Kitchener (of Khartoum), Stanley ("the explorer"), and above all, in the highest firmament, General Gordon. For twenty years and more the youth of Britain have been sedulously taught to take these men as exemplars. Thus imperialism breeds its own supporters. But in the case of Gordon it has been almost too successful. General Gordon has become a figure so heroic that the first literary genius who comes along must needs deal with him as Shakespeare dealt with Brutus or Anatole France with Joan of Arc. So Mr. Lytton Strachey writes "The End of General Gordon." In seventy-five pages he gives a breathing picture of the man, makes an epitome of all the books available on Egypt from 1882-1884, characterises the home politicians such as Gladstone and Hartington and Granville, and reaches his conclusion in the Battle of Omdurman with the words:

At any rate, it had all ended very happily—in a glorious slaughter of twenty thousand Arabs, a vast addition to the British Empire, and a step in the peerage for Sir Evelyn Baring.

R. P. A.

### COLLAPSE OR COMMUNISM?

*The Economics of Communism*: with special reference to Russia's experiment. By Leo Pasvolksy. Macmillan, New York, \$2.25.

**T**HIS is the first real study of the economic situation in Russia during the years 1917 to 1920. It has been written by an economist whose anti-Communism has not prevented him from collecting and presenting the facts in such a way as to make the book really illuminating. The faults—and they are grave enough—are faults of omission: for example, he produces statistics to show the falling-off in skilled workers, and attributes this to obscure points of Soviet policy, ignoring the all-pervading fact

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of mobilisation against the counter-revolution. All through he omits to examine how far the facts were due to the existence of the counter-revolution, preferring to trace everything to Communist policy; and he dismisses the blockade, in a single paragraph, as having had no effect on the situation.

Yet the facts he gives are really authentic, being based on official Moscow papers; and they do show, as he claims, a steady decline in production from 1917 to 1920. Having shown this, M. Pasvolsky thinks he has shown the fundamental rottenness in the economics of Communism. In fact, what he has proved is that M. Pasvolsky does not understand the most fundamental principle of Communism. This is shown most clearly by the very point at which he begins his study of the Russian experiment—November, 1917. Quite apart from the counter-revolution, no Communist would have expected a sudden leap forward in production after the November revolution, for the reason that the cause and condition of the November revolution was the collapse of the existing capitalist order.

If M. Pasvolsky had extended his study beyond the territories of Soviet Russia, what would he have found? In every country, a similar decline of production after the war boom. In every country, this decline could be attributed, in part at least, to the policy of the capitalist Government. It would be easy enough to draw the conclusion that there is something rotten in the economics of Capitalism; and this conclusion would clearly be more justified than his former one, because the capitalist system is fully established in those countries, while the Communist system never has been established in Russia.

But no scientific study of the economic system in any country could begin with the autumn of 1917. In normal times—say, for example, the years between 1910 and 1913—it would not matter very much which year was chosen as the basis of study. The economic situation generally remained steady from year to year. But the economic situation in 1917 was not the same as in 1916, and not at all the same as in 1914.

This applies to Russia more than to any other country. No one doubts this; but a few striking examples, casually referred to by M. Pasvolsky, will serve to show the extent of the economic crisis in 1917. With regard to the railway situation, on which so much depended, M. Pasvolsky says that early in 1917 "Railroad specialists considered that by the fall of 1917 the railroad traffic would have been reduced to such an extent that practically all transportation would come to a standstill." Even more striking are the figures showing that, long before the war, the output of locomotives in Russia had fallen from 1,281 in 1906 to 363 in 1912; and that in 1914, out of a total of 20,057 locomotives in Russia, only 7,108

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were under ten years old, 7,937 were 10-20 years old, 1,247 were 20-30, 2,083 were 30-40, 1,535 were 40-50, and 147 were over 50 years old! M. Pasvolsky states that the average life of a locomotive is 12-25 years; remember that six years of intense use, without adequate repair facilities, had passed from 1914 to 1920; and then consider whether Communist economics should be charged with the fact that out of 9,639 locomotives in Soviet Russia in January, 1920, only 3,925 were in running order!

It is the same if we take the agricultural situation, on which M. Pasvolsky rightly lays so much stress. "The food crisis began before the March revolution and continued through the first period of the revolution. . . . In the latter part of its regime, the Provisional Government introduced a grain monopoly, declared itself the only purchaser of grain and fixed the prices." This led to a further reduction in supplies coming to the towns before the November revolution; the grain from Tambov province, for example, fell to half the quantity obtained from there in 1916. It is interesting to note that the requisitioning of grain at fixed prices, perhaps the most unpopular measure of the Soviet Government, was taken over by it from the Provisional Government. This requisitioning at fixed prices, of course, is not Communist; the British and every other belligerent Government adopted similar measures; and M. Pasvolsky wastes a good deal of space on criticising it; but the essential point is that, before the Bolsheviks gained power, the old economic system was failing to deliver the goods.

