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CORNELL UNIVERSITY
MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Volume IV
JANUARY

TO

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THE LABOUR MONTHLY



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Volume IV
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TO
JUNE
1923

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NOTES of the MONTH

The new Labour Party—The First Stage of Socialist Struggle—The Test of Socialism—Second-hand Policy—The Chance for Leadership—Can it be taken?—A Year's Review of Capitalism—No Stabilisation—The Consequent Issue

HIGH hopes have accompanied the beginning of the new Labour group in Parliament. It is not only the accession of numbers that has given this new sense of hope and interest to all sections of the working-class movement after a long period of deadness. It is the composition of the group and the new elements within it that have given this hope. The Parliamentary Labour Party for the first time speaks as a reflection of the movement outside, and not as an effigy in a case apart and remote from it. Speeches have been made that are thoroughly unparliamentary in style and substance, with the result that for the first time the parliamentary news is being widely read. Insinuations have been made against honourable members of the capitalist class which would usually only be heard far from the polite atmosphere of the House. Amid general surprise at their simplicity new Members have brought in something of the actual sense of hatred and struggle into what should have been the formal fencing of debate. It is in vain that their leader, with his own celebrated lightness of touch and witty dexterity in the parliamentary fencing club, apologises for his raw recruits: these raw recruits, unfortunately for him, show an inclination not to accept his apologies. And this is the most significant innovation of all that they have accomplished. For the first time they have introduced politics in the Labour Party. For the first time they have raised the standard of Socialism in the Labour Party.

THE first stage of the Socialist struggle in this country now begins. The victory of MacDonald over Clynes was not a victory of the left over the right: on the contrary, it is likely to turn out in practice a victory for the extreme right: but it was a victory of Socialist and political elements over bureaucratic trade unionism. MacDonald's politics are likely to be more dangerous in the future than Clynes' trade unionism: because MacDonald represents a definite policy of the State capitalist organisation of industry and the action which coincides, as it has been already seen to coincide during the period of the Liberal Government in 1906-1914, with the aims of Big Business: whereas Clynes represents no policy at all other than docility. But the victory of MacDonald was not his own victory. Only a portion of his majority consisted of his own Liberal following. The victory was given him by the Socialist wing in the Labour Party. And it was given him because they had not yet a man of their own to put forward or sufficient strength to gain an independent success. What is the consequence of this? MacDonald has not a majority. He cannot count on the affection of the trade union officials. He has to look for his supposed majority to the Socialist group which is abhorrent to him. And he has all the time to remember that he is a nascent Prime Minister with the dignity of the Empire in his hands. In consequence he has to walk the tight rope gracefully with an air of light-hearted raillery. And behind his body can go on the conflict of groups. The fight over the leadership was the first real political fight in the Parliamentary Labour Party. The heavy step of official conservatism can no longer tread through every Labour utterance unchallenged. The play of politics begins in the Labour Party, and the first honours go to the Socialist group.

SOcialism as a political force in the Labour Party is a new phenomenon. The significance of this cannot be too much emphasised in view of the common assumption that the Labour Party is Socialist. The Labour Party in point of fact is—so far—a long way from being Socialist. Socialism does not consist in swallowing a formula about the nationalisation of the means of production and exchange. The Labour Party performed this operation fifteen years ago, and it is still possible for one of its

principal leaders and possible Prime Ministers to appear in court and swear that he is no Socialist. Socialism consists in a definite political outlook which colours a man's whole life and action. What is that outlook? It is one of open opposition to the capitalist class and its whole system, and identification with the working-class struggle for a free and equal society of workers. Opposition to capitalism: support of the workers' struggle—it is a simple test. There is no question of sectarian hairsplitting here. Every Socialist International, Second, Two and a-half, Third, or Fourth, subscribes to it. Every time the Labour Party or Independent Labour Party go abroad and mix with Socialists they have to subscribe to it. The I.L.P. not so long ago at Berne declared itself "steeped in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism." The Labour Party at the Berlin Conference of the Internationals proclaimed (through MacDonald as spokesman) its firm basing on the rock of the class war. It declared, "We accept the principle of a general conference with a limited objective, under the conditions and with the agenda proposed by the Vienna Union." The conditions laid down by the Vienna International were that "all proletarian parties will be admitted who stand on the ground of the class struggle, whose goal is to overthrow capitalism, and who recognise the necessity for common international action on the part of the proletariat for the attainment of this goal." But by this test not a single prominent leader of the Labour Party could pass as a Socialist at home.

EVERY one in his every utterance, every speech and every manifesto proclaims the opposite. One and all proclaim their desire for "good relations" between Capital and Labour; their reverence for the "institutions and traditions" of the country; their regard for the "interests of the community"; their zealous upholding of the "national honour"; and their proud maintenance of "our Empire." They vote for reparations to show the "nation's united front"; they set up Committees to inquire into the "causes that impede maximum production . . . from the standpoint of the interests of the community"; they go off on expeditions to Georgia or India to report on "our" interests in the Middle East or "our civilising mission" in India. They sit on Government Commissions and Industrial Conferences "to improve the relations between

employers and employed." They deplore the "menace" of the unemployed "problem." They uphold and openly defend the class massacres and bombings and open executions by a General Smuts in the name of "parliamentary democracy"; and at the same time raise all Europe with clamour at the unfulfilled suggestion of punishment for the Churchill-inspired plotters against the workers' regime in Russia. They assume with pride the honours and decorations of the governing class; and cut out from their ranks old and tried workers of their own movement. Their first instinct on attack is to turn to the capitalist courts of justice for pecuniary satisfaction. Their most constant magnifiers and regular organs of publicity are the lower forms of the capitalist Press. When their master's voice called for war, they called for war; when it called for indemnities, they called for indemnities; when it called for more production, they called for more production; when it calls for reconstruction and international peace, they call for reconstruction and international peace. To talk of Socialism in this company has as much meaning as to talk of sedition at Buckingham Palace.

THE new Glasgow group are Socialists. That is the whole innovation. They hold a definite political position, and they regard the capitalist class as their enemies. That is all, but it is a great thing. For from that everything else can follow. In the conventional Press they are spoken of as extremists. This is, of course, ridiculous. They are very far from being extremists. On the contrary, it would be much easier to question their Socialism. David Kirkwood, so widely bruited as the fieriest spirit of all, pleaded on behalf of the unemployed as the men "who won the Great War." "Remember that the race which we represent—I mean you all now, I embrace you all—is the race which, when roused by the German menace, could face the greatest military machine the world ever saw, and smash it. Do you think that that same race is going to walk the streets of London unemployed?" We are sure that Kirkwood would have little wish to be judged in the Workers' International by such a sentence, or that in making the familiar appeal he had any thought to make the killing of German workers a boast, or a claim for consideration from the butcher class they served so faithfully, or a contrast with their present unemployed

condition, or anything but the counterpart of their present sufferings—the slaughter of yesterday and the unemployment of to-day, two episodes in a single story of subjection. But it would be beyond reason to ask for clear statement on such matters as this in the present stage of development of the movement of this country. There has never been a school of Socialism here, nor—despite all the Fabian tracts and copies of “ Value, Price, and Profit ”—any simple practical Socialist training. The time to criticise will be later. For the moment the great achievement is that there exists at last in the Labour Party, not one or two individuals, but a group of men who feel themselves to be the expression of the militant working class and in definite opposition to the capitalist class and its whole system, atmosphere, and traditions. That is a great achievement, and it holds out tremendous possibilities for the future, not merely in the Parliamentary Labour Party, but in the whole Labour Movement. The opportunity in the hands of this group is immense. If they use it to the full they can build up for the first time a definite Socialist leadership and following in the working-class movement of this country.

HOW far will they succeed ? It is a question which demands more factors than their own personalities to answer. The limitations of their Parliamentary rôle they themselves know as well as any. Their power, if it develop, will be outside. Inside, they are at the mercy of the Parliamentary group and its machine. Outside they can rally the workers behind them. If they stand firm on every issue they can be sure of the backing of the Party Conference against any attempt to gag or limit them. But the measure of their success will be the measure of their power to take up the leadership that is theirs for the asking, to voice, not merely Socialism in general, but the actual Socialist leadership which the movement is looking for in vain to-day. Can they formulate a clear alternative programme to the present drift of the official movement ? Can they see a way through the present confusion ? The question gives rise to another question. What are the possibilities of the position ? What is the present line of development of the movement ? Is Capitalism recovering for the moment ? If it is, then that recovery will give another lease of life to the trimmers. But if

it is not, if the present sufferings are to continue or increase, then the Socialism which has already been thrown up by the conditions of after the war will grow and develop into the dominant force of the working-class movement.

A YEAR ago, when we attempted to review the position in the light of the previous twelvemonths, we came to a provisional conclusion. On the one hand it was necessary to recognise the universal defeat and depression of the working class. On the other hand it was possible to take comfort in the failure of the victorious capitalists to settle their own affairs. The hour of their victory was the hour of their defeat. The first signs of this inner confusion of the capitalists was already visible at Washington and Cannes. The history of the past twelvemonths, with the failure of Genoa and the fall of Lloyd George, has supplemented this. It is now possible to give a more exact indication. The attempt of the capitalist world to solve its own inextricable confusion has failed. Recovery by the path of international reconstruction, of Genoa and Lloyd George, has met with disaster. The tangle of reparations, debts, and exchanges remains untackled. To-day the attempt at reconstruction is by a new path. And that path is at the expense of the working class. The capitalist offensive continues. After wages have been cut to starvation levels the attack has turned on hours. Already Stinnes makes the move for ten hours in Germany. The beginnings of the attack have already taken place here.

WHAT is the meaning of this further development? It is an attempt at recovery by a new path. It is the third and most desperate attempt of capitalism to recover after the mortal crisis of the war. The first attempt was the simple-hearted attempt to start again with a boom and more production. The boom soon collapsed; the more production turned to over-production and unemployment. The second attempt was the serious and long-continued attempt to tackle the international position and reconstruct the shattered world economy. That attempt reached definite failure at Genoa and with the fall of Lloyd George. Now comes the third attempt, to raise up industry again for the moment,

not by any real remedy or restoration, but by the depression of the standards of the working class. It is a desperate attempt, and it is doomed to failure. For the situation has changed from a year ago. The first signs have now become visible of the recovery of the working class, particularly in Germany, but also in every country. And at the same time the failure of the capitalist class to solve their own problems, the abandonment of all attempts at international solutions and reconstruction, are the strongest confession of their weakness. What, then, will happen? They may win a temporary and unreal recovery by cheap production. But it will only recoil upon their own heads if the main problems of foreign policy and foreign markets remain untackled. By its inevitable increase of production it will only increase the intensity of competition and hasten the inevitable future war. And by its renewed blows upon the working class it will only stimulate their resistance and unity, and increase the intensity of the class war to the pitch of revolutionary readiness in the moment of the imperialist war.

WHAT is the immediate consequent issue? The path of the recovery of capitalism is as futile now as it was futile in the days of repeating "more production." Not in this way will the misery be lessened. Instead the way that is needed is the way of common resistance and the united front—the united front that was offered by the left wing a year ago and refused by the right wing, internationally and nationally. What has been the consequence of this refusal of the united front? To-day Fascism rules in Italy, Poincaré in France, Stinnes in Germany, Die-Hards and Conservatives in England, and a riot of anti-labour legislation rages in the United States. These are the consequences of refusal, but they are also our indication for the future. They show that the class struggle is growing stronger in the future, and not less. They show that the capitalist class is conscious of its weakness and is preparing for future struggles. The issue now is that we shall also be prepared, and no longer let our movement be shackled by those forces which are actively engaged at once in driving out the militant elements of the movement and in tying up the remainder with Ten Years' Truces and political alliances to the service of capitalist

reconstruction. The fight against these forces, which are still the ruling forces in the movement in this country, is the fight which the new Socialist group can take up, and by taking it up they can save the future of Socialism and the working-class movement in this country.

THE WORLD ECONOMIC SITUATION

By H. P. RATHBONE

MORE than four years have passed since the first conflict between the forces of imperialism has ceased. In every newspaper to-day one may see one representative of capitalism or another anxiously discussing the possibility of a trade revival. If such a revival is coming are the forces of the workers prepared? Are we so ranged that we can take full advantage of it? Alternatively, if a further period of depression is at hand what are the forces making for resistance? What is our policy? Finally, supposing capitalists can manage to stabilise the present position, what is our next advance?

To decide then what are the tactics of the workers in the struggle against capitalism it is necessary to decide in what way the forces of capitalism will develop. Will capitalism manage to repair its efficiency and so bring about a revival, or will it slip further into the slough of depression, or finally can it succeed in stabilising its present insecurity?

The position to-day is that in every country except Russia the workers have been beaten by the forces of capitalism. Their wages have been cut, their hours have been lengthened, and the liberal reformism of the pre-war period has vanished in the thick mist of reaction. In England a tenth of the population is living on doles or starving. In Germany, in spite of a prolonged and ever more speculative capitalist boom, the workers are being crushed further into the mire by longer hours and lower real wages. In America, while capitalists have been making immense profits and securing them by bonus issues, the railroad workers are told by the Wages Board that "a living wage would wreck every railroad in the United States." In France the position of the workers grows every day more similar to the position of the German workers—they are becoming assimilated into the mid-European coolie plantation. In Italy the defeat of the workers is complete, and Fascism, the most reactionary form of capitalism, reigns supreme. In the colonies of

imperialist exploitation Irish workers are now confronted by their own capitalist government. India has not recovered from the debacle of Ghandism, and in every other colony capitalism has been able to exploit the workers even more ruthlessly than at home.

Yet the international world of capitalism is still facing the problems it has been endeavouring to solve for the last four years. Allied capitalism has yet to extract its war booty from the Central Powers and resolve all the other contradictions which it created by the Versailles Treaty: in its efforts to do this its unity has broken. American capitalism has not yet reconciled itself to a bankrupt European continent. The victory of the Allies, which was meant to secure peace for the victors in the Near East, has only produced further conflicts. Conference succeeds conference only to break up after "complete agreement," but nothing resolved. It would seem that chaos can only intervene. But is that the truth? To find the answer let us see what measures capitalism has taken to outlive until to-day the post-war chaotic conditions.

In the decade preceding the war capitalism in its modern form of imperialism was finally realised. Industrial companies were formed only to be absorbed by their rivals. These erstwhile rivals competed with other rivals, and finally amalgamated; international agreements were made; international consortiums were formed, thus producing an immense concentration of finance capital. Alongside of this concentration, and because of this concentration, capitalists instead of merely exporting their goods exported also their surplus capital. They competed to lend money to foreign governments. They competed for concessions to exploit newly discovered wealth and to start factories in countries where labour was "cheap." Fresh rivalries appeared and old rivalries were revived because of this effort to employ their capital to "economic advantage"—in other words to obtain greater profits from this capital than by keeping it locked up at home. These rivalries were manœuvred by cliques of politicians who also had their own personal interests to serve. The Agadir crisis, amongst many others, was temporarily resolved only to lead to fresh crises.

This development of capitalism sharpened the struggle of the workers. The concentration of capital led to a gradual rise in prices

and a consequent fall in real wages. This concentration, which contained the germ of the larger conflict, de-stabilised the position of capitalism, producing depression now in one, now in another, industry. This increased the number of unemployed, which was further increased by the rise in prices and the consequent lack of purchasing power. To defend their position the workers organised, they elected their own representatives to Parliament where previously they were represented by Liberal reformists, and in their demands for higher wages to meet the rising prices they were forced into strikes on a larger and larger scale.

The conflict between different groups of capitalists in their imperialist rivalry finally led to the world war. Each country was gradually thrown on its own resources. The lack of supplies enabled capitalists rapidly to force up prices. To meet the demand for raw material certain industries, such as iron, steel, and chemicals, were immensely increased in productive power. In that increase, and to take advantage of that increase, prices were further raised and profits also were immensely increased. The loss of imports coupled with the demands of the armed forces led to the absorption of the unemployed. The rise in prices and the consequent need for higher wages led to a renewed strengthening of the defensive forces of the workers.

Resolving the War Chaos

Finally by the end of the war every element in the forces of capitalism necessitated further inflation and a further rise in prices. Every country was burdened with huge war debts: every European country was short of certain supplies, thus threatening a rise in prices. All the victorious countries except America were faced with increased productive power in certain goods and decreased productive power in others. America alone had increased her total productive power. The Central Powers were faced with a decrease in the efficiency of production of iron, steel, and chemicals owing to the lack of necessary repair during the war, and their exchanges began to show signs of weakening.

Such was the situation at the end of the war. When the pegs were removed that held suspended the pre-war pound, the franc, and the lira, their values slid ever quicker down the precipice, leaving the dollar suspended menacingly on the heights of the gold

standard. The nationals of these currencies, England, France, and Italy, found their exports to some countries threatened by America. They found their old hunting grounds stocked with American goods. In other countries they found that, owing to lower exchanges than their own, these countries could not purchase their goods. They were faced with unemployment. Likewise imports poured in from countries with better exchanges, and thus their home industries were faced with ruin. Nor was this all: for prices which had been checked during the war in their upward flow, now that control was removed could make further huge leaps upward. This only increased the number of workers unemployed. The consequence of this chaos in the exchanges and increasing prices only resulted in accentuating the rivalry. It was clear that artificial stability must be obtained if possible and that the supports to the capitalist edifice could only be strengthened piecemeal to prevent it from collapsing into chaos. So some countries prohibited entirely the import of certain articles until that particular industry could be rehabilitated and made able to compete on some "equitable" basis. In other cases huge tariffs were imposed frankly to subsidise the home product. Consciously or unconsciously the decline in the exchanges of the Central Powers, which was rapidly proceeding, was hastened by continual Allied threats, making it impossible for these countries to compete at all owing to their lack of power to purchase the necessary raw materials.

Finally, throughout the Allied and neutral world huge schemes of reconstruction of industry were spread broadcast and popularised by the Press. In England electricity was to be the future power; it was going to revolutionise agriculture: the empty pasture was going to give place to intensified horticulture. In the colonies plans for huge harbours were made and a vast network of railways were to open up the undeveloped areas. America desired to compete for the largest mercantile marine. Italy created State industrial monopolies to manage and extend her ports, her shipping, and her shipbuilding. The world's undeveloped lands were to be planted with cotton and sown with wheat. Each neutral and victorious country, it appeared, would contribute to a general increase in world prosperity. Russia and the Central European Powers were alone excluded from these schemes.

Such was the dust that was thrown in the eyes of the workers in the way of industrial development. As to the conditions of the workers still more dust was necessary. The chaotic state of capitalism had produced its results: threatened unemployment and demands for wages to meet the ever-rising prices. The workers demanded nationalisation; they were promised it. More houses; schemes were elaborated. More education; bills were introduced. Workers' control; joint committees were set up. The pre-war capitalist indeed appeared to have been wiped off the map.

All these promises were accepted in good faith; meanwhile capitalism was recovering, was taking advantage of the shortage of supplies, was consolidating its position, and was intensifying the boom that followed in the wake of the war. Prices were forced up, huge combines were formed to insure short supplies and to secure the market that was created by this shortage of supplies. Concentration and high prices led to general over-capitalisation. Profits were made secure by the issue of bonus shares and by reconstructing old companies with inflated capital. But these features of the boom contained all the features of its quick collapse. Over-capitalisation led to high prices, which in turn led to dwindling markets. Shortage of supplies led to over-productivity, and both led to unemployment. Finally, the Central European markets were destroyed while the Russian market remained blockaded. The world was faced with a contradiction between production and consumption. This intensified the struggle between rival capitalist groups, and finally the boom showed signs of declining first in Japan, where the upward curve had been sharpest, finally spreading right throughout the world, until at the end of 1920 there were few who were not already looking for a new revival of trade.

That was the position at the beginning of 1921. Capitalism, by means of the artificial boom and speculation that it created in 1918-20, coupled with the promises of a reconstructed world, managed at once to survive the chaos which it had created by the war and to break and dissipate the revolutionary forces of the workers. From 1920 to the beginning of 1921 the boom which it had created collapsed, the revolutionary force of the workers had been dissipated, and it began its attack on Labour. By the end of 1921 the workers in the Allied and neutral countries had been

driven down almost to pre-war conditions and had lost practically all the gains they had obtained during the war and the post-war boom; the workers in Central Europe were still further beaten.

Survey of the Great Powers

But this was not enough: the forces of capitalism had done this, but they had still failed to solve their own problems. If we survey the position in industry in each of the largest countries we find that in *England*, for the third quarter of 1922, the export trade is still only 70 per cent. of the volume of 1913, whereas the imports are 85 per cent. of the 1913 volume. An accounting balance has been achieved in the last budget, but at the cost not only of deferring the redemption of the national debt, but even of increasing it. Wholesale and retail prices, though showing a fall in the earlier months of the year, have for the last two months been steadily on the increase. The production of coal for November was within 91 per cent. of the 1913 monthly average output; but this has been at the cost of reducing the workers' real wages to well below the 1913 level. Iron and steel production shows a slight increase, but the October output of pig iron, the highest this year, is still 56 per cent. of the 1913 output, and steel production 66 per cent. of 1913. Workers in American cotton are still working only four and a half days out of six in every week. Shipbuilding, though showing a slight revival during the last two months, in November had 36.3 per cent. of its workers unemployed. But the finance of capital is booming. Securities are now 14 per cent. above the figure for December, 1921. September bank deposits decreased by 9 per cent. since January, 1922, but since then have again been on the increase. Capital issues are being eagerly over-subscribed; the Marconi Telegraph Co. last month, for instance, was offered £13,000,000 for their issue of £1,500,000. Shipping freights, after declining throughout the year, have shown, during the last two months, an increase, and this in spite of the fact that there were still idle throughout the world on July 1, 8,200,000 tons or 44 per cent. of the total world tonnage.

In the *United States* we find that the indications of a revival which appear to exist in England have occurred earlier. Wholesale

prices, which fell in 1921 to only 38 per cent. of 1913 prices, had risen to 78 per cent. in August. Imports have increased in the first eight months of 1922 by 10 per cent., and exports have increased by 28 per cent. Production of iron and steel, which boomed in the first six months of 1922, decreased during July and August owing to the strike enforced on the miners to defend their wages. Cotton piece goods production is now on the up grade, but cotton growers are already talking of reducing their acreage by 50 per cent. Bank deposits, capital issues, and the prices of industrial securities have largely increased. It would seem that trade had definitely turned the corner.

Japan was the first country to break the artificial boom, which, owing to her extraordinarily rapid development, was greater than in any other country. What has been her policy since then? How have her capitalists managed to save her from collapse? The answer to this question is simply and solely—by restriction of output. Other countries have restricted the output of their raw materials, such as raw cotton, as in the case of the United States and Egypt. The capitalists of all the Allied powers, as well as the United States, have restricted their output of iron and steel. Every other raw material throughout the Allied and neutral world has been more or less subject to this restriction, in some cases on an organised, in some on an unorganised scale. But Japanese capitalists have done this for their manufacturers on a much more complete and organised scale. Such products as iron, coal, copper, cotton fabrics, raw silk, flax, woollens, fertilisers, paper, and flour have all been restricted in output since 1920 by the organised trade associations of the capitalists. Thus, in May, 1921, the coal interests organised a restriction of 17.5 per cent. in the output of coal. In May, 1922, the principal weaving mills were only worked 69 per cent. of their normal output. The output of soda and bleaching powder was reduced to 59 per cent. in 1921, and to 60 per cent. in 1922 by organised restriction. Thus has Japan saved her industries from collapse. But at what a cost! By these means prices, ever since June, 1921, have been kept stable, or, if anything, increased; thus, the inflated capitalisation of Japanese industry which occurred during its short-lived post-war boom has been stabilised, but unemployment has increased. It was

estimated, for instance, that at the beginning of this year at least 90,000 miners were unemployed, or 20 per cent. of the total in the industry.

When we turn to *France*, however, the story is somewhat different. Here we have a country living on an ever-increasing budget deficit in the hope that some day a credit balance will be struck by means of reparations payments from Germany. The expected deficit on the budget for 1923 is estimated to be 35,000 millions of francs, compared with the estimate for 1922 of 31,000 millions and the estimate for 1921 of 3,197 millions. Meanwhile, wholesale prices have been increasing steadily until they were, in October, 1922, 239 per cent. above 1913 prices, having increased twenty-five points since January of that year. Likewise the exchange of France with England, which stood at 205 per cent. of par in January, 1922, had depreciated in November, 1922, to 240 per cent. of par. The total volume of trade, though it has increased in the first nine months of 1922 by five million tons since 1913, on a total of forty-eight millions for 1913, shows an increase in the adverse balance of imports over exports of over four million tons, or 5 per cent. This is mainly represented by increases in purchases of raw materials. It would appear, in spite of these signs of a revival, that the budget finances do not presage well for the future, while the reliance on reparations payments to pay off the ever-increasing debt and balance the budget has had its effect on the exchange—an effect which is increasing as the amount of reparations expected becomes more and more exiguous.

If we examine the position in *Central Europe* we find in some countries, such as *Austria*, that the whole structure of capitalism is kept on its feet by a series of speculative operations, and when the frequent crises, which are the inevitable outcome of such operations, become too severe even for speculation to thrive in, the structure is propped up again by small loans so that speculation may continue. In *Germany* the enormous and artificial boom which has now continued for eighteen months is showing signs of changing from a type to some extent based on production to a type very similar to that of *Austria*. For there are indications that the collapse in the exchange, by preventing to an increasing extent the purchase of raw materials, is resulting in a decline in the surplus

of production available for export. The boom, the rise in prices, and the consequent inflation of industry has increasingly worsened the conditions of the workers. The decline in the volume of production per unit has resulted in the demand for longer hours, and the enormous rise in internal prices has meant that the struggle between the workers and the capitalists, owing to the fall in the real wages, becomes ever more intense and more defined. Owing, however, to the fact that the concentration of industry in Germany has led to the enormous surplus of finance capital in the hands of a few large industrial magnates like Hugo Stinnes and Otto Wolff, it is possible that this capital, by means of speculation in exchange, has been transferred abroad, and by being available for the purchase of raw materials will still postpone the collapse.

The result of this chaos of under-production on the part of *England*, the *United States*, and *Japan*, coupled with the loss of the markets of *Central Europe*, are producing similar conditions in the mainly exporting countries and colonies of *South America*, *Africa*, and *Asia*. They have surplus raw materials which they cannot export. In addition, they cannot obtain the supplies they need. So they have become, to an increasing extent, their own manufacturers. *China* has increased her cotton spindles from 1,422,832 spindles in 1920 to 2,066,582 spindles, according to the latest returns: *India* has increased her spindles from 6,689,680 in 1920 to 6,870,804 in February, 1922. Both in China and India there appears to be no short time, whereas in all the old cotton producing countries, including Japan, short time exists. But this process of industrialisation is slow: meantime their finances are in a rotten condition: budgets will not balance; exchanges are going further and further against them. They can only wait on the revival of the importing countries of the world.

The Economic Problems of Capitalism

In this survey of the countries of the world we have found that the chief problem facing capitalists in each country has been the discovery of how to prevent the chaos that threatened to intervene as a result of the break in the post-war boom. Prices, it will be remembered, were increased to an enormous extent, productivity was enlarged, and over-capitalisation resulted. It is estimated by

Dr. Kitchin that, whereas the total world holdings of securities before the war was £20,000 millions, the present holdings have now approached the enormous figure of £60,000 millions, or an increase of 200 per cent. in less than ten years. When the demand fell away what could be done to stop the fall in prices and so prevent the collapse of the over-capitalised industry? The reply that was given to this question was restriction of output. In every country and to varying degrees of organisation and of success capitalism resorted to this method. The result is that to-day a certain stability if not a rise in world prices has been obtained. The prices of the three great exporting countries of the world at present—England, United States, and Japan—have been stabilised at a figure which for July of this year represented a mean average (unweighted) of 73 per cent. above 1913 figures. What does this mean? Does it not indicate in part the measure of over-capitalisation in these countries? It involves a further period of increase both in wholesale and retail prices. (The latter, it should be noted, have become stabilised almost in the same month that wholesale prices stopped falling, whereas when wholesale prices stopped rising retail prices continued to rise for several months thereafter. It seems that the middlemen were able and willing to wring the last pound of profit out of the rise, but though able refused to give consumers the last pound of saving out of the fall.)

But this rise in prices will occur in a world where there is an inherent *contradiction between production and consumption*. To make this clear let us take the production of steel. In England it has recently been stated by the president of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce that the productivity of steel furnaces is 50 per cent. above pre-war figures. The average monthly production of steel in 1913 was 855,000 tons. The present monthly *productivity* is therefore 1,282,500 tons, but the monthly *production* for October was only 565,200 tons, which is thus only 44 per cent. of the possible production. The United States tells the same story. Here was a country which acted as salesman to the Allies during the war, which increased her output of steel to satisfy the demands of the Allies. The highest average monthly output to which she reached was in 1917 when she produced 3,816,000 tons. Her highest monthly output in 1922, when steel production was said to be

booming again, was in May, when it reached the three-million figure or 79 per cent. of her average monthly production in 1917 (her productivity is all probability was vastly greater than this figure, though no statistics are available on this point). The productivity of shipbuilding was also enormously increased after the war. In 1919 the monthly average tonnage launched in the U.S.A. and the British Dominions, the highest production year for these two countries, was 339,616 and 29,894 tons respectively. The monthly average in 1920, which was the year of the largest production for the United Kingdom, was 171,302 tons, making a possible total monthly production of 540,812 tons. In comparison the average monthly tonnage launched for the first nine months of 1922 in the United Kingdom, its Dominions, and the U.S.A. only reached a total of 157,449 tons, or a decrease, compared with the possible production, of 483,353 tons. In plain words, the shipbuilding *production* of the British Empire and the United States, the two potentially largest shipbuilding entities in the world, is now only 29 per cent. of its possible *productivity*. Nor is this all: for the shipbuilding industry has still to face the dead weight of the shipping tonnage which is still laid up unused throughout the world. It was estimated by the Department of Commerce of the U.S.A. that in July, 1922, roughly 8,200,000 tons of shipping were still laid up throughout the world, a reduction of only 400,000 tons since January. This means that 13 per cent. of the world shipping tonnage is idle. No wonder that 36 per cent. of the shipbuilding workers in Great Britain are still *unemployed*. No wonder that the workers *employed* are being forced to work for wages which are computed to be 61 per cent. below the pre-war level. Yet capitalism still maintains that trade has turned the corner, in the face of an under-productivity of 29 per cent. in shipbuilding and 44 per cent. in iron and steel!

But we have only taken the productivity in manufactures. There is also the productivity in raw materials. As we pointed out above, practically every raw material throughout the world is restricted in its potential output. Yet capital is still being exported to foreign countries, presumably for development of some sort. It is estimated that since the beginning of 1921 the U.S.A. has exported \$500,000,000. In the same period Great Britain has

exported £82,000,000. According to the apologists of capitalism this capital should now be being used to make productive the undeveloped portions of the earth. Yet capitalism seems to find that even the present production of the world is superfluous. Why then is this export of capital continuing except that finance capital can gain greater profit out of the mere export of it, not to mention the profit to be gained by manipulating the concessions resulting therefrom, than by keeping it deposited or even used for development at home. This, then, is the contradiction between production and consumption inherent in a capitalist system based on profit. And this is the reason why capitalism, though it may stabilise itself for a time by such devices as output restriction, cannot solve this problem.

The Political Problems of Capitalism

This problem, however, may be further accentuated in the near future by the possible solution of the international political problems that still remain to be faced by capitalism. Let us take only one instance. For four years such capitalist economists as J. M. Keynes have been endeavouring to persuade the Allies to redeem the mistake they made when they compelled Germany to sign the Treaty of Versailles. For four years these economists have succeeded in persuading the Allied capitalist Governments gradually to whittle down their original demands on Germany; for four years these economists have been showing that by ruining capitalist Central Europe the Allied capitalist Governments have nearly ruined themselves. Thus the slogan "Germany must pay to her very last dollar" has by gradual degrees been converted into the vague demand of Bonar Law: "Everything must be got from Germany that she can reasonably be asked to pay." The actual sums demanded by France, which were estimated by Dr. Klotz in the French Chamber in the autumn of 1919 at a total of £18,700 millions, have been whittled down until M. Poincaré at the Four Ministers' Conference last month in London announced that France would agree to accept £1,500 millions. Therefore if this problem ultimately solves itself by this process of elimination and in the near future a Germany be reconstructed by the loans to her which have already been proposed, the productive capacity of the world will thereby be increased. It would seem that before,

however, Germany's consuming power can have recovered, the productive power that she will add to the world's total will further increase the crises ahead of capitalism.

At the beginning of this article we put three alternatives of the future development of capitalism before us for solution in order that it may be possible to decide what should be the policy for the workers in the present and future struggle. These three alternatives were: Can Capitalism repair its efficiency and bring about a revival in trade, or will it slip further into the slough of depression, or thirdly will it manage to stabilise its position? From our survey it follows that the answer to these three alternatives is partly number one and partly number three, but with this important qualification. Capitalism has developed since 1913, has increased its productivity since that date, has further exploited the undeveloped areas of the world. *Therefore it is in relation to this increased productive power and increased consuming power of the world that a trade revival must be measured, and not in relation to the producing and consuming power of the world in 1913.* Accordingly the trade revival so anxiously awaited by capitalism must, to be a trade revival at all, be of such a kind that in terms of 1913 it would be considered a boom. From our survey of the present economic situation there is no sign of this. Nor is it this kind of revival which capitalism would appear to expect. The trade revival is simply one which will enable capitalism so to increase production as to prevent its complete collapse. In the strict sense of the word it is therefore merely a stabilisation of the present position. But owing to over-capitalisation and increased productivity of industry the stabilisation will be short; it will be followed by the inevitable artificial boom owing to the continued output restriction, the unabated concentration of capital, and the consequent rise in prices; the curve of the development of capitalism will become more jagged, the heights will be steeper, the depths more precipitous.

What is the end of this process? On the one hand progressive decay of industry, on the other hand a sharpening of the class cleavage. But actually these two portents contain within themselves their own remedy; and the solution of the second, the intensified class struggle, is also the solution of the first.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN A WORKERS' STATE

By E. B.

EVEN in Soviet Russia there is unemployment. The number of registered unemployed is now over 300,000, or about 5 per cent. of the total number of regular workers in industry and commerce. How does it happen that there is such a large volume of unemployment in a Workers' State ?

As in England, so in Russia, unemployment is directly caused by factories closing down ; but the reasons which have led to the closing down of factories are fundamentally different in the two countries. It is true that the unemployed worker himself does not care very much *why* he is unemployed : the fact that he cannot get work is the main point for him, whether he is in a workers' State or in a capitalist State. If he is interested in anything else, it is in the question of when he is likely to get work again.

But he can only find the answer to this question by examining the causes of the industrial depression and the factors which are making for recovery or the reverse. When these causes and factors are examined both in England and in Russia, the contrast in the outlook for the unemployed in the two countries is positively startling.

The causes of unemployment in the United Kingdom are familiar enough, and there is no need to do more than mention them here, in order to point the contrast with Russia. During the war years, and more especially after the war, the proportion of the nation's production taken by capital as profits, and by the State as taxation, increased substantially, leaving a smaller proportion to labour. In spite of the period of rising wages, therefore, labour's purchasing power was dwindling year by year, for wages (taking labour all round) never kept up with prices. There was, therefore, less home demand ; and the possibility of foreign demand had been killed by *exactly the same process in other countries*. Of course the terms of the Peace Treaties were also most unfavourable to trade recovery ; but they were only incidental.

The markets had been killed by the poverty of the workers, that is, by the increased proportion of the wealth produced which was taken by capital in every country during the war and after-war period. In Great Britain, this was concealed for a time by the "replacement boom," that is, the building up of stock lost (such as ships) or exhausted (such as textiles); but this boom could not do more than postpone the depression due to labour's loss of purchasing power. In many ways the boom actually aggravated the position.

Such was the fundamental cause of the unemployment which developed here and in other capitalist countries towards the end of 1920. What was the position in Russia?

There also the capitalist class and the capitalist State had exploited the workers to an increasing extent during the years 1914 to 1917. But with the Bolshevik revolution in November, 1917, this process came to an end. From that time forward the capitalist claim to a share in the wealth produced each year was disregarded; the whole product of labour passed to the workers and to their State organisation.

And yet, towards the end of 1921, unemployment began to appear, and it has since been slowly developing. As a matter of fact, this sudden appearance of unemployment in Russia is largely a mere change of organisation; ever since the early part of 1917 there had been large numbers of workers with no constant employment. In the earlier period of the revolution, these workers were kept on the factory books, although work was intermittent. The reason why the factories worked intermittently was simple enough. Owing to the occupation by the foreign invaders and counter-revolutionaries of the main fuel-producing areas, and to the constant struggle to defend the Soviet Republic, the factories could not get enough food, fuel, or raw materials to keep them going.

When the new economic policy was introduced in 1921, the available stocks of food, fuel, and raw materials were concentrated in the most efficient factories, and the others were definitely closed down, the workers hitherto attached to them becoming "unemployed."

Thus there has been no substantial change in the position; right through since 1917 there has been under-production owing

to the lack of food, fuel and raw materials, the difficulty of transport, and partly also the deficiencies in the new organisation of industry ; but wherever production was possible, things were produced, and whatever things were produced were consumed. And here, in spite of the fact of unemployment, which exists both in Russia and in this country, lies the essential difference between the position in the two countries. Unemployment occurs in a workers' State when, owing to material conditions, production is not possible ; it occurs in a capitalist State when production is perfectly possible, but does not " pay," that is, when the existing system does not allow consumption.

This contrast between the *causes* of unemployment in the two countries also holds good when we turn to the other factors in the position, which may cause industrial recovery or a continuance of the industrial depression in Russia and in the United Kingdom.

In the capitalist country each reduction of employment means a reduction in the purchasing power of labour, which in turn means less demand and more unemployment. Production is reduced because it does not pay.

In Russia, on the other hand, as actual experience has shown, the reduction of staffs attached to factories has actually increased production, because it simplifies the problems of food supply and transport to the factories which *are* kept working. The consequent increase of production, by providing more materials, makes production possible in other branches of industry, and thus leads to more employment.

It is particularly significant that, whereas in the capitalist State the growth of unemployment leads to all-round reductions in wages, in the workers' State the growth of unemployment has been accompanied by an all-round increase in wages. In the capitalist State these reductions in wages cause, of course, a further fall in demand and therefore more unemployment ; in the workers' State the rise in wages stimulates demand and employment.

If again we compare the position of the key industries of mining and engineering in the two countries, we find that unemployment in these industries in the United Kingdom is extremely pronounced, while in Russia there is no unemployment in mining

(on the contrary, there is a severe shortage of miners), and in engineering the only unemployment is due to temporary shortages of fuel and raw materials at the factories.

When we turn to the measures taken by the Government in each country to deal with the problem of unemployment, the contrast is even more glaring. As far as the actual relief of unemployed workers is concerned, it is true that unemployed pay is on a higher scale in England ; but then such a comparison is not fair without allowing for the normal standard of living in the two countries—a standard due to the economic position of industry. The low relative standard in Russia existed before the revolution ; and the fact that it has not been possible to raise it since the revolution is due to the devastating effects of the foreign invasions and civil wars.

But even taking things as they are, we find that in many points the unemployed worker is better off in Russia than here. His dependants, for example, are in many ways provided for, not because he is unemployed, but because the social system makes provision for the care of maternity, for infants, and for children. When there is a possibility of providing special work to absorb the unemployed, the local authorities encourage the formation of special "artels" or groups of workers who take on the job on lines somewhat similar to those of the guilds in England. There is no question of a contractor, whose profits absorb part of the available funds ; the necessary tools and materials are provided by the local authority ; and of course there is no question of the workers drawing anything less than normal rates of wages.

A considerable amount of special employment has been given along these lines in Russia, especially in Petrograd, Moscow, and other large towns, where full advantage of the need to provide work has been taken to carry out repairs to streets and houses, to improve sanitation, and generally to improve the material conditions of the population. Relatively to the amount of unemployment, far more has been done in Russia than in the United Kingdom to provide *special* work ; and moreover the whole energies of the Russian Government have been steadily directed towards the development of normal production, the growth of which will provide *permanent* employment.

What has been done in the United Kingdom to develop production and thus provide permanent employment? There is first the series of Peace Treaties, whose clear aim is to develop British production by killing German competition—a policy which has already had to be reversed. Then there are the specially Imperialist attempts to provide markets by the appropriation of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the German colonies—attempts which by their costliness and creation of bad blood have simply increased the financial embarrassments and industrial depression at home. As a contrast, we find the Russian Government persistently widening the circle of its friendly relations with other countries, and slowly but successfully developing its foreign trade.

In purely internal matters, we find the British Government attempting to encourage production and employment in two clearly defined ways.

The first is by reducing wages—decontrolling the mines and thus ending its wage guarantees; ending its agricultural commitments; scrapping the Trade Boards; and openly backing the employers' efforts to reduce wages on every possible occasion. In Russia, on the other hand, we find a legal minimum wage, adjusted month by month in accordance with price fluctuations and advancing with the growing economic stability of industry.

The second method tried by the British Government to encourage production is the provision of certain credits to industry at low rates of interest—a method which is in essence the same as the simultaneous reduction of the Bank of England's rate and of all interest rates. Let us consider what purpose this serves.

Production has dwindled in Great Britain because it does not pay. One part of the costs of production is the interest rate on borrowed money, with which many transactions are carried out. If the interest rate is reduced, production will be slightly cheaper. The reasoning is quite sound, so far as it goes. But the reduction in the cost of production is so slight that it makes practically no difference; and it has not added one penny to the purchasing power of labour which is the real key to the situation. No capitalist will produce goods which he will be unable to sell, however much the interest rates are reduced.

It would have been a different matter if the British Government had said : " The charges of interest and dividends on existing capital are crippling industry, and must be abolished." That was what the November revolution of 1917 actually carried out in Russia. But it is simply childish for the British Government to say, as in effect it has said in these financial measures : " The interest charges on existing capital — some £15,000,000,000 — are sacrosanct ; but of course it would not be good for production that the rate of interest on the petty sum of perhaps £50,000,000 required as new capital this year should be more than 3 per cent."

In Great Britain, of course, there has been no attempt to provide credits for the *consumer*, on the growth of whose purchasing power any permanent increase in employment must depend. In Russia, during the earlier period of the revolution, rations were distributed, and the question of the consumer's purchasing power did not arise. When, however, in order to make the organisation of production more efficient, payment was introduced, the purchasing power of the workers became important. It is very striking that in Russia, as soon as the consumers' purchasing power began to be outstripped by the increase in production, machinery was at once developed to provide credit for retail purchases, so that the growth of production should not be handicapped by a purchasing power always lagging behind it.

The nature of this retail credit machinery is of special interest, as its wide adoption is only possible in a workers' State. It was realised from the start that ordinary retail sales on credit would be out of the question, owing to the enormous volume of " booking " that would be necessary and the difficulty of ensuring eventual payment. But the existence of a wide network of co-operative stores, together with the government's control of credit, made a much simpler plan possible.

The first thing was the formation of special co-operative units at each important factory or office ; many such units were already in existence.

Then the central co-operative society in the town or district gave, as a loan repayable with interest some months ahead, to each of these factory co-operative units a number of vouchers, with

which goods could be bought at any branch store of the central co-operative society. These vouchers are distributed as required, again as loans, among the workers at the given factory, who then use them for purchases, repaying the loan out of subsequent wages. Thus at the retail stores the transaction involves no booking ; the vouchers are equivalent to cash.

Meanwhile the central co-operative, which stands out of its money until the vouchers are paid for in cash some months later, receives a large credit, to enable it to do this, from the " higher " credit machinery—the State Bank or the Co-operative or Industrial Banks set up with Government help.

In this way the credit machinery in the workers' State is brought right to the individual workers, whereas in the capitalist State it never reaches the workers directly, and in times of severe industrial depression, due to reduced demands from the consumers, it is of no help whatever.

These contrasts between the unemployment situation in Great Britain and in Soviet Russia are not mere matters of chance, or of a " bad " government in this country and a " good " government in Russia. They go right down to the root of things. Failure to deal with unemployment in this country is not due merely to the follies of Lloyd George or Bonar Law ; had they been a thousand times more able they could have done very little more. For, under the capitalist system, to provide employment means to provide employment that will increase capital's profits ; no other employment—except on so small a scale that it makes no difference—can be provided. Thus it is that in this country even a labour government could do next to nothing ; it could alleviate the suffering, but it could not cure the disease so long as it allowed the capitalist system to continue.

BAVARIA AND THE GERMAN FASCISTI

By M. PHILIPS PRICE

THE end of the Hohenzollern monarchy in Germany meant something more than the fall of a dynasty. The event had important social-political aspects, for it meant nothing less than the removal of one of the pillars, which supported the fabric of the old German State, and that was the pillar of agrarian privilege. The ground had been prepared for this revolution as far back as last century, when some of the worst abuses of a semi-feudal society on the land were removed and the way paved for the investment of industrial capital in the agricultural industry. In November, 1918, Germany east of the Elbe had ceased to be a land in which the junker alone dominated the public services, and became a land where industrial capital and the junker owners of the latifundias were arrayed against an agricultural labouring population, which had won for the first time in history the right of combination in defence of its occupation. But the junkers, although they have lost their special privileges, still play an important rôle in German politics. They have an industrial policy of their own and, since they can no longer force that policy down the throat of other elements of the population without their consent, and since they cannot totally eradicate the Socialist instincts of the land-labouring population, they seek alliances with the middle-class elements of the industrial centres, whose capital is in the long run indispensable to them, if they are to keep up the productivity of their estates.

One symptom of the change that has come over the Prussian agrarian party to-day is the fact that it has changed its name from "Konservativ" to "Deutsch National." This shows that the junkers no longer expect to win popular sympathy by harking back to the slogans of the old days. They must have a constructive policy and a national policy in order to get support from the small cultivators and independent peasants in West Prussia and South Germany, and from the numerous elements of the intelligentsia and petit bourgeoisie of the industrial centres, without whom they cannot reckon,

now that the three-class electoral system is abolished, to secure a political representation in the Reichstag under the Weimar Constitution. And in order to win support from these elements it has been found necessary to have recourse to what Bebel in his day termed "the Socialism of the silly fools." Every village of small cultivators has its speculator, who in most districts is a Jew. Every impoverished family of the lower middle classes in the towns, whose sons are unemployed through the break-up of the old Prussian military system and are gaining precarious existences as political secretaries or as bank clerks, has in recent years been forced to call in the pawnbroker to value the family jewels and portraits. And the pawnbroker, too, is as often as not a Jew. What easier task is there than making the Jew responsible for all the evils of modern Germany? Here, then, are possible recruits for the party of agrarian reaction, which can no longer find a way to power by extolling the advantages of agrarian privilege, but can find it by appealing to religious prejudices of the middle ages and using these prejudices as a means to entice those into its camp who would otherwise be forced by poverty into the ranks of the Socialists and Communists. Thus has arisen in North Germany the so-called "Deutsch Völkisch" movement within the agrarian Nationalist Party. It has arisen through the attempt of the junkers to extricate themselves from the net of the industrial capitalists, which is closing down upon them, and has its point directed just as much against the capitalists of Hebrew origin as against the reformist and revolutionary Socialists of the Left. It is the instrument which the pure agrarian interests still possess (now that their Press is partly absorbed by the industrial capitalists) and which they use to strike their bargains with the middle-class parties in the Reichstag.

But when all is said and done, Prussia, with its great centres of industry containing a Socialist working class and a self-conscious middle class, with relatively few peasant proprietors and a large proletarianised land population working on the great estates, is not a very fertile ground for this "Socialism of the silly fools." Much more fertile ground has been found in Bavaria. Of all the Teutonic lands Bavaria was the furthest removed from the big highways of land and sea traffic during the industrial developments of the last fifty years. The industrial population is sparse and scattered, and

the peasants, freed by the influences of the French revolution from the junkers, became independent cultivators earlier than in Prussia. Shut in on their upland plateaus bordered by the Alps, the Thuringian and Bohemian forests, and the Jura, the Bavarian peasant remained the boorish, superstitious, good-natured, and politically backward element of Germany that he is to-day. Thus with a backward but landowning peasantry, with an absence of a politically effective industrial proletariat (except in the far north, Frankenland), it only required the introduction of an element which had been accustomed to rule to convert Bavaria into the Vendée of Germany. And that element was soon to be found in the emigrant junkers and generals of the Hohenzollern army, who have settled in Bavaria in recent years, in order to make it the centre from which they could work for the re-establishment of the old regime in Prussia. Prussia, in fact, according to a popular saying in contemporary Germany, has migrated to Bavaria after the November revolution.

It is not generally realised that the Kapp Putsch of March, 1920, succeeded in its object—the overthrow of a republican Government based on a coalition with the Socialists—in one part of Germany, namely, in Bavaria. Ever since then an undisguised dictatorship of reaction has been in power in Munich. In Bavaria one can see on a miniature scale what would be likely to happen in the rest of Central Europe if the emigrants in Munich succeeded in accomplishing their plans. But the first thing that one can observe about the Bavarian reaction is that the various elements composing it have not by any means a common policy. That policy has been characterised by numerous vacillations, dependent upon whether Ludendorff, the leader of the Prussian emigrés, or Dr. Heim, the leader of the Catholic Bavarian Peasants' Party (*Bayerische Volkspartei*), get the upper hand in the councils of the Cabinet in Munich. In general it may be said that that policy has gone through two phases and is now in the middle of a third. During 1920 the peasants were in the ascendancy. The Bavarian "*Volkspartei*" commenced a plan of action whereby Bavaria should get back its old rights of fiscal autonomy, control its own passport and police regulations and foreign affairs, and generally undermine the strong centralist tendencies of the Weimar Constitution. In its separatist

zeal it was prepared to enter into relations with the diplomatic agents of the French Government and the representatives of the French General Staff, who were aiming at the re-creation of the Federation of the Rhine under French tutelage. Even the Prussian generals, including Ludendorff, began to coquet with these French agents, though their objects were not the same as Dr. Heim's. They wanted a separate Bavaria for their schemes of restoration in Prussia, although of course they would not disclose this to the French. But the French got wind of Ludendorff's intentions and made conditions for their recognition of an independent Bavaria under a restored Wittelsbach dynasty, which would have left the Bavarian Government a mere cipher of Paris, and so the whole plan fell to the ground. Thus ended the first phase in the history of the post-revolutionary Bavarian reaction.

In the winter of 1920-21 a certain State forest official, Escherisch, began to organise a military body, which was designed to combat by force all attempts at strikes and risings of the working classes and to rouse the national instincts of German middle-class youths. The revolutionary movement of the Italian workers which led to the occupation of the factories had just taken place, and the German industrial capitalists, who had not yet completed their big amalgamations, were becoming very nervous at these developments. The "Orgesch," as this strike-breaking organ of Escherisch was called, thus found abundant support from the finances of German heavy industry. The important feature about the "Orgesch" was that it did not confine its activities to Bavaria, but regarded itself as an All-German institution. Centred in Bavaria, it had by the new year 1921 spread its branches all over Germany. The plan, which the Prussian agrarians and militarists had hoped in 1920 to realise with the aid of Bavarian peasants' parties and with the connivance of the French, and which had been wrecked by the latter, they now attempted to achieve alone. The situation thus created was best characterised by the cartoon of the Munich caricaturist, Olaf Gulbransson, in the Berlin *8-Uhr Abend Blatt* at this time. A Bavarian lion was seen stamping on the ground with its paws, its whole body taut with energy and conscious of its might. But on its back and holding the reins in his hands sits a military figure resembling Hindenburg.

Here lay the cause of the difficulties which beset the Orgesch from the outset. The Entente Powers would gladly have seen the spectre of Communism laid by a German White Guard, but if that White Guard began to coquet with ideas of *revanche* and to aim at the re-establishment of a military regime, which might conflict with their own, at once there would be trouble. In the early part of the winter 1920-21 the Entente secured under the terms of the Versailles Treaty the dissolution of the Civil Guards ("Einwohnerwehr"), which had played such a part along with units of the old Hohenzollern army in suppressing the revolution in Prussia in 1919. The Orgesch, too, was threatened with the same fate, but by converting itself into a secret organisation it managed to save itself and to continue to keep its arms and depôts, to drill its members, carry on nationalist propaganda, organise strike-breakers, break up Socialist meetings, and raid the bureaus of the revolutionary Left. It was, in fact, the early phase of the German Fascist Movement. Yet it could not play quite such a rôle as the Italian Fascisti, for in Germany the now powerful industrial capitalists had control of the machinery of State, and had no intention of allowing their children, the White Guard organisations, to turn into independent prætorian forces with Bonapartist proclivities. Nevertheless the Stinnes party, which during this time was firmly entrenched in the executive but not in the legislative organs of the German Republic, used the Orgesch to terrorise the reformist Socialists and other "democrats," who fondly imagined that a parliamentary majority was a guarantee that the will of that majority would prevail. "It is not too much to say," says a secret report of the Munich bureau of the Orgesch, published in the *Vorwaerts* for September 11, 1920, "that the Government of the Reich is dependent on us. If it will stand up to the Entente and not dissolve the secret military organisations in Bavaria, all will be well. Only a Government which acts like this will remain in power."

The crisis in the Orgesch, which has symptomised the third and existing phase of the Bavarian reaction since 1918, has been brought about by two causes. Firstly, as indicated above, the Entente, and in particular the French Government, hung the threat of the Ruhr occupation over the heads of the Orgesch if it dared to aspire to any higher aim than strike-breaking and hunting

down Communists. This caused a split in the ranks: the more far-seeing leaders, like Escherisch himself, did not desire to try conclusions with an obviously more powerful French army, while a number of others, corresponding to the "Völkisch" elements in Prussia, were ready for any adventure. Secondly, the German heavy industry capitalists had by the winter of 1921-22 largely overcome the crisis immediately following the revolution. They had carried through their great concentration and had got large blocks of their capital out of Germany and safely invested in neutral countries. The necessity for co-operation with industry and finance capital in the Entente countries, and particularly with the French ironmasters, was becoming an urgent problem for at least one of the German trusts, and consequently the existence of a potential prætorian guard in Germany which might take their nationalist and chauvinistic slogans rather too literally became a danger. For the Stinnes trust anti-French propaganda is only a means whereby better conditions may be obtained for that trust in any future amalgamation of coal, iron, and steel interests in Westphalia, Lorraine, and Northern France. But the nationalist agrarians, with their militarist and anti-Semitic hangers-on, have no understanding for the finesse of this diplomatic game. The anti-Semites in particular began to kick over the traces. These elements had got control over the so-called "Organisation Consul." That body, originating as the secret service of the notorious Erhardt Naval Brigade, which had dyed its escutcheon with the blood of many thousands of German workers during the struggles of 1919, had continued after the Kapp Putsch as the secret intelligence department of the Orgesch. And this Organisation Consul in the summer of 1921 commenced a regular campaign of terror and assassination. During the Polish rising in May, 1921, in Upper Silesia it and a brother organisation, the "Freikorps Oberland," distinguished themselves by organising pogroms of the Jews, who happen to be the best financial support of the German national propaganda in that country! The leaders of this movement began to preach the most extreme form of racial hero-worship. With them Jews are vermin, and even the Christian religion is tainted because of the racial origin of its founder. Their cult is semi-heathen, the old Teutonic gods and Wotan their symbols of greatness, the Teutonic

"Swastika" of Indian origin their sign of power. It is almost inconceivable that such views should be held in these days in a European land, but they are undoubtedly the inspirers of the murderers of Erzberger and Rathenau, as the trials of the accomplices at the Leipzig High Court showed. The ills of Germany are, to these impecunious sons of former Prussian officers, now gaining a precarious living, due to a universal Semitic capitalist conspiracy against a chaste Germania.

The crisis caused by the shot which brought down the head of the royal stag amongst Semitic capitalists, Walter Rathenau, shook the Orgesch to its foundations. The money from the heavy industries and from the economic organ of the Prussian junkers, the "Landbund," stopped at once, and the Nationalist Party in the Reichstag made haste to repudiate the Völkisch elements. Some of the more moderate of the Nationalists, like Dr. Düringer, joined the Stinnes party as a protest. The component groups of the Orgesch began to go their own way and divide into three independent groups. The Bavarian separatist groups, which under Dr. Heim and the peasant parties had given tentative support to the Orgesch after the breakdown of its French liaison in 1920, have now begun to act on their own again. At the congress of the "Bayerische Volkspartei" this autumn in Munich a new party programme was worked out, demanding for Bavaria an autonomy bordering on separation and the virtual abolition of the Weimar Constitution. Other separatist groups have begun to take the initiative in Bavaria of late. The Bavarian Royalist Party (Königspartei), led by Dr. Meyer-Koy and Graf Bothmer, have revived the plan for a restoration of an independent Bavarian monarchy under the Wittelsbach dynasty with the assistance of French finance. The group called the "Donau Federation" aims also at a separation of Bavaria from the rest of Germany and at a federal union with Hungary and Austria under the Habsburgs. The financial assistance for this plan comes from the Vatican and is directed not only against France but as much against the Quirinal. The representatives of this tendency in Munich are Cardinal Faulhaber and the Papal Nuncio Pacelli.

The second group arising out of the Orgesch is that centring round the so-called "National Socialists." To them have come

what remains of the Organisation Consul, the Organisation Kanzler, and the Freikorps Oberland. As extreme anti-Semites they have reconstituted themselves under this new name and are organising terrorist expeditions against Socialist industrial centres, attacks on Jewish shopkeepers, and the plundering of banks and post trains. In fact, even the Bavarian Government has been forced to issue warrants for arrest for highway robbery against some of the leaders of this group. They represent the extreme Right of the Fascist Movement in Germany—the romantic robber barons of the middle ages transplanted into the twentieth century, with the self-imposed task of saving the capitalist system. The German trusts have ceased to finance them any longer. Only Hugenburg, a former director of Krupps, is known to have given them money recently, for they would undoubtedly be useful in the event of a general strike.

There remains now to be considered the third group, and this can be regarded as the original kernel of the Orgesch, the men immediately round Escherich himself, who still retain the old organisation after the others have split off. They retain also the connection with the heavy industry trusts, and are still amply supplied with funds from Stinnes, his friends, and industrial rivals. The latter do this because they see in the Orgesch still an extra-Parliamentary organisation which can force the Socialists into submission to their economic dictatorship, and which is not likely to get out of hand or set up as Bonapartists on their own. These are, in fact, the practical as opposed to the romantic Fascisti—the tame servants of industrial capital, who will break strikes or organise nationalist demonstrations whenever their masters, engaged in delicate negotiations with the Entente heavy industry trusts and preparing the ground for future international amalgamations and pooling of profits, require a little assistance from “the people.”

But if the rejuvenated Orgesch is to be the private military arm of the German trusts, it is necessary to find an intellectual arm. Stinnes, in his recent speech to the State Economic Council, has told all Germany that the eight-hours day must go, and that an extra two hours a day must be put on to produce for reparations account. His Stinnes-Lubersac agreement, as everyone knows,

gives him a 6 per cent. profit on the turnover of all reparations transactions. This ten-hour day must, therefore, be popularised at all cost, and the Social Democrats won over to the task of persuading the German proletariat of the necessity of this. In the event of their failing to persuade, then the Social Democrats must be induced to work the strike-breaking machinery ("Technische Nothilfe") created originally by their leader, Noske, and perfected now by the Orgesch. This, then, is the motive that stands behind the idea of the "Great Coalition from Stinnes to Scheidemann." Its realisation would be the last stone to be placed on the fabric of capitalist reconstruction in Central Europe. It would be the logical development of the particular form of practical, industrial Fascism which is developing in Germany to-day.

Up till recently it seemed as if the "Great Coalition," from the Stinnes party to the Social Democrats, with the extra-Parliamentary forces of the industrial Fascisti, the Orgesch, in the background, was going to be realised in Germany this winter. The ground had already been prepared by the union of the two wings of the Social Democrats, the outspoken revisionists and the Centrists, in the congress at Nuremberg in September. It was no accident that the meeting place was chosen at Nuremberg. The headquarters of the National Socialists and others of the romantic Fascisti type are at Munich. From here they dominate Bavaria south of the Danube. Through the secretary to the police prefect in Munich, Herr Glaser, one of their nominees, they control the secret service and apparatus of justice in this part of Germany. Woe to any person who crosses their path as the result of the Fechenbach trial showed, where ten years' penal servitude was given to German citizens who had dared to report in the Press the activities of their secret societies. But between the agrarian districts of South Bavaria and the industrial districts of Prussia, Socialist Thuringia, and Communist Middle Germany stands the industrial district of Nuremberg, in the pastoral highlands of Frankenland. The Frankish labouring population have always been staunch Protestants and upholders of the flag of reformist Socialism, and the heroes of the National Socialists would have to pass through this land in order to bring their filibustering expeditions to the North. That was what Otto Wels meant when he said, at the Unity Congress in Nuremberg:

"The fate of the German Republic is in the hands of the workers of Frankenland." The Unity Congress was a challenge to romantic Fascism, but it was also an offer of peace to industrial Fascism under the cover of the "Great Coalition," and with the watchword: "Defence of the Republic." For a week previously, the last Majority Socialist Congress at Augsburg had rejected a resolution to turn down, in principle, a coalition with the Stinnes' "People's Party." And the Majority Socialists were the dominant factor at the Nuremberg Congress. The policy of President Ebert and of Dr. Helphand (Parvus), whose influence in the councils of the German Social Democrats is still very great, and whose organ, *Wiederaufbau*, is untiring in its efforts to secure reconstruction with the aid of Stinnes, was in the ascendant.

But last month a crisis came. Directly after the Mussolini coup in Italy, the Bavarian National Socialists decided also to strike. The plan was to carry out a Putsch in Frankenland, and to use this as a base to operate against North Germany. But once again the German heavy industry capitalists blocked the way. They threatened the National Socialists with the "Great Coalition," and the United Social Democrats with the dictatorship of the National Socialists, unless they agreed to the Great Coalition. Dr. Wirth was put up to give an ultimatum to the Social Democrats in this sense. Faced with this crisis, the Trade Union leaders, who are always more in touch with the masses than the leaders of the Social Democratic Party, forced the pace and secured the rejection of the "Great Coalition." So the Wirth Government fell. In the meantime the South Bavarian Fascisti had missed their chance. As the Social Democratic Minister of the Interior for Prussia, Herr Severing, announced last week in the Diet: "We have now made preparations against any attempted armed expeditions from Bavaria into Prussia, not only by concentration of sufficient police forces, but also by the use of those methods of warfare which these people are used to." By this he referred to armed workmen's guards in Frankenland and Central Germany. The arrest of the notorious Captain Erhardt by police officials of the Reich, in the jaws of the lion at Munich, is also an indication that heavy industry and the Social Democrats were able, at the decisive moment, to scotch the plans of the National Socialists.

The Cuno Government is a coalition of the nominees of the two great German trusts—the Stinnes trust and the A.E.G., Krupps, Hamburg-Amerika Line Industrial Federation, with subsidiaries connecting the latter with Wall Street through the Harriman concern. It stands for a masked industrial dictatorship of heavy industry and finance, with its Fascist organ, the *Orgesch*, on the one hand and the "Great Coalition" with the Social Democrats on the other. It has the support of the former, which it finances. It is seeking to secure a coalition with the latter, without which it knows that it cannot put through the ten-hour day with the two extra hours for reparations account. It remains to be seen how the struggle within the ranks of the United Social Democratic Party will develop in the near future.

The coming of winter has seen romantic Bonapartist Fascism in the saddle in Italy. It has seen Germany one stage nearer to the extra-Parliamentary industrial dictatorship, which characterises the practical Fascism of northern, non-Latin lands. To complete it, the co-operation of reformist Social Democrat leaders who will confine themselves to parliamentary methods, while their capitalist colleagues will not, is required. In England the general election has brought finance capital in the form of the "Big Five" into power by constitutional means. But the problem of unemployment may force even the victors at the polls to seek assistance of the Labour Party to keep the underfed from taking action on the streets. Let the developments on the Continent be a warning to the Labour Party to refrain from any step which may lead down to the slippery slope, through parliamentary collaboration, to coalition with capitalist parties, and finally to direct responsibility for the industrial Fascism which big business interests of every capitalist country will be compelled to have recourse to sooner or later in order to save itself from decay.

BOURGEOIS POLITICAL PARTIES IN CHINA

By W. W.

A THOROUGH understanding of the inner workings of that great and complicated process, the struggle of social forces in China, is impossible so long as the primitive idea exists that the Chinese struggle may be dismissed as a mere fight amongst generals. Unfortunately this superficial opinion of complicated Chinese conditions has already gained a footing; in reality, however, it is no more than a hasty, superficial conclusion drawn from facts which do not even exist. It cannot be denied that the names of generals are repeatedly found on the surface of political life. Civil war forces military groups into the arena, and people fail to see what are the forces at work behind these groups, far down in the depths of the Chinese masses.

China is daily becoming more involved in the sphere of international trade. The Chinese wall, which at one time cut off China from the whole world, has fallen, and China is no longer an isolated country unconcerned with world capitalism. The penetration of foreign capital into China, together with its effects, has done its work. Railroads, steamships, and entire factory settlements, with their smoking chimneys, prove the new trend of Chinese economic life, and their results cannot be ignored. It must be remembered that quite recently Chinese foreign trade has been doubled and has reached the enormous sum of £150,000,000. The network of railways connecting the various parts of the gigantic Chinese territory is continually expanding. However, it is not generally recognised that China does not form a uniform picture in its economic structure.

For most people China is a uniform whole and is treated accordingly: this conception is due to its remoteness. The reality presents quite a different picture, for China may roughly be divided into three different parts: the South, including the whole territory south of the river Yangtze; United China, generally termed North China, being the whole territory north of the river Yangtze as far as the great Chinese wall; and Manchuria. These

three parts of China have each peculiar economic conditions which determine the social tendencies of those political groups which are so closely allied to the several parts of China and the political demands and wishes apparent in the present struggle.

South China is now passing through the period of "primitive accumulation." It is a kingdom of the petty bourgeoisie, consisting almost entirely of native-born Chinese. Unlike North China, the South is less under the yoke of foreign capitalism. There exists a certain influence of finance capital, but even this performs merely a supplementary function. The coastal territory of South China is somewhat differently placed, for it is under the control of the British possession Hong Kong. Hong Kong, however, does not regulate industry, but merely trade, and this mainly by duties which are levied both on imports and exports.

Let us turn to the extreme end of China, viz., Manchuria. Here agriculture is making rapid strides and producing a big surplus for export trade. This tendency ensures a flow of ready money and thereby fosters the prosperity of the Manchurian farmers and traders. Simultaneously the development of peculiar types of finance capital is noticeable, which also speeds the development of Manchurian agriculture.

Then there is the case of United China, with its water system of the Yangtze river, a network of railways, and two important harbours, Shanghai and Tientsin—this is the kingdom of industrial China.

This scheme of the economic structure also corresponds with the growth of those social forces which are behind the present political struggle in China.

More than ten years have elapsed since the revolutionary war in China swept away the monarchy and hoisted the five-coloured flag over the newly founded Chinese republic. The mandarins, the Chinese bureaucratic clique of officialdom, still keep alive the Manchurian dynasty that existed for so many hundred years. They cling to power and for modern China they embody the most important section of those reactionary forces against which the present struggle is being waged.

The Chinese mandarins linked up their fate closely with that of world imperialism which surrounded the old Chinese empire

with exploiting treaties and contracts. In order to ensure compliance with these treaties the help of the mandarins was sought, so that the burden of the treaties should be shifted on to the Chinese people.

Military groups came into being during the first years of the revolution; these imitated the mandarins, joined forces with them, and formed the basis of those military groups, or cliques as they are styled in China. During recent years these cliques have grown so powerful as to give the impression that the military groups were the only active forces in China.

Both the mandarins and the militarists are reactionary forces; but these do not comprise the whole life of China. It cannot be doubted that the process of growth and development of class-consciousness on the part of the Chinese bourgeoisie is now in progress. In the different parts of China they are pushing their class interests and demands under different forms to the front.

The chambers of commerce and industry, the present mouth-pieces of the Chinese bourgeoisie, are rallying around them the support of the new generation.

The Chinese bourgeoisie does not confine its organising activity to itself, it undertakes also the organisation of the scattered forces of the petty bourgeoisie and of the artisans, a force strongly developed in China. Besides, between the Chinese bourgeoisie and the Chinese intelligentsia (by which is meant the so-called European-Chinese intelligentsia, which is steadily developing) by degrees a relation is becoming noticeable, which threatens to end in the transformation of the Chinese intelligentsia into a tool of the Chinese bourgeoisie.

Thus the two great and tangible powers now figuring in the political arena of China are the militarised mandarins and the Chinese bourgeoisie. And also quite recently the Chinese proletariat has appeared on the horizon. But this superficial review by no means covers the whole ground of the present facts. For just as the militarised mandarins of modern China are not uniform in structure, neither has the newly developed bourgeoisie attained its final form.

Actual conditions have produced strange combinations—and not isolated ones—of the absorption of militarists by the bour-

geoisie; for example, a military man who has amassed capital became shareholder in or even independent owner of a certain business undertaking.

General Tsao-Kun, the leader of the "Chihli," belongs to this type, just as General Chang-Tso-Lin and dozens of others.

It is quite clear that this combination is increasing the power of the Chinese bourgeoisie, giving it good cause to question the distribution of power and to stake a claim for its appropriate share thereof. In this matter the opposition of the military groups of the militarised mandarins becomes apparent; they will not relinquish their position without a struggle, a fact which gives rise to the intricate nature of the civil struggle in China.

In the Chinese political arena there still exist three important political groups, corresponding in detail with the economic plan already presented. South China has the so-called Government of Sun-Yat-Sen, Central China has in Peking the Peking Government under the control of the Chihli Party led by Generals Wu-Pei-Fu and Tsao-Kun. In Manchuria Chang-Tso-Lin reigns.

The bitter armed struggle of the past few months, although conducive to the increase in power of the Peking Government, caused no change in the political map of China, which for the present remains unaltered. How can this be accounted for? The reasons apparently are to be found in those social conditions which form the root cause of the general Chinese political position and the civil war.

The struggle between the south and the north has deep roots of an economic nature. The victory of the north signifies for the southern, chiefly the petty bourgeoisie, the penetration of inland capital into the south, which would bring about the ruin of southern commercial bourgeoisie. It is this fact that strengthens the southern independence, the tendency to provincialism and autonomy. This, too, is the reason why Sun-Yat-Sen—the supporter of the petty bourgeoisie—demands in his programme the nationalisation of finance capital and independence of foreign capital; for finance capital, let it be home or imported, is alike the enemy of the southern trader and factory owner.

Sun-Yat-Sen and the Ho-Min-Dan Party are popular in the south. Careful observation indicates that this popularity is not so

much due to the fact that Sun-Yat-Sen wants to reform the whole of China, but that he defends the independence of the south in the struggle against the north.

Manchuria, where the Fin-Chang (Mukden) Party operates under the leadership of Chang-Tso-Lin, is on the one hand the home of the last Manchurian dynasty—a fact which has had its influence on Chang-Tso-Lin—and on the other it constitutes the arena for the opposing influences of the Imperialists, where the chief part is played by Japan, which compels Chang-Tso-Lin to dance to the tune it calls. It is no longer a secret that Chang-Tso-Lin became strong by the support of Japan. Japan calculated that in this way it would not only gain control over Manchuria, which was necessary as a compensation for Korea, but also over Peking, the seat of the official Chinese Government, such control being of great importance to Japan. It has already been noted that Chang-Tso-Lin is an important shareholder in several Manchurian financial concerns, and was therefore organically connected with the Manchurian bourgeoisie. Consequently, although half-beaten, Chang-Tso-Lin is necessary, both to Japan and the Manchurian bourgeoisie, and in return he was able to maintain his positions in Manchuria.

During last April north and south had a common enemy, Wu-Pei-Fu, who prevailed in Central China and had established himself in the valley of the river Yangtze. He held the majority of Chinese arsenals in his hands. Under the ensign of the "Fight for the National Revival of China" he became a serious competitor of both Chang-Tso-Lin and Sun-Yat-Sen. The result was, on the one hand, Sun-Yat-Sen's expedition against the north, and on the other the military operations opened by Chang-Tso-Lin against Wu-Pei-Fu. In Central China Chang-Tso-Lin was stigmatised as a traitor of the Chinese people and a hireling of Japan. This circumstance was made use of by Wu-Pei-Fu and facilitated his victory over his enemy. Sun-Yat-Sen's expedition to the north was too weak; Chang-Tso-Lin's defeat in the north was viewed with sympathy in the south, and all Sun-Yat-Sen's calculations miscarried. Wu-Pei-Fu kept the upper hand, and by means of his victory was able to be in control over the Peking Government. He restored the old Parliament and the power of the former President, Li-Yun-Chun.

Wu-Pei-Fu's victory was obviously to the advantage of that section of Chinese bourgeoisie which we have described above as the industrial bourgeoisie of Central China. It is quite clear that the restoration of the parliamentary system throws open the political arena, which had previously been occupied by the representatives of the militarised mandarin class, to the Chinese bourgeoisie. The latter in its struggle for power is naturally aware that it needs a pliable weapon, and no doubt looks on and values Wu-Pei-Fu in this light. This last encounter of armed forces is all the more important in that it set free the hands of the Chinese bourgeoisie and raised the hopes of Chinese public opinion.

The scene of conflict in China will now be Parliament, as it was formerly the battlefield. In other words, the Chinese civil war is by no means at an end. The troops are merely resting. Wu-Pei-Fu and Chang-Tso-Lin return to their headquarters, one to Lao-Yan, the other to Mukden, to reorganise their armies, form new corps, and prepare for renewed fighting. In the meantime the struggle is prosecuted by peaceful means in Parliament, and even more outside. The calling of Parliament is by no means an ideal solution. Under present conditions this Parliament is far from being, even in the slightest degree, an acceptable representation of the country.

China must deal with the following questions: (1) the conclusion of the work for establishing a constitution for the Chinese republic; (2) the unification of the country and the formation of a Central Government; (3) the abolition of the "Tu-chuns" and the reduction of the army.

In order to understand future discussions of these questions in Parliament we must examine the political groups at present in existence in China.

In the ordinary sense of the word there are no political parties in China. The so-called parties are really groups of persons connected by personal interests and not by questions of principle. The only party with a definite programme, even though not strictly adhered to, is the Ho-Min-Dan Party, with the old revolutionary, Sun-Yat-Sen, at its head. Before the 1911 revolution it was known as the Tin-Men-Wei, or Federation of Nationalists. This body was the leader of the 1911 revolution, but subsequently fell to pieces partly owing to the reprisals of the dictator Yuan-Shi-

Kai, partly owing to internal disintegration, the leaders fled the country, and within the party itself serious differences of opinion were manifest. Somewhat later Sun-Yat-Sen formed a new party out of the remnants of the Ho-Min-Dan Party, calling it the Chinese Revolutionary Party, which adopted three basic principles: (1) the racial principle, (2) democracy, (3) socialism (somewhat on the lines of Henry George's Single Tax), and accepted the authority of the executive head of the party. It formed a comparatively small group, as several old members left the party. After the restoration of the Shantung province in 1920, however, the influence of this party gradually increased; it was reorganised in 1921, and resumed the old name, Ho-Min-Dan, without altering the party programme.

The composition of the party is extremely varied. Widely different types belong to it quite independent of their class. Ex-officials and generals, bourgeois emigrants, soldiers, and workers, and particularly Chinese who have been educated abroad. This party is very like the Russian Social Revolutionaries, although the agrarian question with them is not so predominant an influence as with the latter.

The so-called "racial principle" or nationalism is conceived by the supporters of the party as an endeavour to restore China by the efforts of the Chinese themselves. But it is also taken to cover the idea of colonising and assimilating Mongolia, Chinese Turkestan, Tibet, and Manchuria. The party's idea of Socialism is the nationalisation of large-scale industry. It is Sun-Yat-Sen's conception of Socialism as State capitalism. Owing to its varied composition the party is unable to play the part which might otherwise be expected of its large membership in China (the paper figures are about 100,000). The kernel of the party consists of petty bourgeoisie, which gives it its character. As a matter of fact, membership of the party entails no obligation, although Sun-Yat-Sen himself lays great stress on the question of submission to the executive head of the party. From the point of view of organisation, it is not a party in the Western sense; it holds no congresses, no conferences. The Central Office, elected two years ago, carries on the work of the party on its own responsibility, so that its leadership applies not so much to the party as a whole as to a given group of persons.

The Ho-Min-Dan Party may thus be characterised as a party of the petty bourgeoisie which aims at liberating China from the domination of foreign capital. It is at present the means by which the Sun-Yat-Sen Government of the south has been able to retain its power.

More recently there have been serious differences of opinion within the Ho-Min-Dan Party, especially between the Sun-Yat-Sen and another leader, Chen-Tsun-Min, who has several supporters. These differences became evident already two years ago, and arose mainly because Sun-Yat-Sen insisted on the immediate election of a President regardless of the "law" and the Constitution, while Chen-Tsun-Min maintained that "a council of administrators of the Canton Government could be formed." Sun wanted centralisation of China. Chen wanted decentralisation.

Sun wanted to overthrow the Northern Government with armed force; but Chen was of opinion that the north should be split up and that the power of the Peking Government would be weakened by the union of autonomous provinces. Sun advocated the dictatorship of the Ho-Min-Dan Party, whilst Chen is a supporter of the coalition idea. As recent events showed, their differences of opinion within that party led to an armed struggle between Sun-Yat-Sen's and Chen-Tsun-Min's supporters, thereby causing a big deterioration in the party strength. Still, this party, which possesses many talented people and a certain degree of organising experience, will play an important rôle in the history of Chinese life, especially in the political struggle threatened in the newly formed Parliament.

After the revolution another party, called the Progressives, was formed alongside of the Ho-Min-Dan, but differing from it in its conception of the centralisation question. In its original form this party did not exist for long, and dissolved quickly. In its place two groups were formed—or, as they are termed, "cliques": "Nyan-Gin" and "Tsao-Tun." Neither of which has a written programme; they are composed of practical business people, members of big industry and bourgeois financiers. Lan-Chi-Cha is the leader of the Nyan-Gin group; he was a reformer under the rule of the Manchurian empresses, and prior to the revolution a supporter of the constitutional monarchy and an opponent of the republic. Under Yuan-Chi-Kai he occupied the position of a

Minister of Justice, from which he retired when Yuan-Chi-Kai tried to have himself proclaimed emperor. At a later date he took part in the struggle against the south, thereby losing his political prestige and barring his return to any governmental position. In 1919, during the students' movement, both he and his group concentrated in trying to influence the young generation, for which purpose they attempted for a time to herald Socialism. Yet the young Chinese remained hostile to this group.

The Tsao-Tun group was divided into an old and a new group, with Lan-Chi-In and Tsao-Chu-Lin as leaders of the old group. This group is closely connected with the Chinese financial and industrial circles. The new group is composed in reality of commercial people belonging to the "Bank of Communication." Wu-Pei-Fu's victory has almost brought about the ruin of this group, so closely connected with Chang-Tso-Lin. The former prime minister, Lan-Chi-In, fled to Japan.

Recently yet another group was formed in the upper classes of China which is connected with the progressive groups. This new group consists of professors, chiefly of Peking University, and its directors are Tse-Yuan-Pei and a professor named Chush-Shi. They issued a manifesto and a programme entitled "Our Political Views," which is an interesting example of the formulation of the political demands of Chinese liberalism. The manifesto was addressed to the "Best People" without reference to their opinions. That is to say, the document was intended to provide a programme which could unite democrats, syndicalists, and anarchists. This document is extremely characteristic of the individualist Chinese outlook, showing an inclination towards various anarchist forces. The authors of the manifesto, in their attempt to find a main political platform, declare: "We must unitedly demand good government for China as a minimum." The maximum demands of the group are classified under two heads: (1) all State organs must fully serve the interests of the community; (2) the freedom of the individual and his development must be fully secured. They embody their political wishes in three demands laid before the Government: (1) the Government must be constitutional; (2) it must be responsible, and its work must be public both in the financial concerns of the State and in the investigation of

matters which may allow of State action; (3) the Government must have "a plan of action." This latter plan of action is defined in the form of definite demands which the new progressive party will put forward under given political conditions. On the question of the unification of China they demand that a peace conference of the north and south should be held. They recommend as practical measures for guaranteeing unity of the north and south: (1) the calling of the Parliament dissolved in the sixth year of the revolution; (2) final confirmation of the constitution; (3) final reduction of armaments; (4) the reorganisation and centralisation of the machinery of Government, and a number of other demands which almost entirely formed the basis of the work of Wu-Pei-Fu.

It may be of interest to point out that Tse-Yuan-Pei is an important figure and has repeatedly taken part in the Government as Minister of Education. This time he was also a candidate for the position of President; it is clear that there was little chance of his succeeding to the latter post. Undoubtedly, however, the demands raised are in accordance with the views of the Chinese progressive bourgeoisie, and at the present time seem to be being carried into effect. In any case the new political group contains the germs of a new organisation which could play an important part in the life of China, not so much perhaps from the practical view as from the ideological side.

These are the most important groups in the political life of China. The question as to whether they are based on the broad masses of the population must be answered in the negative. With the exception of the Ho-Min-Dan Party all the groups are only connected with a narrow upper-class section. They are either of the governing class or of the Chinese intelligentsia in the service of the governing class. Except in the south, where the peasants form the majority of the population, they have not been drawn into the political struggle. They are ignorant, full of prejudice, and from the economic point of view their life is deplorable. The paid soldiery are only involved in the civil war as tools.

Young China—a mass of high school and other students all sporadically take part in the popular movement—at present forms a very small proportion of the Chinese millions. But

this small proportion is largely penetrated by Socialist ideas, and forms the radical groups.

As a whole it may be stated that the wide masses of the Chinese people are at present outside political life. The political parties described above have only gained a slight hold on the masses, and therein lies their essential weakness.

The World of Labour

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INTERNATIONAL

Communist Congress

AT Petrograd on November 5 the Fourth Congress of the Communist International was opened by Zinoviev ; the further sessions were held at Moscow and continued until December 5. The invitations sent out for this Congress were more restricted than those to the previous congresses. There were 392 delegates present representing sixty-three national parties, of these 342 possessed full voting powers, forty-four in a consultative capacity, and four guests. The whole international position was reviewed, and the effect of the policy adopted at the last world congress closely examined in respect of each country.

The congress unanimously approved the tactics of the executive and voted the following resolution to sanction the report submitted by the executive :—

RESOLUTION ON THE EXECUTIVE

The fourth World Congress unreservedly sanctions the political work accomplished by the Communist International Executive, who during fifteen months faithfully carried out the decisions of the third world congress and adapted them, where necessary, to the political exigencies of the moment.

The fourth Congress of the Communist International especially approves the tactics of the united front, such as were formulated by the Executive in December, 1921, and the other documents drawn up by the Executive on this subject.

The fourth Congress of the Communist International agrees with the opinion of the Executive in respect of the crisis in the French Communist Party, the events which have taken place in the Italian Labour Movement, as well as in the Norwegian and Czecho-Slovakian Communist Parties. Purely practical questions of detail concerning these parties will be dealt with by the special Commissions, whose decisions are still being studied by the Congress.

In reference to happenings in certain parties, the fourth Congress recalls and confirms the fact that during the interval between two international congresses the Communist International Executive is the highest authority of the entire Communist Movement, and that the decisions arrived at by the Executive

are binding on the members of the Third International. It therefore follows that it is a breach of discipline to attack decisions of the Executive under the pretext of appealing to the next congress. Should the Communist International permit such practices it would thereby paralyse its activities and abolish all regularity and unity.

As for the doubts expressed on the question of the application of Article 9 of the statutes of the Communist International, the fourth Congress declares that it is Article 9 which confers on the Executive the incontestable right to exclude from the Communist International, and in the same way from national sections, persons or groups of persons who take up a hostile attitude towards Communism.

As a matter of course the Executive is obliged to have recourse to Article 9, if the national party does not exercise the necessary energy and vigilance by means of its intermediaries to the party against non-Communist elements.

The fourth Congress of the Communist International reaffirms the twenty-one conditions, drawn up by the second Congress of the Communist International, and charges the new Executive to be most vigilant in enforcing them. In the future the Communist International ought to be more than ever an international proletarian organisation which combats all opportunism; in short an organisation based most rigidly on the principle of democratic centralisation.

Trotsky in the course of his speech referred to the new economic policy in Russia, and stated that the Russian State enterprises employ more than 1,000,000 workers. In reference to the International, he maintained that it was made up of right and left elements, and although he considered the right element a grave danger, he denounced indifference as the worst danger of all.

Amongst the delegates the negro race was also represented, for the Communist International, unlike the Second, includes both white and coloured races; it was suggested that at a future date an all-black conference should be held at Moscow so as to discuss the position of the 150,000,000 negroes—52,000,000 of whom live in America and edit 450 papers—and realise the united front.

The attitude of the Communist International to the trade unions and the action of Communists was summed up by Losovsky, who declared that the International was against expulsions as well as the voluntary resignation of Communists from the unions.

In view of the fact that a cursory review of the programme of the International would be of no value, and the impossibility of making a detailed one at the congress, it was unanimously decided, at Zinoviev's suggestion, to delegate the Executive to deal with it on the following lines:—

- (1) That the Executive should study and publish all the projects contained in the programme;
- (2) That every national body be required to submit their definite proposals to the executive three months before the convention of the fifth Congress;
- (3) That the same national sections justify definitely and decisively the necessity of the struggle for temporary demands, at the same time making necessary reservations according to existing conditions;
- (4) That the Congress energetically refuses to term opportunist temporary demands based on theory;
- (5) That the general programme should include historic fundamental examples of temporary demands made by certain national sections.

Amongst the most important national questions discussed was the crisis in the French Communist Party, which had been only temporarily decided at the Paris conference of November 15 (*see* LABOUR MONTHLY, December, 1922), subject to ratification and further proposals by the Communist International. The Fourth Congress decided that the French Communist Party should convene a national council, possessing the powers of a congress, during the month of January, at which a new executive committee should be elected and composed on the following basis :—

CENTRISTS : ten principal delegates and three deputy ones.

THE LEFT : nine principal deputies and two deputies.

RENAULT GROUP : four principal delegates and one deputy.

THE RENAUD JEAN GROUP : one principal delegate.

THE YOUNG COMMUNIST GROUP : one principal delegate (with voting power)

The political bureau to be composed of three delegates each from the centre and left sections, and one from the Renault group.

Froissard and Souvarine were appointed to represent the French Communist Party on the International Executive during the coming three months. The decisions in respect of the French Press were that Cachin should remain as editor of *L'Humanité* with Dunois, on an equal footing, as general secretary ; one editorial secretary to be chosen from the centre and another from the left. Comrades who have resigned should return to their positions. The editing of the *Bulletin Communiste* is to be entrusted to a comrade belonging to the left section of the party. The congress adopted these proposals with two dissentients.

The Young Communist International

The Third Congress of the Young Communist International met in Moscow on December 4, 1922. The organisation has greatly increased in strength during its three years' existence, and possesses members in almost every country in Europe. The present total membership is 800,000 divided into fifty sections.

The agenda discussed by the congress included : (1) Report of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International; (2) The results of carrying out the decisions of the Second Congress; (3) The economic position and struggle of young workers; (4) The next steps in the fight against militarism and the white terror; (5) The young socialist organisations and the united front of young workers; (6) The question of workers' sports.

World Peace Congress

A peace congress, summoned by the International Federation of Trade Unions, met at the Hague, December 10-15. The following organisations received invitations to be present at the congress:—

The National Trade Union Centres (twenty-two in number) affiliated with the International Federation of Trade Unions, together with their constituent trade unions; twenty-nine of the International Trade Secretariats; nine of the National Trade Union Centres not affiliated with the International Federation of Trade Unions, together with their constituent trade unions; the Second (London) International and affiliated organisations; the International Working

Union of Socialist Parties (Vienna) and affiliated organisations; the International Co-operative Alliance and affiliated organisations; the Young Workers' International (Berlin) and affiliated organisations; the International Working Union of Socialist Young Workers' Organisations (Vienna) and affiliated organisations; the International Federation of Working Women; twenty-two of the International Pacifist and kindred organisations together with their affiliated organisations; nineteen of the Teachers' organisations of various countries.

The congress was well attended, and representatives from twenty countries were present. The following resolution was passed unanimously on the opening day of the congress:—

This conference demands a new peace, based on new international agreements, and its members resolve to work unremittingly by every means in their power to bring about the convening of a World Congress through the instrumentality of the League of Nations in order to achieve a new peace.

Though both the Third International and the Red International of Labour Unions were not invited, Russia was represented on behalf of the Russian Trade Unions. Losovsky as spokesman declared that Russia was ready to join in any definite scheme. The peace resolutions were such that the Russian delegates outlined a separate one, calling for a Committee of Action against War. But the Congress rejected the Russian proposition and voted in favour of resolutions advocating prevention of war by an international general strike, education in peace ideals, disarmament, and the transformation of the League of Nations into an effective instrument for peace.

Statistics of Trade Union Internationals

International Federation of Trade Unions

The most recent statistics published by the International Federation of Trades Unions of Amsterdam show a total membership of 21,991,615, organised in twenty-four countries and being 69 per cent. of the total number of organised workers in the countries under review. The membership is as follows:—

Argentine	74,958	Hungary	152,577
Austria	1,079,777	Italy	1,200,000
Belgium	698,384	Jugo-Slavia	50,000
Bulgaria	14,803	Latvia	22,607
Canada	164,383	Luxembourg	20,966
Czecho-Slovakia	827,761	Norway	95,927
Denmark	242,545	Peru	25,000
France	756,243	Poland	365,190
Germany	8,417,200	South Africa	50,000
Great Britain	6,559,033	Spain	240,113
Greece	170,000	Sweden	313,208
Holland	223,718	Switzerland	225,822

In comparison with the statistics published in July, 1921, these show a decline, the total affiliations at that date being 23,907,059; besides the same applies here as in the case of the R.I.L.U. in respect of Italian figures which have been recently reported in *L'Humanité* as being not more than about 800,000.

Red International of Labour Unions

The Central European Bureau, on the occasion of the Second Congress of the Red International of Labour Unions, published complete statistics from each country of the strength of R.I.L.U. in each union and in the country as a whole. These show there are thirty-two countries in which the R.I.L.U. has supporters, the members are mainly groups in opposition to the central organisation and not the affiliations of central organisations, except in the case of Bulgaria, Egypt, Dutch Indies, Uruguay, Chile, where either the chief trade union centre or the majority of same adheres to the R.I.L.U. The statistics which give a total of 12,274,000 are :—

Argentine	30,000	Esthonia	16,000
Australia	60,000	Finland	48,000
Austria	90,000	France	300,000
Belgium	?	Germany	1,250,000
Canada	30,000	Holland	20,000
Chile	90,000	India	?
China	150,000	Italy	350,000
	(metal	Japan	7,500
	workers	Luxembourg	2,000
	who are	Mexico	25,000
	negotia-	Norway	100,000
	ting with	Poland	200,000
	the	Rumania	2,500
	R.I.L.U.)	Russia	7,914,000
Bulgaria	34,000	Spain	200,000
Czecho-Slovakia	367,000	Sweden	75,000
Dutch Indies	27,000	Switzerland	50,000
Egypt	100,000	Turkey	15,000
England	300,000	Uruguay	?
		United States of America	422,000

In the case of Russia the statistics issued at the last Trade Union Congress show that on the voluntary basis the membership of the central commission has been reduced to 5,100,000 ; the figures given for Italy cannot be regarded as absolutely reliable because the whole labour movement is in a state of chaos under the Mussolini regime and statistics are constantly changing.

GERMANY

Congress of Workers' Councils

THE first Congress of the Revolutionary Workers' Councils was held in Berlin, on November 23. Prior to the congress there was much controversy on the advisability of holding the congress under existing circumstances. The General Federation of Trades Unions (A.D.G.B.) refused to be associated with it, and was loud in its condemnation of what it termed the Communist Congress. The A.D.G.B. helped in this way to spread the idea that the delegates and conveners of the congress consisted entirely of Communists. That such was not the case a few detailed figures will suffice to show; though the idea of the congress and majority of the delegates belonged to the German

Communist Party (K.P.D.). For instance, of the 371 delegates from Saxony, 237 were members of the Communist Party, thirty-seven of the United Socialist Party, and seven Independent Socialists; the representatives from Rhineland, Westphalia, consisted of 211 Communists, eighty-two United Socialists, forty-two Independents, and fifty-nine non-party; those from Thuringia included twenty-two United Socialists, fifteen Independents, and fifty-nine non-party workers. All the funds necessary to organise the congress were collected from the workers, and the congress received the support of the rank and file if not of the officials, and was attended by nearly a thousand delegates from all parts of the country.

Since nothing tangible was being done to alleviate the misery of the workers, the idea of formulating a plan of campaign and urging it on the Government by means of the Workers' Councils was mooted, and in this way the congress of November 23 came about. It was since it was proposed that the enormous fall in the exchange and the change in Government took place.

Chief among the demands of the delegates were the establishment of a workers' government; measures to ensure daily necessities to the labouring masses; the annulment of the Versailles Treaty and restoration of Europe and prevention of bankruptcy and economic chaos by (a) seizure of values; (b) increase of production by retention of the eight-hour day and the introduction of compulsory work for all those fit to work between the ages of eighteen and fifty-eight years. The congress was unanimous on all the resolutions on these points, as also on that defining the attitude towards the trade unions here reproduced for greater lucidity:—

RESOLUTION ON TRADE UNION POSITION

In answer to a communication from the A.D.G.B. and Afa Union Workers' Councils.

The Congress regrets to record that a completely unnatural relationship exists between the Trade Unions and the Workers' Councils. Trade Unions and Workers' Councils, organisations similar in nature, should support one another in every possible way, especially in the present struggle against the employers, against hunger and want, and in the defence of the eight-hour day.

Instead the public is granted the spectacle of certain Trade Union leaders opposing the Workers' Councils Movement with an energy worthy of a better cause.

The Congress therefore considers it a duty to put and elucidate the question: "Why is this?" before the German workers who must bear the consequences of this unnatural state of affairs.

The spokesmen of the Workers' Councils demanded from the very beginning that the Trade Unions should take over the leadership of the movement and convene a Workers' Councils Congress. So persistent were the Works Councillors in their desire to link up all the forces of the Labour Movement that they repeatedly approached the A.D.G.B. Executive, although rebuff seemed certain from the attitude of the Trade Union leaders.

The Trade Union leaders repeatedly rejected the proffered hand. Even when the leaders of the most important Trade Union in Germany requested the summoning of a Workers' Council Congress, the large majority of the Trade Union leaders persisted in their earlier decision and all the evil consequences entailed for the workers.

Based on these incontrovertible facts, this Congress declares that it is entirely the

fault of the Trade Union leaders that the Congress was summoned without the co-operation of the Trade Unions.

The German workers could not possibly be satisfied with a mere protest against the cowardly inactivity of the A.D.G.B. in view of the events connected with the eight Bielfeld points; the five demands of the Stuttgart metalworkers; the open letter of the Communist Party; the ten A.D.G.B. demands to alleviate unemployment; and their ten demands on the taxation question. On the contrary they owed it to themselves and their class to try to fulfil on their own the duty which the A.D.G.B. Executive had so criminally neglected to perform; to carry out this duty despite all difficulties, threats of employers and numerous Trade Union officials, and the enormous financial sacrifice entailed.

The Congress is glad to be able to confirm the fact that the Workers' Councils Movement proved strong enough to set aside all obstacles which threatened the holding of the Congress. . . .

Just as the employers threatened those who took part in the Congress with proceedings, there were many Trade Union officials who threatened they would bring about the expulsion of those who participated in the Congress and thus disrupt the Trade Unions. . . .

This Congress calls on all unorganised workers to join the Unions, for only when all workers are prepared to make sacrifices will they be in a position to conquer the employers' organisations. . . . It is therefore the duty of every honest worker by all possible means to strengthen the unions, so that everything now in the Trade Unions helpful to the bourgeoisie will be wiped out and the Trade Unions thus transformed into what their very existence demands: Organisations of the workers' class struggle.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE LAST RESERVES OF MANKIND

The Citizen of the World. By Oliver Goldsmith.

The Problem of China. By Bertrand Russell. Allen & Unwin, price 7s. 6d.

First Congress of Toilers of the Far East. January, 1922. Published by the Communist International, Petrograd.

THERE are always certain difficulties in making a comparison between "two poets in two different ages born," and perhaps the difficulty is increased when the characters and natures are so radically different as those of Mr. Russell and Oliver Goldsmith. Nevertheless the similarity of their treatment of the problem of China is sufficiently noticeable as to warrant comparison. To Oliver Goldsmith the idea of treating the Chinaman and what he understood to be the Chinese outlook on life as a foil to the feverish behaviour of contemporary society, was irresistible. It delighted his contemporaries, as Mr. Russell's articles delighted *The Times*. For all the more ridiculous features of Western civilisation a contrast, real or fancied, could be found in the calm and serenity of the Yellow Land. Reflections upon the nature of society, the nature of men, their motives and impulses, came readily from the pen. By the literary circles of the eighteenth century the *Citizen of the World* was ranked along with the *Vicar of Wakefield*.

In one thing Mr. Russell has the advantage over Dr. Goldsmith: he has been to China. But it is only fair to say that he makes no undue use of this advantage. Apart from a few anecdotes and personal reminiscences, he introduces no more facts than he might have gleaned, living in Chelsea, from a perusal of the books of Mr. Putnam Weale, Professor Dewey, and other authorities and journalists. Indeed in one sense the necessity of using these authorities (a necessity imposed on Mr. Russell by this highly sociological century) detracts from the main purpose of the book. It is true that Mr. Russell may have thought his purpose to be a statement of the recent history of China and its present problems. But his true purpose comes out in those passages which reveal the balm to his wounded ideals and disillusioned spirit that Chinese habits and manners had the power to give. Though the apparent effect is an added querulousness with the West, yet one feels that China was the healer of his soul.

To some it will seem a pity that Mr. Russell should merely have contributed another book to the Renaissance of the Eighteenth Century, as built up by the Cambridge school. So much about China could have been told us by a trained Socialist investigator. Still, even that is of less importance than the views of the Chinese people themselves.

Fortunately, though we have still to seek for a fully satisfactory treatise on Chinese society, the actual plans and programmes of the live elements in China are revealed to us by the report of the Congress held in Moscow last February. There were assembled the victims of the Washington Conference, the peoples

of Korea oppressed by Japanese imperialism, the peoples of Mongolia, raided and ravaged by White Guard Russians and by the Japan-aided Tu-chuns of the northern provinces, the Syndicalist Unions and working-class parties of Japan, and finally a round dozen of parties, Nationalist and Socialist, that are springing up in the exploited lands of China. These people had been excluded from the thieves' kitchen of Washington. Here they were able to voice their claims and prepare their plans in common for resistance to the common enemy—Imperialism. In twelve sessions they discussed their plans, dealing first with the international situation and the results of the Washington Conference, and then with the differences that might arise between the nationalist bodies and the Socialist and Communist Parties. On these differences an understanding was reached; in the particular case of Mongolia a declaration was elicited from the Ho-Min-Dan Party (Chinese revolutionary nationalists) that they renounced any aim of re-annexing liberated Mongolia.

The results of the Washington Conference are summed up in a resolution, too long to quote, in which the world situation and its effect on all imperialists and the toilers of each of the Far Eastern countries is briefly defined. The last definition is memorable. It runs:—

The vast masses of workers and peasants of the Far East make up "the last reserves of mankind." Their revolutionary awaking will be a mortal blow to the entire world rule of oppression and exploitation.

The veteran socialist Katayama opened the congress, while there participated in the discussions a motley list of speakers, including a woman member of the Chinese Parliament, representatives of the Chinese railwaymen's union, the nationalist Press of China, and the Labour Press of Japan, the Christian organisations of Korea, and even the trade unions of the Dutch Indies. The history of the Korean passive resistance rebellion of 1919 and its bloody sequel was related—a movement of independence scarcely even heard of in this country—and the recent annals and problems of the Mongolians and Japanese workers are plainly and simply told in speech after speech. It is something like a Beatific Vision to read this report, to see these exploited peoples of the Far East preparing to get rid of exploitation, and to realise that it will not be a long time until the imperialist robbers are put to flight.

R.P.A.

PEACE BY ORDER

A New Province for Law and Order. By Henry Bournes Higgins. Constable.

IN this book Mr. Justice Higgins, who from 1907 until 1921 was President of the Australian Federal Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, describes for the benefit of the inquisitive foreigner the working of industrial arbitration in Australia. It has virtue, for it sets out the principles which have guided the court, and the statement of those principles may help to dispel illusions. Apart from this, however, the book is a pathetic document.

"The object of the court," we are told, "is to preserve industrial peace, . . . to protect the people as consumers." The President's only comment on

the action of "loyalists" who in 1917 took the places of striking waterside workers is that "the ships were being loaded and unloaded, and that was enough." "The court has no duty, it has no right, to favour or to condemn any theories of social reconstruction. . . . It leaves every employer free to carry on his own system so long as he does not . . . endanger industrial peace." Industry must be humanised, but for the reason that "one cannot conceive of industrial peace unless the employee has secured to him wages sufficient for the essentials of human existence."

But the book goes further, and tries to estimate the results of arbitration; here it ceases even to be edifying or illuminating. It tells of the number of disputes which have been settled without a stoppage, and enumerates a number of temporary gains which the court has authorised for the workers; otherwise, however, it does not attempt to explain the part which arbitration has played in Australian life, in the development of the Australian working class. Mr. Higgins writes as an expert, fascinated and blinded by a welter of detail, interested in "problems" for their own sake, and as a lawyer, concerned not with the conflict of class interests but with the logical implications of a statute. He treats the court simply as a piece of mechanism to be adjusted dexterously to deal with the difficulties which threaten "industrial peace"; he seeks to have an answer ready for any particular case of conscience upon which men are prepared to dispute. This book was published at a time when the condition of the Australian worker is on all counts worse than it has been for twenty-five years, and when the arbitration system is in hot water all round; but Mr. Higgins calls only for the redrafting of the Act which set up the court. In spite of its portentous catalogue of decisions the book does not make it possible to appreciate the effects of compulsory arbitration on the working class in Australia. To do that we need at least to give a thought to the conditions under which the arbitration system has developed and to consider the manipulation of trade unions by the court.

Arbitration began with the whole backing of the trade unions. After the collapse of the great strikes of the early 'nineties the unions in their revulsion from direct action put their hopes in legislation. Allied with strong middle-class sections who were vaguely convinced that Australia had a future of its own, they aspired to build up within Australia a self-sufficient middle-class paradise where the troubles of the Old World would not be reproduced. Australia, guarded by an invisible Long Wall of tariffs and Immigration Acts, was not to be "a drift Sargasso where the West in halcyon calm rebuilds her fatal nest," but a land where democratic principles and reason would prevail, and in which class antagonisms would be obliterated. Arbitration appeared to promise security to all classes. The steady increase in general prosperity during the early years of this century encouraged Labour to hug the illusion that Australia was to develop on lines of its own. The demand for labour was keen; the workers' bargaining power, apparently ruined in the 'nineties, had been more than restored. Arbitration, which registered a series of wage advances corresponding to price increases, received the credit for the maintenance and improvement of the workers' conditions. By the time the Federal Court was

established (1904) the Labour Movement everywhere was pledged to support compulsory arbitration.

The gratuitous glory which the court derived from the improvement in the workers' bargaining power was reinforced by the personality of the President. Uncannily "fair-minded," Mr. Justice Higgins went to immense trouble to "see both sides," and to play his legalist game with scrupulous accuracy. Unquestionably, in the three or four years preceding the war, there was no one more popular with the workers and the small middle class. Both he and his court were supported especially keenly by Labour politicians, who could appear as reassuring apostles of industrial peace, and by trade union leaders, who found that arbitration encouraged large membership. Certainly arbitration in Australia had as good a run for its money as was conceivable.

With the collapse of trade in the last two years, however, the hollowness of the "benefits" of arbitration is revealed. The court is now unable, as the present President admits, to secure even the "sacrosanct" basic wage. It is used to prevent unions from striking, and, as in the case of the engineers and the timber workers last September, to impose longer hours. It was a fair-weather system. Now, when the economic conditions of the last twenty years have disappeared, the issue between Capital and Labour is becoming clear. When both sides are resolute, the impotence of a formal, supposedly classless, piece of machinery is disclosed. Employers turn to the lockout, dignified under the name of "quiet trade," and, impatient even of the Arbitration Court, demand instead piece-meal machinery created to deal at random with a particular dispute. Unions resist the employers' demand to scrap the whole system but, following the lead of the miners and seamen, tend to scorn the court and to revert to direct action. Further, it is now clear that the defects of the Act, of which the late President complained, were not an accident, but the natural and necessary result of the unwillingness of legislators to put the needs of employers at the mercy even of an Arbitration Court. The book is an anachronism and a piece of mysticism, blind to the facts of present-day industrial life.

Not only is compulsory arbitration proved now to be impotent to help the progress of Labour to a private millennium; its effect on the organisation of the workers has been simply disastrous. Unionism has been encouraged, in the sense that recruiting was made easier, and the result was "pence-card unionists," who now are deserting. The court, as is shown in this book, frankly used all its influence to break the principles of militant unionism. It refused to arbitrate while members were on strike. Registration at the court was conditional on continued "good behaviour." Rules and the internal government of unions were modified at the order of the President. As was seen by the Australian Workers' Union in 1915, members could be admitted or excluded at his discretion. It was left to the President to settle the status of rival unions. Heavy money penalties were imposed for direct action. Different wage rates were fixed at different centres, in spite of the existence of a "union rate." Preference to unionists was refused the shearers and the seamen in 1911, and the builders' labourers in 1913. The sympathetic strike was given especial attention. Crafts were given awards "which should be regarded as a special

privilege entailing special obligations"; in 1917, for instance, the engine-drivers were treated well on condition that "in a strike of miners they would lower and raise the officials and any men remaining at work." Heavy bonds were required from unions to prevent their members presuming to place "their duty to other unions higher than their duty to the public, to their human kind." Under arbitration unionism has been emasculated; the court has almost succeeded in turning it into a mere convenience of capitalist social order, in destroying ideas of class, and in making Labour mutely content with a subordinate status. "This court has repeatedly expressed the value which it attaches to unionism, and with no uncertain voice, but this court cannot help unionism in a struggle against the public interest. It is hard to see what more could be done by the court, a court created by and for the public of Australia . . ."

E. M. H.

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More British Marxism

R. P. D.

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NOTES of the MONTH

*The End of Reconstruction—A British Policy Pricked—America's Hand
—The Hand Shown—British Isolation—Britain's Next
Policy—French Bankruptcy or War—Workers
Unprepared—The Indecency of the Hague—
Mock Campaigns—The Way Clear*

THE air is clearing. The oppressive stagnation, the long-drawn deadlock of the world after the war is reaching its end. The conflicts of capitalism to-day, so long concealed under hypocritical forms, are breaking out in open violence and preparations for war. A new period is beginning, and it is not the period of peaceful reconstruction looked for by the economists. The forces that govern our age are becoming plain to all. The issues of the working-class struggle are growing sharper. The opportunities of veiling those issues behind sham sentiments are becoming more difficult. At the present moment no one can survey the world situation as it is without perceiving the utter remoteness of the common formulæ of recovery and reconstruction, and the deeply revolutionary character of the age in which we live.

THE last few weeks have seen a testing of the forces of the world situation; and the answer has been a revelation that marks a stage in the progress to new conflicts. Events have been so rapid that there is still a widespread unconsciousness of the complete reversal that has taken place. When French forces are on the Ruhr it is difficult to realise that barely a month ago Poincaré and Clemenceau were definitely declaring their opposition to the occupation of the Ruhr in the face of the angry demands of French nationalism. When the British Government is meekly signing the terms of its financial bondage to American capitalism, at the same time as it is seeing the European debts to itself ignored and the hopes of European trade revival destroyed, it is difficult to remember that barely a month ago British capitalism was hoping

by a skilful stroke and the exploitation of American indecision to bring about a liquidation of the whole situation in terms of European restoration and triumph for itself. From this far-reaching reversal of the whole situation, with its immeasurable consequences for all Europe, two great facts emerge. The first is that Britain, whose economic position has made her for the moment the upholder of the interests of European reconstruction, has been defeated. The second is that the force behind that defeat has been the United States.