In the production of coal and textiles the story is the same; and the reader wonders why M. Pasvolsky does not throughout show the whole process of declining production from at least 1915. Wherever he does give comparative figures, one gets the impression of a decline rapidly becoming more intense, and inevitably producing a first-rate economic crisis in 1917 and 1918.

What is the bearing of this on the Communist experiment in Russia and on the general theory of Communism? As for Russia, M. Pasvolsky sums up the situation in the antithesis "Communism or Production?" But even the facts he gives suggest that the alternatives with which the Russian economic system was faced in 1917 were really "Collapse or Communism?" Many hostile critics of the Soviet Government have already expressed this belief, admitting frankly that but for the November revolution and the Soviet Government there would have been years of complete chaos and anarchy in Russia. The breaking-down of the capitalist order in Russia occurred before the Communists seized power, and some other economic relations had to be set up. Admittedly, the Soviet Government made mistakes; and lines of policy, sound enough in themselves, were made futile by the continuance of an armed

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struggle against the counter-revolution, and had to be withdrawn or modified. But all that the facts prove is that the measures taken by the Soviet Government were not adequate to revive, by 1920, an industrial system that was in the last stages of decay in 1917.

Turning to the bearing of all this on the general theory of Communism, we can see that, inevitably, if Communism can only step in when Capitalism is breaking down, the early stages of any "Communist experiment" must show a rapid decline in industrial production. The old social order, the old economic relationships, fail to function; the masses fail to get food; what M. Pasvolsky calls a "consumption psychology" takes the place of a "production psychology." Communism comes forward with new economic relationships, a new social order; but Communism cannot at once arrest the far-reaching results of the collapse of Capitalism. Nor, equally, can it apply Communist principles throughout every sphere of the economic system, for the reason that, by hook or by crook, things must be kept going. But, above all, it must keep control of the situation, for only a Communist Government realises that the continuance of the old order is impossible, and that the attempt to patch it up—in which, M. Pasvolsky admits, all non-Communist parties are united—will only lead to a more disastrous final collapse, with all its consequences in suffering for the people. E. B.

### RUSSIAN RAMBLES

*Soviet Russia as I Saw It (in 1920).* By Sylvia Pankhurst. Workers' Dreadnought, 152, Fleet Street, E.C.4. 2s. 6d.

*The New Policies of Soviet Russia.* By N. Lenin, N. Bukharin, S. J. Rutgers. Charles H. Kerr and Company, Chicago.

IT was with some curiosity that one opened Miss Sylvia Pankhurst's impressions of her Russian visit. Apart from the peculiar historic interest in having a definite record of Miss Pankhurst's views at any time, one believed that her noted sympathies with Bolshevik policy and her considerable knowledge of the British Labour movement might result in a volume that would give a special viewpoint not to be obtained in the many previous treatments of the same subject. In certain respects one's hopes were justified. There is plenty of enthusiasm in Miss Pankhurst's reprinted articles (as they presumably are), and there are plenty of facts. Even if facts and enthusiasm are somewhat inextricably interwoven, this must be attributed to what is the main defect of the book, that the writer has clearly never really made up her mind whom she intended her readers to be. If she meant to write for those who were already conversant with and sympathetic towards the Soviet system and institutions, she would have cut out the fairly frequent patches of a somewhat dingy purple; if, on the other hand, the book was in-



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tended for propaganda, a much more careful arrangement of the facts, and a much fuller explanation of the general methods of Soviet administration were called for. The man in the street has no realisation, for example, of the essential differences between the Soviet method of delegation and a system of Parliamentary representation. Miss Pankhurst, as might be anticipated, is at her clearest and most interesting on such matters as divorce, marriage laws, child welfare and infant education; her early experiences in the feminist movement having evidently acutened her instinct for outstanding and important features.

We have received from the United States of America a volume entitled "The New Policies of Soviet Russia," and described as published by Charles H. Kerr and Co., Co-operative, Chicago. This is a fascinating example of the different uses to which the same word is put in the United States and in this country. The first article in the book is the article by Lenin, of which a special version appeared in No. 1 of the LABOUR MONTHLY. The LABOUR MONTHLY version is reprinted verbatim, with the Americanisation of certain words like "Labor," but without the removal of a single word, and without the addition of the slightest acknowledgment of any kind. If it is to action of this kind that Mr. Kerr refers when he calls himself co-operative, I can only say that we should use a different word on this side of the Atlantic.