AMERICA has once again been the supreme power for Europe which has held every country dangling in hopes, and in the end left all to go to crash. Six weeks ago the hopes of an American loan and intervention dominated the situation. In the hopes of that financial relief French nationalism moderated its tune, and Clemenceau, as he left New York, declared against military measures on the Ruhr, while Poincaré on the same basis met a hostile vote of the Chamber and accepted the support of the Radicals in the hope of that miraculous intervention. British finance built castles in the air of European restoration and a cancelling out of debts. The British Premier had already described the pathetic dilemma of the British position. If on the one hand we pay the United States, he had declared, while on the other we remit German reparations and Allied debts, then victorious Britain "would be the only nation in the world that would in truth be paying any substantial indemnity at the close of the war." It was on December 13 that the British Premier made this statement. On December 14, J. P. Morgan, British financial agent in America, visited the Secretary of State Hughes. On the 15th Poincaré faced the hostile vote of the Chamber. At the same time rumours were spread of an American loan of one and a-half million dollars ready to hand, and an impending economic conference to be summoned by America. The coincidence of the summoning of the American London Ambassador to Washington with the visit of the British Chancellor of the Exchequer was made the subject of speculation. British diplomacy began to build magnificent schemes.

BUT those schemers were destined to a rude awakening. Once again at the last moment the American hand was revealed. The dreams of a saviour vanished. French militarism was left free to work its will. British policy found itself isolated and helpless. The Paris Conference revealed the discomfiture of the British. Just as at Washington a year ago the French unrestricted submarine and aeroplane building programme was let through by America after expressions of pained regret, so now with the occupation of the Ruhr. According to *The Matin*, Mr. Hughes, the American Secretary of State, recently discussed the occupation of the Ruhr with M. Jusserand, the French Ambassador to Washington. Mr. Hughes "expressed some doubts" as to the value of the occupation from a material point of view, but added: "In any case, it is your right." Once again British hopes were dashed to the ground: American policy under the guise of spoken disapproval gave practical support to the French. America found that she would only be a "sympathetic spectator"; "when the French plan has been tried and its results demonstrated" she might consider intervening.

WHAT was the practical effect of this? On the one hand the negotiations for funding the British debt went inexorably forward, there was no respite there. The conference at Washington opened with professions of good-will; the British Chancellor of the Exchequer was stated to have made a profound impression by the frankness of his business-like statements. Then the Conference got down to work. And almost immediately there came news of a deadlock, of a suspension of the conference, of Mr. Baldwin's return to England to consult with the Cabinet. The American Debt Commissioners were inflexible; they demanded the acceptance of terms that would mean the eventual payment of £200,000,000 more than the British felt they could offer. This is one factor in the changes of the last few weeks—changes that have left Britain isolated. And on the other hand reparations and the Allied debt for Britain vanished out of sight, not as a price of economic restoration, but alongside of a smashing blow to the hopes of economic restoration. The situation feared by

Mr. Bonar Law became realised. Amidst the general consensus of the rest of the world the burdens became shifted on to Britain.

THE result was immediate. Britain was thrown into the arms of Germany. The co-operation between Britain and Germany became complete. The British representative on the Reparations Committee became virtually Germany's spokesman. The German Government implored the British troops not to desert them. *The Times* published a review of Nitti by Keynes. British opinion looked admiringly to Stinnes and the industrial magnates concocting measures of economic resistance on the Ruhr, an admiration that betrayed a lurking fear lest Stinnes and his associates might not come to an agreement with the French. British industry looked to the possibility of a revival of the coal trade in consequence of the removal of the Ruhr for the time being from the economic sphere of Europe. As for France, the British Government consoled itself with hopes of an impending bankruptcy. The Chancellor of the Exchequer declared to the American public (according to the *New York Herald*) that "the franc may go the way of the mark" and "there is danger of revolution in France as well as in Germany." The British representatives at Paris were reported to be convinced that France was aiming, not at reparations, but "a new war . . . as a diversion that may postpone the inevitable hour when it shall be seen that French national finance is bankrupt—that word is used here."

IN this way British policy adapted itself to the new situation. But it was at the cost of a tremendous change. The hopes of economic restoration and reconstruction were submerged. The new calculations were in terms of hostile alliances and impending conflicts. For the one factor on which most hopes were placed was also the most threatening—the question of French bankruptcy. With each successive phase it has become increasingly clear that the driving force in French policy is the French financial position, alike in the moments of truculence and in the moments of concession, in the moments of rabid anti-Germanism and of

sudden co-operation with Germany. The French Budget Commission has reported that in a few years' time the whole available French revenue will barely be adequate for the interest on the growing debt, and there will be nothing left for public services. At the same time the feverish expenditure on military preparations continues in full force—an army of 700,000; conscription of the African colonies to produce a further army of 800,000; strategic railways in Africa to facilitate the transport of these troops to Europe; intensive submarine building; and an air force of 128 squadrons of nine planes (against the British thirty-two of twelve). Meanwhile the militarists in the countries that neighbour France are also working hard. The superiority of the French in aircraft is used as an argument, in Britain as in other countries, for a more rapid development of the air forces—forces which only hypocrisy can pretend are useful in defence. Major-General Brancker, the Director of Civil Aviation, spoke bluntly on this point on January 16. He said that France was outbuilding us, that her planes were admittedly meant for war, and that therefore she could only be building for war with Britain. The British Cabinet, remembering taxes, unemployment, and the American debt, cannot go beyond the addition of two Territorial Air Force brigades to the brigade defending London. But the conjunction of these two conditions, of growing financial collapse and growing military expenditure, is too arresting for the meaning not to be plain to anyone. There can here be no question of time and long calculations. If the goal is not war very much sooner than is yet generally recognised, it is only because events may supervene of no less magnitude than war.

THIS is the situation with which the international working-class movement is confronted. In the face of this situation the preoccupation of the various sections with rosy pictures of what can be achieved in "our Parliament" or "our Diet" is even more irrelevant and pathetic than in the days that led to 1914. The growing clearness and insistence of the class struggle in its simplest sense and in its fullest international force becomes more and more definite; and it becomes more and more

difficult for the most conventional, hesitating, and reactionary leadership to ignore it without becoming openly involved in opposition to the working class. The easy confusions and alluring alternatives are being driven out of existence. The most reactionary of leaders are being compelled to make a show of taking up the issues of the class struggle. They go to the Hague under the presidency of Mr. J. H. Thomas to pledge themselves to the international general strike against war. They go to Trafalgar Square to arouse the masses on the issue of unemployment alongside of the unemployed leaders. The ludicrousness of both these situations, and the inevitable inconsistency with their actual policy and actions, exposes their real position in the sharpest light. The falsity of the position is such that, if only sufficient of the working class are awake to it, it cannot long continue.

WHAT happened at the Hague Peace Congress? The official leaders of the Labour Movements of every country met to mobilise the forces of the international working class against war. They met to proclaim the international general strike against war. Did they mean anything serious by this? Their own comments make clear their point of view. "In one sense," declared Mr. Henderson, "the cause of peace will already have been lost if it ever becomes necessary to put the resolution into effect." "Our business," wrote Mr. MacDonald after the adoption of the resolution, "is not to make grand declarations that if a war came we should not fight (my comment on that is 'Wait and see')." But even more than their comments, their actions reveal the facts. For, as it happened, the conference was able to afford a simple test. The Russian trade unions' representatives wished to treat the question seriously and prepared a careful concrete programme of actual steps necessary in order to organise international working-class action against war—forms of propaganda to be undertaken, method of organising resistance, establishment of organisations in the armies and navies to cause revolt at the critical moment, establishment of international working-class communications, &c., &c. This was a cold breath of reality against the hot-air resolutions of the posturers. To have to discuss it

and provide an alternative programme would have been inconvenient. The chairman, Mr. J. H. Thomas, accordingly refused to put the resolution of the Russian Trade Unions to the conference. Instead, resolutions were passed in favour of education in peace ideals for the rising generation, disarmament, the League of Nations, and—the international general strike against war, passed on the proposition of the British Trades Union Congress. The British Trades Union Congress, which had just at its last meeting refused its central body any power whatever, not merely of common action, but even of common financial assistance, now comes forward as the sponsor of a resolution for international common action under the direction of the Executive of the International Federation of Trade Unions. It would be difficult for open indecency to go further.

THE same situation is revealed at home. Under stress of the situation the Labour Party is compelled to develop from the path of purely parliamentary agitation for legislative measures to endeavouring to take up the leadership of the movement of the masses on class issues such as unemployment and the rent strike. But once again the character of their campaign is rendered unreal by the actual facts of their policy of class co-operation. While they can organise unemployment demonstrations all over the country, the only demand they can put forward is to summon Parliament. The solitary voice of one leader, Smillie, declares for a definite policy—the one-day or two-day general strike to secure the demands of the unemployed. His proposal is not even published in the official Labour organ. So in Parliament the Labour benches may raise their indignation and protest. They feel (whatever they may be told by Sidney Webb and Lord Haldane) the class character of the contest: the very opposing benches an expression of class opposition; the ranks opposite them an embodiment of the interests of the exploiters. But their official policy, the policy of their leader, is a policy of class co-operation, and all their raging is without meaning. Their leader is embarrassed by it, but his policy is not hindered. On the very night of the famous “scene” MacDonald takes part in the next debate to appeal for “peace in the coal industry” and the necessity for employers

and employed pulling together in "the general interests of the community" (this section of his speech was omitted in the report in the official Labour organ—the policy of class co-operation cannot be too openly displayed before the masses, who have to be fed on make-believe campaigns).

WHAT does this amount to? It means that the present leadership of the Movement is being compelled by the nature of the working-class situation to embark on campaigns which by reason of its non-working-class policy it is unable to carry through. It is being compelled to take up the issues of unemployment or war against war: and at the same time it dare not face what is involved in making the advocacy real. The straddle of one foot in the mass movement and one foot in class co-operation becomes more and more strained and difficult, and results in more and more ludicrous postures. They may mount the rostrum with the unemployed leaders in order to place themselves at the head of the agitation: but when once their panacea of summoning Parliament has failed they have nothing left to offer. If in this situation they succeed in remaining at the head of the movement, the disgrace is with all the rest of us. We should welcome the present position. For the moment, it is true, it is full of disastrous possibilities for the working class. Against real and impending dangers we have nothing but a sham structure of such palpable dishonesty as to be almost honest in it. But the same situation which exposes the rottenness of what we have points the way to what we need. The shams cannot long stand the fierce testing imposed on them by the revolutionary realities of the world situation. At every successive turn of the situation the inadequacy of the old forces is more manifestly revealed. We who believe that we can see the clear way of the working-class movement can go forward.

A PROGRAMME OF MARXISM

By N. BUCHARIN

(It is many years now since there has been any attempt to make a full statement of the world outlook of Marxism. The last classic attempt was the Erfurt Programme of 1891. On that programme was built up the Second International and the social democracy of before the war. Since then the whole conditions of the world have changed. The situation of world crisis and revolutionary struggle which the old Marxist programme only foretold is now part of our actual experience. The following first attempt to make an adequate statement of modern Marxism, prepared as a draft programme for the Communist International by N. Bucharin, will arouse widespread interest.)

I. CAPITALIST SLAVERY

General Characteristics of Capitalism as a System of Exploitation.

At the present time almost the whole globe is under the rule of capitalism.

This rule is based upon private property and the production of commodities for the market.

A small group of persons is in possession of the monopoly of the means of producing these goods, and of the means of distributing them ; this group is the capitalist class. This monopoly assures to this class an undivided economic domination over millions of proletarians, who possess no means of production, and who are forced to sell their labour power.

The economic domination of the bourgeoisie is secured by its political rule and by its state organisation, which gives it a monopoly over all arms and means of applying physical force.

The rule of the bourgeoisie is also secured culturally, for it possesses the monopoly of education, this being in the hands of the capitalists.

Wage Labour and the Conditions of Exploitation

The working class, which forms a constantly growing majority of the population, thus serves as a living source of profit to the bourgeoisie exploiting its labour.

The working class, economically oppressed, subjected politically and culturally, is the slave of capital.

Contradictions in the Development of the Capitalist System

The hunt for profits forced the bourgeoisie to develop its productive powers continuously and increasingly, and to extend the sphere of operations of capitalist production. But the fundamental defects of the capitalist system revealed themselves at the same time with ever growing distinctness ; these defects inevitably lead to the complete breakdown of the capitalist system.

The rule of private property imparts an anarchic character to production, and leads to blind production regulated by no conscious power. This is shown on the one hand in the severe conflicts between various competing concerns and groups of concerns, causing an enormous waste of energy ; on the other hand the unregulated production causes periodically recurring crises, accompanied by destruction of productive forces and mass unemployment among the proletariat.

To the anarchy of production must be added the class conflicts. Capitalist society, built up on the exploitation of an overwhelming majority of the population by an inconsiderable minority, is torn in two, and its whole history is one of conflicts between the classes.

The struggle of the capitalist system for world domination leads to a special form of competition among the capitalist states, finally expressed in wars which are equally inevitable accompaniments of capitalism, as are crises and unemployment.

The extension of capitalist production, involving the development of productive forces, is accompanied by the decay of pre-capitalist economic forms in the competitive struggles, by the decay of a part of the peasantry, by the disappearance of handicrafts, by the economic defeat of small and medium capital, and by the open plundering and merciless exploitation of the colonial countries. This process leads on the one hand to an accumulation of capital, to its concentration (centralisation) in the hands of a few multi-millionaires, and is, on the other hand, accompanied by a tremendous

increase in the numbers of the proletariat, which, having passed through the severe school of the capitalist system, becomes the deadly enemy of the bourgeoisie and its system of society.

The process of the centralisation of capital, and of the extension of the capitalist system, constantly reproduces the fundamental defects of capitalism on an ever-increasing scale. The competition among small capitalists ceases, only to be replaced by one among big capitalists ; where competition among big capitalists comes to a standstill, it widens its radius and becomes a competition between the gigantic associations of the millionaires and their states ; the crises change from those of local and national character to crises extending over a number of countries, and finally to world crises ; the local wars are replaced by alliances and world wars ; the class war develops from isolated actions of single groups of workers, first to a national struggle, and then to an international struggle of the world proletariat against the world bourgeoisie.

The inevitable sharpening of the class antagonisms is accompanied by a simultaneous consolidation of the antagonistic class forces. On the one side the capitalist bourgeoisie forms its associations, secures its state power, and organises its armed forces ; on the other side the working class, brought into one camp and united by the mechanism of capitalist production itself, creates its own powerful organisations, which are sooner or later transformed into weapons of the proletariat in the war against the bourgeoisie and its main support—state power.

The natural course of capitalist evolution thus inevitably sharpens the contradictions of the capitalist system, and finally renders the existence of the system itself impossible. The living force which overthrows the capitalist system is the proletariat, which revolts against its bondage, annihilates the regime of capital, and organises the systematic economics of Socialism, the premises of which are created by capitalism itself.

These premises of the new form of society which has to replace capitalism are : the concentration of the means of production, a powerful capitalist technique, the science created by capitalist evolution, and the workers' organisations, which will be able to furnish the first organisers of the new order of society.

The Last Stage of Capitalism

The last decades of the rule of capital are characterised by special features of evolution, rendering the internal contradictions intensely acute, and leading to the unheard of war crisis of 1914 and the years following.

Capitalism became world capitalism, a form of economics which subordinated all other forms on the whole surface of the globe.

The numerous private undertakings competing with one another and destroying each other in this competition, have been replaced by mighty associations of industrial magnates (syndicates and trusts), consolidated by the banks. This new form of capital, in which banking capital amalgamates with industrial capital, in which the possessions of the large landowners also become a part of the general organisation through the agency of the banks, where there are cliques of enormously rich financial oligarchies almost possessing the character of hereditary dynasties, bears a sharply accentuated monopolist character. The free competition which has taken the place of the feudal monopolist economics now changes into a monopoly of finance capital.

This organisation of capital, essentially monopolist in nature, and frequently causing separate groups of the bourgeoisie of different branches of industry to unite, also gives rise to substantial changes in the type of competitive struggle. Instead of competing by means of low prices, there is a growing tendency to use force openly : boycotts and other forms of pressure within the country itself ; high protective duties, tariff wars, the employment of armed force backed by state power—in international relations. This increasing acuteness of competition is in international economic relations largely due to two facts: first to the general division of the colonies among the greatest capitalist states ; secondly, to the extraordinary increase in the export of capital, accompanied by the increased endeavour to occupy fully the territories to which the exported capital flows.

Under such conditions state power and its armed forces assume a special significance for the bourgeoisie. The policy of finance capital is directed to rapacious activity of the utmost intensity (Imperialism), requiring enormous reinforcements for armies, air

fleets, and every description of means of annihilation. The gigantic development of militarism becomes one of the causes of international competition, increasing the acuteness of the competitive struggle and leading to disastrous wars.

The process of the centralisation of capital on a world scale has thus led to the creation of mighty state capitalist trusts, great powers of finance capital, which have become the central points of the capitalist pressure extending throughout the world, of the capitalist predatory raids, and of the exploitation and enslavement of enormous numbers of proletarian, semi-proletarian, and peasant elements. The weaker bourgeois states exist in direct or indirect dependence on these mighty powers and live at their mercy. A direct object for enslavement and exploitation is finally formed by the colonies, which number hundreds of millions of working and exploited inhabitants.

There are two main forces organising against the mighty organised forces of finance capital : on one side the workers of the capitalist states, on the other the oppressed peoples of the colonies. This basic revolutionary tendency is, however, temporarily paralysed by the corruption of a considerable section of the European and American proletariat by the imperialist bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie of the most powerful imperialist states, which have reaped enormous profits by plundering colonies and semi-colonies, have raised the wages of continental workers out of the booty of their plunder, thereby interesting these workers in allegiance to the imperialist " Fatherland " and in its plunderings. This systematic bribery has taken special effect among the labour aristocracy and among the leading bureaucratic elements of the working class, social democrats, and trade unions, which have become perfect tools in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

The keen competition among the most powerful of the great powers for the possession of the colonies led to the world war of 1914. This war shook the foundations of capitalist economics to such an extent, rendered the position of the working class so much worse, destroyed so many imperialistic illusions among the proletariat, that it brought on a new historic phase in the disintegration of capitalist production.

The Results of the War and the Beginning of the Decay of Capitalism

The war of 1914—1918 brought about a destruction of productive forces never before experienced in history ; it led to the immediate annihilation of gigantic means of production and of the best living working forces of humanity ; it caused an unheard of waste of energy as a result of productive power being used for unproductive purposes. The attempt made by the national state capitalist trusts to compensate for this wastage by the perfection of the forms of organisation (the subjection of private capitalist enterprises to the state, the so-called State Capitalism) only served to render the struggle between the separate states the more acute.

The total disorganisation of the world's traffic thus brought about the chaos in the division of labour hitherto obtaining throughout the world, the collapse of the reciprocal and regulated modes of settlement, the disturbed rates of exchange, and the unheard of state debts, all these factors intensify the ruin of capitalist world economics.

The imperialistic economic systems undergo essential changes, for the colonial and semi-colonial countries take advantage of the slackening of the imperialist grip to gain for themselves greater economic independence. This circumstance undermines the sources of the affluence of the mother countries, and intensifies the general crisis.

All the above stated fundamental facts of the war and post-war periods are expressed in the sinking of the total income of society.

The sinking of the collective income of society leads in the first place to an acuter struggle in the re-division of the income, not only in the competitive struggles of the various groups of the financial oligarchies, and in the struggles of the colonies with the mother countries, but in the class war of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, in which the intermediate groups show the tendency to join the proletariat in those cases where they have particularly suffered during the war.

The post-war position of capitalism can in general be characterised as being absolutely unstable in every sphere of its existence : economic, political, social, and even on the ideological and cultural fields ; for in the background of the general crisis there appear

obvious signs of the decomposition of the bourgeoisie, the return to religion, to mysticism, to occultism, and so forth, plainly showing the coming fall of bourgeois civilisation.

The Breach in the Imperialist Front and the Epoch of Social Revolution

The growing intensification of the class war, which became apparent during the war itself, led to a breach being made through the imperialist front at its most sensitive spot—Russia.

The November revolution of the Russian proletariat, which was able to overthrow the bourgeois regime thanks to specially favourable fighting conditions, started a new era of international revolution, and became the first link in the chain.

The proletarian uprisings which followed the Russian revolution, and which ended in the defeat of the proletariat after a brief victory (Finland, Hungary, Bavaria), or which remained standing halfway, due to the treachery of the Social-Democrats, who were actively engaged against revolutionary Communism (Austria, Germany), formed stages of the general development of international revolution—stages in which the bourgeois illusions are being punctured and the forces of Communist revolution are being mobilised and consolidated.

It is just for the above reasons that the mere fact of the existence of Soviet Russia is of such significance as an organising centre of the proletarian world movement. By the mere fact of its existence Soviet Russia drives a wedge into the capitalist system, for it comprises one-sixth of the globe, and its structure is in principle opposed to the capitalist regime. Besides this, it represents the most powerful vanguard of the proletarian movement, for here the working class has all the means and auxiliaries of state power at its disposal.

In the course of development of international revolution, the Social Democracy and the trade unions under its leadership became an extraordinarily powerful counter-revolutionary force. Not only did these abandon the interests of the workers during the war, in that they supported their "own" imperialist governments, but they also supported the rapacious treaties of peace (Brest-Litovsk, Versailles); they stood by the side of the generals (Noske), as an active force, when proletarian uprisings were being drowned in

blood ; they led an armed resistance against the first proletarian republic (Russia) ; they treacherously betrayed a proletariat almost in possession of power (Hungary) ; they became members of the rapacious League of Nations (Thomas) ; they openly took sides with the employers against the colonial slaves (the English "Labour" Party). International Social Democracy thus forms the last reserve and strongest support of bourgeois society.

The abandonment of imperialist illusions within the working class has freed the proletariat from the influence of the Social Democracy, and forms the soil for the development of the Communist Parties, which are uniting in the course of the struggle to form a mighty revolutionary association of revolutionary workers: The Communist International. From out of the chaos and the misery, out of the falling debris of shattered capitalism, out of the mad and monstrous new wars in which the bourgeoisie may destroy the last remnants of its own culture—out of all this the Communist International will lead humanity on a new path and only those who do not follow this path will fall victims to death and decay.

II. THE EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKERS AND THE COMMUNIST ORDER

The final aim pursued by the Communist International is the substitution of the capitalist order by the Communist order of society. The Communist order of society, prepared by the whole course of evolution, is the sole means of escape for humanity, for it alone is able to remove the fundamental defects of the capitalist system leading to inevitable and unavoidable ruin.

By means of abolishing the private ownership of the means of production, and the passing of these means into common property, the Communist society replaces the unregulated force of competition and the blind course of production by a rational organisation and an appropriate plan. The abolition of anarchy in production and of competition implies the simultaneous disappearance of war. The colossal waste of productive energy, and the spasmodic development of society will here be substituted by a systematic utilisation of all sources of help, and by a harmonious, painless, economic evolution.

The Communist order of society also does away with the division of society into classes, that is, besides exterminating anarchy in production it exterminates social anarchy. The opposing classes are replaced by members of one great equal working community. The gigantic unproductive expenditure caused by human beings combating one another in a society composed of classes, now disappears, and the energy thus released is employed in the struggle with nature, and for the progress and development of the power and dominance of mankind.

The abolition of private property does away with the exploitation of one human being by other human beings. The work done is no longer done for others. Every difference between poverty and wealth disappears. At the same time the organs of class rule vanish also, above all—state power. State power, which is the embodiment of class rule, vanishes in proportion to the vanishing of the classes. All standards of compulsion die off gradually in proportion.

The abolition of classes will be accompanied by the abolition of all monopoly of education. All education, including the very highest, becomes general. Such a state of affairs in the first place renders a dominance of any group of persons over another group impossible, and in the second place, offers a wide field of selection and sifting of talent and genius in every branch of culture.

Here there are no barriers of a social nature placed in the way of productive forces. In the Communist society there is no private property, no patent rights, profit making for personal benefit, artificially maintained ignorance among the masses, or gigantic unproductive expenditures.

The uniting of technique and science, the scientific organisation of production, statistic-social book-keeping, the utilisation of every economic possibility (correct apportionment of districts, concentration, the best possible utilisation of natural forces) secure the greatest possible productivity of labour and set human energy free for the mighty task of developing science.

The development of productive forces enables the general well-being of the collective mass of humanity in the new society to be improved, enabling a degree of culture to be attained hitherto unexampled in history.

The new culture of a humanity united for the first time, and having now abolished all limits set by intermediate state forms, will be founded on clear and transparent reciprocal relations among human beings. It will thus bury all mysticism, religion, and superstition for all time, and give a mighty forward impetus to the development of all-conquering human mind.

III. THE FALL OF THE BOURGEOISIE AND THE FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM

General Characteristics of the Transition Period

Between the capitalist and Communist systems there lies a long period of proletarian struggle, of its victories and defeats, a period of continuous decay of capitalist relations, of national wars, of colonial uprisings, of armed and "peaceful" warfare of capitalist states against the socialist states coming into being,—a period which comprises temporary agreements between social-economic systems contradictory to one another, and life and death struggles between such systems. Finally, the complete victory of the proletariat and the firm establishment of the power which it has gained through so much suffering and privation, will be followed by an epoch of accelerated development. The multiplicity of the conditions of the revolutionary process, the variety of types of the new relations being formed,—this will be the main feature of the tedious transition period of development. Not until this epoch has fulfilled its historical task will society begin to become a Communist society.

The Dictatorship of the Proletariat as the Unavoidable Premise of the Struggle for Communism

An unavoidable premise for the transition from capitalism to Communism,—the starting point without which the further evolution of mankind is entirely impossible, is thus the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois state and the seizure of power by the working class, which has to set itself the first and most important task of suppressing the enemy and firmly establishing the new regime. Dictatorship of the proletariat—that is the most elementary premise for social evolution.

The seizure of power by the proletariat is nothing else than the destruction of the bourgeois state apparatus by the fighting

organs of the proletarian class struggle, and the organisation of a new proletarian class power by these organs.

The form of proletarian state power generally best adapted to its purpose is that of the type of the soviet state. This has been demonstrated by the experiences of the Russian and Hungarian revolution, which greatly widened the experience gained by the Paris Commune of 1871. It is precisely this type, arising immediately out of the broadest world movement, which assures the greatest activity of the masses, and consequently the best prospects of ultimate victory.

The soviet type of state is flatly opposed to bourgeois democracy, which is invariably a veiled form of bourgeois dictatorship. The mass organisations of the workers, which are at best merely tolerated under bourgeois dictatorship, form in the proletarian democracy the main supports and organs of the proletarian state everywhere.

The soviet state differs from bourgeois democracy in that it openly reveals its class character, and openly sets itself the task of suppressing the exploiters in the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population.

While the bourgeois democracy does not touch the monopoly of the capitalist class with respect to the means of production, and to all material values of decisive importance, and thus reduces the formal rights of the workers to mere fiction, the soviet state first creates the premises for these rights by actually securing the liberty of the workers' press by rendering the functions of the workers' organisations possible, &c.

For the first time in history the proletarian democracy realises the equality of all citizens without difference of sex, race, religion, and nationality,—an equality which has never been realised in a capitalist state.

The proletarian democracy and its organs which realise the broadest democracy amongst the workers are in incomparably closer relations with the masses and enable them to take part in the administrative process. The right to elect new delegates, the right to recall them, the combination of executive and legislative power, the arrangement of electoral districts not according to territorial, but according to economic principles (according to factories, undertakings, &c.)—all this draws an abrupt line between

the bourgeois parliamentary republic and the soviet dictatorship of the proletariat.

The proletariat, as leader and vanguard of all other workers, and above all of the masses of the peasantry, secures its leading role by legal privileges, which are unavoidable in the first stages of development. These privileges must gradually die out in proportion to the progress of the education received by the rest of the working masses, and later by the rest of the citizens of the state on the basis of the new relations.

An essential part of the seizure of power by the working class is formed by the destruction of the bourgeois monopoly of arms, and by the concentration of arms in the hands of the proletariat. During the course of the struggle the main object in view must be the disarmament of the bourgeoisie and the arming of the proletariat.

The further organisation of the armed forces, based on strict revolutionary discipline, must be carried out on precisely the same fundamental class principle ; it must correspond to the structure of the proletarian dictatorship, and to the principles assuring leadership to the industrial proletariat.

Expropriation of the Expropriators and Abolition of the Bourgeois Monopoly of the Means of Production

The victorious proletariat utilises the power which it has seized, first to break the resistance of the enemy and to guard the continued rule of the working class against the attacks of the bourgeoisie, and secondly, it utilises this concentrated power for the expropriation of the expropriators, that is for the revolutionary transformation of the economic, and consequently of all other social relations. As a rule this expropriation will assume the form of confiscation, that is, by the expropriation of the means of production without compensation, and the delivery of these means into the hands of the proletarian state.

In this regard the Communist International proposes the following fundamental measures :—

- (1) The expropriation of the large industrial undertakings, of the means of transport and traffic (telegraph, telephone), electric works, &c.

- (2) The proletarian nationalisation of large landed estates, which are to be given over to the administration of the organs of the proletarian dictatorship ; one part of the landed estates, especially that part being worked by the peasantry under lease, to be handed over to the peasantry. The extent of the ground area to be delivered up to the peasantry is determined by economic expediency, and by the necessity of neutralising the peasantry, that is, by the social-political importance of the peasantry.
- (3) Proletarian neutralisation of the banks. Delivery of all gold reserves, securities, &c., into the hands of the the proletarian state. Security of the interests of small depositors, centralisation of the banks, subordination of all large banking concerns to the central state bank of the republic.
- (4) Nationalisation and municipalisation (communalisation) of wholesale trade.
- (5) Annulment (cancellation) of state debts.
- (6) Monopoly of foreign trade.
- (7) Monopolisation of the most important printing establishments and newspapers.
- (8) In the execution of these measures, the following principles are to be observed :—

Nationalisation should as a rule not be extended to small and medium properties. The first reason for this is that the proletariat which has seized power has not the required number of organising forces at its disposal, especially during the first days of the dictatorship, to enable it not only to destroy the old order, but to bring about a union of the small and medium units of production. The second reason is that the proletariat should not provoke the intermediate groups against it. The victorious proletariat must find the right course of action to be adopted towards those spheres of production which can be subjected to centralised and systematic management, and those which would only

be cumbersome ballast. The latter must be left to private initiative.

The transition from Capitalism to Socialism cannot be carried out at one stroke. For this reason externally capitalistic forms and methods of administration and organisation, as individual stimulation to work, piece work, bonus systems, calculation in money, capitalist forms of accounting and book-keeping, &c., are thus not only permissible during the preliminary period, but unavoidably necessary. The proletariat must devote particularly careful attention and the utmost precaution with regard to reciprocal relations between town and country, and set up no barriers to the individualistic working motives of the peasantry.

The Proletarian Dictatorship and the Classes

The struggle for the expropriation of the expropriators requires a most thorough study of all elements of this struggle. The big bourgeoisie and the rich landowner, as well as that part of the officers' and army staff subject to them, are the most consistent enemies of the working class, and a bitter struggle against them is absolutely inevitable. As a rule it is only possible to utilise the organised powers of these circles after the dictatorship has been established and all conspiracies of exploitation and uprisings have been determinedly suppressed.

The question of the technical brain workers plays a most important role for the proletarian revolution. Every counter-revolutionary action originating in the ranks of the technical brain workers must be rigorously suppressed, but at the same time the proletariat must take into consideration the absolute need for these skilled workers and carefully avoid any action which could injure them economically, especially those groups which have already suffered through the war.

With regard to the peasantry, the Communist Party is confronted with the task of winning over a great part of the peasantry for the party. The victorious proletariat must differentiate strictly between the various groupings within the peasantry itself, estimate their specific importance, and aid the landless, semi-proletarian

elements of the peasantry by every possible means, give them a part of the large landowners' ground, ease their struggles against usurious capital, &c. The proletariat must neutralise the intermediate elements by leaving their land and their possessions untouched, and by combating every attack made by the rich peasantry in combination with the rich landowners. In this struggle the proletariat should lean upon the organisations of the poorer population of the country, which are under the leadership of the country proletariat in all countries where the system of agricultural wage labour is developed.

The petty bourgeoisie of the cities, which always stood between extreme reaction and sympathy for the proletariat, is also to be neutralised as far as possible. Their neutrality is assured if their property is not touched, if they are allowed liberty of economic intercourse, aided in their struggles against usurious forms of credit, &c.

In order to fulfil all these tasks the most varying organisations of the proletariat (co-operatives, trade unions, and other associations, finally the party as well) must be actual organs of the proletarian power. It is only when these organisations lend unlimited support to the proletarian power, only when the class will is perfectly united, and when the party has the leadership, that the proletariat can successfully carry out its part as organiser of the whole of society in the most critical period of human history.

Abolition of the Bourgeois Monopoly of Education

The proletariat, when abolishing the monopoly of the capitalist class over the means of production, must simultaneously do away with the monopoly of education possessed by the bourgeoisie, that is, it must take over all schools, including those for higher education.

One of the most important tasks of the proletariat is to train skilled technicians from the ranks of the working class, not only in the sphere of production (engineers, mechanics, organisers, book-keepers, &c.), but for scientific and military work, &c. This is the only way possible of enabling fresh groups of qualified workers to be continually added to the proletarian power, so that this may in reality become a power leading the development of society.

To this task must be added the further task of raising the general cultural level of the proletarian masses, the task of their political enlightenment, the raising of the level of their knowledge and technical qualifications, their practical introduction into social work, and further, the combating of vestiges of bourgeois and petty bourgeois prejudices, &c.

Under the heading of combating bourgeois prejudices and superstitions, the first place is taken by the fight against religion, a fight which must be carried on with all requisite tact and all caution, especially among those sections of workers in whose daily life religion has hitherto been deeply rooted.

The Removal of Imperialist Pressure and the Organisation of Voluntary State Associations of the Proletariat

The main support of the gigantic imperialist state were and are the artificially created relations between the colonies and half-colonies, and imperialist mother countries. The colonial and national questions thus play an exceedingly important role, not only from the viewpoint of the decay of capitalist relations, but also from the viewpoint of capitalist structure.

In this regard the programme of the Communist International makes the following demands in complete opposition to the policy of the bourgeoisie and of social democracy :—

- (1) The right of self-determination of the peoples, under which is also to be understood the right of complete separation from the state. This principle is binding as a requirement to be demanded of the bourgeois state, where it serves as a weapon against imperialism, and is equally binding under the regime of proletarian dictatorship, where it serves as a means of overcoming the national distrust nurtured through centuries of bourgeois government.
- (2) The liberation of the colonies, and the support of all colonial movements against imperialism. In the case of a proletarian state embracing former colonies, the latter are accorded the right of separation.
- (3) Unions of Soviet Republics, at first in the form of federations.

In view of the fact that the power cannot be seized by the proletariat simultaneously in all, or even in the most important countries, and that single proletarian states come into being—compromises on the field of foreign diplomacy by the proletarian states (commercial connections abroad, loans, policy of concessions, participation in general conferences, and other forms of agreements) including military agreements) are possible, permissible, and at times even obligatory.

This policy, dictated in each case by the necessity of attaining some purpose, has, however, nothing in common with pacifism as a principle. On the contrary, the Communist International recognises in the fullest degree the right of the proletarian republics to intervene in the interests of the oppressed and exploited.

The question of defending a native country can no longer be put in so general a form as at the beginning of the war, before a proletarian state was established. In the first place the proletariat of all countries must aid the defence of this proletarian state, and even aid in its extension as the extension of the base of international revolution.

The question of the attitude to be adopted towards war is further complicated by the perfect admissibility in principle of the formation of blocs between proletarian states and many bourgeois states against other bourgeois states, in accordance with the particular war in question. The question must be solved with regard to concrete expediency of purpose, and the strategy of the general struggle is to be worked out by the Communist International.

IV. THE ROAD TO THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

A successful fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat assumes the existence of a Communist Party which is firmly united, determined to fight, disciplined and centralised. The first step on the way to the dictatorship of the proletariat is the firm consolidation of the Communist Parties. These parties must play the leading role in every sphere of the proletarian mass struggle, must utilise every opportunity of gaining influence over the broad masses of the workers and of extending this influence to the working masses of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie of the towns.

The most important problem towards winning over the masses is to win over the trade unions, and to free these from the ideological and organisational influence of the social democracy. Unless the majority in the trade unions is won over, the realisation of the proletarian dictatorship is unthinkable. In precisely the same manner, special attention is to be devoted to the working youth and women, for the attitude adopted by these during the first phase of the dictatorship will largely determine the course of events.

The process of uniting the masses under the Communist flag must be developed in all actual questions of daily life. Above all the fight against imperialism and militarism, the fight against the danger of fresh imperialist wars, &c.

Other questions coming under this heading are those connected with the struggle against the economic results of the war and post-war crisis. (Fight against increased prices, against unemployment, against longer working hours, against higher taxation, &c.)

The support of Soviet Russia, as a means towards strengthening it and towards mobilising the masses about this anti-capitalist centre point, constitutes the most powerful organising instrument in the hands of the international working class.

For the co-ordination of actions, and for the purposeful leadership of the same, the international proletariat requires an international class discipline, which must above all be strictly adhered to in the ranks of the Communist Parties. This international Communist discipline must be expressed by the subordination of all partial and local interests of the movement to its general and permanent interests, and by the unqualified execution of all resolutions passed by the leading organs of the Communist International.

THE HISTORY OF FASCISM—I

By A BORDIGA

THE origin of the Fascist movement may be traced back to the years 1914–1915, to the period which preceded the intervention of Italy in the world war, when the foundation for this movement was laid down by the groups which supported intervention. From a political point of view, these groups were made up of several tendencies. There was a group of the Right, led by Salandra and the big industrialists, who were interested in the war and who had even supported the war against the Entente before the decision to fight on the side of the Entente. On the other hand, there are also the tendencies of the left wing of the bourgeoisie, the Italian radicals, *i.e.*, the democrats of the Left, the republicans who had been by tradition in favour of liberating Trieste and Trento. Finally, the interventionist movement included also certain elements of the proletarian movement : revolutionary syndicalists and anarchists. From a point of view of personalities, it is worth mentioning that the movement was joined by the leader of the left wing of the Socialist Party, Mussolini—the manager of *Avanti*.

It may be stated approximately that the Centre groups did not participate in the formation of the Fascist movement, but returned to their traditional bourgeois political parties. The only groups which remained were those of the extreme Right and those of the extreme Left, *i.e.*, the ex-anarchists, the ex-syndicalists and former revolutionary syndicalists.

These political groups which in May, 1915, scored a big victory in forcing Italy into the war, against the will of the majority of the country and even of parliament, lost their influence when the war was brought to a close. Already during the war one could foresee the inevitable waning of the influence of the interventionists.

They had represented the war as a very easy enterprise, and when the war became prolonged they lost their popularity. Indeed, one might doubt whether they were ever popular.

In the period that followed immediately after the war, we saw the influence of these groups reduced to a minimum.

From the end of 1918 to the first half of 1920, the period of demobilisation and slump, this political tendency was completely defeated owing to discontent caused by the consequences of the war.

Nevertheless, from the viewpoint of political organisation we may connect the origin of the movement which seemed so insignificant at first with the formidable movement which we see to-day.

The "fasci di combattimento" did not disband. Mussolini remained the leader of the Fascist movement, and their paper, *Il Popolo d'Italia* continued to be published.

At the elections in Milan in October, 1919, the Fascisti were completely defeated, in spite of having their daily newspaper and their political chief. They obtained a ridiculously low number of votes; nevertheless, they continued their activities.

The proletarian revolutionary and socialist movement, which was considerably strengthened by the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses after the war, did not make full use of the favourable situation, for reasons I need not go into now.

The revolutionary tendencies lacked the backing of a revolutionary organisation and of a party that would lend them permanence and stability, and thus the favourable psychological and objective circumstances were not utilised. I do not assert—as Comrade Zinoviev accused me of saying—that the Socialist Party could bring about the revolution in Italy, but at least it ought to have been capable of solidly organising the revolutionary forces of the working masses. It proved unequal to the task.

We have seen how the anti-war socialist tendency has lost the popularity which it enjoyed in Italy.

To the extent that the socialist movement failed to take advantage of the situation and the crisis in social life in Italy, the opposite movement—Fascism—began to grow.

Fascism benefited above all by the crisis which ensued in the economic situation and which made its influence felt in the labour organisations.

Thus the Fascist movement at a most trying period found support in the D'Annunzio expedition to Fiume. The Fiume

expedition in a sense gave to Fascism its moral support, and even the backing of its organisation and its armed forces, although the D'Annunzio movement and the Fascist movement were not the same thing.

We have spoken of the attitude of the proletarian socialist movement ; the International has repeatedly criticised its mistakes. The consequence of these mistakes was a complete change in the state of mind of the bourgeoisie and the other classes. The proletariat became disorganised and demoralised. In view of the failure to win the victory that was within its grasp, the state of mind of the working class changed considerably. One might say that in 1919 and in the first half of 1920 the Italian bourgeoisie to a certain extent became resigned to the idea of having to see the triumph of the revolution. The middle class and the petty bourgeoisie were ready to play a passive part, not in the wake of the big bourgeoisie, but in the wake of the proletariat which was to march on to victory.

This state of mind has undergone a complete change. Instead of submitting to a victory of the proletariat, we see on the contrary how the bourgeoisie is organised for defence.

The middle class became discontented when it saw that the Socialist Party was unable to organise in such a manner as to gain the upper hand ; and losing confidence in the proletarian movement, it turned to the opposite side.

It was then that the capitalist offensive of the bourgeoisie started. This offensive was to a certain extent the result of capable exploitation of the state of mind of the middle class. Fascism, by reason of its heterogeneous character, offered a solution of the problem, and for this reason it was chosen to lead this offensive of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism.

Our Communist Party, from the moment of its inception, consistently criticised the situation and pointed out the necessity of united defence against the bourgeois offensive. It advocated a united proletarian plan of defence against this offensive.

To get a full view of the capitalist offensive, we must examine the situation in its various aspects in the industrial as well as in the agrarian field.

In the industrial field the capitalist offensive in the first place

exploited the direct effects of the economic crisis. The economic crisis caused the shutting down of a number of factories, and the employers had the opportunity of discharging the more extreme elements of the organised workers. The industrial crisis furnished the employers with a good pretext for cutting down wages and withdrawing the disciplinary and moral concessions which they had been forced to make to the factory workers.

At the beginning of this crisis we saw in Italy the formation of a General Confederation of Industry, an association of the employing class which took the lead in this fight against the workers and submitted every individual employer to their discipline. In the large cities it is impossible to start the fight against the working class by the immediate use of violence. The workers of the cities are generally organised in groups : they can easily gather in a large mass and put up a serious resistance. The employers therefore started by provoking the proletariat into actions that were bound to end unfavourably for them, because the economic struggle in the industrial field was bound to transport the activity of the movement from the trade unions to the revolutionary domain, where it would need to be under the dictates of a political party which was really communist. But the Socialist Party was nothing of the sort.

At the decisive moment of the situation the Socialist Party proved incapable of giving a revolutionary lead to the action of the Italian proletariat. The period of the great success of the Italian labour organisation in the fight for the amelioration of the workers' conditions gave place to the new period in which the strikes became defensive strikes on the part of the working class, and defeats became the order of the day.

At the same time, the revolutionary movement of the agrarian classes, the agricultural labourers and other peasant elements which are not completely proletarian, compelled the ruling classes to seek a way of combating the influence acquired by the Red organisations in the rural districts.

In a great part of Italy, for instance in the most important agricultural districts of the Po Valley, a state of affairs prevailed which closely resembled a local dictatorship of the proletariat or of the groups of agricultural labourers. The communes, captured by

the Socialist Party at the close of 1920, carried on a policy of imposing local taxes on the agrarian bourgeoisie and the middle class. The trade unions flourished. Very important co-operative organisations and numerous sections of the Socialist Party grew up. Even in those rural districts where the working-class movement was in the hands of men who were reformists, it took a definitely revolutionary trend. The employers were even forced to deposit sums of money to guarantee the carrying out of the agreements imposed by the trade unions.

A situation was reached where the agricultural bourgeoisie could no longer live on their estates and had to seek refuge in the cities.

Certain errors were committed by the Italian socialists, especially on the question of occupying the vacated lands and with regard to the small farmers, who after the war began to buy up land in order to become big proprietors.

The reformist organisations compelled these small farmers to remain somewhat the slaves of the movement of the agricultural labourers, and in this situation the Fascist movement managed to find important support.

In the domain of agriculture there was no crisis of such dimensions as to enable the landed proprietors to wage a successful counter-offensive on the basis of the simple economic struggles of the labourers. It was here that the Fascisti began to introduce their methods of physical violence, of armed brutal force, finding support in the rural proprietor class and exploiting the discontent created among the agricultural middle classes by the blunders of the Socialist Party and the reformists. Fascism benefited also by the general situation, which daily increased the discontent among all these groups of petty bourgeoisie and petty merchants, of petty proprietors, of returned soldiers, and of ex-officers disappointed in their lot after the glories of war.

All these elements were exploited and organised, and this was the beginning of this movement of destruction of the Red organisations in the rural districts of Italy.

The method employed by Fascism is rather peculiar. Having got together all the demobilised elements which could find no place for themselves in post-war society, it made full use of their

military experience. Fascism began to form its military organisations, not in the big industrial cities, but in those which may be considered as the capitals of Italian agricultural regions, like Bologna and Florence. The Fascists possessed arms, means of transportation, assured immunity from the law, and they took advantage of these favourable conditions while they were still less numerous than their revolutionary adversaries.

The mode of action is somewhat as follows. They invade a little country place, they destroy the headquarters of the proletarian organisations, they force the municipal council to resign at the point of the bayonet, they assault or murder those who oppose them or, at best, force them to quit the district. The local workers were powerless to resist such a concentration of armed forces backed by the police. The local Fascist groups which could not previously fight by themselves against the proletarian forces have now become the masters of the situation, because the local workers and peasants have been terrorised and were afraid of taking any action for fear that the Fascist expedition might return with even greater forces at their command.

Fascism thus proceeded to the conquest of a dominant position in Italian politics by a sort of territorial campaign, which might be traced on a map.

The Fascist campaign started out from Bologna, where in September—October, 1920, a socialist administration was the occasion for a great mobilisation of the Red forces.

Several incidents took place: the meeting of the municipal council was broken up by provocation from without. Shots were fired at the benches occupied by the bourgeois minority, probably by some agents-provocateurs.

That was the first grand attack made by the Fascisti.

From now on militant reaction overran the country, putting the torch to proletarian clubs and maltreating their leaders. In their dastardly work the Fascisti enjoyed the full backing of the police and the authorities. The terror started at Bologna on the historic date of November 21, 1920, when the Municipal Council of Bologna was prevented by violence from assuming its powers.

From Bologna Fascism moved along a route which we cannot outline here in detail, but we may say that it went in two chief

geographical directions, on the one hand towards the industrial triangle of the north-west, viz., Milan, Turin, and Genoa, and on the other hand towards Toscana and the centre of Italy, in order to encircle and lay siege to the capital. It was clear from the outset that the south of Italy could not give birth to a Fascist movement any more than to a great socialist movement.

Fascism is so little the movement of the backward section of the bourgeoisie that it could not make its first appearance in southern Italy, but rather in those districts where the proletarian movement was more developed and the class struggle was more in evidence.

Having just described the prime elements of Fascism, how are we to interpret the Fascist movement? Is it purely an agrarian movement? That we would not say, although the movement originated in the rural districts. Fascism could not be considered as the independent movement of a single group of the bourgeoisie, as the organisation of the agrarian interests in opposition to the industrial capitalists. Besides, Fascism has formed its political as well as military organisation in the large cities, even in those provinces where it had to confine its violent actions to the rural districts.

We have seen it in the Italian Parliament, where the Fascisti formed a parliamentary faction after having precipitated the parliamentary elections of 1921, which did not prevent the formation of an agrarian party independently of the Fascisti.

During recent events we have seen that the industrial employers have supported the Fascisti. A deciding factor in the new situation was furnished by a recent declaration of the General Confederation of Industry in favour of entrusting to Mussolini the formation of a new Cabinet.

But a more striking phenomenon in this respect is the appearance of Fascist Syndicalism.

(To be continued)

THE I.W.W. AND THE COMMUNISTS

By EARL R. BROWDER

(The information contained in the following article, of which advance proof-sheets have been sent to us by the courtesy of the "Labour Herald" of Chicago, is sufficiently serious to justify publication in this country.)

ONCE holding the position of foremost exponents of revolutionary unionism, the Industrial Workers of the World have to-day the doubtful honour of being the only labour organisation that expels Communists for their political opinions. And now the recent convention of the "wobblies," by approving of the past administration's activities and the expulsion of Brown, Hardy, Novak, Newman, and others, has carried that organisation into company with the most reactionary bureaucrats of the world's labour movement. In the American labour movement, it is the I.W.W. alone which has made it a crime against the union to advocate affiliation to the Red International of Labour Unions.

The I.W.W. has often protested against the expulsion of rebels from the trade unions, and made great arguments thereon. But few records of violent suppression of minority opinion in labour unions are more complete than that of the "wobs" against "The Temporary Committee for Working Class Unity," formed to propagate affiliation to the R.I.L.U. after the I.W.W. had denounced that organisation. The details, published in the *Unity Bulletin*, issue No. 3, leave nothing to the imagination. The story of the kidnapping of Bartell, in Detroit, by Raddock, secretary of I.U. 440, and a gang of fellow workers, and the robbery of his papers and \$213 in money, still stands unrefuted and unrebuked. The assaults upon the persons of Joe Carroll, Lorence Borzik, Walter Bates, and Mike Novak are there recorded as typical of many others; the attack upon the members of the Unity Committee went to the length of a raid upon the home of Newman,

the seizure of his desk, typewriter, money, and other personal property. Any one who said a good word for the R.I.L.U. was called a Communist and treated as an outlaw.

These methods are worse than those used even by Gompers, the arch-reactionary. In the capacity of president of the A.F. of L. this bureaucrat recently excluded a union of office workers in New York because it was officered by rebels and Communists. But when the *Locomotive Engineers' Journal* reported this as an exclusion of radicals, Gompers took pains to get in the record his denial that the action had any political significance. He placed the entire case upon the ground of the immediate functioning of the union, without any consideration of the radical views of those excluded. In the whole American labour movement it is only in the I.W.W. that "Communism" is sufficient ground for expulsion.

Not content with leading the fight upon the Red International, the I.W.W. blazed the trail later followed by Abe Cahan in the *Forward*, Jewish Socialist daily, by attacking the work of the Friends of Soviet Russia. Without the slightest evidence, they published statements that famine relief money was being diverted to other uses. But they went further than any other group has cared to follow; they physically interfered with famine relief collections, an act without parallel in this country, and only equalled in Europe by the most reactionary governments. On Christmas evening, 1921, an entertainment was held by the Jugo-Slav members of I.U. 440 to assist the famine sufferers in Soviet Russia. This gathering was invaded by Bowerman, secretary of the I.W.W. Union, with a bodyguard, who demanded that the receipts of the entertainment be turned over to him. Not caring to make a fight, the Jugo-Slav members allowed him to get away with it. They saved some of the money for the famine stricken workers of Russia, however, by presenting bills for the services of the performers, which was later turned over to the famine fund. But the General Headquarters officials took away \$57.12 intended for Soviet Russia's sufferers.

The confiscation of the membership card of H. S. Calvert, but very recently, demonstrates that this spirit continues unabated. Calvert is an I.W.W. of some years' standing, who went to Russia in 1921, and was one of those instrumental in launching the

Kuzbas industrial colony project. For a year he has been working in America on that project, which has the approval of the Soviet Government of Russia. As a further demonstration of their disapproval of anything even remotely connected with the Red International, via Russia, the officials of the I.W.W. took advantage of Calvert's presence at a union meeting, where cards must be presented, to confiscate his. They did not take the trouble to prefer charges, or to hold any proceedings whatever.

It has seemed to many observers that the I.W.W. was definitely setting out on the road of the anarcho-syndicalist organisations of Europe. But their recent convention has shown that there is nothing so positive even as this left in the organisation. What seemed like vigorous action in that direction was only fear of the new ideas brought into the movement by the Red International. The I.W.W. is not going anywhere. It is just drifting and decaying.

For over twenty days from November 11 to December 5 the Fourteenth Convention sat in session to do the business of not more than 15,000 members. And in all that time there was hardly one clear and definite action taken. Following up their doctrine of "democracy," one side of which is their constitutional provision that officers can serve but one term, the forty delegates each spoke on every question that came before them. The nature of this "important" business is illustrated by the debates of seven days upon the officers' reports, of three days on the question of remitting debts of a few hundred dollars owed to the organisation by the retiring officers, and others of the same calibre.

When the appeals of the expelled Communists came before the convention, however, they were quickly disposed of. Mike Novak, one of those appealing, was present and requested the floor to defend himself. He was refused, and the convention even excluded him from the hall while they considered his case. He was then told that his appeal had been referred back to the Industrial Union to which he had belonged. But the official organ of the I.W.W., *Industrial Solidarity*, later stated that the expulsion had been upheld. In no other labour organisation in America would it be possible to witness expulsions being confirmed without even allowing the victim to be heard in his own defence.

Following Gompers Internationally

In the question of international affiliation, the I.W.W. followed the examples set by Mr. Harding and Mr. Gompers. That is, it adopted a policy of isolation, prefaced according to the Harding-Gompers manner with protestations of desire for international amity and accord. The only line which means anything definite in the international resolution adopted by the convention is that which reads: "Resolved, that we do not send any delegate to any International at the present time." The leading element in the organisation is favourable to Rudolph Rocker's "International," but is afraid that affiliation would cause another loss of dues-paying membership.

Typical of the general drift of the I.W.W. (and the outstanding characteristic of the organisation to-day is the complete lack of any kind of leadership—it has merely drifted into the currents of counter-revolution) is the case of John Sandgren, a notorious anti-Russian propagandist. Everyone thought that he had been thoroughly discredited, and so he had. His name is now carefully kept in the background, but actually he is the theoretician and "intellectual" of the I.W.W. to-day. Whenever it is necessary to produce a document of a theoretical nature, John Sandgren is the man called upon. He it was who wrote the recent reply of the I.W.W. to Losovsky's appeal to the rank and file of that body. Sandgren has come back, but the fact is not generally known or acknowledged.

Dual Unionism the Issue

The explanation of this entire course of events, the expulsion of the Communists, the attacks on Russia, the refusal to affiliate with the Red International, &c., is a simple one. The I.W.W. has gotten into its present deplorable position by its reaction of fear of the new tactics of the world revolutionary movement, of the slogan of "back to the mass unions." Based from the beginning upon the conception of dual unionism, the tactic of splitting the old unions as the beginning of building new ones, it could not understand or assimilate the R.I.L.U. tactic of solidarity, of industrial unionism through amalgamation, and the unity of all the revolutionary forces of a given country upon a common plan of action. For too long I.W.W. militants had made their organisation

the all-in-all, refusing to recognise the existence of anything outside of it as worthy of a moment's consideration. The year of 1921-22 found them incapable of changing to meet the new epoch now opening up. As a consequence they are now definitely outside the stream of Labour's revolutionary movement.

Many alleged theoretical differences are trotted out as the reasons for opposing the R.I.L.U., but the only effective reason is to be found in the issue of dual unionism. These chronic dualists cannot bring themselves to unite with the mass unions, which they would have to do in the Red International. To prevent such a thing they bring forth the most elaborate sophistries. But if the Red International would accept their dual unionism, the I.W.W., in all likelihood, would quickly dissipate all their other objections.

When one recalls the splendid revolutionary fervour formerly animating the I.W.W., typified by such men as Ralph Chaplin and Harrison George, which made that body of men objects of admiration even on the part of those who disagreed most strenuously with their dual unionism, the present nondescript organisation which bears the name made famous by former heroes appears as a tragic example of degeneracy. The reactionary poison has got in its work. Many militants who have hoped against hope for the past few years that the organisation would redeem itself are now turning their faces toward the future. The dead past must bury its dead, which includes the former revolutionary spirit of the Industrial Workers of the World.

RUSSIA IN 1923

By ANDREW ROTHSTEIN

SOVIET Russia is facing the coming year with confidence. In the economic sphere the ground is daily becoming firmer under her feet. Take industrial production, which for a modern State is the crucial point. During the "industrial year" (September to September) just ended, she turned out close on one million more tons of coal than in 1920-21, and more than in any year since 1918. She produced half a million tons more of oil, and reached the 50 per cent. level as compared with pre-war figures. Her furnaces produced 170,000 tons of pig iron, 136 per cent. of 1921 figures; 322,000 tons of martensite, 175 per cent. of the previous year's output; and 254,000 tons of steel, 179 per cent. of 1921. All these are the highest figures reached since 1918. The same applies to the output of locomotives (141 per cent. of 1921 figures); iron ores (129 per cent.); cotton yarn (227 per cent.), woollen yarn (158 per cent.), and linen yarn (1,820 per cent.); rubber manufactures (800 per cent.), and so on.

In large measure this improvement is traceable to more efficient and exacting measures in the factories; but these again were rendered possible by a definite improvement in agriculture. The new economic policy in this sphere, which leaves the peasant free to sell his grain at the best possible price once he has paid his taxes, has provided a vast stimulus which would have shown itself last year but for the famine. It has produced an extension of the area sown this year, and, under improved weather conditions, a consequent improvement of the crops. Russia has now an internal reserve of nine million tons of corn until the next harvest, and though most of it must be devoted to fighting the effects of the famine, for that very purpose possibly half a million or a million tons will be available for export abroad.

This revival in production must have, and is already having, a marked effect upon her financial position. While, on the one hand, a series of drastic measures of economy and taxes upon industry—such as no State but Soviet Russia dare attempt—have combined progressively to increase the proportion of her revenue accountable by taxation from one-sixtieth of the total in January to one-tenth in July; at the same time her foreign trade relations have already provided a small trade balance (twenty million gold roubles),

which is being poured like a rejuvenating stream into the arteries of the industrial organism, drained of its resources by seven long years of war and revolution. Arcos Ltd., the commercial agent of the Russian Government in Great Britain, had a total turnover between August, 1920, and December, 1921, of £11,850,000. During the nine months between January and September, 1922, it had a further turnover of £10,500,000. The foreign trade monopoly held by the Government determines that the ultimate decision as to Russia's economic needs shall rest with the State, while at the same time it is elastic enough to allow complete freedom to industrial trusts and private undertakings to make their necessary purchases and sales abroad, under the general supervision of the Russian commercial representatives.

It has been alleged that this economic improvement has been secured at the cost of abandoning all that was won by the revolution. In reality all that has happened has been the emancipation of industry, agriculture, commerce, and finance from the fetters imposed by civil war and invasion, and a return to the comparative freedom enjoyed by private enterprise in 1918. But the principal natural sources of wealth, the main industries, foreign commerce and shipping, remain in the hands of the State: and a judicious use of the apparatus of the State Bank will before long be the deciding factor in keeping the price of food and other necessities at a reasonable level, thanks to the reserve created by the State grain tax (240 million poods).

The real wages of the workers (*i.e.*, as compared with the cost of living)—and in this Soviet Russia stands alone—show an unbroken monthly increase from last spring onwards, until now they stand at an average of 80 per cent. of the pre-war level. Large credits are being given to the co-operative societies, and to their branches in factories and workshops, in order to lower the prices of primary necessities and increase the purchasing power of the workers. Housing is still a municipal concern, being handed over to private groups only when they can show the possibility of putting and keeping the house in proper repair; and it is noteworthy that the assumption of such functions by organised groups of workers is the rule, not the exception. The more vital provisions of the Labour Code still remain in force, and their constant application is

enforced daily by the Labour Inspectors, acting under the control of the People's Commissary for Labour, who is himself chosen by the All-Russian Trade Union Congress. Education is still more accessible to the workers than to any other section of the community (thus bearing direct proportion to numerical strength), thanks both to the Government free places and to the widespread system of trade union scholarships.

With the consciousness of this healthy progress at her back, Soviet Russia faces the new year in foreign policy with even greater confidence than at the beginning of 1922. Her programme is a simple one and straightforward. She wants peaceful and neighbourly relations with all the world. At the Genoa Conference last spring she raised the question of disarmament, foreseeing the bloody possibilities of strife in the Near East. Her overtures being rejected, she raised the question again in December, at the Moscow Conference with the Border States, albeit in a narrower form.

In the Near East she desires to see a free and economically independent Turkey resume the enlightened guardianship of the Straits, which would then once more become a boon to commerce and permit the complete demilitarisation of the Black Sea. In the West, Soviet Russia asks for an opportunity to do business on equal terms. In countries with which she has had a trade agreement for some time she expects that common sense will soon have driven home the necessity for full diplomatic recognition. In other countries, and first and foremost the United States, she hopes that the spectacle of devastated Europe will soon convince all sane men that she cannot be ignored if reconstruction is ever to begin.

But she is firmly determined on one thing—that she will remain, not only in politics but also in economics, a free and sovereign State, fulfilling her function in the world of States as an independent unit. Under no circumstances will she consent to accept unfair and impossible burdens, which can only have the result of reducing her to the status of a colony, though her chains should be gilded by the League of Nations. She became a free labouring community in November, 1917, and intends to remain so. It rests with the Western nations to say whether she shall labour in co-operation with and for the benefit of all, or remain a stranger both to the wealth of the West and to its miseries.

PACIFISM—OLD AND NEW

By E. VARGA

PACIFIST ideology has recently undergone a change. Once again it seems as though the fate of the world is to be dependent on the pacifist idea. The Washington Conference awakened a new interest in Pacifism; the refusal of the United States to participate in the Genoa Conference on the pretext of the impossibility of European reconstruction as long as European states maintained such big armies has also tended to make the question more actual. After the great disillusion, due to the failure of Wilsonism, the Socialist Internationals hastened to endow Pacifism with a new meaning. Capitalist papers, like the *Manchester Guardian* which pursues a clear-cut pacifist policy, have done likewise. Hence the importance of examining to what extent this new Pacifism is taken seriously, and in how far it is likely to become a political reality, or, on the contrary, give rise to new conflicts amongst the forces of imperialism.

In its present form the pacifist movement is exceedingly complicated, though it is undergoing rapid changes, and it is no easy matter to discover the class feelings at the bottom of the various pacifist ideologies. We need first to examine the development of Pacifism before, during, and after the war. Later we shall attempt to differentiate between bourgeois Pacifism and the proletarian peace movement, in spite of the difficulty in drawing the line between the bourgeois movement and the opportunist tendency of the workers' movement with its Pacifism in the tow of the bourgeoisie.

Pacifism Before the War

Bourgeois pre-war Pacifism had two main tendencies: the ethical and idealistic and the economic.

Idealistic-ethical Pacifism has been nothing but an ideological movement. Its principal preachers, Lammasch, Förster, Fried, Forel, &c., are ideologists unrepresentative of any class, and are wholly incomprehensible in their attitude to the problem of war.

They assume war to be the result of the lack of the ethical development of humanity. Their anti-war campaign is conducted on behalf of a general moral ; in principle they are anti-violence, no matter what the source. Socially, they are counter-revolutionaries, since they also repudiate the use of force for the liberation of the oppressed classes.

Förster, who is an example of this tendency, writes in his book, "World Policy and World Conscience," as follows :—

Those who believe that external warfare justifies civil war, prove with what speed imperialism at home flourishes on that which they desire to destroy.

It is quite comprehensible that Förster repudiates communist methods of which he writes naively :—

The Russian Communists must not treat every question from the point of view of class interest on the principle that this interest is one with the human interest. No. They must act, in a most definite way, with justice and humanity—towards the present directors and organisers of production.

They should not allow all intellectuals and the whole ruling class to be in opposition to them, nor by the severity of their dogmas, which are regardless alike of customs and traditions, thus split society completely into two hostile camps.

The works of all the other pacifists of this calibre are in a similar vein. The Hague Peace Conference and the establishment of the International Court of Justice have been the sum total of the success of ethical-ideological Pacifism : the world war has shown only too clearly the inefficacy of this movement.

A more positive school of pacifism holds the opinion that war is a bad business for every country, even those which are victorious. Norman Angell is a characteristic representative of this type, whose work "The Great Illusion" is well known. He bases his argument on the dependence of states, which is of such a kind that, bound by the ties of foreign commerce, credit, and exchange, the fall of any one state results in considerable economic injury to the victor country. Without having recourse to any philosophic reasoning, he argues that war should be avoided, because it is a deplorable business even for the victors. It is no mere chance that England is the land of origin of this kind of pacifism, being a country most dependent on foreign economic conditions.

The basic error in the reasoning of Norman Angell—apart from the fact that he neglects to consider the reasons for the history and the part played by the warlike spirit—the basic error is in his assumption that the question of war or peace may be considered in its relation to the welfare of a country as a whole. In reality the problem of war or peace does not evoke the interest of the whole country, but merely that of small groups of big business men, armament manufacturers, officers, and such like. And in spite of the enormous damage inflicted by the world war, it has not yet been proved that these groups did a bad business—on the contrary.

Yet this type of Pacifism deserves a certain attention, because the victorious countries, in their struggle against war, adopt this view of Norman Angell.

Proletarian Pacifism

Before the war, and especially during the war, two kinds of proletarian Pacifism were distinguishable. Let us term the first passive counter-revolutionary; the second active counter-revolutionary.

Pacifism, passively counter-revolutionary, is generally confused with opportunism. The outstanding characteristic of opportunism is its belief in the evolution of capitalistic society towards Socialism without the necessity of any struggle, without any bourgeois war, and in truth at a period so remote that it is of no interest to the present.

These opportunists passively await the future in their mistaken interpretation of the Marxian dogma, which puts political overthrow and reconstruction after the overthrow of economic conditions, without understanding or desiring to understand that this goal can only be reached by means of the incessant class-struggle and armed action against the bourgeoisie. Since opportunism believes that capitalism cannot be abolished by force, it has no conception of the revolutionary possibilities which war opens up: it is pacifist in principle. And that is logical. In the eyes of those who accept the capitalist exploitation of the workers, all wars, as far as the workers are concerned, are nothing but the reflection of prejudice.

The various pacifist resolutions adopted by the Second International illustrate this point of view very clearly. Some of these resolutions tend to bring out the active revolutionary current in proletarian Pacifism. In this manner the Stuttgart resolution of 1907 expresses itself :—

In case of an outbreak of war, it is the duty of Socialists to intervene to secure its termination at the earliest possible moment, and with all their energies to use the economic and political crises caused by the war to rouse the masses of the people, and thereby hasten the fall of the capitalist domination.

Governments ought not to forget that the Franco-German war resulted in the Commune, and the Russo-Japanese war stirred up the revolutionary forces of the Russian people.

Workers consider it treason to fire on one another for the benefit of the capitalist class and the aggrandisement of dynasties.

The “active revolutionary” tendency of the proletariat is based on Marx and Engels. For them wars are not brought about by lack of human development as the pacifist theologians aver, but are the fatal result of a certain given situation between classes. Lenin reasoned in like manner when he wrote on November 1, 1914 :—

War is neither a mere chance, nor a punishment as the teachers of Christianity, patriotism, humanity and peace, and the opportunists pretend. It is an inevitable part of capitalism, a capitalist fate as surely determined as peace.

Wars, in the opinion of Marxian revolutionaries, are important factors in the development of society. Marx remained quite a stranger to passive pacifism, but in several instances he intervened in favour of war. For example, in 1849, after the victorious revolution, he wrote on the duty of the German workers to wage war on Tsarist Russia. In 1910, Kautsky spoke of the probability of the proletarian revolution during war or at its close.

It is obvious that these two conceptions of proletarian Pacifism clash ; the one is opportunist, the other revolutionary. It is not surprising that the first type, despite its most violent protests, in words, against war, collapsed on the outbreak of war and became identical with that of the bourgeoisie.

War-Time Pacifism

There were two distinct types of bourgeois Pacifism during the war. The first, ideologic, based its campaign on pre-war

principles with the watchwords : " A speedy peace " and " A peace of reconciliation. " It met with no more success than in its pre-war efforts.

A new point of view emanated from the Entente countries, and particularly from Anglo-Saxon countries. It was that of the " war to end war. " Germany might be defeated ; but once victory was assured a League of Nations should be created, which would prevent all future wars. Peace without annexations, the last war, the League of Nations, right of self-determination for all nations may be confused with the Wilsonian watchwords, for the famous fourteen points were based on these principles. Wilsonism was propagated by Wilson, by a small ideological circle and the leaders of social patriotism who were in need of a way to become reconciled with the masses whom they had fooled for years and years with their talk of Pacifism. Wilsonism provided obstinate Anglo-Saxon opponents of war with a means of taking up a position against Germany, and forced them to take an active part, in spirit, in the war.

The attitude of the champions of pre-war proletarian pacifists is well known. All the spokesmen of the Second International who for dozens of years had declared their hatred of war, passed into the bourgeois camp with flying banners. Plekhanov, Hyndman, Hervé, Kautsky, &c. This disgraceful failure of the International, and this treachery, was justified in different ways. Kautsky's theory was that the workers of every country are bound to defend their own country.

On October 2, 1914, Kautsky wrote in the *Neue Zeit* :—

Everyone has the right and the duty to defend his own country ; it is real internationalism to recognise this to be the right of all Socialists of every country, even those who are at war with my country.

But the opportunists, who did not give such brutal approval to the murder of the working class in the service of the bourgeoisie, did not find the means of utilising in a revolutionary way the given situation. Max Adler wrote in his pamphlet " Principles or Romanticism " as follows :—

The foreign policy of Marxism can only be a pacifist one, though not pacifist in the bourgeois sense of a movement for peace, nor according to the Socialist idea of peace such as has obtained hitherto ; it must be emphasised here that the internationalism of the Social Democrats

will be, and inevitably must be, a piece of Utopianism, if the principle of peace is not made the essential principle of home and foreign policy Socialism after the war will be organised international pacifism, or it will not be realised.

On this point Zinoviev aptly remarked that such ideas are not those of a Marxian programme, but of petty bourgeois opportunism. The gulf between International Pacifism and International Chauvinism is easy to bridge.

The explanation of the keen war service of those who were so filled with hatred of all war lies in the fact that their interpretation of the proletarian class struggle was absolutely wrong. People who are of opinion that an armed struggle is unnecessary to emancipate the workers, and believe in peaceful evolution by improving the lot of the workers under capitalism must necessarily conclude that the workers' interests and those of the bourgeoisie are inseparable. This outlook is clearly expressed by the most important representatives of Chauvinism, Lensch and others.

What is the position of the bourgeoisie in war-time? Colonies are lost, as well as the possibility of exporting on a large scale, which leads to unemployment, wage-reduction, and a lowering of the standard of living for the industrial proletariat of the country. In this way some explanation is possible of the apparent contradictory attitude of the Social Democrats, both before and during the war. Anti-war in pre-war days, because war adds to the ills of the proletariat, they are social-patriots during the war because a deterioration in the position of the bourgeoisie would signify a similar condition for the proletariat. Such an outlook is purely the logical development of their separation from the real struggle for the abolition of capitalism, and is not a contradiction.

The active revolutionary pacifists adopted quite a different attitude and principles during the war. Particularly was this so of the little group around Lenin, which was the very soul of the Third International. From the beginning this group decided to transform this imperialist war into a war against the bourgeoisie for the overthrow of capitalism. Its programme seems to me well sketched in Lenin's words which declare :—

The present war is a popular war. That does not mean that one should be swallowed up in the popular current of Chauvinism, but that in time of war class antagonisms exist and are shown up more

readily. Refusal to obey, military strikes, are utter stupidities, the tearful and plaintive dream of an unarmed struggle against the armed bourgeoisie. It is still the duty of socialists in war-time to carry on propaganda for the class struggle. Have done with those ramblings and senseless dreams of "Peace at any price!" We want to raise the standard of the war against the bourgeoisie.

On this programme the strategy and tactics of the Russian Communist Party have been built to lead the proletarian revolution on to victory.

Post-War Pacifism

The war has entrenched moral and ideological Pacifism in all the ignorant circles of the intellectuals, the petty bourgeoisie, and even in certain proletarian circles. On the other hand, Pacifism, or rather Wilsonism, has suffered much from the peace negotiations.

Keynes, in his book "The Economic Consequences of the Peace," has described in a most interesting way the attitude of the principal signatories of the Peace Treaty. He pictures how Lloyd George and Clemenceau led Wilson step by step away from the path of Wilsonism and forced him to take that of the brutal peace. Needless to say, this historic event was not due to the different personalities of Wilson, Clemenceau, and Lloyd George. The real truth is that Wilsonism was devoid of any class ideology, whilst Clemenceau and Lloyd George really represented the interests of the capitalist class of their own countries. All the beautiful Wilsonian phrases subsided, and his pet idea, the League of Nations, was no more than a house of cards to which nobody paid any serious attention. This constituted the death-blow of pacifist ideology.

On the other hand the second type of bourgeois Pacifism became stronger. Norman Angell's theory has been fully verified during the years that have elapsed since the war. It is apparent that in the present state of capitalism a victorious war is a misfortune for a country, and that it is impossible in present conditions for the conquered to restore war damages or even for the victorious countries to allow themselves to accept payment of their due, should the conquered be prepared to pay, for fear of bringing about a crash in the capitalist economic system. Norman Angell predicted all these consequences: the decay of international credit, the chaotic condition of exchanges, unemployment, the

cessation of international trade, and all these things have come to pass. And it has been proved that for the mass of the inhabitants of a victorious country war is in reality bad business.

The enormous amount of unemployment in the victorious countries, the business crises, and the crushing taxation constitute a powerful economic foundation and explain why certain capitalist circles are sincerely pacifist. This is especially the case in England, where commerce has suffered most from the economic world upheaval. The *Manchester Guardian*, under the direction of Keynes, carries on a most active pacifist propaganda. The two million unemployed and the increase in taxation by 30 to 40 per cent. have shown the British what a bad business the war has been for them. In the case of the other victorious countries, a similar state of things exists amongst the bourgeoisie, unless nationalism has been so developed by war that they are blinded to the fact at the moment.

The Russian Revolution and the revolutionary attempts in Hungary and Germany, &c., have given rise to a third type of bourgeois Pacifism, which we shall call "Bourgeois Class-Pacifism." Bourgeois politicians see much more clearly than the opportunists of the working-class movement that defeat in war, and all war in general, gives the proletariat the best chance of securing arms which are indispensable to the overthrow of capitalism.

This type of bourgeois Pacifism has gained more and more ground since the victory of the Russian Revolution. The great change which has taken place in the balance of power between the classes is characterised by the following fact: whereas before the war the ruling class drew from the ranks of the proletariat the forces destined to keep the proletariat in its place (police, soldiers, &c.) it is now forced to organise class-troops for this purpose.

All the defence organisations of recent origin in the various European countries (the "Orgesch" in Germany, the "Awakened" in Hungary, the Fascisti in Italy, &c.) prove that the ruling class has been obliged to arm itself against the proletariat. From which fact it becomes clear that a new war, involving as it would arming the proletariat (this proletariat which must be armed for the struggle which it has to endure), would be an extremely dangerous

enterprise for the ruling class. Hence, in addition to their unhappy economic experience, the fear of arming the proletariat adds a powerful incentive to bourgeois Pacifism.

It was to be expected that the opportunists of the workers' movement should put themselves entirely at the service of this bourgeois Pacifism. An article which Hilferding published in the *Freiheit* is particularly typical; he speaks of the possibility that exists for imperialist countries to arrange their affairs amongst themselves by means of a peaceful compromise. The Washington Conference was the chief reason for this conclusion. But let us read the passage of this article, which clearly shows how Hilferding and the Centrists paddle in opportunist waters :—

Nothing is more senseless than to fail to recognise that behind the new methods of world policy the most powerful political and economic forces are at work. The communist interpretation, daily based on the hope of a new war and the wish to let loose the world revolution, is as perverse as it is senseless. It is senseless because it forgets the terrible void of this young epoch. Perverse, because of the abominable thought that the victory of Socialism, that is to say, the victory of true humanity and culture, can only be secured by means of the terrible barbarism and cruelty of another war! If one really expects the victory of Socialism from a renewal of suffering and not from increased knowledge, then one can only close one's eyes anxiously before the period which is coming.

Here we see counter-revolutionary Pacifism of a pre-war type. There is to be no armed struggle at a moment when the proletariat is armed or the ruling classes weakened, but an "increase in knowledge," that is the way to secure the victory of the proletariat—at a very remote period, it is true.

The Perspective of the New Pacifism

The most important question is, what is the strength of this new post-war Pacifism?

The reduction of armaments, prescribed by the Washington Conference, is generally considered—though incorrectly in my opinion—to be a result of this movement. The reduction in warships has a double interpretation. In the first place, it has been openly recognised that should the United States decide to compete in the race for battleships with the British and the Japanese, they would win the race because of their superior economic position. On this account they were in a position to

force other maritime powers to reduce their armaments—and that by means of the threat of another war. In the second place, the war has proved that armour-plated warships no longer play the effective rôle in warfare formerly attributed to them. A year prior to the Washington Conference the British Press carried on a controversy on the advisability of building dreadnoughts, or of concentrating the limited resources of the country on building submarines and light battleships. The reduction of armaments decided by the Washington Conference is hence only a logical result of the experience gained in the last world war.

The rôle played by France at this conference throws still more light on this subject. France rejected the proposal of reducing the number of submarines, in spite of Balfour's declaration that the only interpretation of this policy was that France contemplated an attack on Great Britain. In the same way France persisted in her refusal to reduce land armaments.

Thus it is evident that the results of the Washington Conference have not exactly the same reasons as Hilferding and the pacifist opportunists ascribe to them. Neither should it be forgotten that the Washington Conference gave rise to a number of war threats on the part of the United States against Great Britain (on the question of oil in Mesopotamia, submarine cables in the Pacific, &c.), besides provoking during the conference a courteous exchange of war threats between the French and British representatives.

Still we must make the deduction that war experiences have strengthened bourgeois Pacifism ; but not so much ideological Pacifism as class-economic Pacifism. The fear of a proletarian revolution will make the capitalist powers think before rushing lightly into a new war, before re-arming the proletariat.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that the world economic crisis implies the necessity of a new war. No new market is available for the products of the machinery of production created by the war in the United States, England, and Japan. The possibilities of capitalist expansion are reduced at present. The United States is trying to monopolise the South American market ; China, that great market, appears to be developing its own capitalism and meets the invasion of foreign capital, or rather colonisation,

with the beginnings of military organisation and a call for independence. The reconstruction of Germany, East Europe, and Russia is held up for reasons of policy. France and Great Britain fear a renewal of strength in Germany, not only politically, but because of commercial competition in the world market. Capitalists regard Russia as dangerous ground, because there the proletariat is in power. The world market has become too limited for the three great victorious powers, U.S.A., Great Britain, and Japan. Hitherto, a similar international situation has caused an armed struggle between imperialist powers to conquer the world market.

Two tendencies present themselves : one to avoid war both from fear of economic consequences and the possibility of a proletarian revolution, and the other a desire to fight for possession of the world market. It would be frivolous to say beforehand which of these tendencies will win the day. The teachings of history, however, are there to tell us that the days of warfare have not yet passed.

The World of Labour

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INTERNATIONAL

The Fusion of the Right Wing

REPRESENTATIVES of the Second International and of the International Working Union of Socialist Parties' (Vienna) Executives, met in Cologne, on January 5, in accordance with an agreement arrived at during The Hague Peace Congress of December, 1922, when a Committee of Action was formed. The Cologne meeting, in a long manifesto, declared that International Socialism must mobilise its forces and re-establish itself internationally to meet the capitalist offensive and world-wide reaction. In so doing, the manifesto, while announcing its desire for unity, condemns the parties and groups who "take the name of communists" and makes them responsible for the breakdown of the effort to attain unity made at Berlin, in May, 1922. Therefore, the manifesto continues, the possibility of convoking a congress together with the Moscow Executive has vanished for a long time to come.

The meeting agreed to call a World Socialist Congress to re-establish the Socialist International on May 21, at Hamburg, to include all socialist parties who are in agreement with the following :—

- (1) The emancipation of the workers by abolishing the capitalist system of production to be the ultimate aim, and the class struggle the means of attaining that object;
- (2) The unity of the Trade Union Movement within the International Federation of Trade Unions at Amsterdam to be essential to the success of the class struggle;
- (3) The resolution of the Hague World Peace Congress in 1922 on the question of the "Mission of the workers in the struggle for peace" to be the basis of all action against the danger of war; the necessity of being perfectly clear as to the attitude of the workers during war;
- (4) The International is not merely a peace-time instrument but an essential weapon during war;
- (5) On the final formation of a Socialist International to adhere to that and no other political international association outside this body.

Representatives are to be sent from all bodies on the basis of one delegate for every 5,000, and not more than fifty from any country.

The meeting discussed the Paris Conference on Reparations at some length, and Comrade Wels spoke on behalf of the German workers. In the conviction that the reparations position would still be unsolved when the Unity Congress meets in Hamburg, he made the following proposition which the Conference approved :—

- (1) The question "Reparations and Occupation" to receive special attention at the Hamburg Congress ;
- (2) A special international commission to prepare a report giving details of actual conditions in the occupied territories taken in connection with the Reparations question ;
- (3) The international Socialist Press to be requested now to give special attention to this question, and Socialists in Parliament to give details of the position when a suitable opportunity arises.

Essen Conference of the Left Wing against the War

On January 6-7, a congress of left wing Trade Unionists and Communists met at Essen to discuss the situation arising out of the breakdown of the Paris Conference on Reparations, and the threatened occupation of the Ruhr. Representatives were present from: Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and the Netherlands. The Conference drew up a manifesto addressed to the workers both of the Entente and conquered countries, in which it was urged that the workers were being rushed into a new war for capitalist aims ; that the whole burden of reparations and sanctions was being shelved on to the workers by the capitalists, who at the same time cut down wages and agitated for a longer working day, and that the bourgeoisie should be forced to take the whole burden of the Versailles Treaty on themselves. In the words of the manifesto :—

Down with the robber Versailles Peace ! War on all imperialist wars !
Down with the reparations and sanctions of the Capitalist Governments !
Workers, unite, so as to be able to make the capitalists—the real war lords—
shoulder the burdens of the war and the expense of economic reconstruction.

The occupation of the Ruhr implies a new war, even then when the Germans make no armed resistance. It will accentuate the differences between the different States and enflame national passions anew.

A European committee of action was formed of those most closely concerned in the coming struggle, and a general strike is being organised should it prove necessary. Already the French Government has made wholesale arrests of French Communists and left wing Trade Unionists in connection with the Congress.

FRANCE

Revolutionary Committee of Action against the War

RECENT events have re-awakened the energy of the militant working-class movement in France after a long period of confusion and weakness. The Communist Party, strengthened by the decisions of the Fourth Congress of the International which led to the withdrawal of its compromising elements, put up a strong and unhesitating stand against the militarism of their Government in the Ruhr, and drew upon its leaders the full force of Government persecution. And the United Confederation of Labour, throwing aside the old economic sectionalism of no politics, has joined with the Communist

Party in the formation of a Revolutionary Committee of Action to combat the war.

The stiffening of the Communist Party by the Fourth Congress of the International took the shape of a demand that members should resign the membership of freemason organisations and of the "League of the Rights of Man" (an association which did patriotic propaganda during the war). These demands, though apparently of a simple character, were effective in their intention of freeing the party from elements which had come over with the old Socialist Party, but really belonged to the bourgeois political world. A series of resignations followed, including Frossard, the secretary. Similar steps were taken with *Humanité* to relieve it from its pre-communist elements. Cachin, Vaillant-Couturier, and others of the better-known leaders stood by the party and have since received varying terms of imprisonment. The Government persecution has not touched Frossard or any of the right-wing socialists, Longuet, Renaudel, &c. In conformity with the recommendations of the Fourth Congress a Committee of Action of the party together with the *Confédération Générale du Travail Unitaire* has been formed. This move was a result of the abolition of Article 11 of the Statutes of the Red International of Labour Unions which involved co-operation between it and the Communist International; in lieu of this statute committees of action, composed of trade unionists and communists, are to be formed. The French Committee of Action met simultaneously with the Reparations Conference in Paris, and is carrying on an active anti-war propaganda.

The Congress of the Seine Trade Union Federation, held December 24-25, was of especial importance due to the final decision of the C.G.T.U. to ratify its affiliation to the Red International of Labour Unions in accordance with the C.G.T.U. resolution at the St. Etienne Congress. The question of affiliation was the chief subject under debate, and the vote showed a two-thirds majority in favour of it. The Bakers' Union opposed the discussion of international affiliation, urging that it was not the business of the departmental unions, but of the National Congress. The Seine Federation, it may be recalled, was the ringleader in the opposition to the C.G.T. in 1920, and took a prominent part in the split. Before the C.G.T.U. was established it was composed of 203 unions; but these have now fallen to 146, with 80,000 subscribing members.

The resolution on the international orientation received 94 votes from 78 unions, against 37 votes of 26 unions, and was as follows:—

The Congress of the Departmental Union of the Seine Trade Unions, in complete accord with the decisions of the National Congress at St. Etienne, confirms those decisions. It specially approves of the decisions in respect of trade union control and factory committees, propaganda, tactics, and action, as well as relations with external groups which adopt the platform of the class struggle.

It will prepare, in conjunction with the C.G.T.U., by intensive propaganda, the establishment of factory councils, including all the workers in any one enterprise, so as to exercise workers' control, both as to working conditions and production.

The congress, in accordance with the decisions of the last national congress, invites all the trade unions affiliated to the Seine Federation to apply these

decisions and to carry on a vigorous workers' offensive for a general increase in wages, the maintenance of the eight-hour law, and against the taxation of wages.

In the international field, the congress approves of the attitude of the C.G.T.U. delegation at the Second Congress of the R.I.L.U., and congratulates the C.G.T.U. on its affiliation to the R.I.L.U., at the same time requesting all the unions belonging to the Seine Department to carry out the decisions taken.

ITALY

Taxation of Wages

IN order to cope with the financial chaos in Italy, the Mussolini government introduced a system of wage taxation, calculated to bring in sixty million lire annually. The tax applies to State employees and also municipal and provincial employees. For those workers in permanent employment the scale is 10.32 per cent. for State employees, municipal, &c., 12.40 per cent. for workers on inferior railways, trams, or inland waterways. Non-permanent workers are to pay 4 per cent. on their basic wage and 10.32 or 12.40 per cent. on all supplementary allowances.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Farmer-Labour Party Negotiations

A CONFERENCE for progressive political action was held at Cleveland, on December 11, 1922, one of a series since the first conference held in Chicago in February, 1922, to debate the question of the formation of a third political party on the lines of the British Labour Party. Representatives of railroad unions, farmers' organisations, trade union leaders, and the Socialist Party were present; but the Workers' Party, which has been active in working for a Labour Party, was refused representation on the grounds that "The principles of their organisation were not in conformity with the declaration of the conference. . . ." The Socialist Party entered a mild protest against their exclusion on the grounds that the party was "un-American"; but agreed that the party should be excluded because of its "disruptive tactics," and its policy of "rejecting the principles of democracy in favour of dictatorship."

The Farmer-Labour group moved that a Labour Party be formed in these words: "That the conference for progressive political action hereby declares for independent political action by the agricultural and industrial workers through a party of their own." The resolution was discussed at length and finally lost by 64 votes to 52.

The programme adopted by the conference was:—

- (1) Repeal of the Esch-Cummins railroad law, operation of the railroads for the benefit of the people, and public control of water power in the interests of the people.
- (2) Direct election of the President and Vice-President by the people, and extension of direct primary laws in all States.
- (3) Action by Congress to end the practice of courts to declare legislation unconstitutional.
- (4) Enactment of the Norris-Sinclair consumers' and producers' financing corporation bill, designed to increase prices that farmers receive and reduce

prices that consumers pay for farm products, and the creation of an independent system of food production credits.

- (5) Increased tax rates on large incomes and inheritance and payment of a soldier bonus by restoring the tax on excess profits.
- (6) Legislation providing minimum essential standards of employment for women ; equality for women and men while improving existing political, social, and industrial standards, and State action to insure maximum benefit of Federal maternity and infancy acts.

Workers' Party Convention

The second convention of the Workers' Party was held in New York, December 24, 1922. The report presented showed that the party had greatly grown in power since its foundation in December, 1921, and been very active in carrying on both political and industrial campaigns. The chief campaigns have comprised an agitation for a Labour Party and the programme on the industrial field, urging the militant workers to remain within the old unions and work on the lines laid down by the Trade Union Educational League. The party strength was estimated to be 20,000, built up chiefly by the foreign language federations of which there are now sixteen in the party ; an appeal was made for more activity in building up the English-speaking membership.

The following statement on the International was presented to the convention and voted unanimously :—

The Workers' Party accepts the principle that the class struggle for the emancipation of the working class is an international struggle. The workers of Russia have been obliged to fight against the whole capitalist world in order to maintain their Soviet Government and to win the opportunity of building their system of production on a communist basis. In this struggle they have had the support of the enlightened workers of every country.

The future struggles against capitalism will take the same character. In order to win the final victory in the struggle against world capitalism the working class of the world must be united under one leadership.

The leadership of the international struggle which inspires hope in the hearts of the workers of the world and arouses fear in the capitalists of every country is the leadership of the Communist International.

The Workers' Party declares its sympathy with the principles of the Communist International and enters the struggle against American capitalism, the most powerful of the national groups, under the inspiration of the leadership of the Communist International.

It rallies to the call : Workers of the World, Unite !

The Workers' Party sent fraternal delegates to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International ; but this convention took place before the delegates returned to report.

BOOK REVIEWS

MORE BRITISH MARXISM

An Outline of Modern Imperialism. By Thomas Ashcroft and others. Plebs Text Book No. 2. Plebs League. 2s. 6d.

Imperialism: The Final Stage of Capitalism. By N. Lenin. Translated by André Tridon. Progress Printing Co., Boston, Mass.

THE above two books show very clearly the difference between Marxism and the British-American substitute for Marxism.

Lenin's book is not yet available in English. The above "version" is only a mangled fragment which it is a crime to have issued under Lenin's name. (This fact itself, incidentally, is an illustration of the barbaric character of British-American Marxism, which issues even the classics of its science in a doctored and mutilated form without being conscious of its vandalism—not only in the case of unknown and unnamed publishers such as the above, but also in the case of the Kerr publications. The nature of the omissions is even more significant, but to these we shall come later.)

Even in its present mutilated form, however, the preface to Lenin's book reveals in a flash the whole difference between revolutionary Marxism and Plebs hobbies of the economic interpretation of politics.

"It is painful," writes Lenin, "in these days of freedom to read over certain passages of this book in which the thought of the censorship prevented me from making certain definite statements or from enlarging upon certain important points. When I wished to say what imperialism stood for on the eve of the Socialist revolution, when I wished to say that social-patriotism, that is lip-service to Socialism coupled with patriotic deeds, was a complete betrayal of Socialism, a desertion to the bourgeois camp, and that this schism in the Labour Movement stood in certain relations to certain concrete conditions of imperialism—I had to confine myself to allusions and suggestions, or to refer the reader to a reprint of the 'illegal' articles I wrote between 1914 and 1917."

To Lenin, writing under a censorship, it is painful and shameful to be compelled to slur over what the Plebs authors, writing under no censorship (save, perhaps, the fear of ill-will of trade union officials), never think of including.

The absolute difference here revealed is a revelation of two worlds.

To Lenin imperialism is a living, concrete thing; it is not simply the expansion of finance-capital and the partitioning of territories; it is the development of oligarchy, the spread of social decay, the corruption of the Labour movements, the growth of opportunism, the division of the world working class, the betrayal of socialism—and also the eve of the socialist revolution.

To the Plebs the study of imperialism is an assiduous collection of information about capitalist expansion and exposures of capitalist diplomacy, together with a few conventional references to the exploitation of the working class and the necessity for replacing capitalism.

So Lenin's treatment shows the living interest of an active thinker-fighter in the class struggle. His chapters run:—

MODERN CAPITALISM

- (1) Concentration of Industry and Monopoly.
- (2) The New Rôle played by the Banks.
- (3) Finance-Capital and Oligarchy.
- (4) The Export of Capital.
- (5) Division of the World under the Capitalist Groups.
- (6) Division of the World under the Great Powers.
- (7) Imperialism as a Special Stage of Capitalism.
- (8) Parasitism and Stagnation of Capitalism.
- (9) Criticism of Imperialism.
- (10) Historical rôle of Imperialism.

Contrast with this the banal and unrelated newscutting treatment of the Plebs chapters:—

- (1) The Economics of Imperialism.
 - (2) British Expansion, 1882-1914.
 - (3) German Expansion, 1885-1914.
 - (4) French Expansion, 1881-1914.
 - (5) Russian Expansion.
 - (6) Italian Expansion.
 - (7) Europe on the Eve of War, 1914.
 - (8) Imperialism in War Time.
 - (9) Imperialism in the Peace Treaties.
 - (10) Japanese Expansion, 1871-1921.
 - (11) American Expansion, 1898-1921.
 - (12) Imperialism and the Worker.
- Appendix.—The Theory of Imperialism.

What are the lessons that the Plebs has to teach? For this we must turn to the chapter on "Imperialism and the Worker," neatly docketed away from the rest of the book. Here the Plebs finds that "three lessons of especial moment stand out from a study of imperialism." They are (1) "The Interdependence of Economics and Politics" (a typical Plebs phrase, Marxistically ludicrous, but no doubt a rare and refreshing reward of arduous study for the working class); (2) "Internationalism" ("The workers must learn that an injury to one is an injury to all"); (3) "Working Class Independence" ("Let us rally to our own standard. Let us inscribe upon it the watchwords, 'Solidarity,' 'Self-Reliance.' In that sign—and in that sign alone—we shall conquer"). So ends the third lesson of the Plebs gospel.

These are the portentous results of scientific Marxism applied to the main character of modern capitalist society. The *Plebs* had really better merge itself in the *Labour Magazine*.

What is the explanation of this pathetic and abject failure? It is not an accident; it is instinct in the whole of Plebs teaching and thinking, with its barren "science" and abstract class-consciousness, leading only to Labour Party vagueness.

The explanation is to be found in the very character of the "Marxism" taught by the Plebs—the British-American substitute for Marxism as taught in such works as Ablett's "Outlines of Economics" or Boudin's "Theoretical System of Karl Marx."

In these systems the essence of Marx is left out. The economics (Marx never wrote about "Economics") is taken in unreal abstraction, and the history and politics is slurred over or omitted. The value for the class struggle becomes nil. Promising young men are sent to the Labour College for two years and come back budding snobs and trade union officials.

So extreme is the pitch this reaches that the American translator of Lenin's "Imperialism" actually only takes Chapters 1 to 6 of the ten chapters given above, and entirely omits the remaining four chapters, which contain the whole outcome. No doubt he felt that the first six chapters contained the "economic exposition," and that the rest was simply Lenin's ramblings, containing party politics and similar matters of no concern to Marxism.

To examine the opportunism of the British Labour Movement as a reflection of imperialism would no doubt appear to be a partisan occupation beneath the impartial theoretical dignity of the Plebs conception of Marxism. But it might come as a surprise to the Plebs-taught students of Marxism to learn that Marx wrote:—

"The English proletariat is becoming in practice more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of nations appears to be aiming at establishing in the end a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat alongside of the bourgeoisie. For a nation which is engaged in exploiting the whole world, all the conditions are ready for this."

Or that Engels wrote:—

"You ask what the English workers think of the colonial policy? The same as they think of any politics: there is no workers' party here, but only conservative and liberal radicals: the workers are eating out of England's world-market and colonial monopoly."

And

"The English trade unions let themselves be led by men who are bought by the bourgeoisie, or at any rate are counted in their ranks."

All this vulgar language of Marx and Engels is far from the refined and scientific atmosphere of the Plebs text-book, which introduces its "Marxian" study of imperial and world problems with a blessing from a member of the General Council.

The distinction may now be quite shortly and simply put.

Marxism interprets history and politics in terms of the class struggle.

The British-American substitute for Marxism interprets history and politics in terms of economics (an occupation favoured by many bourgeois historians). The conventional insertion of a stock phrase or two about the working class at the beginning and the end—"at the base of the whole structure lies the exploitation of the masses," p. 9; "we cannot solve the problem of

imperialism while capitalism lasts," p. 135—makes no difference to the complete absence of the class struggle from the actual study.

The most glaring example of this may be taken from the account of the outbreak of war. A whole chapter is devoted to "Europe on the Eve of War, 1914." In the nine pages of that chapter the collapse of capitalist diplomacy is carefully narrated. *The collapse of the International is never mentioned.* Is it not clear that any account whatever of "Europe on the Eve of War, 1914," *from the point of view of the class struggle*, though it were only three lines in place of three hundred, would mention the collapse of the International? And if that is clear, then is it not clear that any defence whatever that may be put forward for the reasons in this case only serves as an admission of the central issue, that this study is not written from the point of view of the class struggle—and therefore is not an accurate historical study?

In point of fact there are two whole pages on the "psychological aspect." "We must not omit another aspect of the eve of war—the general outlook of the peoples, which makes them fit material for the great struggle." The passage goes on to speak of the "deception of the masses." And all the time it never touches on the main instruments of the deception of the masses, the main agents which made the people fit materials for the great struggle—the social patriotic Labour leaders, whose treachery was the real collapse of 1914. To do so might have made these pages useful for the practical understanding of the workers, instead of filling them with inflated psychological bombast about "race egoism." But, then, this might have given offence; and there is nothing in this book to disturb the equanimity of the most offensive and treacherous member of the General Council.

Not that the Plebs authors are wanting in moral censure when they feel occasion arises. The terms of the Treaty of Versailles, they tell us in another of their bold passages, "grossly violated both the proposed war aims of the Allies and also the terms of the armistice." Here they are on safe ground; here the Labour Party and the U.D.C. have already spoken; and here a British Marxist may safely follow. The violation of armistice-pledges by capitalist diplomatists is a serious matter for the workers. But the violation of certain other pledges in 1914 by the workers' own leaders is of no concern.

This clinging to the skirts of the U.D.C. is the final and logical conclusion of the picture of these Marxists, who set out on their journey without understanding that Marxism is politics or nothing. For it is not the case that there can be a kind of vacuum of no politics, as they hope and imagine; if they exclude the revolutionary politics of Marxism they inevitably come at the mercy of liberal politics. Their economics wither into an arid dogma; their actual thinking and politics becomes philistine and bourgeois. An actual examination of the authorities quoted in this "Marxian" work is instructive evidence of the real influences which have moulded it. The score is as

follows (political writers only; historical authorities, such as Holland Rose, have been omitted):—

Brailsford	..	..	..	17	quotations
Newbold	..	..	..	6	„ (all from his I.L.P. period)
J. A. Hobson	..	..	..	4	„
E. D. Morel	..	..	..	3	„
Brig.-General Thomson	..	..	..	3	„
Boudin	..	..	..	2	„
L. S. Woolf	..	..	..	2	„
Marx, Engels, Kautsky, Lenin, Trotsky, Bucharin, Hilferding, Rosa Luxembourg, Varga				0	„

It is really superfluous to add anything to this list.

The only reason for spending a review of such length on a book of this character is because the Plebs teaching is still widely looked to in this country as representative of Marxism, and only when we have completely exploded that myth can we lay the foundations of the real revolutionary movement in this country.

R. P. D.

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NOTES of the MONTH

*Collapse—A Few Weeks Back—A Petition in Bankruptcy—The Shams
Go Down Together—Lausanne the End of Liberal Pacifism—
The British-French Conflict—Miniature Boom and
Coming Slump—War Prospects*

IN the hour of need the working-class unity of the West is lacking. This is the first and foremost fact of the present situation. Four years after the war it is possible for French troops to overrun the heart of industrial Germany with the connivance of the British Government, while the workers of the countries concerned look on helpless. This is the exact amount that has been achieved by the Wilsonian pacifism of the Second International and the paper solidarity of the International Federation of Trade Unions. The collapse of the International of the West European Labour Movements was so certainly predictable that it is too commonly taken for granted. It occasions no more surprise than the parallel collapse of the League of Nations. Yet the circumstances are such as to make it worthy of note.

IT has occurred with dramatic suddenness after the empty parade of the Hague Conference. Only a few weeks back, and the whole assembled Labour and Socialist organisations of Europe, under the presidency of Mr. J. H. Thomas and in union with the liberal pacifist sections of the bourgeoisie (but excluding the communists) had vowed themselves to the international general strike against war. They had refused consideration of the Russian proposal of a practical programme. They had scorned the Russian warning that the Ruhr would put them to the test. The secretary of the Trade Union International boasted in public in Berlin that the occupation of the Ruhr would see twenty-five million trade unionists in action. When the test came, the hollowness was

exposed. The twenty-five millions of the Amsterdam Trade Union International were revealed to be a paper army. The first instinct of the Social Democrats of Germany and the Independent Labour Party of this country was to clamour for the retention of the British Empire's forces on the Rhine, thus revealing the extent of their belief in the working-class International. The fight against French militarism in France was undertaken, not by the Socialists, but by the Communists, who had never been invited to the Hague Conference, and who alone bore the brunt of the French Government's persecution. The Second International, the Vienna International, and the Amsterdam International joined in a manifesto to the German workers calling on them to exert pressure on their capitalists to pay reparations.

LIKE a company promoter who recognises that his last cards have been played, and that nothing remains but to go into voluntary liquidation, the secretary of the bogus Trade Union International at Amsterdam decided to make a clean breast of it in the hope of thereby regaining credit. He confessed the organisation and policy that he represents to be as powerless as in 1914. But this confession is worthless unless it is accompanied by a recognition of the mistake that has been made and a determination to alter it. The attempt by a confession of failure to gain another lease of power shows a complete inability to understand what is happening. The important point is not that his organisation and policy is as powerless as in 1914; it is that its continuance or reconstruction along the present lines will be as useless as in 1919. It is necessary to recognise, however bitter, that the Russian warning was correct, and that it is useless to pass general resolutions without making practical preparations to carry them out. United working-class action against war is a revolutionary thing, or it is hypocrisy: and if it is sincerely intended, it is necessary to face up seriously to all the requirements of revolutionary organisation. This is the issue which the Labour Party leaders who profess theoretical adherence to the principle of united working-class action against war will now have to face.

THE collapse of the International of the Western European Labour Movements coincides with the collapse of the League of Nations. These two organisations have been so closely intertwined that their common outcome combines to form a single picture. Their simultaneous collapse serves to reveal and symbolise the character of the new period on which we are entering. The clash of forces has now reached a point at which the shams and polite fictions of the peace can no longer find any room. Those shams received their most obvious and concrete embodiment in the League of Nations and the loyal and anti-revolutionary "Internationals" associated with it. During the years of ferment and movement after the war those organisations were pushed upon the attention with an untiring publicity. That these institutions, whose publicity was plentifully financed by the wealthy and absorbed by the gullible during these last few years, should now pass out of the picture is a significant item. They were born together, and in their death they were not divided. The events of the Ruhr and Lausanne represent more than the immediate issues with which they are concerned. They represent the final conclusion of reconstructions and liberal pacifism.

LIBERAL pacifism—or the veiling of imperialism under gallant phrases of freedom and crusading justice—reached its death at Lausanne. Belgium and the war was its vision of glory; Wilson and Versailles was its zenith. The aftermath of Versailles made the taste prove bitter. Washington sought to revive the tradition, but already the reflection was fainter and less confident. Genoa made a supreme effort to conjure up the old spells—and failed. With the events leading up to Lausanne the last authentic note was heard in Lloyd George's rallying cry to fight for "the freedom of the Straits." The cry won no response. Lausanne took place in a relentless public atmosphere of bargaining and oil. "I loathe the question of Mosul," declared Lord Curzon on his return to the sympathetic atmosphere of the Peers, "especially its associations with oil." Lord Curzon had reason to complain. The rôle of the "English gentleman" is finishing—and all history

breathes a sigh of relief. The grandiloquent periphrases are ignored. Short sordid words like "oil" have to be pronounced by noble lips that loathe them. In the last fierce lap of imperialist rivalry and conflict politics become open in their indecency. Coal in the Ruhr, oil at Mosul, become the open objects of the fight. When ugly things are called by ugly names, the world can at last become beautiful.

THAT war has not already developed from the situation of the British and French Governments at present is due to British inability rather than lack of will. Britain has to suffer the whims and wills of France alike in the Ruhr and at Lausanne, thwarting her policy and preventing her moving, because France is ready to fight and Britain is not. Britain is not in a position to face war at present. The British Prime Minister had occasion recently to refer to the problem created by the existing war weariness and the probable necessity of war. The panic call to the colonies sent out by Lloyd George had evoked only a cold response. The magic of the "freedom of the Straits" failed to work. And at the same time, by an unfortunate coincidence, just when the crisis to the Ruhr and Lausanne brought the moment of need, America became urgent over the settlement of her debt, and the British Government, after vain attempts to improve the terms, found itself compelled to accept a further heavy burden for an immense period ahead. Thus everything in British conditions since last autumn pointed to caution even at the expense of the appearance of pusillanimity—in other words, to Bonar Law in place of Lloyd George. In France, on the other hand, desperate conditions breed valour, as in Britain discretion—in other words, Poincaré in place of Briand. With certain bankruptcy ahead, the French bourgeoisie was ready to gamble on vast military expenditure and adventures in the hope of somehow coming out on top. So France was free to act, and to play the *enfant terrible* without fear of consequences in the Ruhr and at Lausanne. The British rulers could only look on with apprehensive helplessness at the French, and hope that they would get enough rope to hang themselves.

IN consequence, the policy of the British bourgeoisie was to make the best of it and leave it at that, in spite of the demands of a powerful section for immediate action on the side of Germany. They could only comfort themselves with the thought that France was engaged in a preposterous adventure and must soon be bankrupt. Meanwhile the temporary boom resulting from the stoppage of the Ruhr afforded a welcome stimulus to British industry. In all the mining districts and iron and steel centres orders poured in. "The French occupation of the Ruhr," runs a typical report from Sunderland, "has increased the demand for pig iron: there is every indication that many more blast furnaces on the Tees-side will be blown again, though of course the miniature boom may be only temporary." But this boom in its nature cannot be a mark of returning health, but of increasing disease. It is based, not on the recovery, but on the desperation of Germany. The orders may pour in, but can they be paid for? And if not, the boom can only be the prelude to a slump far more devastating than any preceding. Finally, if France should succeed after all in organising the Ruhr, and reaching an agreement with the German industrialists, then the great coal and iron combination of Central Europe against Britain will have been accomplished, and it will be impossible for Britain to remain quiet. Already the apprehension of this, and the consequent preludes of action, appear in the utterances of British Press and statesmen.

WHAT is the resulting position? The conflict between Britain and France is declared in any case. In the one alternative France fails and goes bankrupt, and British supremacy in Europe is established. In that case the conflict between Britain, the one remaining power in Europe, and America is immediately hastened. It is in fact likely that, if there is any danger of such an issue, America will intervene beforehand with some form of international loan and rehabilitate France. In the other alternative, France is successful, and Britain is compelled to face the choice of final capitulation and industrial decline or war with France. In any case the issue before the working-class movement is one of definite action or wordy impotence. To invoke in these conditions the

formula of the League of Nations, as was done in the Labour Manifesto at the opening of Parliament, is simply abdication. The old general opposition to war or agitation over unemployment become meaningless and impossible. Either the challenge when it comes must be taken up, or the complete inability to act must be confessed. When real events happen, politics must be made real or they cease to exist.

THE COAL WAR IN EUROPE

By M. PHILIPS PRICE

PACIFISTS and humanitarians tell us that the Versailles Treaty, as the embodiment of the spirit of greed and envy, is responsible for chaos in Europe and is a breeding ground for new wars. To judge from their line of argument one might think that had it not been for the accident that President Wilson was outwitted in Paris in the summer of 1919, the ills of Europe might have been on the way to being cured by now. But the mere fact that each successive Entente Premier, whether he is inclined to be reasonable in nature, like M. Briand, or whether he is a firebrand, like M. Poincaré; and each British Premier, whether he be Coalition Liberal or Tory, follows a certain line of policy in regard to the Versailles Treaty, would indicate that the policies of England and France over the problem of Central Europe are not due to the whims of misguided statesmen but are due to far-reaching economic causes, dictating political tendencies.