W. T.

### PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Insurance Against Unemployment.* By J. L. Cohen. P. S. King. 18s.  
*Debs: Authorised Life and Letters.* By David Karsner. Boni and Liveright. \$1.50c.  
*A B C of Communism.* By N. Bukharin and E. Preobrajensky. Socialist Labour Press. 2s. 6d.  
*L'Application du Salaire Minimum pendant et depuis la Guerre.* Par R. Broda. Bircher, Berne.  
*Agriculture and the Community.* By J. F. Duncan. International Bookshops. 2s.  
*Whitehall.* By C. D. Burns. H. Milford. 2s. 6d.  
*In Days to Come.* By Walter Rathenau. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.  
*The Menace of Money Power.* By C. P. Isaac. Jonathan Cape. 8s. 6d.  
*Life and Labour in the Nineteenth Century.* By C. R. Fay. Cambridge University Press. 20s.  
*Proletarian Dictatorship and Terrorism.* By Karl Radek. Marxian Educational Society. 20c.  
*How We Came Out of the War.* By I. C. Willis. International Bookshops. 2s.  
*The Revolution and Democracy.* By F. C. Howe. C. W. Daniel. 7s. 6d.  
*The Great Steel Strike.* By Wm. Z. Foster. C. W. Daniel. 7s. 6d.  
*Democracy and the Will to Power.* By James W. Wood. A. A. Knopf. \$2.



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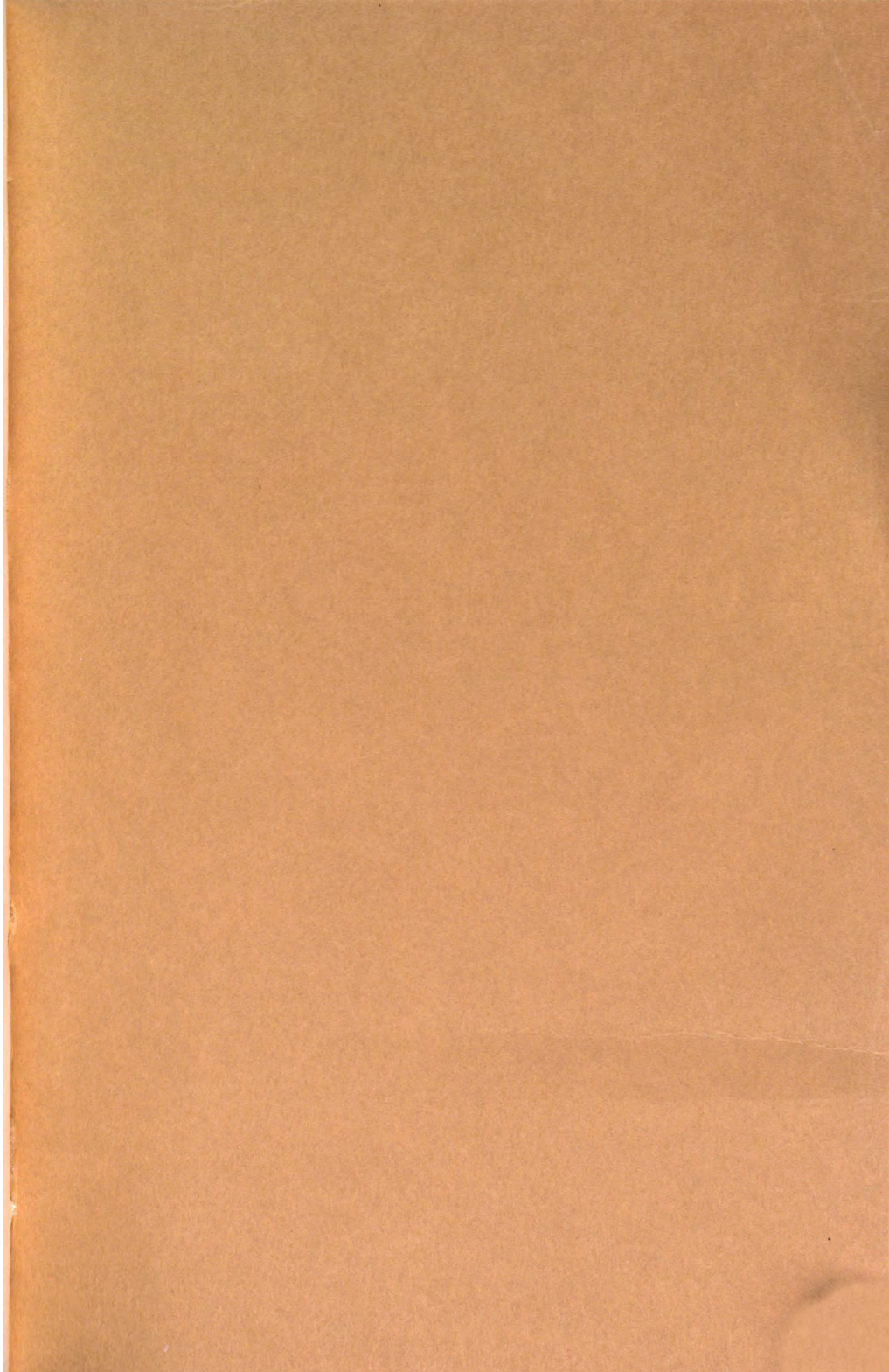
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