At the same time, as regards France at least, it is not quite true to say that there has been no change in her policy towards the Central European problem in the last year. There *has* been a change, but it is not due to the replacing of "reasonable" M. Briand by "unreasonable" M. Poincaré. The change is of a deep-seated economic nature, connected with internal developments in France. The Versailles Treaty was, in effect, a compromise between two classes of economic interests in France—the inflationists and the deflationists. The latter saw the yawning gap in the national Budget and held that in the interests of the investors in War Loans and public funds, *i.e.*, of the holders of passive capital, that Budget must be balanced. The seventy-five milliard gold francs, which M. Klotz estimated in September, 1919, as the French claim on Germany for allowances, pensions, and widows, was a demand for cash payment from Germany to prevent the continuance of inflation of the French currency, the fall of the value of the franc, and of the investors' holdings. On the other hand, the inflationists in France

(at the period when the Treaty was framed they were weak) had no objection to seeing the franc fall, so long as French industries could expand and with the aid of low currencies dominate the Continent. Steering a somewhat middle course between the small investors, who spoke through M. Klotz, and the heavy industries came the big French banks. Interested as floaters of War Loans in the policy of deflation, they also had one foot in the heavy industries, which in France, unlike in England and Germany, they largely influenced even during times of inflation. Hence when the seventy-five milliard gold francs of German reparations were not forthcoming, it was not difficult for the great French banks to cut their losses on depreciated currencies and war investments, and to back the Comité des Forges in its bid for the control of the coal and iron resources of Europe. Hence the demand for sanctions became louder and louder, beginning with the occupation of three Rhine harbours on the right bank in February, 1921, followed by the talk of "productive guarantees" when the question of a moratorium was raised in the autumn of 1922. The Dariac report at last showed what the French heavy industries were aiming at. The French annexation of Lorraine, control of the Saar, and occupation of the left bank of the Rhine for fifteen years was foreshadowed already during the war and embodied in the Franco-German secret agreement of February, 1917. But that could not satisfy the French heavy industries. In order to secure a dominating position, they had to get control of the Ruhr coke, with which alone the Lorraine ore could be smelted. As Germany's incapacity to fill the gaps in the French Budget became clear, the excuse which the French industries wanted was provided. In his secret report to the French Government M. Dariac, after describing the coal and iron industries on both banks of the Rhine, concludes: "This is a question which must be for us beyond all discussion. These are the guarantees, which we must on no account relinquish."

The demand for the economic union of the areas in which the Ruhr and Saar coal, the Lorraine and Longwy-Briey ores are situated, has not been confined to France. As far back as May, 1915, when the German heavy industries were beginning to make their voices more and more heard in the councils of the junker Government of Germany, a document was written by the confidential

parliamentary agent of the National Liberals, Herr Stresemann, on behalf of the Zentralverband Deutscher Industrieller and Bund der Deutschen Industriellen, containing the following passages: "In addition to the acquisition by us of the iron region of Briey, the coal departments of the Pas de Calais ought also to be included. The acquisition of these territories makes it essential that the population of these regions should not be allowed to exercise political influence on German policy, and therefore the mining and other properties here should be taken over and the owners compensated by the French Government. . . . Our monthly production of steel is now one million tons. But this does not fully cover our requirements and an increase is desirable. The basis for this increase is the minette in Lorraine united with that of North France. But if we were to give back the fortress of Longwy with the numerous smelting furnaces in that region to the French, then we should have to carry on the next war with the enemy guns threatening the greater part of our Luxemburg steel plants." And so we see that the Dariac and the Stresemann reports, although separated by seven years from one another, speak one and the same language. They say: union of coke and iron ore. But as the events since 1914 have shown this is only possible in one of three ways. Either the Ruhr coke subordinates Lorraine and Longwy-Briey iron ore to its will (the Stresemann solution), or the Lorraine and Longwy-Briey ore subordinates the Ruhr coke (Dariac and Comité des Forges solution), or, thirdly, the ore and the coke unable to dominate each other agree to unite on a basis of equality.

The Versailles Treaty enabled the French heavy industries, if not to dominate the iron and coal of the whole of the above-named regions, at least to go a good way on the road to so doing. In spite of the devastated areas the French coal production, which in 1913 was 40,800,000 tons, was in 1922 with the Lorraine and Saar coal 32,000,000 tons. In addition to this comes 20,000,000 tons of German coal and equivalent of coke deliveries under the Spa agreement, making the Comité des Houillères, which controls the coal distribution of France, the biggest coal merchant in Europe. The fall of the mark in Germany does not worry the Comité des Houillères, which uses the German coal, produced at sweated wages, to pay subsidies to the French coalowners and to keep the home

price of coal in France down. Also the amount of iron ore at the disposal of the French Comité des Forges is bigger than that at the disposal of any other European State. The pig-iron production in France in 1922 was 5,100,000 tons, the iron ore production in 1920 and 1921 13,800,000 and 14,100,000 tons against 12,700,000 and 3,400,000 tons in England, while France's steel exports have risen from 400,000 tons in 1913 to 1,300,000 tons in 1922. Against this the German Verein der Deutschen Eisenhütten has lost 75 per cent. of its iron ore sources, and the Kohlensyndikat has, in addition to the loss of 10 per cent. in that part of Upper Silesia ceded to Poland, and 15 per cent. lost in Lorraine and the Saar, to give up another 10 per cent. of its coal production under the Spa agreement. Nevertheless, this great increase in the industrial strength of the Comité des Forges and of the Comité des Houillères over against its German counterparts has not brought about the complete domination of the former over the coal and iron resources of Western and Central Europe. The Saar coal acquired by the French under the treaty has proved itself entirely unfit for coking, being of too soft and gaseous a nature. English coke is too dear, and cost of transport great. The Lorraine and Longwy blast furnaces therefore have been to a large extent dependent upon the Ruhr, which is the only large area where there are numerous coal seams containing the requisite percentage of carbon, gas, and ash to make good coke. And the German Kohlensyndikat has not been slow to use its control over this valuable coke source to its own advantage. It has obstructed every attempt of the Comité des Houillères to alter the Spa programme and to secure that instead of 1,720,000 tons of coal monthly France shall receive 1,775,000 tons, of which 620,000 tons shall be coke and 100,000 tons fine coal for coking. The amount demanded is practically the same, but the Comité des Forges asks that instead of sending non-coking coal to glut the French markets, an increased portion shall be converted into coke and delivered. This is what the Comité des Forges secured on paper through the Reparations Commission last August, and one of the pretexts for the present coal war is in the fact that the Kohlensyndikat has not carried out these deliveries.

But these pin-pricks of the Kohlensyndikat are all part of the game, which is to lead up to negotiations for the creation of a

Franco-German coal, iron, and steel combine for controlling the production of the Ruhr, Lorraine, Saar, Longwy-Briey, and Luxemburg. They are lovers' quarrels, which, as the present coal war shows, are often the most bitter on the eve of the announcement of the betrothal. For it is just as much a necessity for the Verein der Deutschen Eisenhütten to have a good supply of cheap Lorraine minette, bought on a falling franc, thereby saving buying at gold value Swedish and Spanish ores, as it is for the Lorraine and Longwy furnaces to have Ruhr coke. Therefore some interchange of shares in each other's undertaking, coupled with purchase and sale agreements, is becoming a vital necessity for both. But will the trusts which make up the Comité des Forges and the Kohlen-syndikat be content with a 50 per cent. participation in each other's concerns, or will the former demand 60 per cent. as the price of victory enforced by the bayonets of the French army, and the latter 60 per cent. on the ground that they alone have the technique and engineers to make the combine a success? That is the issue which is being decided on the Ruhr to-day.

In this connection it is interesting to see what has already been done by the German heavy industry trusts by way of co-operation and co-partnership agreements with non-German trusts. As I have pointed out in former articles since the defeat of the German revolution, two enormously powerful industrial trusts have arisen in Germany which dominate the political life of the country—the Rhine-Elbe Union (Stinnes) and the A.E.G.-Krupp-Otto Wolff Federation. Both of them have spread out their tentacles and have their connections in the City of London and Wall Street on the one hand, and in the Rue de Madrid (Paris) on the other. Their connections with English banks and undertakings enable them to get credit in gold for raw material purchases and also profits from participation in British exploiting enterprises in colonial parts of the earth. Also these enabled them to fall back on English coal for the finishing metal industries in their trusts, in the event of a breach with the Comité des Forges. On the other hand, both the Stinnes and the anti-Stinnes trusts have French connections, but in neither case, where subsidiary companies have been formed to exploit a certain enterprise, has the participation been equal. The French have in nearly all cases secured a controlling influence. Nevertheless

the principle of co-operation and division of profits between French and German capitalists has in the last two years been accepted and become a fact.

The Stinnes trust is less internationally connected than its rival, but nevertheless its connections are not unimportant. Its iron and smelting properties in Luxemburg were bought out at the end of the war in cash, so that it has now no share in the Société des Terre Rouges, which has taken them over. But in Czecho-Slovakia it has formed a subsidiary company with participation of Schneider-Creusot (an important member of the Comité des Forges) to control the metal trade, in Austria it is in partnership with Italian capital (Castiglioni) in the Alpino-Montana mines, and in Hungary with British City banks in the Anglo-Hungarian bank. Another French connection is between one of its members, Siemens-Halske and Siemens-Schuckert, and the Syndicat des Constructeurs en Ciment Armé.

The A.E.G.-Krupp-Otto Wolff Federation have the following international connections. Through the Phœnix A.G. and thereby the Hamburg-America Line, it comes in contact with the Harriman concern in America; through the Anglo-German banking house Kleinwert (London) with the Russo-Asiatic Consolidated in the City and with Vickers. The exact share percentage held by the German trust in these English concerns is not yet known. Then through two of its members, the Haniel group and the Phœnix A.G., it has a minority participation in the French Société Metallurgique de Knutange, exploiting its former properties in Lorraine through the Röchling bank, a minority participation in the Société Lorraine Minière et Metallurgique and the Acières de Longwy, formed to take over its properties after the war in Lorraine and North France, through Felten Guillaume a minority participation in the Société de Terre Rouge, and the "Arbed" behind which stands de Wendel, Schneider-Creusot, and the Belgian Bank de Bruxelles. In all these participations, except the one through Röchling, the German trust is in a minority of 40 per cent. Röchling, however, has succeeded in acquiring 60 per cent., thus controlling a joint Franco-German enterprise in Lorraine under the shadow of French bayonets. This perhaps is the first swallow announcing the summer.

It is not possible at the present time to say that one or other of the two German trusts tends more towards industrial alliance with the French heavy industries and the other more to London City and Wall Street. A year ago it was possible to see a pro-French tendency in one and a pro-English one in the other. This may have been because a bitter struggle was being fought between them in Germany. But last autumn Stinnes, who until then had poor international connections and little German bank capital behind him, fearing the coming of a stable currency under Anglo-American banking pressure, made haste to acquire one-third of the shares in the Berliner Handelsgesellschaft, the bank of the A.E.G. Since then, although the competition between the two trusts continues as before, there is more than one point now where they overlap and even co-operate for limited ends. Before both of them now lies the question, whether they are to develop their French connections, aim at the coal, iron, and steel combine with the Comité des Houillères and the Comité des Forges, pass through a period of crisis while the mark is being tuned up to the level of the French franc, as has already happened in the Saar and will happen in the Ruhr if the French army stays there, but in exchange for this get the unity of the mineral resources of the western part of the European continent. That this solution has much attraction for Herr Stinnes no one can doubt after his utterances during this last year. Thus at a meeting of the Westphalian industrialists last June he said that the German heavy industries must concentrate on coke production for export, and that the rest of Germany would have to look elsewhere for its supplies. Also he said: "We must at all costs have a definite settlement of reparations, even if it means the occupation of the Ruhr by the French." Again, on December 6, the *Zeit*, organ of the heavy industry Volkspartei and closely connected with Stresemann, referring to the unification of German coking with French smelting interests, said that this solution must be aimed at, even if it means that the German concerns hand over ready cash to the French concerns in compensation.

That the French trusts have shown from time to time a readiness to come to an understanding is undoubted. Thus, when the question of the division of Upper Silesia after the plebiscite had to be decided, it is a fact, though not generally known, that members of

the Comité des Forges proposed that if the German interests owning coal mines and smelting plants in Upper Silesia would agree to a French participation of 20 per cent. in these German undertakings, the French Government would leave the whole Silesian industrial area within the German political system. This was refused by the German Government under pressure from the directors of the mining and smelting interests in the Ruhr, mainly from the Stinnes trust. Even now in the Polish part of Upper Silesia the French have not taken more than 20 per cent. of the shares in the great Hohenlohe concern and the management is left in German hands. Again, shortly before January, 1923, negotiations were going on in Paris and Berlin, through confidential agents of the two German trusts and the Comité des Forges, for the creation of the Franco-German Combine. But the Germans laid down conditions unacceptable for the French. Trusting to the fall of the mark, which enables them to keep the gold value of wages at an ever-decreasing ratio to selling prices of industrial products, and knowing that the French heavy industries are suffering from difficulties in placing their products in countries with a currency more depreciated than theirs, they stubbornly refused to consider a combine in which they did not have the controlling interests, or at least a 50 per cent. participation. The reply to this has been the military occupation of the Ruhr and the new economic "sanctions" of the French, which will lead logically to the introduction of a higher currency than the mark in the Rhineland and Ruhr. This is an attempt to make it impossible for the Ruhr industries to keep their markets in the rest of Germany by raising Ruhr coal prices to the level of the prices in France. The same measures have led in the Saar already to coal being quoted there at 836 marks a ton, while on the right bank of the Rhine it was quoted at 300 marks. If the German trusts accept this position they lose their home markets. But they would increase their investments in French industrial concerns and they would probably be ready to agree, if they got at least a fifty per cent. participation in the French trusts. That they have a good idea of the value of the properties which are at stake, is seen from the Stock Exchange reports of the *Bergwerks Zeitung* for January 30, the organ of the Westphalian heavy industries, which says: "The developments in the Ruhr have called the attention of the world to

the fact that colossal and valuable properties exist here. Both home and foreign investors are tumbling over each other for shares in them. This is the cause of the great rise in the value of Westphalian industrials at a time when the enemy is in the land."

The other chance before the German trusts is to extend their *liaisons* with English and American banks and businesses. This would be a much more painful operation and would probably mean the shutting down of the greater part of the German industries, because large credits for coal and raw material in high valuta lands could only be obtained by stabilising the mark and bringing it in some fixed relation to the sterling and dollar. The unemployment which would follow from this is appalling to contemplate. But the German trusts would not lose, for they would increase their holdings in valuable industrial securities and other investments in England and America. On the other hand this method would reduce Germany to a vast pawnbroker's shop, in which English and American banks would buy up the national property at knockout prices and the German trusts would get their commissions and a share in the subsequent profits. It would mean a conversion of huge blocks of active capital into passive capital. The former holders of German industrial shares would now hold the scrip of currency loans and mortgages on the public works of Germany. The dead weight of interest-bearing paper would press down as an intolerable burden upon the German population, who would be unemployed to an even greater extent than in England to-day. Some such solution is clearly what the Executive Council of the British Associated Chambers of Commerce had in mind when it issued its memorandum recently on the reparation problems. It proposes the seizure of Germany's maritime customs, to be administered by the Allies in the service of a loan (it could only be a British or American loan) of one milliard sterling for currency stabilisation and reparation payment. And is one not to assume that this is the course recommended as a solution of the reparations problem by the Joint Council of the Trades Union Congress and the Executive Committee of the Labour Party, in its recent manifesto published immediately after the French occupation of the Ruhr? No actual mention is made of a loan, but after a preamble condemning a policy which "cripples Germany's purchasing power and destroys

her credit " it goes on to demand amongst other things the making of " a formal proposal for the reference of the whole reparation problem (including the present action of the French Government) to the League of Nations." In other words, it would call in that same body, which may be more truly styled the political organ of the Pierpont Morgan, Rothschild, and various international Jewish banking houses from the Frankfurt ghetto. These will lend to any bankrupt State in Europe credit on terms. We know the terms in Austria—the dismissal of thousands of State employees without provision for their future, the seizure of important public revenues, and the relinquishing of the control over the State finances by the Austrian Parliament in favour of a foreign financial commission. This is the alternative for Germany to the Franco-German coal and iron combine. In place of sweated wages and ever-falling currencies the German workers will be paying tribute to the international money-lords in unemployment. From the inflationist frying-pan they will have jumped, with the applause of British Labour leaders, into the deflationist fire.

I cannot think that those who framed the manifesto of the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party are aware of the true nature of the remedies they propose and of the people whom they look upon as saviours of society. But it is satisfactory to see that the I.L.P. has, no doubt under the pressure of the militants from Scotland, demanded the complete scrapping of the Versailles Treaty and of the whole policy of reparations. It is necessary to add, however, that the only way for the producers of wealth in Europe to escape from slavery under a Franco-German coal and iron combine on the one hand, and being sold up like old iron to the international Shylocks of finance masquerading under the name of the League of Nations on the other, is to combine to down the heavy industry trusts and make the great mineral resources in the basin of the Rhine and Moselle European public property to be worked in the interests of all.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT AND THE UNEMPLOYED

By R. PAGE ARNOT

FOR two and a-half years now a large proportion of the workers of this country have been unemployed. Throughout the whole of these thirty months nearly two million wage-earners have been living in great poverty, bordering on starvation : some of them have been like this for three years. Their condition has now come to be taken as a matter of course. Nobody thinks twice about them. They have become, as it were, a permanent feature of our civilisation.

Yet, if one pauses to reflect for even a moment, then the fact that one out of every nine wage-earners is unable to earn a wage, that these millions (counting their families) have been starving slowly since the autumn of 1920, suddenly acquires a deep significance. It is seen at once not as a permanent feature, explicable in lecture rooms, of a continuing capitalist civilisation, but as a sign that this civilisation is waning to its end.

But obviously men do not see it in this way. Nor, though remarkable, is this by any means hard to explain. The historic parallel is not difficult to find. It is clear to us that when the Roman Empire had begun to crumble to pieces, no one, or at any rate no body of men seem to have been capable of understanding exactly what was taking place. Politicians and civil servants, capitalists and trade unionists, shopkeepers and merchants—they all went about their business as usual, accepting every fresh calamity (after a little squealing) as a matter of course, and doing nothing in the vain hope that sooner or later they would get back to normal times.

In all our surroundings, in all the news of foreign events, there is only one thing which is of any real importance, that is the existence

in this country of nearly two million men and women who have no work to do and have not had work for two and a-half years.

Confronted with what is euphemistically called "the slump," the Government of Great Britain found itself completely incapable of providing any measure by which to surmount the difficulty. Its immediate efforts were centred on balancing the Budget because, for the first time within memory, there was a danger that the national accounts of the United Kingdom might show a deficit. Apart from this the attitude of the Government was no different from the mob of financiers and capitalists who kept repeating during the last months of 1920 (as they were to keep on repeating during the whole of 1921 and 1922) that there was bound, very shortly, to be a revival of trade. Save for this parrot cry no power of foresight was shown anywhere. What of the unemployed? As for them they, like the other workers, would have to "grin and bear it." The Government was not particularly concerned as to what might happen to the workers provided that their "wages came down to an economic level." In pursuance of this they hurled the miners and the agricultural workers into the abyss by withdrawing control of the coalfields at the orders of the coalowners, and by flinging overboard the Corn Production Act in order to balance the Budget. Thereafter the Geddes Axe was forged and sharpened to fall upon the working-class standards of education, housing, health provisions, and so on. To the Government the unemployed were simply pawns in the game: they did not starve them because starved men are difficult to manage, and may also become unemployable. They kept them on a dole, and by frequent shifting of Insurance Acts displayed both their own complete lack of any settled outlook on the future, and at the same time contrived always to make the lot of the unemployed a little worse. Administratively too, the same policy was carried out. Sir Alfred Mond was set to grind the faces of the poor. Every other means by which the unemployed could be prevented from becoming a nuisance on the one hand, and on the other hand driven to seek sustenance even at the cost of cutting wages, was systematically employed. At the end of two and a-half years the Government

policy as regards the bringing of wages to an economic level has been completely successful. Yet their success has done nothing to solve the problem confronting them; they have defeated the Labour Movement, they have defeated the unemployed, but they cannot defeat unemployment. The measure of their fundamental helplessness is that they are still repeating like witch doctors the magic words "There is every sign of a trade revival."

But if the leaders of capitalism have been no better than witch doctors, the leaders of Labour have been like the ignorant believers in their witchcraft. The working class has been defeated, not because of the force of capital's attack so much as from the fact that there was no power of resistance shown, no attempt made to organise that resistance. The most remarkable thing is that this unemployment was treated as a "question" and a "problem" instead of being itself a call to action of the whole of the workers against the capitalists. Actually, instead of this call to action of the whole of the workers, the men who were unemployed were abandoned, thrown back upon themselves. They were left to organise themselves—for themselves. There began the *separate* organisation of the unemployed—an incredible thing. To organise the unemployed was to reject the possible and obvious, and instead to attempt the impossible. Nevertheless this impossible thing was attempted, and the fundamentally unsound idea of organising an evil was put into operation. Once begun, the separateness of the organisation was allowed to develop. No contact was kept between the organised workers and the men who were unemployed. The unions did nothing; the Trades' Councils did nothing; the Labour Party did nothing; the Independent Labour Party did nothing. It was only a few individual communists who, in their leading of the unemployed tried to make the men out of work feel that they were part of the working class in its struggle against capitalism, and that they must therefore act, not as organised blacklegs, but against blacklegging, against rate-cutting and acceptance of sweated conditions. The National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement formed agitational committees, but as these were not created or backed by the whole of the workers they became centres of agitation with a limited objective and for the special use of the unemployed. Therefore, from its

very nature, the separate organisation of the unemployed could not prosper.

It is true that there was a period just at the end of 1920 when it was beginning to dawn on some minds that unemployment was something that demanded not an outlook or an attitude, but action, concerted, prepared for, and carried through with skill and determination. At the Conference of December 29, 1920, called to deal with Ireland, there was passed, at the request of the Council of Action, a resolution which, amid some questionable declarations, demanded maintenance, fixed a rate, and finally in threatening tones stated that

Both the unemployed and the employed workers are not prepared to remain the victims of the pernicious economic system which exposes them and their families to hardship and demoralisation as a consequence of unemployment.

Here in this hastily passed resolution there was a chance. Here, building on this, it was possible to form up the ranks and, as far as could be, control the situation as it developed. What actually happened? The next month, January, unemployment had bounded up by 308,000, and the Cabinet had appointed a Committee to deal with the matter. Quite rightly the Joint Meeting of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the Executive Committee of the the Labour Party refused to serve on this Committee, but their positive proposal was of very little use. Their bold counter-stroke was themselves to set up a committee of their own. Their words were :—

This joint meeting of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the National Executive of the Labour Party unanimously rejects the Government's invitation to appoint representatives to a Committee of Inquiry upon Unemployment ; and decides to appoint its own committee to formulate practical schemes for securing immediate relief for those now unemployed, and definite proposals for dealing with the whole problem as one of national urgency : such schemes and proposals to be submitted for consideration and endorsement to a special Joint National Conference of the Trade Union Movement and the Labour Party on January 27, 1921.

Nevertheless, something might have come out of it if there had been either grasp or foresight shown, but all that that Con-

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ference of January 27 did was to adopt the report of its own Committee—consisting almost entirely of excellent proposals which Mr. Sidney Webb had been putting forward pretty regularly from 1897 onwards—and then adjourn for a month. The Conference had cost nearly £5,000. When the adjourned Conference met it was only to pass one of the most feeble resolutions ever recorded. It found the Government's policy "lamentably inadequate," it "emphatically reiterated" its previous demands, in addition it put forward certain proposals of a positive nature : these require to be quoted :—

The Conference concurs with the proposal of the Parliamentary Labour Party that every possible step should be taken to press this question on the attention of the House of Commons, and to insist that the Government take immediate action for the benefit of the unemployed.

The Conference further invites the Executive Committee of every trade union to secure the affiliation of all its branches to the local Labour Parties and bring all its members actively into political work, in order to take the earliest possible steps to promote a Labour candidate for every constituency in which this has not yet been done.

The Conference further declares that every opportunity should be taken to use the by-elections as a means of bringing pressure to bear on the Government by defeating every Coalition candidate.

In conclusion, the Conference calls upon every wage-earning elector in East Woolwich, Dudley, Penistone, and Kirkcaldy Boroughs to mark his or her sense of the callous refusal of the Government to deal adequately with unemployment by voting for the Labour candidates.

A hostile critic might affect to praise these proposals on the ground that they admitted the bankruptcy of the Labour Party and so were at least honest. Certainly the last clause seems to suggest that the wage-earning electors should be guided, not by any hope in what the Labour Party might do, but simply by hatred of the vices of the Government.

It is worth while to pause for a moment on the circumstances of this Conference, which was so typical of many conferences, and in dwelling upon it we may come upon one of the root evils of the movement. Action after December had been postponed until the January Conference. At that January Conference in the thousand

word resolution that was passed there occurred the following operative clause :—

“ This Conference shall stand adjourned until Wednesday, February 23, to enable the Executives of the Trade Unions to take the opinion of their members in order to decide on any further steps that may be necessary to secure the adoption of its recommendations.”

This operative clause could have been interpreted as meaning that the delay of a month in waiting for the January Conference was to be excused on the grounds that the unions, having conferred together, would under this clause return ready for instant mobilisation of all their members, all their money, and all their other forces.

When the February Conference met a month later it was discovered that a number of unions had not troubled to make these vital preparations. How large was that number? Were there ten unions so remiss? Were there as many as twenty? Or, since the total number affiliated either to the Trades Union Congress or the Labour Party is over 200, might there be as many as twenty-five who had completely lost their sense of fellowship and the duties that fellowship brings? The answer to this question is almost unbelievable. It is that out of all the trade unions the Labour Party Report shows only one union which fully carried out the instructions in this clause solemnly passed at a special conference costing thousands of pounds contributed by the workers for the purpose of saving the workers from the evils of unemployment. And the remarkable thing is that though the one union which took the ballot of its members as to whether they would agree to a one day strike against the Government is a union whose members are generally reckoned amongst the most moderate and backward of the working class (in a political sense), the result of the ballot was 32,368 against 4,369 in favour of a general strike. If this was so with one union—and a union of this kind—what would it have been with the others? The truth is that the workers were profoundly stirred in the beginning of 1921 when they realised that the hunger and want they had known in 1908, that they or their parents before them had known in the 'nineties and the 'eighties, and their grandfathers before them in the hungry

'forties, was again about to be their lot and the lot of their children. They were resolved to get rid of it if they could. Had they been led in January, 1921, they would have marched and marched willingly. Therefore, it is not the attitude of the workers themselves that must be blamed, but that of their officials and leaders, whose reluctance to stand boldly at the head of the workers and fight the capitalists amounted to the grossest social treachery. (Four months later at Brighton one leader was quoted as having said : " We will do nothing to embarrass the Government.") Why, even the most right-wing Kaiser-true social democrat would have seen that merely as a matter of political tactics the spreading of a great agitation amongst the workers, bringing every sort of pressure to bear upon the Government, would have strengthened parliamentary opposition and weakened the Government correspondingly. But even from the point of view of parliamentary gain they were unable to realise what a weapon was in their hands. Perhaps some of them did realise it, but decided it was better " not to embarrass the Government." How great a weapon was cast away, and to what revolutionary policy it could be attached, was shown a few months later when the least little bit of that revolutionary policy, the small desperate effort of Poplar, aroused an almost unparalleled enthusiasm amongst the masses. Poplar was only a little outpost ; in Poplar they were doing no more than relieving the misery they were too late to prevent ; but the working class of Poplar, on behalf of that little, and against the capitalist Government, threw themselves into the struggle with an energy and spirit which only the repeated adjurations of the Poplar Councillors themselves prevented from developing into mass action on a larger scale. Thus, in those two vital months of January and February, Labour missed the revolutionary issue.

Why was there this failure ? The answer is because the leaders looked at everything through bourgeois spectacles : Keynes had been their economist, not Marx. They too, like the rest of the capitalist world, have muttered their charms, and wrung their hands helplessly, awaiting a revival of trade. It is true that they have never hesitated to stigmatise unemployment as part of the present system, and irremediable as long as the present system lasts. This view has been hugged as if it was the extreme demonstra-

tion of a Socialist outlook ; as if whatever steps they took, or failed to take, they would still be sound revolutionaries at heart. But the utterance of this truism is not limited to Labour leaders. Even the King's speech on the occasion of the opening of the 1921 session contained the remark, " This terrible unemployment which we are seeing to-day cannot be solved by legislation." While Mr. Bonar Law has said his say to the same effect a couple of months ago. The fact that unemployment is part of the system is not an argument for fatalism, is not a reason for refusing to embarrass the Government (" We and the Government are in the same boat after all "). It is a reason for using it as a weapon to wring every possible concession out of the capitalists by agitation and arousing the masses, and then, when the masses have been aroused, and when everything possible under the system has been extorted from the capitalists, for overthrowing that system as a whole.

So far we have dealt with the effect of the failure of 1920-1921 on the unemployed, but that was not the only effect. When failures come, they come not as single spies, but in battalions ; and now the Labour Movement is sapped and ruined almost beyond repair. Those who did not stand by the unemployed in January were not likely to fight for the miners in April, and as the decay of courage and solidarity proceeded, a year later they were bound to let down the engineers. 1922 simply continued the story of disintegration and failure. The membership of the unions has dropped right away down, their funds have run out, their resources have gone. Between September, 1921, and September, 1922, membership affiliated to the Trades Union Congress had fallen, without any intervening disaffiliation of a union, from 6,417,910 to 5,128,648. The strongly organised and highly-skilled metal workers dropped down like a plummet. A year ago the A.E.U. had 425,714 members, to-day it has only 333,123, a fall of 21 per cent. Nor is this unrepresentative. In actual fact there are many unions where the proportionate drop has been still greater. There are unions which have not published—and, perhaps, dare not publish—their membership figures. Not only have funds been depleted, but union after union has been compelled to suspend payment of this or that benefit. In the cotton industry, in the engineering industry, in

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various crafts running throughout all the industries, benefits have been suspended. Wages have been steadily dropping. Agreement after agreement has been concluded with as little publicity as possible, and the wages of the workers thus let down to a degree which would have been thought impossible three years ago. More and more wages questions are being "referred for local settlement"—a dreadful phrase which conceals the collapse of the standardised wage scales built up within the last ten years. But worst of all, the failure that began in the winter of 1920 has so eaten its way into the heart of trade unionism that the workers are ceasing to believe in the value of organisation. They are becoming cynical. Those whom trade unionism has failed are beginning to repeat that phrase of despair, "each for himself": what good, they say, has trade unionism been to us. There we have the picture: on the one hand the working class losing its faith in trade unionism; on the other the incredible spectacle of trade union officials' minds moving in the narrow circle of wondering whether the next week's contributions will be able to pay their salaries.

For every single thing that has gone wrong—and nearly everything except parliamentary representation has gone wrong—this failure to deal with unemployment is principally responsible. Whatever the trade unions or their officials do, this dogs their footsteps. Marching by their side goes Holbein's Death: whatever the Labour Movement is doing, there too is the grinning skeleton with his whip.

But, it may be said, what of these parliamentary successes; is not Parliament a means by which to rescue the Labour Movement? Will not the parliamentary fight restore the drooping spirits and hearten the masses? The answer to that question is another. Will Parliament restore the miner's wage or give back to the engineer's family the sticks that were sold up in the lock-out? Parliamentary agitation, combined with a real agitation and mass action outside, can do much. Parliament alone can do nothing. To this we return later.

By the autumn of last year the enthusiasm of the workers' movement was almost completely dead, while the separate organisation

of the unemployed which had flared up like a flash in the pan in the summer of the previous year had also almost completely died away. The ordinary British public had settled down into a blissful forgetfulness of unemployment. In the suburban railway carriages they had forgotten the existence of the unemployed. They were shortly to be reminded of it. Some curious dramatic instinct was at work. Who first made the suggestion is not known ; but presently, and as if spontaneously, the idea of a march of the unemployed upon London began to be talked of. The National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement took in hand its organisation, and throughout the latter part of September and October bodies of unemployed men, like the hunger marchers of 1909, were converging on London. For a time the Press boycotted it or gave it very little mention. Something, however, in it had the quality that arouses widespread attention. Its original purpose had been that these hunger marchers should meet Lloyd George, then the chief ruler of Britain. It appeared to be something like one of the pilgrimages of the Middle Ages. It was not merely a dramatic, it was a romantic move. The romance was heightened when the prosaic Mr. Bonar Law, unable as his predecessor would have been to rise to the occasion and large-heartedly promise them nothing, stonily refused to see them at all. Meantime the new Parliament had been returned while these men were tramping down along the English roads. The new Socialist members were eager to win their spurs and, themselves responsive to popular excitement, pressed vehemently for Bonar Law to see the marchers. The final touch of romance was added by Scotland Yard, whose confidential Press organs proclaimed the existence of a Red plot, a Moscow-engineered attempt at insurrection, and its own brave intention to spoil the rascals' game, while with a courteous insistence they besought the general public to keep away from the Whitehall area where skulls were going to be cracked. A drama, however, cannot last for more than a certain limited time. By the middle of December when it had become clear that Bonar Law was not likely to yield, that the marchers were not likely to storm the West End, and the police were not likely to be given the opportunity of saving society, the interest of the public began to flag, and with the subsiding of public interest there subsided also the lively and concentrated

interest that had been displayed by the members of Parliament and leaders of the unions. The advertising of unemployment had served to stir up the Cabinet to announce a reconsideration of the problem : it had made the middle classes once more aware of the unemployed under the name of Hunger Marchers, and it had stimulated the General Council into receiving a deputation from the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement and to a series of joint demonstrations. But Bonar Law had not been seen in the flesh. The nominal object of their march had been unfulfilled and there was much disappointment in the ranks. Advertising unemployment has its limits.

Nevertheless, in spite of the failure of the march to gain its ostensible object, in spite of the limited uses of advertisement, the Hunger March is not without objective value. That value is found in the simple fact that throughout the English towns men were marching hither and thither, meeting with sometimes a friendly, sometimes a hostile reception, passing through country-sides where the workers came to look at them as at some strange and wondrous procession. All this has meant that by word of mouth, by actual sight and touch, the workers of these towns and villages through which the marchers passed have seen unemployment as a spectacle, have looked upon these men marching like slaves in the triumphal procession of capitalism. Without word spoken, without any tale told of the miseries endured, these marchers have made many people realise capitalism as a process, made them see their own lives and their subjection to the system. This has had an organising value. Once men see things, they have set out to abolish them ; and this march, if it has achieved nothing else, has meant that the masses have begun to organise themselves. This is its main value. And this must not be overlooked.

Nevertheless, this value will be lost unless the organisation thus begun is carried through and followed by action. Unfortunately nothing has happened. Something worse than that, a sham thing has begun to happen. The whole issue of the hunger march is going to be confined to the relations between the General Council and the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement. Already discussions of policy within that Movement have contracted to this, that the main issue for these two millions

slowly starving is put forward as "Affiliation to the Trades Union Congress." Actually after two years the net result of the disorganisation of the working-class bodies is the question of affiliation or non-affiliation to the T.U.C., that is whether the N.U.W.C.M. is to be treated as a trade union, its officials as trade union officials, and its speakers recognised Labour speakers, standing on the joint platform. There is simply no sign of any policy having evolved from the alliance of the General Council and the N.U.W.C.M. Neither from the one side nor the other has there come anything more constructive than proposals for joint demonstrations.

This is the most serious thing at the present moment. It means that, unless a policy is evolved, we shall simply have a reproduction of the failure of two years ago. Only this time the failure will involve the new unemployed organisation in the general discredit; and the broken men who in the failure of trade unionism had themselves reared up an organisation will be finally persuaded that all their efforts are in vain, that all officials are like Walt Whitman's elected persons, and that organisation and solidarity of any kind is not merely sentimental but useless. This, then, is the position in the spring of 1923, that after two and a-half years there is no unemployed policy in the whole Labour Movement. On the other hand there is no hope to be found by looking abroad and expecting a revival of trade, or in looking to the Government and imagining that anything will come from its mingled impotence and insolence. At the moment, it is true, it seems that at last there is some little warrant for the parrot cry of Trade Revival, repeated in ever shriller tones for the last thirty months. It is just possible that for a temporary period the difficulties of the French bourgeoisie in the Ruhr may enable England temporarily to capture the Mediterranean and European market, such as it is. The production of steel may come up, and coal and manufactured goods may increase, but it will not last. There is still no sign whatever of permanent revival and the end of temporary revival with its falling back into a slump will be worse than the beginning. There is no hope then of avoiding the burden of framing a policy by waiting hopefully on the course of events.

The position of the Government is not weak but stronger than ever. The unemployed strategists have reached the end of their

tether ; driven by the lowness of the State dole they were able for a time to exploit the resources of local government. "Go to the Guardians" was good tactics, but it has yielded the inevitable result that the Guardians are either bankrupt or have been replaced by hard-faced men whose business it is to guard the rates. The cry "Go to the Guardians" is a good lead, but it was not a long suit. The long suit was held by the Government which could afford to disregard the outcry from the more excitable members of the middle class, which could shut its eyes to many acts of partial violence on the part of the unemployed, such as mobbing the guardians, because it was bound to win in the end. The Fabian policy of Giolitti in Italy towards the metal workers was followed in England by the British Government towards the unemployed. The motto was "Let the Labour Guardians force up the rates, the rising rates will force out the Guardians"; and wherever the Labour policy had not been carried right through as it was in Poplar Borough, the calculations of the bourgeoisie were successful. Now in 1923 the bankruptcy of local government together with the gap system leave very few chances for the unemployed. There is no longer much to be gained by "tactics": the unemployed leaders, too, cannot escape the burden of working out a policy for the whole of the workers.

The time when there were alternatives is now past. There is now no choice left. Everything else has failed or will fail or by partial success will only deceive the more. The only action which has not yet been tried is the action of the workers themselves. *The workers themselves*—that does not mean the customary "great campaigns" and "nation-wide agitations" of the past, campaigns and agitations which never got outside the newspaper offices in which they were conceived: nor does it mean the somewhat pot-valiant resolutions of executives and conferences, assemblies of chiefs without an army. To rouse the masses, to set these elemental forces in motion, needs nothing but the will to do it and the energy to carry out what has been willed. The actual steps are clear. Definite demands must be put forward in such a way that it becomes unmistakably clear to everyone exactly and precisely what the working-class movement stands for. Full maintenance must cease to be an orator's catchword. The worker

must be the first charge on the Budget—the vote must be for maintenance and against the Army and Navy. Demands once formulated must be enforced by every means in the power of the workers, leading up to the General Strike. The General Strike is reached, not by a bombastic summons from these chiefs without an army, but by every party and union presenting a united front and carrying on a continuous campaign in Parliament, in the municipalities, in the workshops, at the Labour Exchanges, on the streets, and from door to door, increasing steadily in intensity and all concentrated on one issue. When that stage has been reached it does not much matter whether the General Strike is victorious or defeated. For, if defeated, it is the defeat of a class and the defeat of a class is but a phase of victory. Real defeat is the disintegration of a class, the loss of its solidarity, the selfishness of sections, the cowardice of leaders, the corruption of an organised movement.

IRELAND AND THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS

By J. T. MURPHY

A NEW stage has been reached in the struggle for Irish independence. Fourteen months after the Sein Fein forces were split by the treaty with Great Britain, after months of bitter civil war that have thrown into sharp relief the alignment of the political forces of Ireland, there arises a popular demand for peace. It is a moment when popular sentiment tends to obliterate from the public gaze those deep moving currents which sooner or later force themselves to the top. Decisions are being taken now which are all important. Upon them will depend the recurrence of confusion or the clearing of the path to victory.

The working-class movement of Britain deems itself a looker-on more or less unconcerned as to what these decisions may be. Its leaders have allied themselves to Mr. Bonar Law, the leader of British imperialism, through Mr. R. MacDonald, who has called for the blessing of the Almighty on the Free State. How entirely the fate of the British working class is bound up with the fate of Ireland, and other of the subject nations of the empire, seems to be little dreamed of or considered, either by the leaders or the workers themselves. Nevertheless, the decisions now being taken are fateful, and no time could be more opportune than the present to take the measure of our experience and of the tasks to be accomplished in relation to the Irish struggle for independence.

It has been the lot of the majority of those who have participated in or supported this struggle to gather their inspiration from an intense spirit of nationalism. Even the best of the revolutionary leaders of the Irish workers, who hated the ruling class with unsurpassable bitterness, and declared that Ireland could never be free until she had a workers' republic, saw their problem mainly as an Irish problem and not as an international problem of the working class of the world.

Probably James Connolly was nearer to grasping the latter point of view than any other leader Ireland has produced. He, at least, made clear the part of the Irish working class in the struggle for national freedom, pointed to the workers' republic as the goal, and fought and died to give the national impulse an orientation in that direction.

Time and again the question has been raised as to why Connolly, the international socialist, led the workers of Dublin into the forefront of the Irish revolt of 1916. Some thought he had become thereby a nationalist of the deepest dye, and others that his burning hatred of the ruling class had flamed up into despair and enthralled him in a passionate desire to "wreck the great guilty temple" and find rest. But Connolly was too cool and calculating for that. He led the revolt for definite purposes, not the least of which was to demonstrate that an international socialist could and must participate in the struggles of peoples held down by imperialism.

Whether he clearly perceived all the implications of his actions we do not know. One thing is certain; his action in leading the working-class forces of Dublin to the forefront of the national struggle stamped on the pages of history, for all to see, the part which the working class of Ireland must play if ever the goal of a workers' republic is to be attained.

This one outstanding lesson of the revolt passed by almost forgotten or unobserved by friend and foe alike. Discussion centred around the apparent contradiction between Connolly's international socialism and his association with the nationalist movement. Described as the first revolutionary socialist martyr of Ireland, his work appeared to be complete in paving the way to the saturation of the nationalist movement with socialist aspirations and ideas. That his martyrdom has done this none will deny. But this limited conception of the service he rendered only reveals the theoretical immaturity of socialism at the time, an immaturity which is still evident to-day.

It is thought by some who have an intense class hatred that international socialism ought not to worry itself about struggles for national independence. "What does it matter," they ask, "even if Ireland gets a republic? Free State or republic, the workers will still be at the bottom." By some this is used to intensify their class

propaganda, by others to avoid responsibility and struggle. But in almost all cases the national struggle is viewed out of relation to the struggle of the workers against world imperialism. The cry for self-determination of small nations is generally declared as an absolute right, except by British Labour, which inscribes on its banner an additional qualification: "—outside the British Empire." Revolutionary "extremists" and moderate labourists alike have been bound to a narrow nationalist theoretical equipment, which has warped their actions and misdirected their energies. Labour in England has been and is as imperialistic as its masters, whilst the revolutionary movement is only slowly emerging from a narrow sectarianism almost equally baneful. Until these confused and inadequate conceptions are cleared from the minds of the workers, the path to liberation can only remain tortuous and full of the tragedy of misunderstanding.

The contradictions inherent in any one of the theories indicated above are made so vividly clear by the actualities of to-day, that one feels compelled to bow one's head in shame on realising that responsible leaders of Labour hang on to these outworn theories and make them the basis of their actions. Let us examine them briefly, one by one. The cry of "Self-determination of small nationalities" was made a slogan of the war and taken up by the Labour movement. That it was a distinct appeal to nationalist idealism none can deny. That it was meant in practice to be qualified by an unwritten proviso is equally clear from experience. This proviso reads "on condition that it does not interfere with the operations of the imperialist policy of the Great Powers." How it could be otherwise passes comprehension; imperialism signifies that capitalism has shattered the limitations of nationalism and is driving the dominant Powers towards the conquest of the whole world. To attempt to revert to a national economy is to intensify the problems of capitalism rather than to solve them. It is for this reason that imperialism keeps its colonies in thrall and subjects the "free small nations" to its domination.

There is not a socialist who can deny that the material conditions of the world are ripe for a world economy. It is because the imperialists realise this, too, that they all strive for world power; but because of their narrow foundations, rooted in the nationalism

of an epoch that cannot return, and in an economy which bids them expand as a condition of existence, they cannot create that which the life of the world demands. Self-determination of any nation can therefore never be a reality of any nation within capitalism.

As an absolute demand and conception it is doomed to a similar fate in relation to the working class. Because imperialism cannot solve the world-problem and create a single world-economy, the task falls upon the international working class, as the one social force capable of eliminating the class divisions in society and dealing with the world-economy free from the private vested interests which choke the pathway to a solution under capitalism. It is a task which involves the fate of humanity, and the workers cannot escape it. If therefore the central task is a world-task, national independence as an absolute right falls to the ground, whether viewed from an imperialist point of view or from a working-class point of view.

This conclusion does not justify the claims of the internationalists who decry the nationalist struggle of subject nations. It neither justifies the British Labour movement in limiting the demand for national independence to self-government within the Empire, nor does it give grounds for ignoring the struggle for national independence as a factor in the war for the conquest of capitalism. The struggle for national independence is more than a pious aspiration on the part of the peoples subject to an imperial power. To the working masses of these countries it is a passionate appeal to be free from the shackles of an internal and external enemy, which weighs even more heavily upon them than upon the workers of the imperialist countries. Nay, more; who can deny that even the workers of these countries, of Britain more than any country in the world, have had the rough edges of their every-day struggle softened at the expense of the workers of the colonial countries? Fighting their master class means to the latter not only fighting their masters' State, but also the super-State power of the imperialists. Is it necessary to refer to imperialist interventions in Russia and in Hungary in order to question whether British imperialism would not intervene if the workers of Ireland took the reins of power from the hands of the Free State to-day?

It is this fundamental difference between the relations of imperialism and the international working class towards the

subject nationalities that makes their war for national independence one with the war to defeat imperialism. Imperialism holds the subject nations for exploitation and retains a subordinate national exploiting class dominating the workers. The working class goes to the roots of the struggle and harnesses the workers of all lands to push over the imperialists and the national exploiters, as a means towards solving the problems of economic life and the cultural requirements of the masses of all lands.

The internationalists of the "pure" class war will agree, but fail to see the dialectic process whereby the end is achieved. They classify the imperialists with the national exploiters. That both are exploiters is true. But that their interests always coincide is untrue, or there would be no reason for national revolts of a bourgeois character. From time to time they contradict each other and fight. When thieves fall out there is a chance for the workers to advance. If they do not, the shackles are fastened tighter by the subsequent agreement among the exploiters, who are certainly not out to end their own system. If the workers are to advance, what other course lies open to them except the struggle against the imperialist power—a struggle which opens the path to victory over their own bourgeoisie.

It is only in this way that the problem of class domination in the nation can be solved. If we face it as a national issue only, and make no effort to take the leadership out of bourgeois hands—suppose by some stretch of the imagination that the imperialists could be defeated. What would we have done but laid the foundations for the development of a new capitalist imperialism? The only alternatives to an active striving for leadership in the national struggles are an adaptation to capitalism and the demands of imperialism, the arm-chair philosophy of a looker-on, or agitation for ultimate issues without a single contribution to the forces that are driving towards the goal.

The central problem of the working-class movement of the world, we repeat, is the defeat of imperialism; and upon this victory depends the liberation of the subject peoples of the earth. These national problems find no solution through a nationalistic approach to the problem. Ireland's problem is not simply an Irish problem or an English problem. It is more. It is a problem of the inter-

national working-class movement, and until the working class of this country and Ireland face it as such, we shall wallow in a mass of confusion, be the victims of the clap-trap of the capitalist Press, and be held up to derision throughout the world.

No phase of British history is so appalling to contemplate on the basis of the considerations we have put forward as the later period of the struggle for Irish independence. The long years of struggle against English domination found no echoing thrill in the hearts of the British workers and their leaders. They saw it only as a nuisance when it broke forth into open struggle, and either ignored it entirely at other times, or viewed it at the best through the spectacles of British Liberalism. British Labour protested against "atrocities," but never against the domination of British imperialism in Ireland, even at the worst moments of intervention. Nor did their protests amount to anything more than paper protests and resolutions. Munitions, troops, equipment went as usual. Not once did British Labour hold up a single waggon of munitions or prevent the transport of a single soldier, whilst the common imperialist enemy delivered blow on blow. When Mr. Lloyd George held the weapon of greater war at the heads of the Irish leaders, Labour made a united front with the imperialist Government against the revolting Irish nationalists. It only required the hypocritical benediction on the resulting Free State Government and the moral castigation of the Irish republicans to complete the ignominy of it all. It is time indeed for a transvaluation of our values and a fresh acquaintance with the fundamental issues that are at stake.

Throughout the seven hundred years of Britain's political domination over Ireland not a century has passed without an uprising and a forcible effort to throw off the invader. Time and again the Irish have been crushed, only to see succeeding generations renew the efforts of their fathers. Within the period of struggle the elements which waged the fight have undergone a transformation true to the capitalist era they were entering. From a fight to revert back to a social system of preceding generations, back to the clan and the commune, it became a fight in which the forces were divided into the social classes of capitalism. The capitalist class of Ireland proved no different to the capitalist of any other country, and used the sufferings of the workers and peasants as the means

to liberate themselves from the inconvenience of external domination. Always they drew from the poorer strata of the population to fight their battles, but there were few who were themselves prepared to bear the brunt of these fights for freedom. The masses went into revolt. The exploiters reaped the goods.

Throughout the whole period of their rule the British Government has never been uncertain as to what it wanted or as to which path to pursue. The policy of divide and conquer has never been more efficiently applied. From the days when it brought thousands of Protestant workers into Northern Ireland, fanned the flames of religious hatred and created an Ulster problem, to the days of recent history when it left a hole in the boundary clauses of the recent treaty and prepared the way for re-invasion through Ulster, its policy has been a masterly application of the principle of division and a guarantee against a united Ireland.

When the British ruling classes fettered Irish industry for generations, prevented the growth of an Irish merchant fleet, and placed Irish commerce at a disadvantage, they created situations which rallied the industrial workers to their employers. But in settlement they always settled with the employers and left the workers to make the best of it. When they created a land hunger, and compelled the transformation of rich cultivatable soil to pasture land for cattle rearing, and depopulated the country, they passed their Land Acts to ease the problems of the large farmers, and left the poor agrarian population in starvation. A short-sighted policy for an industrialised country to pursue with an agrarian neighbour, but never an uncertain one.

The ground for revolt has thus always been fertile, whilst the means of division rooted in the class divisions of the Irish nation were ever open to pave the way to Irish defeat. No one saw this more clearly than James Connolly, and no one did more to clarify the minds of the masses on this issue. Each succeeding revolt, rooted deep in the sufferings of the workers of town and country, had produced a further stride towards a socialist programme. But Connolly went much further by his act of 1916. He placed the working class of Ireland at the head of the nationalist movement, which rose mainly amid the agrarian elements of the nation. Had his successors realised the significance of Connolly's action and

measured up its implications, the history of the last few years in Ireland and England would have had to be written differently. If ever there was an historical illumination of the rôle of the industrial workers in the Irish struggle, it was certainly in this bold leadership of the citizen army at the head of the national struggle. It is the high-water mark in the history of the working class of Ireland, a portent of what has yet to be fulfilled more definitely and thoroughly, ere the Irish workers' republic can become a reality.

What then shall we say of the succeeding days between 1916 and 1923? Although it has been repeated until it has become axiomatic in the ranks of Irish Labour that "The progress of the fight towards national liberty of any subject nation must perforce keep pace with the progress of the struggle for liberty of the most subject class in the nation" can we say that these succeeding years have shown an appreciation either of this teaching or of the act of Connolly? Let the successor of Connolly speak for himself as leading custodian of the policy of Labour, and when reading remember the remarkable rally to Sein Fein, the split on the signing of the treaty, and the subsequent civil war. "Now by our own act we of the Labour Movement have kept out of the political arena all through. Right up to the General Election we were content to leave the control of affairs in the hands of the party and the movement that the country trusted implicitly. We did that. We submerged ourselves. We declined to use the situation for party purposes. We joined with the rest of the country and gave our support to the party that had set out to get national freedom. We did everything that we possibly could to strengthen their hands and to assist them in the task they were engaged in." (*Voice of Labour*, September 23, 1922.)

Here is no struggle for leadership, but "We submerged ourselves." Here is no recognition of the working class of Ireland as the custodian of Irish freedom, but the relegation of Ireland's fate into the hands of the bourgeoisie of Ireland, who had no intention of submerging themselves. And yet in the same speech he declares "I had the suspicion that Ireland would not be different from other countries and that the Labour movement of Ireland would have to put up the same fight as in other countries." Yet "We submerged ourselves." The only possible justification there

could ever be for the Irish workers to participate in the struggle was to use the differences between the bourgeois elements of Ireland and the British imperialists as a means to defeat both and to make Ireland theirs. Until then they are Irishmen without a country, fodder for class exploitation.

The relegation of the Irish workers to this subordinate rôle means the perpetuation of their slavery indefinitely. In a country which is preponderatingly agricultural the proletariat cannot relegate the hegemony to the farmer class, except at the price of its own failure to emerge from its existing conditions. A farmer class is never historically the pioneer of socialisation, which is the only possible means of working-class emancipation. Without the socialisation of land there can never be a real solution to the problem of the poor peasantry and agricultural labourers, or a general introduction of up-to-date methods of agriculture. These things can only come through the advancement of industry and its application to agriculture. But the conditions for socialisation are already ripe in industry, and the proletariat are compelled to take it up as an issue or pass into social decay. To take its proper rôle in Ireland as the leader in social progress it must perforce face the issue of the struggle against imperialism. In doing so Irish Labour will be placing itself in direct line with the interests of the working class of the world, and will have a basis for appeals for aid that is sounder and stronger than the political abstraction called self-determination.

The failure of Irish Labour to play its historic rôle during these years has driven it into the hands of its enemies. Objectively the interests of the workers are against the Free State Government. Every effort they make to improve the lot of the worker brings them up against the forces of the State. Nevertheless the policy of submergence is continued to the extent of denouncing the forces which have taken up the fight that they themselves have failed to prosecute, until it would seem that there is neither an appreciation of the rôle they ought to play or of the forces operating in their favour. First they appeared neutral in the struggle between the republicans and the Free State, and then allied themselves to the Free State. Right thoroughly we understand what would have happened had there come into being a republican bourgeois

Government. The workers would still have been subject, but only because of the policy that has been pursued by Labour. That is why the hour of negotiation proved to be the hour of the great betrayal of the working class. Not because it was wrong to arrive at a compromise with British imperialism. Had the workers of Ireland been at the helm in the then existing international circumstances they also would have had to compromise. It is as true to-day as in the days of Mitchell that Ireland will never be free whilst the British Empire endures. But the failure of the working class of Ireland to take the lead left the capitalist class of Ireland free to make the compromise which left the workers where they were before—slaves still to be liberated. The new triple alliance on the pages of history looks well thus: Irish Labour, Irish Free State, British imperialism—versus the interests of the workers and the republican army.

If there was any doubt about the rôle of the Free State then Lord Birkenhead, who helped to make it, can make things clear. Speaking in the House of Lords in March, 1922, he said:—

Does the noble lord really imagine that if someone had presented Queen Elizabeth with this alternative . . . If they said to her . . . “Would you rather send Lord Essex and British troops to put down the turbulent population of the south of Ireland, or would you rather deal with a man who is prepared, with Irish troops, to do it for you, who is prepared to acknowledge allegiance to yourself and who will relieve you of further anxiety and responsibility in the matter . . .” that she would have hesitated? That is the line of political development which I observe with great pleasure, and it is being followed at this particular moment.

However much we may criticise the republican forces, the fact remains that the direction of their activity is correct. It is directed against imperialism, and commands the support of the workers of Ireland and of the International so long as it keeps that direction. The failure of Irish Labour to take the lead in this republican struggle will place Labour in exactly the same position as to-day if the republicans are victorious and carry through a bourgeois programme. And the refusal to fight in any case seals the fate of Irish Labour as a body of workers who made a virtue of slavery.

Thus Ireland's tragic hours reveal again and again how deeply its liberation tasks are entwined with the fundamental task of the

international working class. Upon the men and women without property in Ireland devolves the task: to create a workers' party out of her rich supplies of revolutionary workers and fighters, a party that will lead the workers and peasants of Ireland towards the workers' republic through revolutionary struggle. This does not mean that it is the task of the Irish workers to rise arms in hand and seize power to-day or to-morrow. But it means that the whole character and direction of their activities must be towards that end.

The obligations upon the working class of Britain are equally clear. Its interests are diametrically opposed to British imperialism and so is the issue of Irish freedom from British domination. Freedom for Ireland should be stamped upon the banner of every party claiming to pursue the interests of the workers. The Irish question is an English question, but just as the Irish working class are faced with the task of assuming the lead in the task of liberation for Ireland, so it is the working class of Britain who are primarily interested in their fate. The struggle of the Irish nation is a contribution to the war against the imperialists who hold the British workers in thrall. The fate of Ireland and the fate of the British working class are tied together with the bonds of life and death. Neither can emerge from slavery whilst imperialism endures. The cry of "Freedom for Ireland," and for other subject peoples, thus proves to be not the echo of Liberal imperialism, but a rallying slogan of the international working class, drawing the victims of world imperialism into common struggle against the common enemy.

THE HISTORY OF FASCISM—II

By A. BORDIGA

THE Fascisti have taken advantage of the fact, which we have already mentioned, that the socialists never had an agrarian policy, and that the interests of certain elements of the countryside which are not purely proletarian are in opposition to those of the socialists.

Fascism is an armed movement which employs all methods of the most brutal violence. It also knows how to employ the most callous methods of demagogy. The Fascisti endeavoured to form class organisations among the peasants and even among the agricultural labourers. In a certain sense they even opposed the landlords; we have examples of the syndicalist struggle, led by Fascisti, which resembled greatly the old methods of Red organisation.

We cannot consider this Fascist syndicalism, which works through the use of force and terror, as an anti-capitalist struggle, but neither can we, on the other hand, draw the conclusion that Fascism, in an immediate sense, is a movement of the agricultural employers. The fact is that Fascism is a great united movement of the dominant class, which is capable of using for its final aims any and all means, including the local interests of certain groups of employers, agricultural and industrial.

The proletariat has not properly understood the necessity of forming a united single organisation for the common struggle by sacrificing the immediate interests of small groups. It has not yet succeeded in solving this problem. The ruling class created an organisation which could defend its power; this organisation was completely in its hands, and it followed the plan of the capitalist anti-proletarian offensive.

Fascism participates in trade unionism. Why? In order to take part in the class struggle? Never! The Fascisti took part in the trade union movement saying all economic interests have the right to organise; one can form associations of workers, peasants,

business men, capitalists, landowners, &c. But all organisations should, in their activities, be subordinate to the national interest, national production, national prestige, &c.

This is nothing but a class truce, and not a class struggle. All interests are directed towards a certain national unity. This national unity is nothing more than the counter-revolutionary conservation of the bourgeois State and its institutions. In the make-up of Fascism I believe that we can count three principal factors: the State, the capitalist class, and the middle class. The State is the principal constituent of Fascism.

The news of the successive Government crises in Italy have led one to believe that the Italian capitalist class possessed a State apparatus which was so unstable that it could be made to fall at one blow.

This is not at all the case. Just at the period when its State apparatus was consolidated, the Italian bourgeoisie formed the Fascist organisation.

In the period immediately following the war the Italian State underwent a crisis. Demobilisation was the obvious reason for this crisis. Numbers of those who had taken part in the war were suddenly thrown into the labour market, and at this critical period the State machine, which had previously been organised to its highest pitch to resist the foreign enemy, now had suddenly to transform itself into the defensive machinery guarding capitalist interests against internal revolution. This is a formidable task for the bourgeoisie. They could not solve this problem of the struggle against the proletariat in a military or technical manner; it had to be done by political means.

Therefore we saw the Radical Governments of the post-war period; that of Nitti, that of Giolitti.

It was just the policy of these two politicians which rendered the subsequent victory of Fascism inevitable. They started by making concessions to the working class in the period when the State mechanism had to be consolidated. Fascism came afterwards. The Fascist criticism of these Governments, which they accuse of cowardice in the face of the revolutionaries, is merely demagogic rhetoric.

As a matter of fact, the Fascist victory has been possible precisely because of the first Cabinets of the post-war period.

Nitti and Giolitti made certain concessions to the working class. They acceded to certain demands of the Socialist Party: demobilisation, a democratic regime, and amnesty for deserters. They made these concessions in order to gain time to re-establish their State on a solid basis. It was Nitti who organised the "Royal Guard," an organisation not purely of the police type, but of the new type, the militarist. One of the great errors of the reformist socialists was that they did not consider important the question, which they could have presented on constitutional grounds, of the formation by the State of an auxiliary army. This point was not grasped by the socialists, who regarded Nitti as a man with whom they could very well collaborate in a Left Government. This is one more proof of the fundamental incapacity of the Socialist Party to understand the development of Italian politics.

Giolitti completed the labours of Nitti. It was Bonomi, Minister of War in the Giolitti Cabinet, who fostered the beginning of Fascism; he placed at the disposal of this young movement demobilised officers who, although re-entered into civil life, were still in receipt of a large portion of their army salaries.

He placed at the disposal of the Fascisti the State machine in as large a measure as possible. He gave them every possible facility for organising their fighting forces.

The Government realised that it would be an error to engage in a real struggle in the period when the armed proletariat occupied the factories and the agricultural proletariat showed signs of being about to seize the Crown lands.

This Government, which had done the preliminary organisation work of that reactionary force with which they desired one day to destroy the proletarian movement, was aided in its strategy by the treacherous leaders of the General Federation of Labour, who were then members of the Socialist Party. By conceding the law of Workers' Control, which has never been applied or even voted, the Government was able to re-establish the stability of the bourgeois State.

The proletariat was seizing the workshops and the landed estates. The Socialist Party once more failed to bring about united

action of the industrial proletariat and peasants. And it is precisely this inability to secure united action which enabled the master class to achieve counter-revolutionary unity and so defeat the industrial workers on the one hand and the agricultural workers on the other.

After the Nitti, Giolitti, and Bonomi Governments, we had the Facta Cabinet. This type of government was intended to cover up the complete liberty of action of Fascism in its expansion over the whole country. During the strike in August, 1922, several conflicts took place between the workers and the Fascisti, who were openly aided by the Government. One can quote the example of Bari. During a whole week of fighting, the Fascisti, in full force, were unable to defeat the Bari workers, who had retired into the working-class quarters of the old city and defended themselves by armed force. The Fascisti were forced to retreat leaving several of their number on the field. But what did the Facta Government do? During the night they surrounded the old town with thousands of soldiers and hundreds of carabinieri of the Royal Guard. In the harbour a torpedo boat trained its guns on the workers. Armoured cars and guns were brought up. The workers were taken by surprise during their sleep, the proletarian leaders were arrested, Labour headquarters were occupied. This was the same throughout the country. Wherever Fascism had been beaten back by the workers the power of the State intervened; workers who resisted were shot down; workers who were guilty of nothing but self-defence were arrested and sentenced; while the magistrates systematically acquitted the Fascisti, who were generally known to have committed innumerable crimes.

Thus the State was the main factor in the development of Fascism.

The second factor was the co-operation, as I have already said, of the great capitalists of industry, finance, and commerce, and also of the large landed proprietors, who had an obvious interest in the formation of a combative organisation which would support their attack upon the workers.

But a third factor has also had a very important influence on the formation of the forces of Fascism.

In order to form an illegal reactionary organisation outside of the State, one is compelled to recruit other elements than those

belonging merely to the highest circles of the dominant class. They gained the help of these elements by appealing to those sections of the middle class of which we have spoken, and, in order to draw them into their ranks, endeavoured to express their interests. One must confess that Fascism has well understood how to do this, and has succeeded well in so doing. They gained the assistance of elements belonging to strata only just above the proletariat, and even among those suffering from the effects of the war—all those petty bourgeois, semi-bourgeois, tradesmen, and, above all, those intellectual elements of the bourgeois youth which, in adhering to Fascism, discovered in this struggle against the proletariat a new energy and the exultation of patriotism and Italian imperialism. They brought to Fascism a considerable contribution in supplying it with those human elements necessary for its militaristic organisation.

These are the three factors which have permitted our adversaries to confront us with a movement whose ferocity and brutality we may denounce, whose solidarity we must recognise. We have also to recognise the political intelligence of its leaders. The Socialist Party never understood the importance of this growing antagonistic movement. The *Avanti* never understood that the bourgeoisie was preparing, while profiting by the criminal errors of the working-class leaders. They did not wish to denounce Mussolini, fearing that by so doing they would be giving him publicity.

Fascism, of course, is not a new political doctrine. It has managed to build up a strong political and military organisation, a considerable Press conducted with a good deal of journalistic ability. But there is no semblance of a programme; and now that they have arrived at the control of the State they find themselves confronted by concrete problems and are forced to apply themselves to the organisation of political economy. Now that they have to pass from negative to positive activities, despite the strength of their organisation, they commence to show their weakness.

We have examined the historical and social factors influencing the birth of the Fascist Movement. We shall now discuss the Fascist ideology and the programme by which this movement has drawn to it the various adherents following it.

In reality Fascism has added nothing new to the ideology and traditional programme of the bourgeois politics. Its superiority and originality consist only in its organisation, its discipline, and its leadership. Behind this formidable political and militarist apparatus, there looms a problem which it cannot solve, namely, the economic crises which will continually renew the reasons for revolution. It is impossible for Fascism to reorganise the bourgeois economic machine. They do not know how to find the way out from the economic anarchy of the capitalist system. They endeavour to carry on another fight, which is the struggle against political anarchy, the anarchy of the organisation of the master class in political parties. The stratification of the Italian master class has always thrown up certain political groups, which did not base themselves on soundly organised parties, and which have been continually engaged in struggles among themselves. This was above all the political reflex of the private and local interests, competition between professional politicians in the field of parliamentary backstairs intrigue. The bourgeois counter-revolutionary offensive has dictated to the bourgeois class the necessity of achieving unity of action in the social struggle and the parliamentary field. Fascism is the realisation of this. Placing itself above all the traditional bourgeois parties, it is gradually sapping their membership, replacing them in their functions and—thanks to the mistakes of the proletarian movement—is including in its political crusade the human elements of the middle class. But it cannot construct an ideology, nor a concrete programme of social reforms, going beyond those of the traditional bourgeois policies, which have been bankrupted a thousand times.

Fascist doctrine is anti-socialist and also anti-democratic. So far as anti-socialism is concerned, it is obvious that Fascism is the movement of all anti-proletarian forces, and that it must therefore declare itself against all socialistic or semi-socialistic tendencies, without being able to present any new justification of the system of private ownership, unless it be the well-used one of the alleged failure of communism in Russia. But their criticism of the democratic regime—that it has not been able to combat revolutionary and anti-national tendencies—and that therefore it should be replaced by the Fascist State, is nothing more than a senseless phrase.

Fascism is not a tendency of the Right wing bourgeoisie, which, basing itself upon the aristocrats, the clergy, and the high civil and military functionaries, is to replace the democracy of a constitutional monarchy by a monarchic despotism. In reality Fascism conducts its counter-revolutionary struggle by means of an alliance of all bourgeois elements, and for this reason it is not absolutely necessary for it to destroy democratic institutions. From the Marxian point of view, this fact need by no means be considered paradoxical, as we know well that the democratic system is nothing more than a scaffolding of false guarantees, erected in order to hide the domination of the ruling class over the proletariat.

When the Fascisti turn from their alleged criticism of liberal democracy to proclaim to us their positive conception, inspired by patriotic exultation and a conception of the historical mission of their country, they base it upon an historical myth which has no basis in fact, if one considers the gravity of the economic crisis which exists in this Italy, falsely called "the victorious." In their methods of influencing the mob we see nothing more than an imitation of the classical attitude of bourgeois democracy: the conception that all interests must be subordinated to that of national supremacy, which is nothing more than the collaboration of classes, and is a means of protecting bourgeois institutions against the revolutionary attacks of the proletariat.

The new feature which Fascism has revealed is the organisation of the bourgeois Governmental machine. Recent Italian parliamentary development almost made us believe that we were in the presence of such a crisis in the evolution of the bourgeois State machine that one more blow would have shattered it. In reality we were only faced by a critical period of change in bourgeois Governmental matters, due to the importance of the old political groupings and of the traditional Italian politicians.

Fascism has constructed the organ capable of conducting the counter-revolutionary struggle, even during a disturbed period of transition, if placed at the head of the State.

But when the Fascisti wish to place, side by side with their negative anti-proletarian campaign, a positive programme and concrete proposals for the reorganisation of the economic life of the country and the administration of the State, they were only able to

repeat the banal platitudes of traditional democracy and even of social democracy. They have furnished us with no trace of an original and co-ordinated programme.

For example, they have always said that the Fascist programme advocates a reduction of the State bureaucracy, starting from above, with a reduction in the number of ministers, and extending into all the branches of the administration. Now it is true that Mussolini has withdrawn the special train usually allotted to the Premier, but on the other hand he has augmented the number of Cabinet Ministers and of Assistant Secretaries of the State, in order to give jobs to his legionaries.

Fascism, after having temporarily adopted republicanism, finally rallied to the strictest monarchist loyalism; and after having loudly and constantly cried out against parliamentary corruption, it has now completely accepted conventional parliamentary procedure.

They departed so far from the tendencies of pure reaction that they even made use of syndicalism. In their congress at Rome in 1921, where they made almost ridiculous attempts at formulating their doctrines, they endeavoured to explain Fascist syndicalism theoretically as being the supremacy of the movement of the more intellectual categories among the workers. But even this theory has been denied by their practice, which bases their trade union organisation upon the use of physical violence and the "closed shop" sanctioned by the employers, with the object of breaking up the revolutionary trade unions. Fascism has not been able to extend its power in those organisations where there is the least amount of that technical specialisation of labour which facilitates the control of the job. Their methods have had some success among agricultural workers and certain sections of the less skilled city workers, such as for example the dock workers, without having attained success in the more advanced and intelligent sections of the proletariat. It has not even given a new impulse to the organisation of office workers and metal workers. There is no substantial theory of Fascist syndicalism. The Fascist programme is a confused mixture of ideas and of bourgeois and petty bourgeois demands; and the systematic use of violence against the proletariat does not prevent them from making use of the opportunist methods of social democracy.

One proof of this is contained in the attitude of the Italian reformists, whose policy, during a certain time, appeared to be dominated by an anti-Fascist principle and by the illusion of forming a Bourgeois-Proletarian Coalition Government against the Fascisti, but who at present have rallied to the support of triumphant Fascism. This combination is not paradoxical; it has been produced by a series of events, and there were many early incidents which made it easy to foresee this alliance. One may mention, for instance, the d'Annunzio Movement, which on the one side is related to Fascism, and on the other endeavours to attract to itself working-class organisations on the basis of the programme of the Vienna International, which claims to have a Labour or even socialist basis.

I have still to deal with the recent events in Italy.

On October 24, a National Fascist Council was held in Naples. Everyone knows at present that this event, which was advertised in the entire bourgeois Press, was only a manœuvre to divert the general attention from the "Coup d'Etat." At a given moment the parliamentarians were told: "Cut short your debates, there are more important things to do, every man to his post!" This was the beginning of the Fascist mobilisation. It was October 26, and everything was still quiet in the capital.

Facta had announced his determination not to resign before at least another meeting of the Chamber, in order not to offend against the traditional procedure. However, in spite of this declaration, he handed in his resignation to the King.

Salandra was summoned to form a new Cabinet. In order to countenance Fascism he was expected to refuse to do this.

At this time it was quite possible that the Fascist armies might have behaved like brigands and might have pillaged and destroyed everything in the towns as well as in the rural districts, even against the will of their chiefs, if satisfaction was not given them by calling Mussolini to power.

Then there came a period when public opinion was rather perturbed. The Facta Government decided to proclaim martial law. Martial law was proclaimed, and a collision between the forces of the State and the Fascist forces was expected to take place. For a whole day public opinion awaited developments. Our comrades were very sceptical about such a possibility.

The King refused to sign the proclamation of martial law, which was tantamount to accepting the conditions of the Fascisti who wrote in the *Popolo d'Italia*: "In order to obtain a legal solution it is only necessary to ask Mussolini to form a new Cabinet. If this is not done, we shall march on Rome." A few hours after the declaration of martial law was revoked it was known that Mussolini was on the way to Rome. The military defences were already prepared, advance forces were concentrated, and the town was surrounded with barbed-wire entanglements. However, an agreement was arrived at, and on October 31 the Fascisti entered Rome triumphantly and peacefully.

Mussolini formed the new Cabinet, whose composition you know. The Fascist Party, which had only thirty-four seats in Parliament, had an absolute majority in this Government.

Mussolini reserved for himself the position of President of the Council and the portfolios of the Ministry of the Interior and of Foreign Affairs.

The other important portfolios were divided among the members of the Fascist Party.

However, as the severance from the traditional parties was not complete, the Cabinet comprised also two representatives of the social democracy, viz., Left bourgeois elements, and also liberals of the Right and one adherent of Giolitti. During the war we had General Diaz and Admiral Thaon de Revel at the Admiralty, both of them representatives of the monarchy.

The Populist Party, which carried great weight in the Chamber, was very clever in its compromise with Mussolini. Under the pretext that the official organs of the party could not meet in Rome, it deputed to a semi-official assembly of some of the party's parliamentarians the responsibility to accept Mussolini's offers.

Some concessions were at least obtained from the latter, and the Press of the Populist Party was able to announce that the new Government would not make many changes in the electoral system and in parliamentary representation.

The compromise was extended to the Social Democrats. Mussolini did not accept a representative of the reformist General Federation of Labour, principally because the Right elements in the Cabinet were opposed to it. But Mussolini thinks that he must

eventually have a representative of this organisation in his "great National Coalition," now that he has become independent of all revolutionary political parties.

We can see in those events a compromise between the traditional political cliques and various sections of the ruling class, landed proprietors, financial and industrial capitalists, who are rallying to the new State regime, which has been established by the Fascisti, and assured of the support of the petty bourgeoisie.

What has been the effect of these events upon the proletariat? The latter has been recently in such a position that it has not been able to play such an important part in the struggle but has been compelled to remain almost passive.

The only example of the struggle against the power of the State and the Fascisti was the battle at Cremona, in which there were six killed. The workers fought in Rome. The revolutionary working-class forces hurled themselves against the Fascisti; many were wounded. The following day the Royal Guard invaded the working-class quarters and deprived them of all means of defence, permitting the Fascisti to follow and to shoot down the workers in cold blood. This is a most striking episode of this struggle.

The General Federation of Labour disarmed the Communist Party by proposing a general strike, and begging the proletariat not to follow the dangerous path indicated by the revolutionary group. At a moment when our Press was prevented from appearing they even published the news that the Communist Party was on the point of dissolving.

The most striking incident concerning our party in Rome was the invasion by the Fascisti of the editorial offices of the *Comunista*. On October 31, while the city was occupied by 100,000 Fascisti, the printing plant was entered by a band of Fascisti just when the paper was to come out. With the exception of Comrade Togliatti, our editor in chief, all the staff were able to evade the Fascisti by emergency exits. Comrade Togliatti was in his office when the Fascisti entered. He boldly declared that he was the chief editor of the *Comunista*. He stood up against the wall to be shot, and our comrade was only able to escape because the Fascisti, who were informed that the other editors were escaping over the roofs, started in pursuit.

But this example is quite isolated. The organisation of our party is in good condition. The publication of the *Comunista* is suspended—but not because the printers refuse to publish it. We have published it illegally at another printing plant. The difficulties in publishing it were not of a technical nature, but economic.

They seized the building of the *Ordine Nuovo* in Turin and confiscated the arms which had been kept on the premises for its defence. But we are publishing the paper elsewhere.

In Trieste the police also took possession of the printing plant of our paper, but we are still publishing it illegally. The possibilities of legal work still exist for our party and our situation is not very tragic. But it is hard to foresee future developments.

I have not exaggerated the conditions under which our party has been fighting. This is not the time to be sentimental.

The Italian Communist Party has committed certain errors which we are entitled to criticise; but I believe that the attitude of our comrades at present is proof that we have really worked towards the organisation of a revolutionary party of the proletariat which will form the base of working-class revolution in Italy.

Although one may consider certain steps which they have taken as being incorrect, the Italian communists are well entitled to feel that they have done nothing with which to reproach themselves before the revolutionary movement of the workers of the whole world.

(The Editor of the LABOUR MONTHLY regrets that owing to pressure on our space it has been impossible to include the article on "The Daily Herald" advertised as appearing in this issue.)

The World of Labour

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INTERNATIONAL

New Trade Union Association

THE outcome of the Congress of Revolutionary Syndicalists, held in Berlin, December 25 to January 3, was the formation of another trade union international, the International Association of Workers, or the First International, with its centre in Berlin. It was formed as a "bond of continuity between the glorious past and the ominous present full of menace to the life, autonomy, and independence of trade unionism." All unions affiliated to the Red International of Labour Unions were said to have been invited, but only anarcho-syndicalist representatives from the following countries attended: Argentine, Chile, Czecho-Slovakia, Denmark, Germany (two organisations), Holland, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Spain, Sweden, the Hindu Syndicalist Committee, the Russian Minority, and the French Comité de Defense Syndicaliste (a section within the C.G.T.U.).

The French C.D.S. affiliated to the new international in protest against the C.G.T.U. having ratified its affiliation to the Red International of Labour Unions, in accordance with the St. Etienne decision. The C.D.S. adhesion to the International Association does not imply a further split in the C.G.T.U. The C.D.S. hopes to occupy a position within that federation similar to that which the Comité Syndicaliste Revolutionnaire occupied within the C.G.T. It may, however, be recalled that the C.S.R. did not adhere to any international until it became the C.G.T.U.

Right-Wing Socialists against Action

The committees of the International Federation of Trade Unions, the Second International, and the International Working Union of Socialist Parties (Vienna) met at Amsterdam, January 26 and 27, to consider the situation created by the occupation of the Ruhr. The conference condemned the militarist action of France, and warned the workers against the lying methods being used to deceive the workers, just as during the world war.

It recommended a peace policy based on the general interests of the workers of the world, to attain which the following methods were approved :—

- (1) The vigorous propaganda of the peace policy by publicity in the Press, meetings, and demonstrations.
- (2) The organisation of constant exchange of exact information on the situation in the various countries, to maintain and strengthen the bonds of confidence existing between the proletariat in different countries.
- (3) Pressure to be brought to bear by all Parliaments on their respective Governments to bring about an appeal to the League of Nations, to which Germany should be admitted as a preliminary, with the same rights as the other Powers. Workers to be made aware of the growing danger of war, and to be called upon to use all their strength to repulse the open or secret acts of both militarism and imperialism, and thereby work for the establishment of a durable peace.

This is as far as the executives believed they were capable of going, in spite of the unanimous resolution a few weeks previously at the Hague Peace Congress, declaring in favour of a general strike in order to stop the outbreak of any further wars.

CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

Communist Congress

ON February 2 the first national congress of the Communist Party was held at Prague. According to the report presented, the number of paying members was 132,000, but should in no sense be regarded as accurate, since conditions in the country prevented a regular census of the party from being taken. The membership is said to be rapidly increasing ; at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International the figure given was 170,000.

Manifestoes were unanimously passed sympathising with the French and German workers in their common struggle against both French and German capitalists in its latest phase in the Ruhr.

Kolarov, who addressed the congress on behalf of the Communist International, was deported from Czecho-Slovakia for having assisted at the congress.

The question of opposition within the party, which was discussed at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, has been solved.

FRANCE

Right-Wing Congresses Reject United Front

THE Congress of the General Confederation of Labour (C.G.T.) met in Paris, January 30, and gave occasion for the renewal of the question of a joint conference between the two trade union sections. This has been the uppermost question in French trade union life since the Lille

Congress in June, 1921, when the Left Wing section, since formed into the Confédération Générale du Travail Unitaire, made itself felt by force of numbers. Since the definite split in December, 1921, the C.G.T.U., which professes to have the major part of the workers organised within its ranks, has repeatedly suggested the possibility of unity. The C.G.T.U. urged the necessity of unity during the crises through which the French workers are and have been passing, caused by the intensive capitalist offensive. A fresh appeal was sent to the recent C.G.T. Congress. In this the C.G.T.U. pointed out the necessity of unity in the face of the new warlike activities of France. Such unity, the appeal declared, is only possible of attainment by calling a joint congress of all trade unions, without exception, for which it drew up the following programme as possible basis :—

- (1) The trade unions affiliated to both C.G.T.s on December 31, 1922, to be invited to the congress.
- (2) The agenda to be exclusively confined to the programme of action and the question of national and international orientation.
- (3) The votes to be based on the average number of stamps received by each trade union between January 1 and December 31, 1922.
- (4) A mixed commission of control to be charged with the verification of the real strength of the two bodies, and to report to the organisation commission of the congress, the commission of control to consist of an equal number of delegates from both organisations in the unions, the departmental unions, the federations, and the C.G.T.
- (5) This commission to examine the position of the trade unions affiliated to the C.G.T. at the time when the Lille Congress took place, which have since become autonomous and express a wish to participate in the joint C.G.T. congress.
- (6) Any irregularity or inexplicable discrepancy in the books to disqualify both from participation in discussion or voting.
- (7) The programmes of orientation and trade union activity to be determined by the congress majority.
- (8) The Executive Committee and Confederal Bureau resulting from the congress to be in agreement with the programmes approved by the majority.
- (9) The minorities to bow before the majority, but to retain the right to independent views, criticism, and opposition within the ranks of the C.G.T.
- (10) In future, no exclusion to be pronounced either against a trade unionist or trade union on the plea of trade union discipline. Trade union discipline can only apply in cases of regular decisions for action.

Only one organisation out of the thirteen represented at the congress voted in favour of unity. In a long reply, the C.G.T. Congress pointed out to the C.G.T.U. its disbelief in any possibility of unity, whilst protesting its earnest desire for unity. A big obstacle, it averred, was the affiliation of the C.G.T.U. to the Red International of Labour Unions. Unity, the C.G.T. Congress declared, was only possible within the C.G.T., which represents the French workers. Therefore, before any congress be convoked, unity should be attained within the various unions. Hence,

The congress can only favour the reconstitution of all the unions.

The unions thus reconstituted could take any initiative they liked, including the convocation of a confederal congress to complete the preliminary unity realised by the rank and file.

The C.G.T. Congress was attended by about 700 delegates, and, besides the all-important question of unity, discussed and passed resolutions on practically every phase of trade union organisation. The insidious attacks on the eight-hour day were deplored, but the obvious reply of united forces was rendered impossible by the majority vote against the C.G.T.U. appeal for unity. Edo Fimmen, who represented the International Federation of Trade Unions, confessed that the workers of the world were "asleep," and therefore the general strike resolution taken at The Hague Congress in December could not be carried out.

Much controversy was caused by the proposal to raise the affiliation fee in order to defray the expenses of running the C.G.T. daily organ, *Le Peuple*. The opponents pointed out that no other country had a trade union daily, and that it should become a weekly. Despite such protests, the affiliation fees were increased.

No reliable statistics regarding the strength of the C.G.T. were given, but the general estimate is that the strength is less than 200,000

Lille Congress

At Lille, on February 3, the French Socialist Party held its second congress since the majority of the French Socialist Party became the Communist Party in 1920, after the Tours Congress. The congress was attended by many delegates from other countries, including Hilferding from Germany. This was the first occasion a German attended the congress since the war.

The congress, which met at the most difficult period for the French proletariat, came to no more far-reaching decision than that the League of Nations should intervene in the present international political crisis. The proposition of the Communist Party that both sections should unite in the common struggle was rejected. The attitude of both parties is more evident in the exact invitation and the reply here reproduced :—

COMMUNIST MESSAGE TO LILLE CONGRESS

The Communist Party suggests to the Lille Congress that delegates from both parties meet in a joint congress. This reunion to make plans for the convocation of a conference of all proletarian organisations, with a view to uniting to make an efficacious stand against the occupation of the Ruhr, against Governmental repression, and the danger of a new imperialist war.

In view of Compère-Morel's intervention in the Chamber on January 18 in favour of a general strike, the Communist Party anticipates a favourable reply from the Lille Congress to the present proposal.

The Communist Party is ready to examine any counter proposition made on the part of the Socialist Party.

The Communist Party has only the desire to serve the interests of the workers in the imminent dangers now threatening, and makes no preliminary condition as to the joint action of the proletarian organisations.

LOUIS SELLIER, TOMMASI.

The Lille Congress rejected this offer of unity, and at the suggestion of

Jean Longuet sent a reply in letter form, of which the chief sections are here quoted:—

The congress of the Socialist Party has examined the telegram renewing the proposal of a united front, this time "against the occupation of the Ruhr, against Governmental repression, and the danger of a new imperialist war."

The congress is in agreement with the reply sent to the first offer signed by Frossard, and recalls the reply to your memory. Our party asked you to define exactly the method you purposed to employ in the united front, and demanded guarantees of good faith. Your reply, causing the rupture of the pourparlers, declared your reluctance to "submit to a new examination a question which your congresses, both national and international, had discussed."

. . . You now suggest common action against the occupation of the Ruhr and the dangers of an imperialist war. Nevertheless, you know that your action in these matters is inspired by principles opposed to ours.

You have not taken up a position in respect of reparations, European reconstruction, nor as to the method of solving the Ruhr difficulties which would allow of agreement in united action.

We want a solution conducive to peace. The Communist International, to which you belong and which solely obeys the dictates of Moscow, pursues tactics which risk creating new causes of European warfare. . . .

The congress, therefore, discards your offer.

It hopes that you will consider it useless to send us proposals of a similar nature in future *as long as the conditions of good faith and loyalty, necessary to all joint action suggested by us, have not been fulfilled.*

The congress failed to seize this opportunity to unite the workers into one body on this issue, so important to all French workers; no unity in other matters was asked. Yet many of these delegates have been willing to make a united front with capitalists, of whom they may truly say their "action . . . is inspired by principles opposed to ours."

GERMANY

Communist Congress

THE Leipzig Congress of the German Communist Party began on January 28. It was well attended, and discussion gave proof of the determination of the party to sift each problem. The position in the Ruhr naturally took precedence in discussion, and the final decision of the congress was an appeal to the workers to carry on active opposition to the foreign invader, but not in the leading strings of the German bourgeoisie, but as an independent force. The resolution on the tactics for the united front was passed by 118 votes to 59; the main plan included approaching the workers in the Social Democratic Party and uniting with them in the struggle to bring about a workers' government.

Much discussion took place as to methods, but the majority of the party showed that no rash action would be countenanced, and thus silenced the opposition section, still noticeable within the party.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE LAW AND THE PROFITS

Workmen's Compensation in Great Britain. By Joseph L. Cohen. The Post Publishing Co.

THE object of this book (as stated in the publisher's note) is to set forth, in as simple a form as possible, a statement of the existing laws, some account of their working, and of the problems to which they give rise. The book is stated to be written by a recognised authority on this subject, and to be the only comprehensive study of this branch of social insurance. The publisher's note states that the book should be of service to trade union officials, the student of law, and others. It can only be said that many of Mr. Cohen's statements, when compared with the facts or even (in some cases) with each other, make it important that his recognition as an authority, if it exists, should be at once withdrawn. A careful examination of the legal part of the book demonstrates that it is full of contradictions, omissions, and errors which, if perpetrated by a claims agent of an insurance company, would necessitate his seeking other employment for his talent. The legal aspect of the subject is technical and would be wearisome to most readers, but a few instances must be given. Compare the two following statements as to the powers of the County Court Registrar with regard to agreements between an employer and workman :—

“If, however, the Registrar has reason to think that the amount fixed for compensation is inadequate and that any undue influence has been used, he may ask the Judge to arbitrate, and he may alter the amount according as he thinks fit” (pp. 109-110).

“Where the injustice to the workman is glaring, the Registrar will refuse to record the agreement, but the Court has no power to increase the compensation unless the insurance company can be persuaded to do so” (p. 133).

The reader may take his choice of these two statements, but is advised to rely on neither ; the powers of the Registrar are technical, and only relate to certain classes of cases which raise technical distinctions too complicated to set out here, but they are nowhere set out in this book.

The statements of the law under the Employers' Liability Act have two serious and fundamental omissions. The statement (on p. 114) that the failure to make a claim under the Workmen's Compensation Act within six months cannot be excused if the employer's position is prejudiced is simply incorrect. The provisions of the War Additions Acts are stated differently on pp. 84, 111, and 118, and two of the statements are incorrect. There is nothing said about special rights of minors to an increase after twelve months, nor about the requirements of the Act as to notice or claim

in cases of industrial disease ; nothing even about what constitutes "total" incapacity—the subject of most of the disputes under the Act. The foregoing are a few examples of the numerous mistakes and omissions which occur in the legal part of the book.

I realise the difficulty of writing a simple book on the legal aspect of this subject ; it is wellnigh impossible, but it is inexcusable that a book so full of misstatements of the law as Mr. Cohen's should be published. We suggest that he should take pains to find out the very technical character of the law or leave the subject to be dealt with by someone better qualified.

Apart from the legal aspect of the book, it contains statistics which can be obtained from government and other publications by any industrious person. The difficulty is that these are not well arranged, and are interspersed with theories and comments. The statistics are, however, interesting in some particulars. For instance, it is not sufficiently known that in 1920 the employers paid to insurance companies about £9,000,000, out of which the injured workmen received under £3,000,000—the balance being intercepted.

It is not quite clear whether or not Mr. Cohen offers this book as his final philosophical contribution to the solution of the problem of industrial accidents ; if so, we should have expected something more from a "recognised authority." He is quite kindly disposed towards the workman, but fundamentally he has nothing to say. Schemes of "safety first," joint committees, hospitals, and what not are apparently attractive to him, but to anyone who sees this business from the inside it is the old, old story. In practice, when it is cheaper to be careless of life and limb, care is at a discount, and the interests of organised capital are preferred to those of the injured workman.

The benevolent can talk of helping the workpeople ; the keen business men of safety first ; Mr. Cohen can write a book of mixed theory, fact, and fiction ; but the worker who is injured will continue to be treated either as a fraud or a semi-pauper so long as compensation is merely part of capitalist machinery.

W. H. T.

WHAT IS CRIME ?

Crime: Its Cause and Treatment. By Clarence Darrow. Cloth. 292 pp. 10s. 6d. net. Harrap.

CLARENCE DARROW, the prominent American lawyer, is well known in the international Labour Movement because of the splendid part he played in defending socialists and industrial unionists who were criminally persecuted by their 100 per cent. democratic Government. These people were marched, tried, and imprisoned because they spoke and wrote against the propertied system. They were criminals according to the legal and moral standards of propertied society. What then is a crime ? It is, according to our author, "an act forbidden by the law of the land." And what is the law,

and who defines it? "All laws are naturally and inevitably evolved by the strongest force in a community, and in the last analysis made for the protection of the dominant class." This means, if it means anything, that law has not been evolved to protect society; it is rather an important weapon developed through the class struggle and relentlessly used to protect that class which dominates the State. Darrow, at this point, cuts right through a great deal of humbug prevalent in the Labour Movement regarding the democratic and communal function of law. Within propertied society the law's most important task is to protect the right of possession; that is why, as our author admits, "by far the largest class of crimes may be called crimes against property."

Darrow is not very clear in his handling of the relation of crime to economic conditions. He seems to imagine that this means that poverty is the cause of crime. It is a pity he has not studied that famous Marxian work on *Criminality and Economic Conditions*, by Professor W. A. Bouger (published by the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology). There he would have found it clearly stated: "He who writes upon the connection between crime and economic conditions must analyse the whole present economic system, and not stop with one of the consequences of that system, the poverty in which the proletarians find themselves."

Crime: Its Cause and Treatment is an eloquent plea on behalf of those who, as a result of complex factors, get within the clutch of the law. It does not claim to be a specialist study of the subject, and that is why Bouger's work still remains the greatest book on crime.

W. P.

BLACK LABOUR v. WHITE *

Unemployment in South Africa. By Morris Kentridge. I.S.L. Press, Johannesburg, 1s. 6d.

MR. KENTRIDGE, who formerly sat and no doubt expects to sit again as a Labour member in the House of Assembly at Capetown, discourses on unemployment in this 116 page pamphlet. Passing over his artless presentation of the social revolution as a reform or gradual series of reforms, to be supported by orthodox facts, Royal Commission reports, figures, and weighty arguments, we at this distance and perspective are naturally interested mainly in his references to the masses of native race who form over nine-tenths of the working class of the country. Mr. Kentridge himself is chiefly concerned with white unemployment, and refers only by the way to the native workers as themselves live proletarians. Incidentally he mentions one interesting point, that just as native labour competes with white, so it is itself competed with by other yet cheaper native labour, especially that imported from a distance, and that native unemployment, too, is on the increase.

It is probably true that white unemployment is intensified in South Africa by the fact that the "colour bar" not only excludes natives

from certain jobs reserved for whites, but also, in its customary application, excludes whites from most "unskilled" work as *infra dig*. Mr. Archie Crawford, of the South African Industrial Federation, was publicly shuddering the other day at the very idea of "competition between black and white" as "lowering" to the whites' status and dignity—poor consolation, one would think, for the absence of any doles, insurance, workhouses, or casual wards for the South African workless. For the rest, the "colour bar" in mines and works, for which the Rand strike of last year was fought, really means a standard wage on a white scale, a wage which, bar or no bar, capitalists will never pay to natives. As such, it had to be fought for. But the fight was lost; the low "Kaffir" wage is more than ever used as a lever to reduce the standard white wage, and work hitherto involving white labour is increasingly done with native labour only. It is not communism, but capitalism, which is leading to the "equality with Kaffirs" (*i.e.*, lowering to Kaffir wage standards) so much dreaded by the "poor whites." The moral is surely that the white workers of South Africa—a comparative handful of the working class, and a minority even of the white population—must recognise what Mr. Kentridge, in imagination addressing Parliament, is silent upon.

They must recognise the essence of the situation is the class struggle, and must join forces with their black fellow workers, drawing them, as active allies, into the common struggle (instead of ordering them, as they did last year, to continue working while the "aristocrats of labour" downed tools), and must also link up with the international militant labour movement. If they shrink from this alliance as common or unclean, the native movement of the African continent will tend to a purely racial form—as in any case it must inevitably do to some extent—resulting in colossal bloodshed. But the white workers, except for a few overseers, will— notwithstanding all Mr. Kentridge's belling the cat with "prohibition of imported indentured labour," "land taxation," and "State control" of this, that, and the other—inevitably be starved out of existence as "redundant."

S. P. B.

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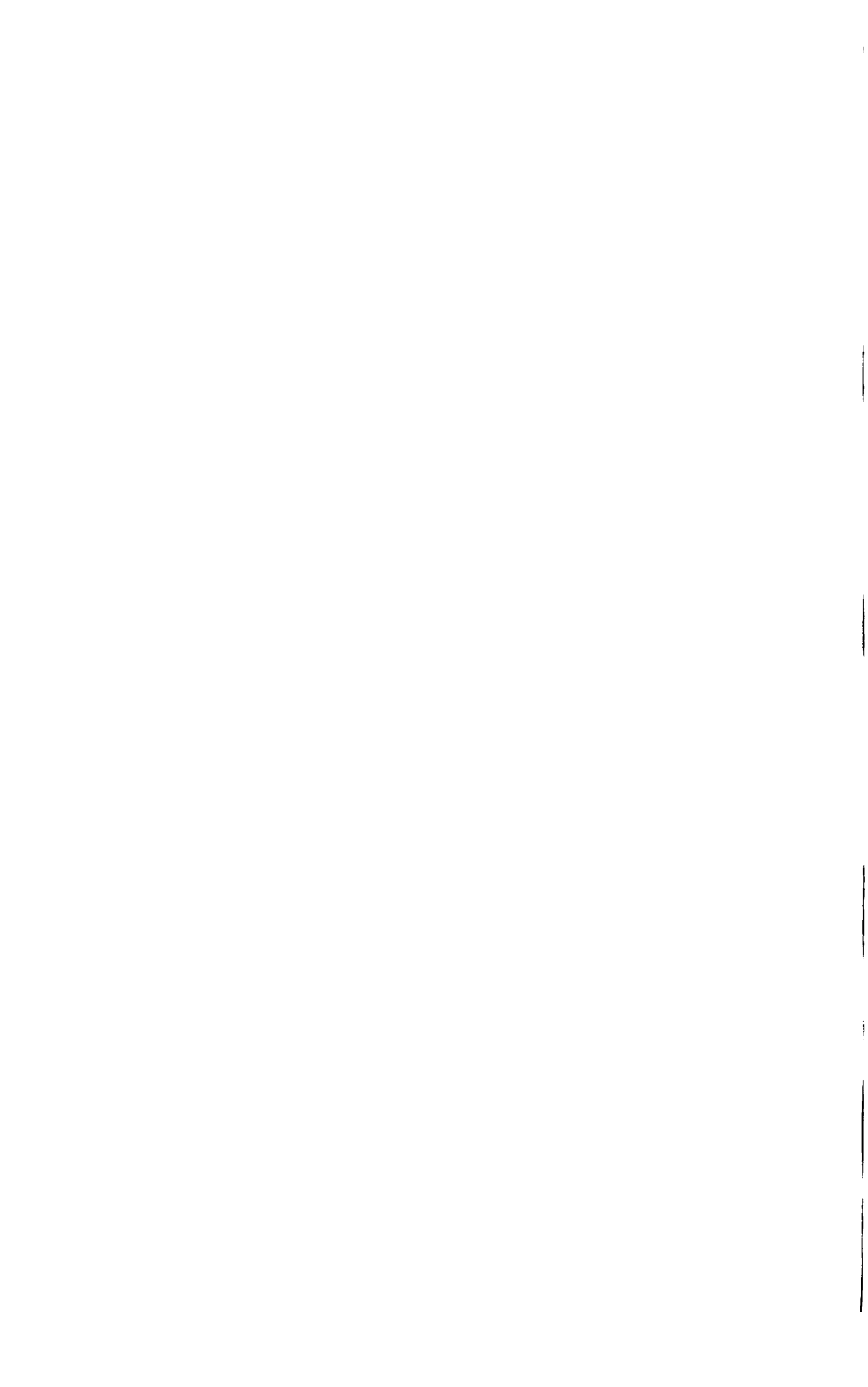
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The Fabian Discovery of Capitalism T.L.

Published at
162 Buckingham Palace Road
London
S.W.1



NOTES of the MONTH

Marx and the Modern World—Marxism and World History—

From Social Unconsciousness to Consciousness—Revolution

and the Working Class—The Period of

Incomprehension—The Lifting of the Fog

—The Tribute of the Hour

FORTY years ago Marx died. His anniversary is being celebrated in a fashion that he would have understood. The suicidal frenzy of capitalist civilisation with its Great Powers reduced by years of protracted conflict to futile plunder raids; the world economic paralysis creeping on winter by winter without cure; the growing hold and consolidation of the forces of revolution around the first proletarian State: all this would have been to Marx in 1883 the filling up of the outlines of a picture already seen, although to any other mind at that apex of victorious prosperity it would have seemed the maunderings of a nightmare. The rapidity of the transformation of human society through which we are living, and the character of which Marx first perceived, is its most striking external characteristic. A hundred years from Marx's birth saw the first Proletarian Revolution and Proletarian State. Will a hundred years from his death see the World Proletarian Republic?

WHAT is the secret of this power of Marx which makes him to-day so close to the living reality of events? The world history to-day which is confounding all the conventional thinkers is Marxism alive. There was no need to refute his critics. History refutes them. Even while they pen their last lines to their Critical Examination they find themselves having to pack up their bags before the gathering storm of the Collapse and the Revolution. The very language of the Press, the very speeches of the statesmen, become unconsciously Marxian. A hundred times "disproved" and "discredited" by critics whose names are now only known to Marxian students, for half a century declared "obsolete" and "antiquated" by theorists whose writings

already carry about them the flavour of pre-war antiquity, a thousand times denied and watered down by faint-hearted followers afraid to break with bourgeois learning and prejudice, to-day Marx stands master in the modern world—the Key to its interpretation and the power that moves it. Not as an individual, however able, not as a solitary thinker or writer, throwing out ideas to be taken up by disciples, but as the expression of the greatest force of modern history—that is the secret of Marx's dominance to-day.

WHAT is that greatest force of modern history? It is the revolutionary force of the working class arising out of the revolutionary conditions of modern capitalism. Marx came at the turning point of two epochs, and he saw the character of the epoch in front. This is what singled him out from his contemporaries and that is why his writings are only becoming fully understood half a century after his death, and will only completely enter into the common currency of human speech and thought a century after. To his contemporaries Liberalism or the middle-class revolution, with its romance and terrors in Jacobin France or insurgent Italy, with its peaceful consolidation in the framework of national freedom, constitutional government, and international trade, was, whether liked or hated, the apex of human achievement. They might celebrate its achievement in utilitarian theories of progress. They might denounce it in terms of mediæval hankerings. Within the framework of its permitted liberties they might speculate daringly on the nature of religion or carry the researches of natural science to an infinitely receding horizon. In course of time their scientific speculations might lead them to the fringes of analysing and revealing the most primitive forms of human society. But all the time in the understanding of their own society they remained children, the slaves of race and place, of erratic impulse and desire. All the time, whether they praised the age in which they lived and wished it to go further, or denounced it and wished it to go back, whether they spun it into fabrics of social theory or were indifferent to it and took it for granted, they

never understood that the age which they praised or denounced or took for granted was at an end and that a new one was beginning. When the first signs of that new world struck them in the shape of the first ugly shocks of imperialist clashings, they were amazed and declared that Barbarism was returning.

IT was here that Marx was able to see and to understand both the force of the age in which he lived and of the age that was to come. On the one hand he gathered up into himself all the traditions of the Revolution, of the revolutionary striving to human freedom and equality that had been borne along for a period by the rising bourgeoisie, the revolutionary rationalism of Hegel and his followers, the thunderous clearing force of the French Revolution, the whole unchaining of human will and energy that had been let loose in 1789 never to rest again. On the other hand he understood, what the other successors of the revolution had failed to understand and were therefore sinking into petty nationalism, underground conspiracy, or ignoble passivity and literary indignation, that the force of the revolution was no longer in the national bourgeoisie, that they had become on the contrary the power of reaction, and that the future force of the revolution which would carry it through to its completion was the international working class. This he saw. This he worked out to its furthestmost recesses. For this he fought. And this is what gave to Marx his power of understanding of the course of events: it is this, this expression of the actual character of the age in which we live and the transformation through which we are passing, and not (as is still often ignorantly supposed) some childish access of hero-worship or exaggeration of personality, that makes the growing body of thought and action and struggle in every country to-day proud to range itself under the Marxian banner.

WHY has it taken so long for the meaning of Marx's thought to be understood and recognised, so that even to-day a large proportion of "educated" opinion deems itself fitted to refer to Marx as a kind of noble savage or

awkward giant, full of errors, though not without genius? The answer is to be found in the nature of the period immediately following Marx. The immediate effect of capitalist concentration, which was destined eventually to lead to its collapse, was an expansion in the form of imperialism which brought at first a flush of prosperity to the imperialist States. This flush of prosperity was the basis of the Second International and the short-lived triumph of reformism over Marx. The immediate gaining of sectional advantages and improvements in conditions blinded the view to the actual character of capitalism, and led to a short-sighted belief in possibilities of peaceful progress and change and the discrediting of the revolutionary view as abstract, unpractical, and unreal. Even where Marxism was nominally accepted as the basis, its supporters were so hypnotised by the visible facts of society around them that they sought to water down or explain away his downright statements.

IT is from this period that dates what still commonly passes for Marxism in Western Europe and America—when a small band of would-be supporters sought to entrench themselves against the onrushing flood by abandoning the whole meaning of Marxism and confining themselves to the fanatical defence of a certain theory of economic value or the mechanical repetition of prophecies of the collapse of capitalism, while in actual current issues giving only conventional or sterile views. Thus Marxism was made ridiculous alike by its enemies and by its supporters, who were alike dominated by a purely empirical view of social conditions and failed to understand that what they saw around them was only one phase of a complex process, and that the truth of Marx lay far deeper and more permanently grounded.

THERE is no excuse for any such mistake now. The outlook has become clear beyond the possibility of confusion. What was before speculation of the future is to-day experience of the present. What could before be discussed or refuted in theory to-day knocks at the door in fact. The revolution, the division of the opposing camps, the breakdown of the existing

order, are parts of visible, tangible experience. With this concrete realisation of Marxism there has come a tremendous simplification. Before an audience of modern workers the theory of Increasing Misery would hardly need demonstration. A copy of a financial journal is sufficient to observe the concentration (including the international concentration) of capital. The most casual reader of the newspapers could scarcely fail to recognise at any rate the eternal symptoms of capitalism as a system of Recurrent Crises. The Social Revolution, that was once declared by "advanced" Marxians of the West to be a "myth," is now a political factor governing the calculations of all statesmen and parties. The Class War, which it used to be held sufficient to counter by adducing the case of John Smith, craftsman, who held a share in a building society, has now, with a complete lack of consideration for such unshakable reputations, revealed Europe and the world in two camps, with class-government, suppression, and violence openly displayed in every country. In the face of this world-situation the old controversies and perplexities appear faded and insubstantial. It was once possible for the International to be split by a controversy on socialist participation in a ministerial combination, and for elaborate arguments of relative advantages and disadvantages to lead to an ingenious resolution by Kautsky balancing both sides and saying nothing. To-day, the whole issue would be summed up in the short, but clear statement that Millerand was joining the bourgeoisie. The explosions of war and revolution have cleared the air and revindicated the downrightness of Marxism. It is not the least virtue of the Russian Communist Party, whose twenty-fifth anniversary has just been celebrated, that it maintained right through the black period of incomprehension the clearness and downrightness of Marxism and so has been able to vindicate it in the world of to-day (much to the discomfiture of many "Marxists" of the imperialist countries). In the present revolutionary period Marxism has come into its own again.

THEREFORE at this moment, when the very news of the day, whether it be the latest exploit of the troops of French heavy industry in the Ruhr, or the sudden seizure without charge or trial of a hundred British citizens by the executive

power, or the butchering of socialists by the Italian Fascist Government, or the tightening of America's financial stranglehold on Europe, or the breaking up of the Labour Movement by reformist leaders, or the bombing of recalcitrant villages in Mesopotamia, are all part of a single converging struggle more and more visibly one—the battle of the world revolution and world capitalism in its last imperialist stage—it is fitting to turn aside for a moment from the incidents of that struggle and their daily records in order to dwell on the more lasting character and meaning of that struggle in the light of which alone the incidents have their significance, and in doing so to pay tribute to the mind and spirit which first gave expression to its meaning and by giving it expression opened a new chapter in human consciousness.

THE *DAILY HERALD* A WORKERS' DAILY?

By C. M. ROEBUCK

THE return of 142 members of the Labour Party to Parliament, the assumption by the Labour Party of the historic rôle of the official Opposition—these are events of considerable importance in the history of the British working-class movement, and impose a careful survey of the existing situation by the thinking elements of the working class, with, if necessary, a revaluation of old values. That the latter course will have to be adopted is suggested, in particular, by the surprising nature of this revival in the Labour Movement—which is continuing all over the country even after the temporary excitement of the General Election—coming as it does after eighteen months of unbroken defeat in the trade union sphere. The reasons for the revival form a separate study : its meaning and results another. But one thing is certain—this big new advance of the working class must be consolidated and held.

The character of the daily workers' paper is one of the most important problems to be considered in this connection : and this is shown by the attempts finally to stabilise its financial position and develop its circulation along existing lines, at present being made by the leaders of the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party. The present article is an attempt to deal with the problem from a different angle entirely, though the conclusions to which it leads will in passing include an answer to most of the questions which have been put during the negotiations referred to. The object is, briefly, to decide whether the present lines of the *Daily Herald* are those which will assure it a future as a working-class newspaper, and what alterations are required to achieve this end— or, alternatively, to serve as the basis upon which a true newspaper of the workers must be built.

For this purpose I have taken a month's issues of the *Daily Herald*—from February 3 to March 3, 1923—and subjected them

to an analysis which should show (1) how far the *Herald* gave a working-class lead on matters of foreign policy ; (2) how far such a lead was given on matters of home policy ; (3) what are the other principal characteristics of the paper as revealed during the month. On this analysis we can build our conclusions as to the character of the paper, and see how far it corresponds with a partly ideal and partly concrete picture of a real workers' paper.

1.—*The "Herald" in Foreign Policy*

The most important topic in foreign policy during the month was the French invasion of the Ruhr, which all the working-class organisations denounced, at one time or another, in their manifestoes as a menace to the working classes of all countries. I am not concerned here with the telegrams of the *Herald* correspondents in Paris and Berlin : nor with the headlines given to their and other communications concerning the crisis, which in general continued to emphasise the peril latent therein. But the leading articles are the section of a paper to which one looks for a lead as to the right policy to be pursued : through them speaks the paper, more clearly than anywhere else. Neglecting their extreme rarity, which is what first strikes one (six issues out of twenty-five)—considering the gravity of the situation, and also certain other circumstances to be mentioned later—we notice the following series of articles, which throw a flood of light on the *Herald's* attitude.

On February 9 there is no leader on the Ruhr, but prominence is given on the front page to Brailsford's plan for a solution of the crisis : Great Britain and the U.S.A. should jointly guarantee the Franco-German frontier, as a preliminary to the revision of the Treaties at a World Conference. This striking suggestion, with its calm confidence that the two Anglo-Saxon powers—one of whom has just withdrawn its troops—will send sufficient forces to assume the thankless rôle of buffer, as preliminary to a revision of treaties which neither of them has shown the least sign of favouring, is obviously left to sink into the reader's brain without comment because the *Herald* has no objection to an agitation concentrating on this object. This agitation soon took concrete form, in the appeal, published on February 17, of eighty-nine Labour M.P.'s

to the United States President for his co-operation at the present moment, "as the one hope of saving Europe." What ground there was for believing that the President would assist in this work naturally no one attempted to give. The proletarian reader is left clinging to this last foothold of civilisation—only to have it rudely kicked away from him, with no more rhyme or reason given, by another leader on February 24 headed "Europe's Only Hope."

This article exposes the French plans for *de facto* annexation, shows how the latter must inevitably bring about another European war, asks what can be done, and replies as follows: "The French workers alone can deal with M. Poincaré, M. Millerand, and their confederates. The German workers alone can deal with their Junkers. If they act now and in unison, they can save themselves and the world." But if, the article adds, they hang back or "expect a miracle from London, Washington, or Geneva, they and we must pay the penalty." Here it is important to observe that the *Herald* not only goes back upon the idea of "Washington" as the possible dove of peace, but also deliberately encourages the idea that nothing can be done in London to stop the war. I mean, *practically*. Of suggestions, of course, there is no lack. In particular a leading article of February 12 has already endorsed the I.L.P. manifesto—"submitting proposals" involving the cancellation of reparations, a world conference, world disarmament, and other praiseworthy objects—with the gratified comment that Labour may well (not organise mass demonstrations or a strike for these proposals, but) "claim" that it alone can save the continent. Nothing more is "submitted" to the imperialists of the world, than that they should cease to be imperialists: as one who should suggest that the present building crisis might be solved by the dissolution of the Master Builders' Federation and their joining the Labour Party.

This "appeal to Cæsar" against himself is applied again in the leader of February 16, headed "Just Folks," which, drawing the lesson of the identity of the interests of all the peoples from Mr. Baldwin's visit to Washington and the French invasion of the Ruhr, concludes: "We urge that nothing should be done without the consent of Parliament to assist the French Government in its

rash and very risky adventure. Labour in the House of Commons should say that it will make all the trouble it can if the Prime Minister allows himself to be hustled into agreeing that the French shall either run trains through or take over that part of the Rhineland territory which is occupied by us. The French Government hopes to hustle him. If that were to happen we should be discredited and even disgraced. Even total withdrawal would be better. The matter must be debated and decided by Parliament. Labour must not fail to insist upon that." Here there is not a sentence but has its pearl of price. An adventure that imperils the lives of millions of workers must at any rate have the consent of a Parliament for whom the lives of millions of workers are of less importance than a dinner at the Carlton Club ; Labour must prevent consent being given without due debate by "making all the trouble it can"—in Parliament ; should the French take consent for granted (as they have done since) "we"—*i.e.*, the British Empire, Mr. Bonar Law's Government, the bringer of liberty to Egypt, India, the African native, and Irishmen living in England—would be discredited (in whose eyes ?) and even disgraced : and "even total withdrawal" (from territory occupied by British troops for the purpose of enforcing the plundering and starvation of the German workers) would be better.

The thesis underlying this article is expanded on February 19 in the last leader of the series. The paper is arguing against permission being granted for French troops to go through Cologne. If France were getting coal, the article runs, and wanted to carry it off, there would have been good reason for Mr. Law to say, "Very well, you have done what you set out to do ; we will help you to get the coal away." "But they are getting no coal. It is troops they want to send. And Mr. Law makes this easy for them. *Neutrality, what follies are committed in thy name !*" The moral, of course, is that the burglar should be assisted when it is clear that he has knocked out the householder and all his friends, and, having both hands occupied with plunder, wants the door held open for him. Mr. Law does not see this : Mr. Law wants at all costs to be "neutral" : poor, simple, ignorant Mr. Law, the astute and Machiavellian *Daily Herald* will explain to him in words of one

syllable what is neutrality, what should be committed in its name, and what should not!

This is what the *Daily Herald* has to say about the Ruhr. What it has not to say (for example, when the British authorities forbid the holding of an International Workers' Conference at which Second, Two-and-a-Half, and Third Internationals will be represented, to protest against the French "rash and very risky adventure") would fill volumes.

Having dwelt with so much detail on the treatment of the major crisis, it is, perhaps, unnecessary to do the same for the minor—that of Turkey. The general characteristics are the same. On February 5 a leader on Lord Curzon's failure at Lausanne is summed up in the sentence: "lasting peace can only come by agreement"; but no hint is given of what sort of agreement is meant. This defect is rendered more comprehensible by the plaintive remark on February 9: "We should find it easier to argue with those who want Britain to keep hold of Mesopotamia if they said quite frankly why they want this." In this connection it is interesting that no comment is made on the interview with the envoys of the "Arab kingdom of Irak," on February 24, who urged the British not to withdraw entirely from Mesopotamia as "you will undoubtedly damage British interests in the East, and certainly destroy British prestige" (as in the Rhineland!). This interview was of particular importance because there could be little doubt even then that the envoy's presence in this country was for the purpose of consolidating British rule—as it turns out, through an "independent Arab federal State."

On February 27 it was announced that the Turks had taken back their order for all Allied warships to leave Smyrna harbour, faced as they were with the concentration of the whole British Mediterranean fleet upon the town; the fleet was thereupon withdrawn, leaving only one British cruiser in the harbour, to remind the Turks that Britain rules the waves, and that Angora's chief port may at any moment be reduced to ashes should they insist too violently on their sovereign independence. How does the *Herald* deal with this typical piece of British imperialist bullying? By drawing the moral for the workers that Angora's fight is their

fight, that bullying at Smyrna is no better than bullying in England during the miners' lockout? Not at all: "By withdrawing our ships (with one exception) from Smyrna we are showing a friendly spirit which is likely to be at once appreciated." When the Turks blustered, says our daily apostle of patience and loving-kindness, they did not gain their point: but when nations "approach one another as comrades, neither seeking an unfair advantage, neither assuming superiority, then matters are soon settled between them." The worker, of course, may perchance remember that he sees such phrases in the *Daily News*—or the *Daily Mail*—when a strike ballot is in progress: and he may wonder whether there may not be something in it after all

After this, it is not surprising to find that the *Herald* does not mention once in its editorials the dragooning of Egypt by General Allenby, or think of utilising the vast working-class experience available in the daily practice of Soviet Russia for suggesting solutions to every-day questions now troubling the working class—particularly housing, taxation, and control of prices. The fact is that, as far as foreign affairs are concerned, there is no working-class note at present to be found in the *Daily Herald* where it is a matter of British policy. The vagueness of phrase, the shallowness of argument, the adoption at a moment's notice of confused and contradictory suggestions, are all characteristic of the ordinary petit bourgeois newspaper, published at one penny for the purpose of conveying to its reader, not information, but something to read in the train.

Perhaps in home policy we shall find a difference.

2.—The "Herald" in Home Affairs

During the greater part of the month under review the attention of the working-class movement as a whole was focussed upon the Labour struggle in Parliament. That is not the fault of the *Herald*, although more attention to the local experience of the evils which the workers' representatives were sent to fight in London would—putting it mildly—have assisted the latter in their task. Let us see, however, what the *Herald* actually says on the Parliamentary fight.

On February 13 there is a leader headed "Now to force the pace in Parliament." It hails the return of 142 Labour M.P.s, "eager to plead the cause of the unemployed, to show how people may get more homes, to protect them from unfair rent, to see that taxation is transferred to the backs which will bear the burden best." But supposing their "eagerness" does not meet its reward, supposing their pleadings are of no avail, their most lucid explanations fruitless, their protection in Parliament unavailing—what is going to happen then? And this is not a merely hypothetical question. It is well known that this is just the result which may be expected. For practical purposes the *Herald* leader becomes a collection of mere words and empty boasting. It may be quite sincere: there may be something genuinely wrong with the heads of the *Herald* leader writers. How otherwise is it possible to explain the leader next day ("On to Realities") which begins by the assertion that, after the King's Speech, the House came to realities, and then proceeds to devote the remainder of its space to a description of the technicalities in Parliamentary procedure which the Labour group is going to eliminate. There is no attempt to sum up the lack of reverence of the Left Wing element before ancient but purposeful ceremonies, to remind the workers that all this pomp and state is a fungus on the rotting organism of capitalist society: no, the article expatiates upon Labour's bold plan to appoint committees of the House at which subjects will be discussed before they are introduced for general debate (a singularly novel and distinctly proletarian suggestion—only that in the capitalist States abroad it has existed for years). Not "Labour in Parliament will set an example to the working masses by its contempt for bourgeois tradition and its unsparing exposure of capitalist hypocrisy," but "Labour will set an example to the whole House if it establishes its special Committees." (Why should Labour want to set an example to the Conservative and Liberal Parties?)

The first lead on policy comes on February 15, in an article headed "Labour and the More or Less Comfortable," which, however, does not contribute anything to the problem of how Labour is to be made "more or less comfortable," but devotes itself to showing the *middle class* that Labour is fighting their

battles in the housing question, and reminds them that it is the only Party which represents both the hand *and* the brain workers. No one, of course, wishes to suggest that brain workers are not a part of Labour : but to differentiate them as a class is to strike at the very root of any successful Labour agitation amongst them.

The *Herald* was so intent upon proving this to the middle class that the Government Rent Restrictions Bill took it completely by surprise. On February 17 it made great capital out of the Government's statement that the Bill represented a compromise with Labour. "A Funny Kind of Compromise," says the *Daily Herald*: in reality, the Government has simply adopted Labour's point of view : it allows landlords to collect increases made after December 1, only because, in all probability, no landlords did make increases after that date. If this attitude was not criminal negligence on the part of the daily working-class organ, it would be difficult to imagine what should be so described : already on February 19 this Sleeping Beauty had wakened to the fact that "Rents Bill Satisfies No-One," while on February 23, a week after the event, it was loudly calling for "No Quarter"—the Rents Bill must be vigorously fought, because "it lifts from law-breakers the penalty of their offence." Even here it could not take the same line as the Labour member (reported elsewhere in the same issue) who bluntly described the Bill as "class war legislation of the worst kind."

This is the *Herald's* treatment of the most prominent Parliamentary topic of interest to the workers : it is a fair type of its treatment of the remainder. There is another field of work from which the paper is not absent : it does not confine itself only to Parliament matters, but seeks out damaging statements by capitalists and employers, and weaves a sermon round them for the benefit of the workers. So far so good : all the Socialist and Communist weeklies do the same. The question is, how does the *Herald* treat its subjects ? On February 5 there is an article on a recent statement by Lord Ashfield to the effect that he was looking for people to hold £10,000 a year jobs, but had difficulty in finding them. First of all, says the working-class daily organ, such capacity is not at all so limited as Lord Ashfield thinks : full many a rose is born, &c. But, lest the working class should sink in

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utter despair at this prospect, the *Herald* comforts them even as slaves were comforted in Palestine 1900 years ago—there'll be pie in the sky when you die, and a rich man will find more difficulty in getting at it than in negotiating the eye of a needle. Hear the sage reasoning: "Less and less value is attached to living in better houses, eating more expensive (and more indigestible) food There is partly also a merciful rarity of Leverhulmes and Geddés, due to the intolerable grind which 'getting on' requires Rich men cannot enjoy themselves. They have no time." This is printed in a paper which draws its life-blood from the subscriptions of working men, who live their whole lives in an "intolerable grind" without ever having time to "enjoy themselves," let alone get on.

Let it not be thought, however, that the *Herald* has no thought for the spare time of the workers. On February 19 a whole leader is devoted to "The Demand for Leisure." Unfortunately the article only explains that all culture is the fruit of labour, adding: "A wise community would not only insist on a fair share of work and leisure all round; it would so organise the planning of towns and transport, &c.," and so on and so forth. "Will that buy the child a new frock?" will ask the working-class reader. But he is not a leader writer

There are other examples of this "New Philosophy" of the working class, but I will select only an article on "Is Education a Failure?" on February 28.

This article is not merely a leader, it is a programme. In this respect it differs from a great deal of what appears in the *Herald*, and is the more important. Hitherto the elementary working-class programme of education demanded free and unqualified access to all rungs of the educational ladder for every human being, on the ground that there was no one who could not benefit in some way or another from complete general education. The educational practice of Soviet Russia has shown that it is possible to combine technical education for a special profession from the first stages of the higher school without injury to the general educational standard. But the general standard

has always been the minimum of our demands. But what do we find the *Daily Herald* claiming? "Not until all start equally on the educational ladder, and only those get to the top who can reach it by their own ability, shall we remedy the present defects": and this principle is interpreted to mean that a sifting is made at sixteen, at which the promising students go on to the university, while the rest "go out into the world," to continue their education by adult evening classes. At eighteen, again, there is another "selection of those likely to profit by further schooling," and the majority again goes out into the world while the select few, "who seem likely to benefit the community most," complete their education. In other words, the educational machine is still to go on turning out huge masses of uneducated or semi-educated "machine-fodder" together with a select caste of scientists or administrators. Where is the justification for this appearing in a newspaper of the working class, which is not yet in a position even to influence the existing educational system, let alone introduce any sweeping changes into it?

Finally, it is important to note that, with one or two exceptions, the leading articles of the *Daily Herald* provide not a breath of comment or hint of leadership on the trade union and Labour movement on whose pence they are built up. During the month we are examining, there was a national crisis of the building trades, involving a principle of vital importance to the whole working-class movement. The London 'busmen, by displaying their determination to fight for the maintenance of existing conditions in their industry, won a signal victory over the employers. In several industries, particularly the mining, there were a number of strikes to enforce trade unionism. In London itself there were a series of stubbornly-contested minor strikes, which however were of great importance because they were taking place in the capital city, and after a period of unheard-of defeat for the organised workers as a whole. The increase in membership of the fighting builders' and miners' unions became so noticeable that even the capitalist press had to comment thereon; while even the fall in the membership of the engineers' union, steadily developing towards the end of 1922, almost came to an end during this very month. Yet of all

this not a word. The place of such matter was filled by articles such as the following.

3.—*Other Features of the "Herald"*

On February 3 we find a leader headed "Broadcasting and the Public," discussing the important subject of the monopoly instituted by the British Broadcasting Company. The trend and essence of the article may be gleaned from the following characteristic conclusion (for a working-class organ!): "It is up to the listening-in community to look after their own interests." Who are this listening-in community, for whom the watchword of self-defence is so resolutely thrown out, and to whom column after column is devoted in the paper through the month? On February 28, according to a reply given in Parliament, there were 56,000 broadcasting licences held by individual receivers, and in addition over 30,000 "experimental licences," *i.e.*, for individuals who had constructed their own apparatus. These are the wide masses to whom the *Daily Herald* can devote its first leading article on a day on which the rest of the paper contains the following items: the death of a baby from starvation in a family of four which was receiving thirteen shillings a week; Edo Fimmen's comment on the failure of the organised working class to prevent the Ruhr adventure: "In every country the Labour Movement is either dormant or concerned only with its own interests"; the refusal of ten London boroughs to sit on the Municipal Employees' Joint Industrial Council, because the Labour boroughs were naturally sending Labour men to sit as employers, thus giving the workers a majority on the whole council; and, finally, the beginning of the series of conferences for industrial unity convened by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress.

This is one case out of many. On February 13, the day of the opening of Parliament, we find the second leading article deals with the absorbing subject of "The Husband as Half-Timer," informing the working-class reader of the views of Miss Stancioff, daughter of the Bulgarian Minister, concerning the duty of the husband to do his share of the washing-up, and so on. This is on a day when the paper reports a forthcoming national rally of

working-class tenants to resist increases in rent : in addition to the unending terror on the Ruhr. On February 15 we find a leading article headed "The Helping Hand" which waxes eloquent on the fact that film actors or artistes singing into the broadcaster don't get an audience that is tangible, lose inspiration, and have to leave the profession : ending with a profound meditation on whether so high a level is obtainable in the new forms of mechanical art as in the old. And this on a day when the rest of the paper includes such topics as the fraud of emigration as a cure for unemployment (a cure which was being extensively advertised by the capitalist press at the moment) ; a scene in Parliament because George Hardie referred to the absurdity of rejoicing over a birth of a son to the Princess Mary ; the decision to employ no married women as teachers in London for the future ; and the British terror and constitution-breaking in Egypt. Further examples of this utter lack of proportion between the subjects dealt with in the leading articles and the topics of working-class interest may be found almost every day (the actual list noted includes February 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 15, 17, 19, 23, 26, 27, 28, March 2, 3) ; one striking example that may be quoted in addition is that of March 3. The leaders are : "Minds that will Not Change" (which deals with the introducers of the Bill for the suppression of Socialist Sunday schools, but in a spirit illustrated in the sentence : "The more their power ebbs, the more pathetic do they become") and "What's in a Name," which ridicules the pretensions of people who do well in life, exemplified in their adopting pompous names for their houses, or altering the spelling of their own names from Smith to Smythe, while all the while the "average householder suffering from burst pipes" requires the aid of a simple plumber, whether his name be Smith or Smythe. This valuable article not only forms a useful contrast with the subjects in the body of the paper, particularly the Unemployment "Gap" Bill, to which a half-inch note is devoted saying briefly that it "falls far short of what the Labour Party regards as necessary to meet the immediate situation" : but also shows for whom in his mind the leader writer of the *Daily Herald* is penning his little sermons.

This forgetfulness of the average worker and weakness for the average householder has already been noticed in connection with

the strange excitement shown by the *Daily Herald* on the broadcasting question. It is particular to note in this connection an article on February 15, headed "Listening-In for Every Home," and speaking of the way "to-day's back gardens fairly bristle with aërials." The workers' back gardens, of course!

The news pages of the *Daily Herald* are a strange mixture, fully in keeping with the mixed character of its leading articles. Side by side with foreign news and home news of direct concern for the working class, we find the most extraordinary collection of reports of deaths of peers, royal betrothals, "human stories," suicides, robberies, sudden deaths, mishaps at weddings, and troubles of cinema stars, aged eight and upwards. This leads to the most extraordinary deviations from the line of policy proclaimed by the *Daily Herald* itself, obviously owing to the free hand granted to the various reporters and "writers-up." Thus, on February 7 there is an interview with Sir Allan Smith, the notorious chairman of the engineering employers who led the lock-out in 1922. The interview is on the subject of unemployment, which Sir Allan naturally attributes to the French invasion of the Ruhr, appending his own solution: "fix liabilities, fund the whole lot, then you can get trade going again." Would it be believed that the sole comment of the *Daily Herald* is: "Nothing could more powerfully testify to the wisdom of Labour leaders in insisting upon the direct connection between unemployment and the state to which Europe has been reduced by the Treaty of Versailles." Not a word of the effect of the "provisions for avoiding disputes" forced upon the organised workers by Sir Allan Smith last April!

Most striking as an illustration of the haphazard and unthinking way in which topical material is treated are the articles writing up important towns of Great Britain. Glasgow is dealt with on February 9, Newcastle on March 2. The tone of the articles is exactly the same. Class differences are kept in the background, or are treated lightly. The article on Glasgow says the class war spirit prevails in the city, which divides into Reds and Blacks who "quarrel with each other when at home, but combine abroad in defence of their native heath": or again, "politics is another recreation in which everybody joins." The article on Newcastle

in the same way emphasises that the city (irrespective of classes), when it goes in a progressive direction, moves by steady steps and not by leaps and bounds. Each article treats the class struggle as an amusing interlude, dwelling particularly upon the geography, architecture, and cultural life (concerts, lectures, and theatres), with never a word of the fact that these cultural recreations are not available for the workers in actual practice. The Newcastle article, which in a couple of words informs you that behind the magnificent broad streets you may find slums, does however refer to the support extended to the local artistic and cultural life by "a highly-appreciative artisan and professional class." This pearl, which might grace the jewel box of *The Times* or the *Daily Telegraph*, is left to waste its brilliance upon the pages of a daily paper which is supported in the main by the workers whom it is intended we should recognise under the name of "artisans" (so dear to the apostles of industrial harmony), but who, of course, do not coincide except for a very small section with the people who have the opportunity to be "appreciative."

Thus the news items, as well as the leaders on foreign and home affairs, show that absence of a determined and clear line of policy, those vague and general phrases intending to soften class differences, that unexpected and irresponsible shooting off at a tangent, which are characteristic of an ordinary middle-class newspaper of the cheaper sort (*i.e.*, intended for the lower ranks of the middle class), and which are none the less characteristically middle class because they are mingled with news and occasional comments breathing a working-class spirit.

4.—*Middle-Class and Working-Class Journalism*

Why is this? What is the underlying reason for this defect, which expressed itself in the instances quoted during the previous pages?

George Lansbury, on February 17, summed up the position in a nutshell. "It is no use thinking we can ever succeed by being lopsided, giving only one sort of news and being too superior to give people the ordinary news of the day." And it is in their interpretation of what is "the ordinary news of the day"—according to

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their lights—that those who are now responsible for the *Daily Herald* supply the answer to the question asked. *Middle class themselves, guided largely by the necessities of the middle-class policy which is being forced upon the Labour Party, they are conducting the "Daily Herald" upon middle-class and not proletarian lines.*

The bourgeois press falls naturally into two categories. One section is the press of the ruling circles of the bourgeoisie, supplying solid information, serious discussion, reliable news more or less reliably treated, and providing material for the different tendencies within those ruling circles in their daily and unceasing struggle with one another for the mastery. Such newspapers are large, contain many pages, are not interested specially in sensational headlines, and have not a very large circulation. Under this heading fall the *Morning Post*, the *Daily Telegraph*, *The Times*, and the *Manchester Guardian*. The second section, embracing all the other London papers, is the press of the lower ranks of the bourgeoisie—the middle class—and is the weapon whereby the bourgeoisie maintains its influence both on the middle classes (including the greater number of the black-coated workers) and the workers. What are the characteristic features of this section? Solidity in nothing : clarity in nothing : consistent policy in nothing : reliability in nothing : shallowness in everything : sensationalism, childish or pornographic, in everything : *apparent* devotion to "the ordinary news of the day" (sometimes called "all the news that is fit to print"), but *in reality* concentration on the task of distracting the attention, confusing the minds, and misleading the opinion of the masses upon whom depend, first, the repressive and administrative machinery of the capitalist State (the salariat) and, secondly, the whole economic structure of the capitalist system (the proletariat). Socialists and Communists often exclaim in horror or wonder at the gutter press ; but quite unnecessarily. It has a deep but definite purpose—to create the delusion amongst the masses that they are informed, and to distract their attention from other issues, while these are settled by the solid papers amongst themselves, for the rulers. And, quite naturally, the workers themselves either fall entirely under the influence of "their" press, or, what is still more frequent, become entirely apathetic to all but the last pages,

containing the betting and football news, which at any rate do provide what may be the source of material interest.

From this it will be seen that the betting and football news which so many Socialists and Communists of all creeds have at various times condemned in the *Daily Herald* is not the cause but the result of lack of a definitely working-class note in every corner of the paper. The characteristic features of a middle-class paper, which we have seen appearing daily during an examination of the *Daily Herald's* pages for a month, are precisely those features which one finds in the *Daily News*, the *Daily Chronicle*, or the *Daily Mail*. It is not denied that in spite of everything the *Daily Herald* remains the trade union organ, and there is a tradition behind it which is not easily lived down. Hence the trade union page (page 6—the one section of the paper where one feels from beginning to end in a proletarian world), although even this tends to be encroached upon more and more by advertisements and notices of every description. Hence also many paragraphs from the districts, and correspondents' articles from abroad, which tell the story of a moment or a day or a phase in the class struggle. But they do not give us the general impression: that is given us by the spineless, detached, or silly leading articles, and the utter hash in the news pages.

Is there a distinctive working-class line which could be applied in order to remedy this state of affairs? On the answer to this question depends the value of any review of this section of Labour's forces, such as was proposed at the beginning of the present article. The answer is "Yes": there is such a line, and it is the line which assumes as its starting point that "the news of the day" is the working-class news of the day—the class conflict or class exploitation continuing ceaselessly in every factory, workshop, store, shop, bank, insurance company, parish, trade union, &c. Foreign news is interesting to the workers in proportion as it tells more or less plainly and straightforwardly of the successes or defeats of their brothers abroad. Parliament and the other existing institutions of capitalist society must be explained every day in terms of concrete events, in order to make the worker realise that he is interested in their fate. Even a burglary or a murder may become

a subject of interest instead of open or subconscious morbid excitement, if the account is an analysis of the class circumstance which made it possible and inevitable for such things to happen. And the leading articles must lead instead of trailing at the tail of events: they must lead instead of halting half-way with Christian or philosophic maxims and wise sayings: they must lead, and not wander off to listen to broadcasting, interview actors, or discuss dish-washing with the daughter of the Bulgarian Minister. They must take up the principal current topics of the day, and explain their significance for the working class, and for that class alone.

The result may be a loss of the 150,000 new readers whom the *Daily Herald* has gained during the last six months, and maybe of even more—at first. But, as the connection of the paper with the daily life of the workers at their place of employment or in their class organisations becomes deeper and deeper, taking concrete shape in the letters from the workers and the circulation groups in each factory, the volume of readers will begin to grow, will rapidly outstrip the highest level ever yet attained by the *Daily Herald*, and will soon pass into the millions. Because the working class has yet many millions of reserve subscribers within its ranks, who have to be approached as their own circumstances and manner of life dictate, and not according to the standards of the bourgeois press—that is, if it is to them as workers we wish to appeal, not to them as victims of the capitalist system of delusion and false education, which leaves them with betting or football news as the only "cultural" recreation.

All the arguments that can possibly be thought of to oppose this point of view were uttered in Russia during the years 1912 to 1914, in enmity to, distrust for, or ridicule of the daily workers' paper *Pravda*. From the first the management of the latter decided to strike out into entirely new fields, and neglect the well worn paths leading to the results described in the preceding pages, which were just as well known in Russia as in England. The full story of the success of *Pravda* I have endeavoured to illustrate elsewhere (in the *Communist Review*); here it is important to emphasise only that the experiment has been tried, and tried successfully. The basic feature of a working-class newspaper, run on its own

distinctive class lines, must be the workers' letters or reports from every field of working-class activity. The secondary feature must be the leading or guiding articles. Given these premises, a paper is a fighting working-class organ : without them, even though the advertisements be removed from its industrial news page, it remains at best a source of confusion and weakness in the workers.

If the *Daily Herald* cannot be transformed in the light of these reflections, at this critical moment in the history of the working class, it is the duty of the consistently class-conscious elements amongst the workers to see that another paper takes its place—or rather, takes the place that the management of the *Daily Herald* refuses to fill—and as rapidly as possible.

THE FUNERAL CEREMONY AT GAYA

By EVELYN ROY

THE thirty-seventh annual session of the Indian National Congress met in the last week of December, 1922, at the picturesque pilgrimage place of Gaya, in the province of Behar. No more appropriate place could have been selected, for Gaya is the traditionally sacred spot in which to offer up *Pinda* (sacrifices) to the lingering ghosts of the departed dead, and so release them from the last earthly bond, that they may journey towards *Nirvana* or seek rebirth. The fifteen thousand or more political pilgrims that wended their way on foot, bullock-cart, or steam car to the holy spot to attend the Congress session were, perhaps, unconscious of the fact that their eager pilgrimage to Gaya was to offer involuntary *Pinda* to the dear departed but lingering ghost of Gandhism, famous to the world as Non-Violent Non-Co-operation based upon Soul-Force—but such was, nevertheless, the fact. According to Hindu custom, after a definite period of mourning for the dear departed is over, the *Sradh* ceremony is performed, consisting of a feast given to all the friends and relatives of the deceased. The *Sradh* at Gaya marks the close of a definite period in the Indian Nationalist movement—the preparatory period inevitably characterised by confusion of ideas and mistakes in tactics, but valuable for the political lessons to be deduced therefrom. The new period that lies ahead was inaugurated upon the funeral ashes of the old.

The social and economic background of the thirty-seventh National Congress was wide as the poles asunder from that which marked its predecessor at Ahmedabad the year before. A full year had rolled away without the slightest approach of the promised Swaraj. Mahatma Gandhi and twenty-five thousand faithful followers fill the Government "hotels" as a reward for having followed the injunctions of Non-Violent Non-Co-operation based upon Soul-Force. The middle classes, once the vanguard of the National movement, are divided among themselves and weak in

their counsels as to the future course to follow. Boycott of schools and law courts, depending on them for fulfilment, have been an acknowledged failure ; boycott of foreign cloth and liquor shops, and the propagation of *Khaddar* and *Charka* (homespun and hand-weaving), which depended on the masses for fulfilment, have equally failed, not for lack of goodwill or loyalty to the imprisoned Mahatma but from sheer economic disability of the starving workers and peasants to pay higher prices and work longer hours in the sacred but abstract name of Patriotism. The chief clauses of the " Constructive Programme," adopted at Bardoli in February, 1922, just after the riot of Chauri Chaura, which urged the prosecution of the triple boycott while suspending indefinitely the declaration of civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes as well as the use of all aggressive tactics, have had the ultimate effect of damping the enthusiasm of the masses for the national cause and of withdrawing from it the backbone of mass-energy, while at the same time giving free play to the forces of Government repression, let loose in all their vigour since the departure of the Prince of Wales from Indian soil.

Meanwhile, what of the masses of whom everyone in India, politically-minded or otherwise, has learned to speak? " Back to the villages " has become the slogan of every shade of political opinion. It would seem that this new and potent force in Indian national life, the hitherto dumb and inarticulate workers and peasants, has become a pawn in the political game, waged heretofore between the Government and the middle classes. How otherwise to explain this eagerness to reach the " masses " ; the sudden zeal for organisation and propaganda on the part of Congress-wallahs ; the equally sudden desire to rush remedial legislation through unwilling Legislatures, on the part of the Government, to somewhat better the condition of rack-rented peasantry and sweated factory hands ?

The thirty-seventh annual session of the Indian National Congress met this year upon a background of comparative industrial calm, broken by sporadic strikes of a purely isolated and economic nature, in no way comparable with the fever of industrial unrest which displayed itself in political strikes and national *hartals* during the corresponding period of last year. But it met at the same time

in a period of intense organising activity on the part of the working masses, of the slow but persistent growth of trade unionism and co-operative effort, of industrial and economic conferences and efforts at federating the loosely-scattered labour organisations whose number and influence have immensely multiplied within the preceding twelvemonth.

Three events bade fair to disturb the harmony of the prospective solemnities of the Congress, and a fourth actually obtruded itself upon the Congress meditations, forcing some recognition from the mourners there assembled of present-day actualities in the land of the living. We refer first to the publication in November of the report of the Civil Disobedience Committee, which declared the country to be unfit for the inauguration of mass Civil Disobedience, including non-payment of taxes, but recommended by an evenly-split vote the reconsideration of the boycott of the Reform Councils, with the object of contesting the elections to be held in the spring of 1924. The second discordant note was struck by no less a person than the President-elect of the Congress, Mr. C. R. Das, newly-released from six months' confinement in gaol, who after the report of the Civil Disobedience Committee, saw fit to deliver himself of two speeches which set the whole country by the ears. In addition to echoing the heresy of Council-entry, qualified with the object of "ending or mending them," the Deshbandhu (Friend of the Country) startled his compatriots and the bureaucracy alike by enunciating such heresies as the following :—

"I do not want that sort of Swaraj which will be for the middle classes alone. I want Swaraj for the masses, not for the classes. I do not care for the bourgeoisie. How many are they? Swaraj must be for the masses, and must be won by the masses." (Speech at Dehra Dun, November 1, 1922.)

A few weeks later he published a "Mass" programme in his daily vernacular organ the *Bangalar Katha*, which declared for the constructive programme and election to the Reform Councils, and stressed the necessity for organising labour and peasant societies as a means to declare a national strike and enforce non-payment of taxes for the final winning of Swaraj, which vague term he recommended should be defined by a National Committee.

Excitement and speculation were still bubbling over the Deshbandhu's heresies to orthodox Gandhism when a third event on the very eve of the Congress plunged the entire nation into a fever of fright and bewilderment. This was the cabling out to India by Reuter, evidently under Government orders, of the complete programme of Social Democracy drawn up for the consideration of the National Congress by the exiled "Vanguard" Party in Europe. The cabled document was published in almost the entire Indian press, Official, Moderate, and Nationalist, on December 21, 22, and 23, the comments thereon extending over the entire week that preceded the opening of the National Congress at Gaya. The object of the Government in this spectacular move was to alienate the Moderates by the spectre of Bolshevism, and to frighten the Congress, and especially Mr. Das's party, out of any discussion that might remotely resemble the "Vanguard" programme. Both these designs were successful. The landlords and Moderates rallied most satisfactorily to the side of "law and order," and the Nationalists busily tried to whitewash themselves of any suspicion that they might faintly approve of such rash republican ideas.

Needless to say the "Vanguard" programme, though it might have been in the hearts of some, found no one to sponsor it in the national conclave, but thanks to the crude advertisement given by the Government its text was known to the entire country. That its clauses of social and economic reform, such as the eight-hour day, the confiscation of large estates for redistribution among the landless peasantry, and the nationalisation of public utilities, remained undiscussed proves the crime of the Congress to be one of deliberate commission rather than omission.

Certain outstanding figures in the Congress may be taken as symbolic of the tendencies that direct the current of national life in India to-day. The voice of Mr. C. R. Das, expressing the ideals and aspirations of the liberal Indian intelligentsia, struggling to free itself from the social and economic interests of the bourgeoisie; opposed to him, the colourless figure of Mr. C. Rajagopalacharia, the "deputy-Mahatma," expounding the principles and dogmas of "pure Gandhism," and personifying the reactionary spirit of lower-middle-class extremism, sounding the death-knell to progress

and scurrying to cover at the slightest hint of revolution. The voice of bourgeois radicalism, speaking in the person of N. C. Kelker, the leader of the Maharashtra school of political rationalism, opposed to the metaphysical reactionaries of orthodox Nationalism and temporarily allied with the liberal intellectuals of the Left Wing in their common fight against the stand-patters of the Centre, who still commanded an overwhelming majority.

These were the voices of definite organised groups, representing the needs and more or less conscious aspirations of an entire class. There were other voices, less distinct and not so clearly heard, but nevertheless symbolic of rising social forces destined to dominate the sittings of future congresses—the voice of P. K. Mazumdar, echoing that of Hazrat Mohani at Ahmedabad, demanding that Swaraj be defined as “complete independence without foreign connection by the people of India by all legitimate and proper means.” Here spoke the new school of radical Republicanism, new as yet to India, but corresponding to the unexpressed desires and needs of a vast section of the people. Fainter still, and heard for the first time within the Indian National Congress, spoke the voice of the workers and landless peasants, through the lips of the venerable Mr. Singaravelu Chettiar, of Madras, who introduced himself, amid the cheers and laughter of the assembled delegates, as “an Indian Communist,” and who urged upon the Congress the necessity of making common cause with labour to bring about a national strike so as to get rid of the domination both of the Government and of the bourgeoisie. Communists throughout the world, he assured his brother delegates, were with India in her battle for freedom. In a manifesto issued just before the Congress, Mr. Singaravelu stressed the necessity of adopting an economic programme which would include the immediate grievances of the Indian workers and peasants within its scope.

The great struggle between the two contending parties within the Congress, the Right and Left Wings combined against the Centre, apparently hung upon the burning issue of Council-entry—whether or not the Congress Party should change its tactics and contest the coming elections to the Government Reform Councils. But the real issue lay deeper, and was tersely expressed in the

popular names given to the respective factions, viz., the parties of "Pro-Change" and of "No-Change." Whether or not the Congress should exercise the right of private judgment upon the mistakes and failures of the past year, and reverse the programme and tactics sanctified by the benediction of Mahatma Gandhi, proven wrong by time and trial—or whether it should follow blindly the dictates of the Mahatmaji throughout the time of his incarceration, regardless of opinions to the contrary—this was the real issue of the struggle at Gaya. Every resolution brought before the house was represented in this spirit by loyal followers of orthodox Gandhism, and was voted upon in this form. "Change or No-Change," "Love and Loyalty to the martyred Mahatma or Treason to his sacred Memory"—thus was every question formulated and thus was it decided where every vote cast was a Pinda offered to the beloved memory of the revered Mahatmaji. Orthodox Gandhism scored a complete and overwhelming victory, but for all that orthodox Gandhism is dead, and what transpired at Gaya was merely the respectful offering of friends and relatives to the lingering ghost of the deceased.

A study of the resolutions accepted and rejected during the five days' Congress deliberations reveals the nature of the struggle that has raged within the ranks of the Non-Co-operators throughout the past eight months. It is the struggle between the past and the present, between the dead and the living, between reaction and progress, which resulted in the temporary and illusive triumph of the former over the latter. The orthodox No-Changers rejected all the recommendations which their own Civil Disobedience Committee had recommended—the withdrawal of the boycott of law courts and schools—and reaffirmed their faith in these confessedly moribund tactics. The recommendation of the same Committee to boycott British, as opposed to merely "foreign" cloth, brought forward as a resolution before the Congress, was likewise rejected on the grounds that the specific boycott of British goods implied a hatred foreign to the doctrine of Non-Violence and Love. The main bone of contention, that of Council-entry, was debated exclusively from the point of view, on the part of the orthodox No-Changers, as to whether Mahatma Gandhi would sanction such a departure from the policy laid down by him at

Ahmedabad and confirmed at Calcutta. In the words of Mr. Rajagopalacharia:—

“The Congress should remember that no great change from the present programme could be recommended by any but the wisest and greatest of leaders. It is not possible for small men to ask the Congress to take a line different from what this house, sitting at Calcutta, decided, after careful consideration.”

There were other resolutions lost, of equal if not more importance to that of Council-entry, which was stressed far beyond its due. The resolution presented last year by Hazrat Mohani, now in gaol, demanding a change in the Congress programme by declaring the goal of the Indian people to be the attainment of independence *outside* the British Empire, “by all possible and proper means,” was presented again this year at Gaya by the spokesmen of his party, which appears to have grown considerably in the past twelve months. Needless to say, the resolution was lost by an overwhelming majority, but the number of votes cast for it was larger than last year, and the speeches made in favour were more outspoken. The annual appearance of such a resolution denotes the growth of that hitherto *rara avis* in the constitutional Congress movement—a party of radical republicanism.

Manifestly in order to show that the No-Change party still asserted its right to give a lead to the people, and as a counter-irritant to the contagious cry of Council-entry, the Congress majority adopted two last-minute resolutions which would be laughable were they not so pathetic in their inadequacy. One was on Civil Disobedience—ambiguously worded and vague in portent, but launched as a possible objective so soon as the faithful followers should complete the preliminary requirements, viz., the collection of twenty-five lakhs of rupees (about £170,000) for the Tilak Swaraj Fund, and the enrolment of 50,000 volunteers, pledged to Non-violent Non-Co-operation and the fulfilment of the constructive programme. The resolution on Civil Disobedience, passed against the unanimous recommendation of the Civil Disobedience Committee appointed by the Congress, is one of those anomalies which can only be explained by a study of the psychology of the No-Changers. The very men who had most loudly cried down the use of this weapon as “dangerous,” now proposed its adoption and carried the resolution successfully through the hypnotised

Congress. It was meant less as a threat to the Government than as a bribe to the sensation seeker. But the Congress has cried, "Wolf ! Wolf !" too often for either the Government or people to pay heed. The resolutions affirming the boycott of schools and law courts, and providing for a conditional declaration of Civil Disobedience (which is to be individual and not mass), were best described by the Pro-change Press as "whipping a dead horse."

The other last-minute resolution thrown as a sop to the sensation-monger bordered less on the Bolshevik, as described by the Anglo-Indian Press, than on the lunatic, taking into consideration the nature of the element which proposed it. It declared :—

The Congress hereby repudiates the authority of the legislatures in future to raise any loan or incur any liabilities on behalf of the nation, and notifies to the world that, on the attainment of Swarajya, the people of India, though holding themselves liable for all debts and liabilities rightly or wrongly incurred hitherto by the Government, will not hold themselves bound to repay any loans or discharge any liabilities incurred on and after this date on the authority of the so-called legislatures brought into existence in spite of the national boycott.

This heroic gesture of defiance before the Government, the Councils, and the world was presented on the last day of the Congress without having been fully discussed in the Subjects Committee, where it was proposed for the first time late on the previous night, and in the absence of some of the leaders. Mr. Rajagopalacharia himself, who proposed the resolution, seemed a little amazed at his own temerity in departing so far from the footsteps of the Mahatmaji, and made little effort to support his point in the face of opposing speeches, which stigmatised the resolution as "non-moral, to say the least." But his faithful followers, trained to obedience, voted blindly in favour, and to the great surprise of everybody present the resolution was overwhelmingly adopted. By this dictum the petty bourgeoisie, represented by the Congress patriots, have driven another nail into their own coffin, since who among the financiers, whether foreign or native, now investing their capital in India will be interested in having come to power a class which has beforehand repudiated the principal and interest on those investments ?

The only other noteworthy resolution adopted by the Congress was that approving the organisation of Indian labour "with a view

to improve and promote their well-being and secure them their just rights, and also to prevent the exploitation of Indian labour and Indian resources." This resolution was passed unanimously, it being the fashion in Congress as well as other circles to talk about the "masses," and a Committee on Labour Organisation was appointed "to assist the Executive Council of the All-India Trade Union Congress for the organisation of Indian labour, both agricultural and industrial." A similar resolution was passed by the Congress two years ago at Nagpur, but nothing came of it. It remains to be seen whether the present resolution will be taken more literally.

The Congress ended, as was to be expected, in a split between the forces of the living from those which clung to the dead past. Mr. C. R. Das and his followers, on the termination of the Congress session, issued a manifesto announcing the formation within the Congress ranks of the "Congress Khilafat Swaraj Party," based upon "the attainment of Swaraj by all peaceful and legitimate means, working on the principle of Non-violent Non Co-operation." Mr. Das resigned his presidency of the Congress on the ground that his views did not coincide with those of the majority, but declared his party would continue to work within the Congress until the majority were converted to their viewpoint, meanwhile reserving the right to follow those tactics which seemed best to them. The Executive of the new party numbers among it such men as Mr. C. R. Das, President, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Motilal Nehru, V. J. Patel, N. C. Kelker, M. R. Jayakar, C. S. Ranga Iyer, V. Abhayankar, &c., &c., names which speak volumes to those even slightly acquainted with the Indian nationalist movement.

It means that the Left, represented by C. R. Das and the liberal intellectuals, has temporarily joined forces with the Right—that school of rationalist politicians who have long since headed a revolt away from Congress leading-strings back into the ranks of the co-operating Moderates, and whose philosophy of nationalism is summed up in the phrase "Responsive Co-operation." The new party, which met at the end of January to draw up a programme and line of action, has not yet published the result of its deliberations, which covered such questions as the formation of a Pan-Asiatic Federation (to supplant Pan-Islamism), boycott of British goods,

and participation in elections to the Reform Councils. A committee is at work drawing up a tentative scheme of Swaraj, which the new party has set itself the task of defining, and will place before the country for discussion and approval through the press and platform. The scheme includes the main points set forth in Das's presidential address before the thirty-seventh National Congress, viz. : (1) The formation of local autonomous centres on the lines of the ancient Indian village system, integrated into a loosely-federated national unit ; (2) the residuary power of control to remain in the hands of the Central Government, so exercised as to interfere least with the local autonomy of the integrated village units.

In view of Mr. Das's reiterated insistence on the importance of attaining "Swaraj for the masses and not for the classes," which raised such a clamour in the British and Indian Press, and led to his being stigmatised as "Bolshevik," the specific declaration of the first convention of the new party on the rights of private property has a double interest and significance. The members declare that "private and individual property will be recognised and maintained, and the growth of individual wealth, both movable and immovable, will be permitted." This frank declaration of class-affiliation and class-consciousness betokens more than the mere winning over of Mr. Das and the school of liberal intellectuals to the protection of bourgeois property rights. It shows the rapid crystallisation of ideology in the Indian national struggle, and the presence of a predominating bourgeois element, determined to protect its class-interests from the very outset against the rising flood-tide of mass-energy that may some day find an outlet in revolution.

WHITLEYISM IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

By B. D. GOUNDRY

(Whitleyism affects other sections of Labour besides those at present "enjoying" the benefits of a system of Whitley Councils. In several industries it is still in being under a modified form, while in others it is held in reserve for the moment when the trade unions make trouble. It is a method of pacification which has served employers and Governments well in the past, and may be used by them again. The following article shows clearly how Whitleyism, advocated as a universal panacea by Lord Milner and other Liberals, has failed, even in the most favourable possible circumstances, to satisfy the needs of the employees concerned. It is of the utmost importance to the ruling classes to have a satisfied staff of Government employees, and that is why Whitleyism has been continued in the Civil Service. Its failure proves again that the Class State cannot avoid the consequences of its own contradictions. The interest of this article, therefore, is not confined to the Civil Service; it deserves the attention of every trade unionist and of all members of the Labour Movement.)

THE introduction of Whitleyism into the Civil Service has proved a failure; the hopes based upon it by the staff have not been fulfilled. This cannot be questioned, but several factors have prevented the failure from becoming as apparent as it is real. Many Civil Service publicists have an interest in the continuance of the Whitley system, whilst the mass-feeling of Civil Servants finds no voice, mainly because of the seeming utter futility of protest. The reasons for this failure, however, and its results, merit attention.

It will be remembered that the Whitley system was introduced during the war in consequence of the serious unrest in industry. Labour was scarce and organised, and was claiming a share in management as well as in profits; and the modest instalment of control involved in the Whitley proposals commended itself for the

time being to those in authority. A similar restlessness was making itself manifest in the Civil Service, due to the increasing cost of living, whilst wages or (as Civil Servants prefer them to be called) salaries were stationary. Here, too, labour, if we except women, was scarce and shared in the general unrest; and so, with a great fanfare of trumpets, Whitleyism was introduced into the Civil Service. Its working has served one purpose: that of a Hyde Park, providing an arena for the letting off of oratorical steam. Yet if Whitleyism had really been a path towards democratic control, the Civil Service gave ideal conditions for its use.

Whitleyism in the Civil Service began by taking itself seriously. It evolved a constitution that sounded promising, and the Staff Side obtained elaborate offices, a well-paid president, and a secretariat. Bonuses were secured for the staffs based on the index figure of the cost of living—borrowed money at this time being plentiful, the Treasury benevolent, the staff demands both insistent and just, and the time opportune. So for a time all went well. The National Whitley Council further embarked upon an ambitious programme of reorganisation. The times, however, became less opportune, borrowing was reduced, labour became more plentiful, and a malicious Press campaign against the cost of the Civil Service began. With the change in the economic situation came a drastic alteration in the Whitley atmosphere. The higher division of the Civil Service, having as a result of the Asquith Committee secured themselves against immediate want, began to take part in an economy campaign at the expense of the lower grades of the Service. The reorganisation of the Civil Service was, it is true, continued, but on a parsimonious scale, thoughtfully designed on the "divide and rule" principle to maintain the old divisions and ranks.

Instead, therefore, of developing into a system whereby the rank and file should secure some control over the conditions of their employment, Civil Service Whitleyism became merely a fresh debating ground for the "Old Gangs." The same individuals, now known as "staff representatives," who had bleated with more or less success for the past twenty years, still continued to approach those who had now become the "Official Side" cap in hand as before. Committees to discuss this and that were created on the slightest pretext, and became a means of delaying reform rather

than of making progress. Some of these committees are still sitting to discuss and deliberate, and their deliberations proceed with all the smooth rapidity of a Government machine.

Eventually the death blow, so far as respects practical achievements, was given to Civil Service Whitleyism by the abolition of the Arbitration Board.

Ponderous meetings of the National Whitley Council are still held, but the proceedings have degenerated to the level of a farce. At these meetings the chairman rises and expresses the Official view upon the current subject. Then the vice-chairman solemnly rises in his turn, and expounds the Staff Side attitude upon the question. No useful discussion ever follows, and Staff and Official Sides sit facing each other in majestic silence. The secrecy of these meetings is modelled apparently on that of the Cabinet; independent thought is absent, and orthodoxy sits enthroned. A vestry or burial board meeting is hilarious in comparison. The sequelæ of these grotesque proceedings are sufficient witness to the present impotence of all this elaborate machinery, the most striking instance being furnished by the Promotion Committee's report. Early in 1920 a committee was formed to consider the subject of promotion in the service. Its first or interim report has apparently been greatly hastened, as it has recently been made operative in all departments.

The question of promotion is one which looms large in the Civil Service. The days of patronage were supposed to have vanished with the introduction of competitive examinations, but a greater mistake was never made than this supposition. Promotion in the army and navy was settled long since, when the principle of seniority coupled with ability secured contentment amongst the higher ranks. This system seems to have given entire and unqualified satisfaction.

The question of promotion amongst civil servants, however, did not apparently offer so easy a solution. The importance and the danger of the subject was realised, and a strong committee of the Official Side was appointed. The strength of this Official Side was obvious from the first; the object, of course, being to defend the class principle in the Service. The Oxford accent and the Cambridge drawl had to be protected against plebeian aggression. The Staff Side members of the committee were inevitably handicapped from

the beginning. Their educational achievements and ability were not in the same diocese as those of their opponents, and outside their own "Little Bethels" they were practically unknown. True, there *was* a disciple of Sydney Webb amongst them, but even he, with all the Fabian passion for minority reports, succumbed to the Official pressure, being apparently overawed by the rank and capacity of his opponents—as well he might be. This committee commenced its labours nearly three years ago, and has not finished yet. Its very first achievement was a limitation in the terms of its reference, which in truth badly needed expansion. Civil servants with salaries of over £900 a year were not to come within the orbit of discussion! This ruled out the first principle of Whitleyism, and shut and barred the door to the right of entry of the rank and file into the sacred portals of the higher division. The Staff Side, peculiarly enough, regarded this as a victory, the Official Side having tentatively suggested £500 per annum as the limit.

The proceedings of the committee were conducted in camera, the utmost secrecy being maintained. The idea of consulting the rank and file on the subject seems scarcely to have been entertained; and although a carefully prepared questionnaire was subsequently issued to some of the larger Associations, it was not discussed by all of the Executives, much less by all the branches. It is understood, however, that the idea of excluding the reference of promotions to the higher grades was acquiesced in by the Staff Side, on its being pointed out to them that considerations of high policy, and even of diplomacy, were involved in the promotion of the higher grades. Such things are not suited for discussion in a democratic atmosphere!

For such "eyewash" to have been accepted seriously by the Staff Side may seem incredible, but such was the case. The Staff Side thereby deliberately excluded from their purview this most important of all points. Yet this calamity was regarded as a triumph, because the suggested limit of dealing with the £500 a year Civil Servant was increased to £900! A Pyrrhic victory indeed!

In order, however, to make certain that the principles of Whitleyism should not become dangerous, the Official Side decided that promotions should not be made other than on the recommendation of the head of the department, or to use their own words, that

in the making of promotions the responsibility of the head of a department must be maintained. In running a department of State the responsibility of the head of a department is governed by rules, regulations, and precedents. No such limitation, however, is suggested in regard to the matter of promotions. Here the head of a department is to be allowed the same absolute freedom that he has always had, and on the principle that a vicar does not usually appoint as his curate a better preacher than himself, the inevitable result is that sycophancy and spats, or a knowledge of golf, are proving useful adjuncts to a successful Service career. So much has nepotism become rife that in the Inland Revenue Department alone there are over 400 appeals awaiting adjudication, in consequence of the head of that department having been allowed freedom to run amok in the matter of promotions. Nor is this the worst feature. For those who appeal there are many more who, for obvious reasons, accept their lot hopelessly, if not with resignation. Such proceedings must of necessity give rise to a feeling of dissatisfaction that will inevitably lead to inefficiency, and the inefficiency of the Civil Service can then of course be utilised as a strong argument against the further socialisation of national services.

Details of the report will of course be of no more interest to the general reader than they are to the average Civil Servant, but the method proposed for assessing merit is deserving of consideration. The power of the head of the department is absolute. His bare *ipse dixit* in this connection is considered sufficient to make or mar a career, *and there is no appeal!* Yet if there is one thing of which the Staff Side of the committee was proud, it was of the introduction of the form on which the head of the department reports. Of course it is ornamented "Confidential." The days of secret diplomacy were abolished merely for foreign affairs—secret "dossiers" are considered the thing so far as the Civil Service is concerned. Not less than twelve traits of character in three degrees of excellence constitute the test to be applied to the staff, from office boy to the giddy heights of the £900 a year mendicant. Marks are to be given for, amongst other things, address and tact, personality and force of character. The fear that many members of the Promotion Committee itself might not be able to pass any sort of examination in these particulars did not deter them. They enlarged upon the

beauty of standardisation of markings, ignoring the fact that no two officials would mark the same man alike, and that the form will be, and has already been, utilised to justify favouritism, and will secure the minimum of efficiency as easily as it has produced the maximum of discontent.

To quote the gloomy and acrid words of "Whitehall Court" in the *Daily Herald*: "The failure of the Promotion Committee is but another instance of that Staff Side surrender which seems to come with monotonous regularity. It only increases the contempt of the Official Side for their opponents, who seem to be overmatched and outmanœuvred in every encounter." The pity is that this stricture is true. Whitleyism in the Civil Service is killing itself, and will eventually cease to function. The Staff Side representatives, who have not mastered the science of diplomacy, are helpless when opposed by bolder men in whom the instinct and ability to dominate seem inborn.

Many of the Office Committees have become lethargic, others have already given up the ghost, whilst the rank and file are indifferent, and only the vested interests that have grown around Whitleyism keep the machinery in the film-like slow-motion it now displays. It is plain now for all to see that Whitleyism was forced upon the Official Side against their will. Even as a weapon of conciliation it is proving of little value, whilst any constructive use to which it might have been put has been whittled away. Opportunities, such as the Promotion Committee had, to open up the Civil Service to the democracy, so that the highest positions should be available for the best brains and intellect, have been frittered away. The Staff Side has always modestly asked too little, and has always accepted less even than that for which it asked. The rank and file have little more interest, much less control, either in their conditions of employment, or in management, than they ever had, and another alleged road to the Millennium has been proved after all to be but a blind alley.

THE PACIFIC IN WORLD POLITICS

By W. P. EARSMAN

PRIOR to the European conflict of 1914 Australia was an unimportant factor in world politics. She had no foreign policy and no foreign relationships. Her rôle in the Pacific was very small and governed by her "White Australian Policy." Her economic and political outlook was coloured solely by the financiers of London. In fact her people and politicians did not for a moment conceive that the day would soon come when she would be developing towards an "independent State," with a policy antagonistic to that of the "mother country." Australians generally believed, including the Labour Party representatives, that Australia was in herself an entire entity and that the world influences did not affect her politically or economically. To-day the whole scene is changed, and the new situation is clearer.

The European War found Australia cut off from the outside world, which meant her supply of imports was practically stopped. Something had to be done to meet the situation. The Federal Government first set about this task by erecting large mills for the manufacture of wool, which in turn led to the manufacture of machinery. From the manufacturing of cloth to the making of uniforms for the soldiers was a short step. Again this led to the building of other factories for other commodities. The soldiers must have boots, their horses must have harness ; so the tanning of leather was undertaken. Rifles and ammunition had to be made, this meant more factories. Then the question of ships arose, and the Government again led the way and commenced the building of merchant ships. This was the case with many other industries.

But as the Government led the way, private enterprise soon followed, with the result that many hundreds of new factories were erected in new industries. From January, 1916, to June, 1921, no less than £398,961,801 new capital was invested in

industry. In fact there is no commodity on the markets to-day that Australia is not manufacturing.

Soon there was a surplus, and then the question arose what had to become of it. A market was the next question, and Australian capitalists were soon searching round, looking for some corner where they could squeeze in their surplus commodities.

During the war Britain was prepared to accept all the manufactured goods Australia could offer. Therefore during that period no trouble existed. Manufacturing and commerce went ahead by leaps and bounds, and everything in the garden was lovely. Springtime passed, and in 1919 the autumn began to fade away and give place to winter. Few people stopped to note the change that was taking place, but towards the end of 1920 it began to be fully realised that economically winter had set in. And only then was it fully realised that Australia was part and parcel of the world economy, and that it was no more possible for her to escape the contradictions, and the evils of those contradictions, arising from the world's economic position than it was possible to stop the sun from rising.

The end of 1920 and the beginning of 1921 saw nearly a complete stoppage in the manufacturing industries. Britain had ceased to buy, in fact she had refused to accept any manufactured goods. Not only did she refuse manufactured goods, but she reduced her demands for raw material, such as wool, wheat, meat, and minerals. This, in its turn, reacted on the workers. While dealing with this aspect of the problem it is well to note that though a big falling off in trade with the United Kingdom is recorded, the records show trade increased during this crisis with America and the countries in the Pacific; Japan, China, and Java, &c. The imports from Britain were reduced, and the exports increased during the war period; but in 1920 there was a falling off by a few points. On the other hand, trade with America increased.

These returns are very significant, because they show in what direction the development of trade is taking place. The Far East is the only market Australia has to operate on if she is to take her place amongst the manufacturing countries of the world. Her statesmen claim she has taken her place amongst the nations,

because of the recognition granted to her at the Versailles "Peace Conference."

To-day, as a unit in the world's economic affairs, Australia is suffering from the same disease that has stricken the body politic. Factories are closed, machinery is idle, and the masses are in the streets demanding bread. The unemployed are of numbers previously unheard of in the short history of the country. The crisis has not yet reached its apex, so that daily the position is becoming worse. The capitalist offensive is proceeding slowly, but so far it has not been successful in its attack on wages and hours. The same whine is heard from the lips of the capitalists as in other countries: "Work more hours and accept less wages, and we will be able to compete with other countries."

In examining the position further, this is what we find, first, that Australia as an economic factor in the world's economy must either return to her pre-war position, that is, a mere appendage of Britain, supplying her with foodstuffs and raw material; or she has to develop as an independent economic factor in herself, competing with other nations. Can she do so? Before answering this question, let us look a little deeper into it.

The problem we have to face is a vast country approximately 3,000,000 square miles in size, with a population of five and a half millions, and unbounded resources in all kinds of raw material and minerals, with fertile plains capable of producing large quantities of foodstuffs. In short, everything to hand as an ideal investment for capitalist exploitation. Why has it not been carried out? Many reasons could be given, but the chief one is that the British financiers have been busy elsewhere, engaged on what they found to be more profitable business. They have been content to leave the developing process to the pioneers, occasionally granting them loans of credit to carry on the work of development. To-day even this has stopped. The London sharks have refused to lend any more. What then is the position? Simply this, that Australia has passed from the stage of being "a repair shop" to that of a "manufacturing workshop," and to carry on she must have money to be successful. Where is it to come from, and what are the prospects?

The prospects are that Australia has only one market to operate

on, and that is the Far East. There is no secret in this, because the National Government has made it quite plain in all official statements that the Far East is the market for them in the future, as the natural outlet for Australian manufactured goods. Europe cannot take those goods because she has plenty of workshops of her own, with large supplies of cheaper labour ; without mentioning that at present she is bankrupt. America is out of the question, because she has developed to the largest exporting manufacturing nation, with large surpluses, and she too is looking for corners to dump these surpluses. In the Far East, Australia meets similar opposition, and of a two-fold character. First, there is an unbounded army of cheaper labourers than can be found anywhere, and second, an army of competitors composed of all nations, America in particular. This opens up the situation still further, and brings us up against the whole ramifications of capitalism.

If Australia has to develop, she must have capital. Where is it to come from ? In the past credits have always come from London financiers without any trouble. This was so till 1920. In that year the first refusal took place. The Queensland State Government required money and made the usual request to London. On this occasion the reply was that no money was available, but if certain land laws which were affecting the financial interests in Queensland were amended, it might be possible to float a loan on behalf of Queensland. This State Government refused to consider the proposition, therefore got nothing. The same thing happened to the State Government of New South Wales in 1921. Both those Governments tried to carry on with the aid of local loans, but failed. Finally, the Queensland Government approached the financiers of the United States of America, and they readily agreed to lend. This is very significant. Not only is the U.S.A. prepared to lend money, but her financiers are investing money in the country, apparently prepared to assist in the development of Australia.

This fact is being more and more borne out by the knowledge of the interest American capitalists have acquired. In the frozen meat and packing industry of the north they have virtually obtained the monopoly. This industry is becoming very extensive and one of the chief industries of the country. American syndi-

cates have taken up the mining of copper, coal, and precious stones—sapphires and opals—also in the north. They have interested themselves in the cotton growing experiments which have been successfully carried out. They have also bought up large tracts of land along the southern sea coast by the Trans-Continental Railway, which runs from east to west. They have also invested in many of the other industries, such as steel and electrical works. To put it short, American capital appears as if it is preparing for a big industrial development. But why? Is it a sound economic investment, or is there some other motive behind it? That there is another motive no doubt exists, and it is to secure economic domination and the political assistance of Australia in the near future.

When we view the world situation, with all its misery, turmoil, and bankruptcy, with its wars and rumours of war, only one conclusion can be arrived at—that this ceaseless struggle will end in another bloody conflict. In the Near East the rumble of guns is heard, and there can be seen the direction in which the conflict is travelling. In Asia Minor, across Mesopotamia, Persia, India, till it finally reaches China and the Pacific.

To give a few moments' consideration to what is taking place in China, we will see where the cock-pit of this struggle will eventuate.

China for the past ten years has been torn to pieces by internal and external struggles. From inside, the different groups have warred with each other at the behest of British, American, and Japanese capitalists, each in turn at some time being in the ascendancy. These conflicts have marked the degree of activity of those capitalists within China, and their claims to acquire special interests for exploitation purposes. Each of those three groups have never halted for a moment and claim after claim has been made upon the Chinese Government for this concession here or that concession there. In fact, looking at the tragedy of the past eight years alone, one would be quite safe in saying that no part of China has been free from the machinations of one or the other of this profit-sucking, bloodthirsty crew. Their greed and avarice knows no bounds; blood has been spilled like water, and to-day the only record known by the Chinese of the British, American,

and Japanese Governments is that they are the most deadly war-loving governments the world has ever known. This, supported by intrigue, lying, and murder, has made the Chinese believe that they are the cursed of all nations.

Britain's imperialism of might is right, acquiring colonies for mere exploitation to get food to feed her factory machinery, combined with her suspicion that all competitors in the Far East not only want to exploit China but that they have designs on India, has made her probably more callous and bloodthirsty in China than she has been in other places.

Japan, from a similar outlook, has been well up in her attempts to conquer and acquire rights and concessions also. Japan, without the necessary raw materials for a great manufacturing country, must keep a big hold on China and her supplies of unexploited and undeveloped resources of raw materials. To-day, Japan views China as a colony in a similar way as she did Corea before taking complete control.

America also, with her imperialist policy of acquiring rights and concessions to unload some of her surplus war capital, is as bloodthirsty as the others. Her "iron heel" is not so patent. She moves under the cloak of the demand for "the open door," and hopes to attain the same end as her brother capitalists. To have the right to exploit China's raw materials and her mass army of cheap labourers without the responsibility of taking over the reins of government is only another method of doing what Britain and Japan are attempting to do.

With this tug-of-war proceeding, there can only be one ending, and one of these fine days, under some pretext of a missionary being lynched or some American or Britisher's pig having its throat cut by one of the other camps, a call to arms will be issued with the command to "go to it." Once again our masters will have fallen out, and the slaves will be ordered to kill one another.

This is the situation we have before us to-day, and this is the situation facing us in the Pacific. The master class are fully alive to it, and are looking round for assistance, and in every way preparing for an attack and at the same time a defence.

Looking at the geographical position of the countries in the Pacific Ocean, we have Japan in the north, and at the southern

end Australia. In between there are the U.S.A. and several groups of islands controlled by Japan and Britain. At the first glance it appears that U.S.A. is in a hopeless position, and should she be faced with the British and Japanese combination, as is threatened at present, then her hope is a small one. But does our first glance convey to us the true position? This is where Australia plays her rôle, and whom will she follow, America or Britain, in this bloody struggle? Geographically, Australia's position is important. Therefore it is important to attempt to analyse her situation.

We have already seen the attention America is paying Australia, and the degree of economic flirtation which is taking place. Will this flirtation materialise into a political marriage? Let us examine the evidence.

The first important point is, why should Australia throw off the influence of the "mother country"? Has the "mother country" not played the part of a fond "mother"? She has in the days of childhood, but we have passed that stage, and Australia has now matured and desires to play the part of a grown up daughter. She thinks, in doing so, that the time has arrived for her choosing her own partner. The "mother country's" recent treatment regarding loans has brought about a disagreement in the family circle. Also the "mother country" has failed regarding exports. Also the attempt to govern from London by some form of imperial federation has created a very strong suspicion of the "mother country," and has brought into being a strong anti-imperial sentiment. Anything smelling of imperial domination is at once attacked and rejected.

Turning to the political side, there is also an antagonism in existence, which will not be easily removed, and one that Australia has been opposed to for many years. This is the alliance with Japan. On this question we find the "long suit" of America, wherein lies the key to the political door of Australia. Australia has consistently opposed this alliance, and at the last Imperial Conference she demanded that the Anglo-Japanese Treaty be not renewed. Little notice was taken of the demand, because later Britain signed the treaty though after events are supposed to have cancelled it.

America and Australia are in agreement on this question. America is anti-Japanese or anti-yellow and refuses the right to Japanese subjects to enter that country. Australia has her "White Australia" policy of refusing admittance to all who are not "white," which brings the two countries together on an important political issue.

As far back as 1855, Australia adopted the policy of restriction to yellow people, and in recent years has tightened this legislation particularly towards Japanese. The British authorities have as consistently opposed this policy as being detrimental to her interests in the Far East. In 1888, one of the Australian Premiers said : "Australians are not school-children who can be called to account by the Prime Minister of England, and neither for Her Majesty's ships of war, nor Her Majesty's representatives, nor for the Secretary of State do we intend to turn aside from our purpose, which is to terminate the landing of yellow people on these shores for ever." From that time till to-day this policy has been carried out, always with the frowning looks of Britain towards it. Japan has raised the question on several occasions, but Britain has not attempted to interfere. It is here we find that strong bonds of sympathy are being tightened between America and Australia.

America's imperial policy of the right of freedom of trade, that is to compete and establish her own factories without taking over the responsibility of the State, is a policy which will further strengthen the connections of the two countries. We have seen that American capitalism, realising that Australia holds the strategical position of the Southern Pacific, is ready to pay to secure her support. Therefore money is invested in her industries. Not only will Australia's assistance be of value in that direction, but her primary products, wheat, wool, and meat, will be of great value in feeding China's millions when American capitalism has collected them into factories erected in China.

What of British Imperial capitalism? It is alive and to-day appears to realise what is going on. This is seen in the agitation started by the Premier of South Australia at the behest of London interests against the "White Australia policy." He is demanding not the abolition of the "white" policy, but that its application be only to southern States. The Northern Territory, he demands, can

only be successfully exploited by the aid of coloured labour, which, he says, is a "black man's country," because of its tropical climate. This agitation is becoming stronger, and the imperialist lackeys are rallying to its support. For the work already accomplished, this Imperial agent has been given a title and "knighted."

From the workers' standpoint, they are solidly against the entrance of cheap labour into the country. This because of the long and wide agitation which has been carried on by Liberal and Labour politicians for the past fifty years. To-day in the councils of the working class, both in the trade unions and in the Labour Party, the evils of this policy are beginning to be recognised. Their eyes have been opened by the developments in the Pacific, and particularly in the Far East. Politically and economically, Australia is vitally interested in this struggle, and the workers are recognising that before long an attempt will be made to lead them to the slaughter under the slogan of "the yellow peril."

This the All-Australian Trade Union Congresses of 1921 and 1922 saw and marked by the resolution which they carried. The unions to-day desire that the wrongs of the past must be righted and understood. They desire to reach an understanding with all workers in the Pacific countries, with the view of strengthening the organisations against the machinations of the imperial capitalists. Therefore they have agreed to call a Pan-Pacific Congress, to be held in 1923, of all workers' organisations, to take the necessary steps to protect themselves in the event of war.

From whatever angle we view the situation, one thing stands out clearly, that Australia is one of the big factors in the Far Eastern struggle, and her geographical position combined with her economic and political development must make this patent to all. The future is viewed with alarm, but with the strengthening of the working class ties of the workers in the Pacific countries a better position will evolve.

REVOLUTIONARY UNIONISM IN THE ENGINEERING TRADES

By J. D. LAWRENCE

THERE are approximately one and a-half million workers engaged in the engineering and allied industries. One quarter may be described as skilled, the remainder semi- and unskilled. They work under indifferent and bad conditions for surprisingly low average wage rates, rendered worse by considerable periods of broken time.

The ending of the war enabled the employers to discharge vast numbers of workers. It is true that many secured re-employment, but there are still upwards of one-quarter of a million unable to find work because of the employers' failure to retrieve their great pre-war export trade. This is of course detrimental to profit-making, but it also serves as a formidable deterrent to the employed workers' efforts to secure higher wages and some measure of freedom in the workshop. For some years prior to 1919 trade had been brisk. Wages had risen, and small reforms had been secured in overtime payment, less fraudulent piecework conditions, better factory accommodation, welfare schemes, the provision of canteens, and, most important of all, the institution of the forty-seven hours' working week.

One result of these improved conditions was that vast numbers of young men, new recruits to the trade, never learned that these had only been secured by militant trade union action. Finding work plentiful, wages good, and discipline not too obtrusive, there was no inducement to give the matter further thought, and though they joined their unions because it was fashionable to do so, they had no time to spare from their amusements to participate in their work, or even to attend their branch meetings. The older men, engaged by continuous overtime, absorbed in house property, allotments, and fireside philosophy, also had no time for union work, which fell upon the shoulders of small bands of

men in each locality. Thus, apathy came, and developed, out of good pay and easy conditions of labour. To-day, the average wage-rate of a skilled engineering worker is 57s. 6d. for a week of forty-seven hours. His rate is 13s. 10d. lower than that of a painter, 20s. 5d. less than a cabinet-maker, and 23s. below that of a compositor. His helper's or labourer's rate is as low as 40s. 5d. or 13s. lower than the rate of a builder's labourer. In the shipyards the position is worse, as with the recent cuts the skilled man's average is 48s. 7d., and his helper's as low as 37s. 6d. By June of this year it is highly probable that the average rate of 50s. for skilled, and 36s. for unskilled workers, will become general throughout the engineering trades.

Since the lock-out of last year, wages have come down with a run, factory discipline has become tyrannical, unemployment more pernicious, and employment made casual and difficult to retain.

The unions have made no resistance to wage-cuts ; some have been compelled to suspend benefits, and all have smaller memberships.

Viewed superficially, the workers appear cowed into submission, but underneath this surface a great ferment is proceeding, which before long is bound to find outlet and expression in definite action. Twenty years ago, there was little or no revolutionary thought among engineering trade unionists. The workman of that time prided himself on his skill as a craftsman, he was usually a conscientious unionist, always ready to fight for the maintenance of his standard of living, but not at all antagonistic to his employer. To-day, there is abundant revolutionary thought in the unions, propounded and propagated by a different type of worker. He is a man of superior skill to his predecessor of a generation ago, but, unlike him, he is contemptuous of any pride or delight in the exercise of his skill. He has no intention of placing his full capabilities at his employer's service ; he does the work allotted to him, mechanically, but with consummate ease, with his mind all the time upon other things.

The basic principle of his every-day thought is the problem of getting rid of the capitalist employer ; getting him out of the workshop, once and for all. He sees that there is no chance whatever for him and his fellows while the capitalist remains in

control. Higher wages, improved conditions, are very well in their way, but amount only to a little more gilt on his chains. Therefore, his whole intellect becomes directed to finding ways and means to rid the industry of the incubus of capitalist control.

There are many men of this kind at work in the unions. They are respected and admired by the bulk of their fellows for their skill as workmen and for their knowledge of and services to the Labour movement.

The problem of getting rid of the employer involves the advocacy of certain much abused measures. From restriction of output to large scale sabotage, from "Take your own tools home" to "Seizing the Workshops," the field has been well surveyed, and though these look attractive as weapons to use in the battle with the employers, it is seen that they are impracticable without the support of an exceptionally powerful union.

It is a melancholy and indisputable fact that present-day unionism has broken down in the engineering trades. The fifty or more unions capable of representing the worker's case managed to preserve an appearance of real strength during the war years while the services of their members were in great demand. The first real test of their strength was the lock-out last year and they broke under the strain.

Since the employers' easy and complete victory they have deteriorated in membership, power, and popularity to an alarming extent. Many are bankrupt in policy, finance, and plans for the future. Their one capability seems to be a certain success in persuading the federated employers to keep refractory firms in check by compelling recognition of trade agreements imposed on the unions by the employers themselves.

All this is of course extremely galling to the revolutionaries in the unions. To their credit, they have never lost heart during the long run of misfortune. They know the kind of organisation they want to replace those existing, and have realised that only by systematic education upon a wide scale can their inert masses be made dynamic and headed in the right direction. They have been incessantly at work educating their members through the Labour College, the Plebs League, by the circulation of Communist literature, by rank and file movements, and by themselves shoul-

dering the burden of branch and committee routine. It is worthy of note that revolutionary periodicals such as *The Workers' Weekly* and *All Power* are more widely read by engineering workers than by any other body of workers—not even excepting the miners.

The chief result of this unremitting though ill-directed propaganda is the demand for a single union for the twin trades of engineering and shipbuilding. The demand has become general and is reflected in the announcement recently made that the General Council of the Trades Union Congress has decided upon a conference of thirty-five of the leading unions to be held early in the year for the purpose of forming one large amalgamation. It is to be hoped that the General Council will achieve a notable success, though their efforts may be frustrated by the desire of the conservative elements to retain the friendly benefit component of the existing union structures. In this connection it is time that the facts of the situation should be understood and faced. Friendly benefit finance has irretrievably broken down. Union men will no longer consent to pay upwards of one and ninepence a week for friendly benefits and at the same time be mulcted one and twopence a week by the State for National Insurance purposes. They have paid for years for their benefits and have witnessed the long predicted failure of the unions to meet their liabilities at a period of extreme urgency to all concerned. In the new organisation sick, unemployment, and superannuation benefits must be dispensed with. The State is providing these, in very inadequate fashion, at prohibitive cost, thus rendering it impossible for the workers to continue the payment of heavy union dues in addition. Confronted with this position, the General Council's only course is to plan the new organisation to function by means of industrial and political action.

There should be a single union open to all workers of both sexes, with a low contribution, with, say, three benefits, viz., strike, victimisation, and legal aid. Strike pay should be high, not less than 30s. weekly, and victimisation pay equal to wages previously received. The abolition of the heavy burden of friendly benefits will enable the union to spend more freely upon organisation, propaganda, newspapers, colleges, classes, and Parliamentary and local elections. The union will be able to concentrate upon the

problem of wresting control of industry from the employers. It can train its members for workshop action, not on the strike and starve policy of the bad days now passing, but can train them to make capitalist dictation impossible in the workshop. No system of shop discipline can endure in face of enlightened and determined opposition. Restriction of output can be planned properly and efficiently executed, sabotage made a fine art, ready for instant application when lock-outs become imminent, and the idea of seizing the workshops by ousting the employers and their managerial staffs can be made a practicable proposition. This last tactic will require the utmost understanding and loyalty from the rank and file members. A long period of education, training, and preparation will be necessary. It would of course never be employed while its successful application remained in doubt.

Revolutionary workers see nothing immoral in the propagation of these tactics. They recognise that a state of war exists between the employers and employed ; a war in which no quarter can be given, no truce or armistice arranged, a war in which, hitherto, the employers have won all along the line.

The merciless pressing home of every defeat inflicted has created the need for a revolutionary policy on the part of the workers. That policy has at last emerged and its essence is the expropriation of the employers from the workshops.

The essential next step is the establishment of the single industrial union, to educate and train the workers in the tactics of industrial warfare, to equip them for the tasks of direction and administration, in readiness for the time when the union's plans have matured for the delivery of the final blow—the ejection of the enemy in control of the industry, and the establishment of the workers' dictatorship of the engineering trades.

The World of Labour

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AUSTRIA

Growth of Fascism

FASCISM is now a recognised organisation in Austria, and the Austrian adherents of Mussolini have taken the title of "Hakenkreuzler" (an anti-Semitic emblem). The Hungarian Horthy, in collusion with Mussolini, is held responsible for this development, which is planned to establish Fascism as a power in Austria so as to be a connecting link between Hungary and Italy.

The Austrian Fascisti are organised in seven groups under the leadership of a former lieutenant of Horthy's; they are said to receive a fee of 15,000 crowns every evening. The recent murder of a workman, a Social Democrat, by a man named Szabo, a leading "Hakenkreuzler," shows that the movement is, as it has been declared, not an anti-Semitic one, but directed chiefly against the working class.

The method of agitation at present adopted is to break up public meetings or workers' reunions. Pacifist meetings are also attacked. The attitude of the police seems to be one of connivance, as shown by the seizure of the edition of the journal *Der Abend*, which contained an article criticising the "Hakenkreuzler."

Unemployment is on the increase; over 140,000 were unemployed in February; those on short time numbered 210,000. In view of these conditions, and the impotence of the Socialists to oppose the tutelage of the League of Nations, which is bound to react on the workers, the ground would seem to be ready for the advent of Fascism as in Italy.

BULGARIA

Communist Election Success

THE district council elections which took place in January show that the Communist Party has gained a fourth of the votes polled in Bulgaria; 994,000 votes were registered, and the Communists polled 230,000. The Agrarian Party, by means of terroristic measures, secured the majority:

437,000 votes; whilst the Social Democrats lost heavily, securing but 41,000 votes; at the 1920 elections the Social Democrats polled double this vote. In 1920 the Communist Party polled 184,000; to-day it is the second party in power; whereas the Social Democrats have become the least important party.

CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

Anti-Sedition Measures

CONDITIONS are such in the so-called Social Democratic republic of Czecho-Slovakia that an anti-sedition law is being discussed in Parliament—the law for the protection of the republic. This law of sixty articles, if realised, will prevent all right of assembly and free speech. Those who spread “false reports” are to be punished by six months’ imprisonment, as also those who are found guilty of taking part in an assembly. It is further prohibited to sing revolutionary songs, or for the Press to reproduce parliamentary reports. Criticism of the President of the republic is to be punished by imprisonment for three years, and any insult to the national flag by three months.

It is possible to suppress entirely any socialist movement by the article on sedition which provides that: “Anyone who uses or threatens to use violence, or desires to change the form of government in favour of any class, will be punished by imprisonment for the duration of ten to twenty years, or even for life in the case of aggravating circumstances.” The Communist Party is agitating against this anti-sedition move; its realisation would mean the outlawing of the party and the total enslavement of the workers.

This law proves the bankruptcy of the Government in the present economic crisis; it offers oppression to cure discontent due to its own failure. Unemployment has increased by 700 per cent. in one year. The number of unemployed in receipt of State aid in December, 1922, was 152,550; in January, 1923, these had increased to 190,000, of whom 55,000 are women; in addition there are 105,120 on short time who receive State benefit—of these 57,000 are women. Just at this juncture of the economic crisis the Government has ordered the reduction of the dole.

ITALY

Fascist Activities

THE Mussolini regime has given fresh proof of terrorism in imprisoning leading Communists and the chiefs of the *Avanti*, including Serrati. All the members of the committee charged by the Communist International with preparing the fusion between the Socialist Party, under Serrati, and the Communist Party have also been arrested on the grounds that they were engaged in a plot against the State; that they had sent some of their members to Moscow to solicit the economic intervention of a foreign Power to the detriment of Italy! Serrati, as editor of the *Avanti*, was charged in addition with publishing the manifesto of the Communist International to the Italian Proletariat; but so did all the other Italian dailies!

The Nationalist Party of Italy decided on March 5 to be absorbed by the Fascisti. In so doing the party acknowledges the identity of aims, that is to say, it sees in Fascism the perpetuation of the idea of extreme nationalism and

militancy which it has pursued since its inception in 1910. The resolution declared:—

The Nationalist Association of Italy renounces all political and social action as a party, and joins up with the Fascist Party. A Nationalist institute of culture is to be founded at Rome, presided over by Mussolini and will be regarded as the direct result of the National Fascist Party.

This political move puts an interesting interpretation on the Fascist trade unions or trade union corporations, as they are henceforth to be called. Workers will no longer doubt their nature since they must realise that they are under the protection of the most extreme jingo party.

Instructions were issued recently on the manner of the organisation of the affiliated local bodies; every province is to have its federation of unions to include all the provincial unions for separate trades. Local committees are to be instituted in each commune representing all the unions in the commune, and will be entrusted with the organisation of new unions.

Trade union federations are prohibited from convening congresses without the permission of the secretary of the confederation. The trade union federations are obliged to inform the Fascist Party of any economic disputes involving political questions, and must restrict their activities to purely non-political matters. The Confederation of Trade Union Corporations (*Confederazione nazionale delle Corporazioni Sindicali*) has its headquarters now in Rome.

The only party that has agitated against this muzzling and oppression of the workers has been the Communist Party, and that, should Mussolini continue his present tactics of imprisonment, may soon be impotent.

JUGO-SLAVIA

Independent Labour Party

AN Independent Labour Party was formed in Jugo-Slavia in January last. It may be recalled that since December, 1920, the Communist Party has ceased to exist officially, and that the country has been and is still subjected to a White Terror of unusual virulence. The formation of this new party denotes the beginning of the recovery of the Left Wing parties from the suppression of the past years.

It has issued the following statement of its aims:—

The Independent Labour Party of Jugo-Slavia has for its chief aim the substitution of Socialism for the Capitalist system by means of the class war.

The Independent Labour Party realises that the workers are now on the defensive against the attack of brutal and reactionary methods of the Capitalist class. Therefore the first and most important duty of the moment, to carry on this defensive, is to restore the most elementary political and economic rights to the workers. This struggle will be carried on independently by the Independent Labour Party, which will never participate in the policy of bourgeois governments or in the work of bourgeois cliques.

The party's first duty will be to regain freedom for the economic organisation of the workers and for the Press; the right of congregation, and a uniform labour law throughout the country. The formation of a united front will be worked for as the best means to ensure ultimate liberty.

The Government has fought the formation of the Independent Labour Party and did all it could to prevent the publication of the decisions of the congress at which the Independent Labour Party was founded.

SWEDEN

Great Lock-Out

THE wages-war, which has been carried on uninterruptedly for the past two years, has come to a deadlock, and the employers in the big industries declared a lock-out on February 1. The chief industries concerned include forestry, saw mills, and paper making, the main industries of Sweden. In the paper mills the employers demanded a wage-cut of 16½ per cent. in January, although since 1920 these workers have submitted to reductions totalling 42 per cent. of the 1920 rates. The workers, because of the improvement in this trade, demanded an increase in wages, and in default struck work wherever reductions were made. Finally all the employers declared a lock-out in February which affects 17,000 workers.

The workers in the saw mills had also been subjected to wage-cuts amounting to 46 per cent. of the 1920 rates, and were threatened with a further cut of 12 per cent.; a lock-out ensued which involves 25,000. Similarly the woodcutters and timber-workers generally have been locked-out; about 15,000 workers are concerned. Thus the whole paper-making and timber trades of Sweden are at a standstill in the fight to reduce the wage-level below that of 1914—since 1920 wages have been reduced by about 50 per cent., whereas the cost of living has only fallen 30 per cent.

Workers in the iron-smelting industry are threatened with both wage-cuts and a longer working week.

It is noteworthy that these trades, in which the employers are most determined to grind down the workers, are those which made immense profits during the war.

The workers are resolute in the present crisis and the lock-out may become more general before any settlement is made.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE FABIAN DISCOVERY OF CAPITALISM

The Decay of Capitalist Civilisation. By Sidney and Beatrice Webb.

ABOUT thirty years ago Sidney and Beatrice Webb began their researches in municipal administration and "the facts of social organisation." Since then they have published some two dozen books, many of which are of a very considerable size; some of them cost as much as a guinea each. They are weighty and learned books. And they are all based on one very simple assumption.

This assumption can best be stated in our authors' own words: "Our former abstention from a moral judgment of capitalism can be justified only by belief that those who are in control of the government and the legislation of the country are aware of the gravity of the social diseases from which we are all suffering . . ." "Before the great war there seemed to be a substantial measure of consent that the social order had to be gradually changed . . . This acquiescence in the progressive development of political and industrial democracy was manifested during the generation that preceded 1914 . . ."

This assumption was not founded on any theoretical considerations. The influence of a system of production and distribution on the social and political growth of a people, and on the ideas and "acquiescences" of the classes into which that people is divided, was never greatly the subject of their study. Their passion for the digestion of statistics, and their habitual use of the mental microscope, prevented them from watching and realising the meaning of the forces that were really working behind the mutations of "progressive" politics. They chose to "examine the lines on which reform may proceed"—to quote the advertisement of one of their books—without examining whether these reforms were steps towards the consolidation of the present regime or towards the weakening of it.

The same inability to reason from cause to effect robs their latest book of much of its value, even for what it is claimed to be—a moral indictment, not an analysis, of capitalism. Thus the poverty of the poor is certainly treated as due to the capitalist organisation of society, but it is nowhere shown to be a necessary result of that organisation. The Webbs merely invoke "a whole century of experience" to show that it is "the outcome, or at least the invariable concomitant, of the divorce of the mass of the people from the ownership of the instruments of production." This argument leaves it open to the Malthusian to argue that poverty is also the invariable concomitant of an unrestricted birth-rate—in fact that economic divorce is not so important as sexual union. And in the same way Major Douglas can point to several centuries of experience to show that destitution is the outcome of private credit-control. The argument "poverty depends on capitalism because a century of capitalism has also been a century of poverty" is bad logic; it lacks a vital premise. It only becomes logical if we add "and because capitalism—*i.e.*, the present system of ownership—produces, controls, and dominates all the institutions and accepted ideas of society." This is a premise that the Webbs accept in phrase; the name of their book has no meaning without it. But when it comes to applying it in real life

—or perhaps we should say in literature, for the value of “moral indictments” of an economic system is mainly literary—the Webbs have no grasp of social theory with which to work.

This lack of logical method and of social theory has proved fatal to the Webbs’ whole life work. It has blinded them to the realities of capitalism : class rule and all that it implies. Its final result is this book—in effect a confession of failure.

It is because the authors of this tract for the times have not worked out the interconnections between the various institutions that make up our capitalist civilisation that they can write the following sentence : “The existence in any neighbourhood of a non-producing rich family . . . is by its evil example a blight on the whole district, lowering the standards, corrupting the morality, and to that extent counteracting the work alike of the churches and the schools.” It would seem ridiculous to the Webbs to argue that without the work of the churches and the schools the rich family and their like might find the neighbourhood unhealthy. And yet it would be difficult to say which is the most useful weapon of persuasion in the hands of the capitalist classes, the church or the school—or the Fabian Society.

The Webbs have devoted much of their lives to the study of local government. They have written with intense admiration of the extension of municipal services to cover activities hitherto in private hands; and in this book they speak of “the effective democratisation of local government.” They will never realise that at certain stages in the development of capitalism the communal control of various services becomes increasingly necessary, in order to prevent the profit-making inefficiency of some key service from hampering the development of a town. The same applies to certain industries; if for instance the reorganisation of the railways fails to reduce freights sufficiently to meet the insistent demand of the Federation of British Industries, it is quite possible that they will be nationalised—when Mr. Webb will presumably believe that the industrialists have been converted by his arguments. As for the “effective democratisation” of local government, the meaning of the phrase depends on whether an extension of the franchise is the determining factor in the acquisition of democracy. It cannot have occurred to the Webbs that the growth in volume and effect of the “stream of suggestion, biassed information, and corruptly selected news” that is poured out by the modern Press has any connection with the extension of the franchise, both locally and nationally. And we may presume that the exploits of Poplar, though tiny in comparison with the problems attacked, have yet been too big to fit under their microscope. For Poplar has at least shown clearly that however far the control of local government by the exploited working classes may be pushed, even when all the weapons of persuasion wielded by the ruling classes have failed, they have still other and more powerful weapons which, combined with minor concessions, can be relied upon to reduce the insurgents to comparative quiescence.

There are scores of minor points in this book, some of them wonderfully revealing of the Webbs’ manner of thought, on which criticism might fasten. There is the devotion of several pages to “The Lack of Good Manners,” “The Corollary of Bad Manners,” “The Emergence of Really Good Manners”; there is the delightful phrasing of their warning to the capitalists :

—“We must therefore solemnly warn our capitalists that if they are well advised they will no longer dare to say ‘After us the deluge’ . . . The evil fate which we have seen dogging capitalism in foreign affairs pursues it pitilessly in home affairs also; and compels it to imbue its slaves with the very instinct of plotting, outwitting, overreaching, grasping, and fighting that makes revolution as inevitable as war. All the more reason for a vigorous disowning and discrediting of the profit-seeking motive, before its prevalence makes reasonable and peaceful social solutions impossible.” There is the rather pitiful appeal which ends the book—an “attempt, possibly vain, to make the parties (*i.e.*, the workers and the capitalists) understand their problem and each other better.” But the most important thing about this book is the fact that the working-class movement, in the form which it is gradually assuming to-day, scarcely appears in it at all. The growth of class-consciousness, which to a member of the working classes seems mainly an increase in fellowship and solidarity with his mates, seems to Mr. Webb only a factor in a disastrous class war, which “varies in its capacity for sheer destructiveness and its incapacity for social reorganisation” according to the degrees of formal democracy within the countries concerned. The slow process by which the workers are coming to realise the ruthlessness of the capitalists’ dictatorship, and the hopeless futility of “moderate” leadership, appears to him to be merely a tendency towards “universal sabotage threatening the existence of civilisation.” Mr. Webb speaks of a war of attrition against capitalism that has been carried on by “the Socialists” during the last half-century, but the workers’ war of attrition by “ca’canny” seems to him immoral and absurd.

In a recent review of this book we read: “This is a good book, one which Plebs will do well to buy and enjoy.” After a long quotation this curious phrase follows: “And I like much the sentence about Marx—that his great significance is not that he revolutionised economics and political science, but that he called the moral bluff of capitalism.”

We do not know whether this reviewer, who may be presumed to be a Marxist, also liked much the Webbs’ next sentence: “The theoretic mistakes of Marx are as patent nowadays as the mistakes of Moses.” Nor do we feel that the *naïveté* of this unsupported sentence, or the excellence of a superficial summary of the connection between capitalism and war, are sufficient reasons for calling this book “good.” But it certainly should be read—and enjoyed—by all who wish to study one of the most important symptoms of the decay of capitalism. For that is what the Fabian discovery of the effects of capitalism amounts to; it is a sign that one of the most powerful inhibitions imposed by the psychology of a ruling class is breaking down. Even the blind can feel now that the daylight is coming; but since they have been persuaded, by those who prefer to work in the dark, that daylight is sure to be destructive, all they can do about it is to issue a “solemn warning.”

T. L.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- The Capital Levy Explained.* Hugh Dalton. Labour Publishing Company, 1s.
An Outline of Economics. Plebs Textbook, 2s. 6d.
Trades That Transgress. G. Colmore. Theosophical Order of Service, 6d.
History of Modern Europe. G. P. Gooch, Cassell, 2 1s.
The Worker and the State. F. Tillyard. Routledge, 10s.
Our Enemy the State. Gilbert T. Sadler. Daniel, 3s. 6d.



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NOTES of the MONTH

APRIL, 1921, saw the first big development in the close-knit series of events that have led directly to the present industrial situation. Month only differs from month, in the industrial history of the two years that have passed since the miners' lockout, by the extent and importance of the wage reductions forced upon the workers, and of the increases in working hours. But April, 1923, is an exception; within the last few weeks the rank-and-file workers in half-a-dozen industries or more have made it clear that they are eager to resist any further deterioration of their conditions, if given the opportunity. During the past month, in at least three industries, an actual struggle has been in progress. The farm workers in Norfolk and the jute workers of Dundee were locked out for four and five weeks respectively. The eastern counties building workers, whose struggle received little or no attention in the Press, whether Labour or capitalist, maintained an unwavering stand against the lockout of their employers, and seem, even after the builders' truce has made it impossible for them to remain out longer, to have forced their employers to offer considerably better terms than were at first proposed. These struggles, three months ago, would have seemed merely single incidents in a series; to-day their importance is not due to any objective change in the situation, but to the fact that in the trade union world as a whole there is a new spirit at work.

THE builders voted by a very large majority against acceptance of the employers' terms, and their officials' action in accepting the settlement is in direct contradiction to every expression of opinion that has come from the men. The insistence of the railwaymen has driven Mr. J. H. Thomas almost to tears; he states that his position has been made impossible because he has not been allowed to negotiate. The spontaneous and scarcely organised action of the seamen in various ports has held up ships from sailing; another wage-cut, and the seamen will not be kept quiet much longer. The pottery workers seem to have reached an agreement (the union officials state that they gave way owing to lack of funds with which to fight), and the position in the

cotton industry is obscure; but here also there is a stir of revolt. And among the miners there have been successful local strikes against non-unionism, the aims of which are admittedly to strengthen the Federation in preparation for the new struggle that cannot be very far off. Over forty per cent. of the miners' delegates voted at the Easter conference in favour of an immediate denunciation of the present agreement.

THE attempt to secure lower wages and longer hours, which these workers are either resisting or preparing to resist, is not simply a normal product of "three years of trade depression." It is not an accidental result of some temporary fluctuation in trade. It springs from deeper causes than these, and carries a much greater weight behind it. There is scarcely an employer in Great Britain who is not fully convinced that a reduction in wages and an increase in productivity is necessary in order to restore industry to health. But there can scarcely be many employers who really believe that such changes are really sufficient to secure an immediate revival. A stone slips in the crumbling ruins of Europe, exchanges begin to rattle down once more, and here in Britain the drive against wages and hours has to be begun all over again before an "economic level" is in sight. Nevertheless, the attack cannot be checked for a moment, if only to keep industry going even at its present level. There is less talk now of a trade revival in the immediate future than there has been since the beginning of the slump. But the pressure on the workers cannot be relaxed, because capitalism, even when it abandons immediate hopes of reconstruction, needs ever greater sacrifices from the workers in order to produce at all.

CAPITAL'S need for cheaper production is so obvious to everyone concerned in industry that in this country, where more than in any other the workers are under the influence of capitalist agencies of opinion, there has been, during the past two years, a very general feeling in the trade unions that the wage-cuts demanded were inevitable. This feeling did not touch the question of longer hours, and here there have been far fewer concessions made, and less ground lost. Increases in hours have

been bought off at the expense of wages on several occasions. But the surrender of wage-gains—payment of *Dane-geld*—only put the employers in a stronger position for the attack on hours that has developed later. The only big movement of resistance, since the miners' fight—that of the engineers—was based mainly on the right to some small measure of control of industry, a right gained during the war, and swept away by the employers in their search for efficiency in production. To-day the process has almost reached its limit. Something has got to break under the strain. The thing that seems to be cracking, if not yet broken, is the psychological dominance of capitalist needs over the minds of the rank-and-file workers. Their spirit of resistance is vague and unformed as yet. It has no definite aims. There is simply the feeling that something has got to be done, that things cannot go on as they have been doing. There is not even a definite conception yet of the attack on wages as a single process that can only be turned back by some form of united action. But with the growth in the spirit of resistance there is growing up also a hazy feeling that it is time for a reconsideration of the methods and tactics of trade unionism. There has been a sudden growth in interest in the idea of "One Big Union," and considerable pressure towards the amalgamation of the craft unions in various trades. Trades Councils in various parts of the country have been reorganised on industrial lines, and there are proposals for national conferences of the Trade Councils to organise the united action of all Labour. A campaign is on foot for a conference of all working-class organisations in the country to work out a national minimum of agreed demands and methods by which these demands can be secured. All these are signs of the new spirit at work in the rank and file.

BUT if the grip of capitalism on the minds of the rank and file seems to be breaking, under the pressure of continually worse conditions, the more obvious bonds that hold their leaders show no signs of slackening. Trade union officials are quite frankly reluctant to fight. They recognise the spirit of the members of their unions, but they are "willing to run the risk of repudiation by the men" (as a leading article in the *Daily Herald* pointed out, with approval, in regard to the officials of the Building Trades

Federation). The phrase of pained disapproval with which Mr. J. H. Thomas greeted the cheers for a strike by a meeting of railwaymen—"no strike gets enthusiastic support from me"—has been quoted in almost every paper in the country, and ought to become a classic. In every case where a dispute is only developing the union officials are "holding back the men," and in many cases where disputes are or have been in progress the men's leaders have offered or accepted terms that their followers have definitely rejected. How far their action is dictated by their own political opinions and hopes is not easy to determine, but they certainly lack the will to win necessary in order to prevent the disastrous intervention of the leaders of the political Labour Party, whose view of industrial disputes is dictated by their fondness for middle-class votes.

IT was the intervention of one of these leaders that led the building workers to an agreement that is not very far from being a complete disaster. The position of the operatives was strong; the employers were divided, and those in the south might not have faced a lockout. The number who had actually posted lockout notices on April 7 was small as compared with the membership of the Employers' Federation. The men were defending a principle—the forty-four hour week—that they had fought for in the past and were willing to fight for again. But now this principle is submitted to the hazard of regional negotiation or "impartial arbitration," while a further reduction of wages below the level of the cost of living agreement seems almost certain. The workers are—wisely—given no chance to reject this agreement; their choice in the regional ballots is between local negotiations, in which they will not have the support of their Federation behind them, negotiation through the National Wages and Conditions Council, or arbitration by a representative of the ruling classes. This is Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's solution.

IN another and not less important dispute the same thing has occurred. Mr. MacDonald has used his good offices to end the farm workers' struggle in Norfolk. Here the solidarity of the men and their splendid temper had given real chances of success.

Their leaders were carried with them into counter-attack; they put forward, to the amazement and disgust of the farmers, a demand for something that comes near to being a living wage—thirty shillings for a fifty-hour week. But the flush of fighting energy, in the Union officials, did not last long. Through the mediation of Mr. Harry Gosling an offer of a futile “three months’ truce” was put forward. That failed; Mr. MacDonald succeeded. The terms which he induced the men to accept include a fifty-hour week, but the provision with regard to overtime make it certain that whenever the weather conditions are possible a fifty-four hour week will be worked. For the “overtime” hours up to fifty-four are to be paid for at the same rate as the ordinary working hours, and in practice will not be considered overtime at all. The men have gained two things: the guarantee of a minimum of twenty-five shillings, whatever the number of hours worked, and the shilling difference between the present terms per week and the employers’ last offer. To gain these they have had to give up the extraordinarily strong position in which a month of solid resistance had placed them. Mr. MacDonald’s intervention was not aimed at helping these workers in their fight for a living wage. He had other aims, and seems to have achieved them.

THESE interventions by the political leaders of Labour are not mistakes in tactics that can be passed over, or steps taken under the pressure of extraordinary necessity. The Labour Party is steadily developing a whole philosophy of mediation between employers and employed. “Mediation,” writes Mr. Arthur Henderson, “in the period of industrial unrest that appears to have started, will evidently be an important part of the work of the Parliamentary representatives of the working classes.” The Labour Party, in fact, only considers itself representative of the working classes when no particular issue is involved; when there is a struggle on, and middle-class opinion is touchy or definitely hostile to the workers, the Labour Party remembers its phrases about representing the interests of the whole community, and “mediates” between the workers and their opponents. The technique of class collaboration is evolving. A year ago Mr. Henderson secured the surrender of the A.E.U. with considerable

difficulty; to-day Mr. MacDonald has settled the builders' and farm-workers' struggles with an ease that recalls the Lloyd George of pre-war days. The Labour Party has avoided the issue of the class war and deliberately excluded from its organisations those who have that issue continually in view. The result is that the Party can no longer help the workers in their industrial struggles, and its leader has come to play the part of an agent of the (capitalist) community.

T. L.

THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HIS- TORY AND KARL MARX

By N. LENIN

THE realisation of the inadequacy and one-sidedness of the old materialism convinced Marx of the necessity of bringing social science into accord with the materialist foundation of society. If materialism lays down the general rule that *consciousness* is to be explained by *being*, then the application of materialism to the examination of society demands that *social consciousness* be explained by *social being*. "Technology," says Marx, "reveals the active attitude of Man towards Nature, the immediate productive process of his life, and at the same time the social relations of his life and the mental conceptions arising therefrom." Marx gives a consistent formulation of the fundamentals of materialism in its application to human society and its history in the preface to his book, "Critique of Political Economy," in the following words :—

In the life of social production, human beings enter into definite and necessary relations which are independent of their will, and correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these productive relations constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis, upon which a legal and political superstructure arises, and which corresponds to definite forms of social consciousness. The methods of production of man's material existence determine the whole process of social, political, and mental life. It is not the consciousness of human beings which determines their existence; the reverse is the case; their social existence determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, or, in juridical language, with the relations of property within which they have hitherto functioned. These relations are transformed from forms of development of the productive forces into fetters of production.

Then comes the period of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation, the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations the

distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, æsthetic, or philosophic—in short, ideological—forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out.

Just as little as one can judge an individual by what he thinks himself to be can such a revolutionary epoch be judged by its consciousness; it must necessarily be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflicts between social productive forces and relations of production. No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed; and new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society. Therefore mankind always takes up only such problems as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, we will always find that the problem arises only when the material conditions necessary for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation. Broadly conceived, Asiatic, antique, feudal, and modern bourgeois methods of production may be designated as progressive epochs of the economic social development. The bourgeois relations of production are the last antagonistic form of the social process of production.

The materialist conception of history, or, strictly speaking, the application of materialism to the sphere of social phenomena, has removed two of the main defects of the theory of history as hitherto understood. History has, at best, up to now, considered the ideal motives of the historical activity of human beings, without examining into the cause of these motives, without discovering the objective law behind the development of the system of social relations, without seeking for the root of these relations in the degree of development of material production. Secondly, the theories applied up to now have overlooked precisely the activity of the great masses of the population, while historical materialism has for the first time made it possible for us to examine, with the precision of natural science, the social conditions influencing the life of the masses, and the changes taking place in these conditions. Pre-Marxian "sociology" and history writing achieved at best an accumulation of bare facts, and have provided us with nothing more than a representation of some separate phases of the historical process. Marx showed the way to a comprehensive and thorough examination into the process of origination, evolution, and decay of social-economic formations, in that he regarded all contradictory tendencies

in their totality, and traced them back to accurately definable conditions of life and production in the various classes of society ; he thus eliminated subjectivism, as well as arbitrariness in the choice and interpretation of some " leading ideas," and laid bare the roots of all ideas, without exception, and of all the different tendencies in the state of social productive forces. Human beings make their own history, but Marx was the first to show what determines the motives of human beings, and particularly of the masses of human beings ; he was the first to show what the totality of all these conflicts is to human society, what are the objective conditions of the production of material life, forming the basis for every historical activity among human beings, and what is the evolutionary law of these conditions. In this way Marx pointed out the way to the scientific study of history as a consistent process, following definite laws through all its multifarious immensity and in all its contradictions.

That in every society the strivings of some members of this society are opposed to the strivings of others, that social life is full of contradictions, that history shows us a struggle between and within peoples and societies, that history is composed of alternating periods of peace and war, revolution and reaction, standstill and rapid advance or decay—all these facts are well known. Marx gave us the clue which enables us to discover the law underlying this apparent labyrinth and chaos. This clue is the theory of class war. It is only the study of the sum total of the strivings of all the members of a society, or of a group of societies, that can lead to a scientific determination of the results of these strivings. The source of conflicting interests lies, however, in the difference of position and living conditions of the classes into which every society is divided. " The history of all societies up to now has been the history of class war," wrote Marx in 1848 in the Communist Manifesto (and Engels added later : " except the history of primeval society"). Free men and slaves, patricians and plebeians, barons and serfs, guild citizens and journeymen, in short, oppressors and oppressed have always stood in opposition to one another, have carried on an uninterrupted struggle, at times open, at times concealed ; a fight which invariably ended with a revolutionary reformation of the whole society, or with the common decay of both fighting

classes. In earlier epochs of history we find almost everywhere a complete stratification of society into various classes, a multitudinous graduation of social positions. In ancient Rome we see patricians, plebeians, knights, slaves ; in the middle ages—feudal lords, vassals, guild citizens, journeymen, serfs ; and within almost all of these classes a still further special graduation. The modern bourgeois society which has arisen out of the decay of feudal society has not annulled class antagonisms. It has only replaced the old classes by new ones, created new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle. Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, however, is distinguished by having simplified class antagonisms. The whole of society splits up more and more into two large hostile camps, into two large classes directly antagonistic to one another : bourgeoisie and proletariat . . .

Since the great French revolution, European history has revealed in a number of countries, with special clearness, the real fundamental of events, the *Class War*. Even during the epoch of restoration there were a number of French historians (Thierry, Guizot, Mignet, Thiers) who could not but designate—when forming a generalisation on events—*Class War* as the key to French history as a whole. And the latest epoch, the epoch of complete victory of the bourgeoisie, of the parliaments, of extended if not general suffrage, of cheap daily newspapers read by the masses, the epoch of mighty and ever growing labour organisations and employers' unions, &c., has shown even more graphically, though often in a very peaceful constitutional form, class war as the motive force underlying events. In a number of historical works, Marx has in fact given us brilliant and profound examples of materialist historical writing, analysing the position of each separate class, and thus demonstrating why and how every struggle of class against class is a political struggle.

THE GERMAN ARBEITS- GEMEINSCHAFTEN

By PAUL HOYER

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AT the triennial congress of the General Federation of Free Trade Unions of Germany last July in Leipzig, one of the most hotly debated subjects was that of whether or not the Federation should participate further in supplying delegates to the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* (Joint Industrial Councils) that were set up in 1918, or whether they should abandon the policy and leave the field open to the "Christian" trade unions, the *Hirsch-Dunker Gewerkvereine*, and other non-socialist federations of workers to fill their vacancies. So close was the vote that those who stand for continuing the policy of collaboration with the bosses can take little comfort from the result, even though they won a technical victory. For the number of delegates voting against the proposal of continuing was larger than the number voting in favour—the vote stood 345 for abandoning the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* and 327 for retaining them—and only the fact that the 327 delegates represented 3,803,186 members while the 345 represented but 3,582,362 saved the day for the reactionaries by a narrow margin.

What, then, are these Joint Industrial Councils about which opponents and friends are so stirred up?

During the great world war, under the slogan of preserving the unity of the empire, the unions and the bosses had agreed to refrain from measuring their strength in strikes and lockouts, and to try to compose their differences over the green table. Then, in 1918, came the revolution with its tremendous upheavals. For a while it looked as though Germany might go the way of Russia and become a Workers' State. The bosses saw two alternatives—one, of losing all they had and seeing their industries nationalised; the other, of continuing the "industrial peace" policy of war time, and of admitting the workers to equal partnership, on the surface at least, in the management of industry. They chose the latter—and the workers fell for the bait.

Thus on November 15, 1918, an agreement was arrived at between the leading associations of employers on the one hand, and the general commission of the Free Trade Unions of Germany, the Federation of Christian Trade Unions, the Federation of German Workers' Associations (also known as the *Hirsch-Dunkers*, after their founders), the Polish Unions, and the Joint Councils of shopkeepers' assistants, of non-manual workers' federations, and of technical employees, on the other. This agreement provided for certain reforms, and the establishment of a central committee with equal representation of employers and employees to settle all disputes.

Further negotiations ensued, and by December, 1919, a definite constitution had been adopted for the "Central Joint Council of the Industrial Employers and Employees of Germany," the preamble of which reads as follows:—

Imbued with the realisation and the responsibility, that the reconstruction of our national economy demands the co-operation of all economic and mental forces and an all-embracing, harmonious working union, the organisations of industrial employers and employees associate themselves in a central joint industrial council.

It will be seen from the very wording of the preamble that a harmonious living together of the lion and the lamb is the object sought.

Space will not permit the reproduction of all the provisions of the constitution. Suffice it for me to construct a picture from it as to how the joint industrial councils are made up, what classes of workers and of industrials they embrace, and what the tasks are that are delegated to them under the rules adopted.

German industry is, for the purpose of the councils, subdivided into fourteen branches; iron and metal, food and drink, building, textile, mining, glass and pottery, wood, clothing, paper, leather, chemical, oils and fats, and stone industries, as well as the electrical, gas, and water works. Each of these forms a national joint industrial council for its particular branch. Each council is made up of an equal number of representatives of the employers and of the employees. The basis of representation is the following: for the first 150,000 workers employed in the industry, one representative each of the employers and employees constitutes

the joint council; for 150,000 to 250,000, two each; for 250,000 to 350,000, three each, and so on. The national councils may be subdivided geographically or as subdivisions of the same industry.

Each national joint industrial council has jurisdiction over questions pertaining exclusively to that industry, each regional council over those affecting that geographical district, and so on. Each national joint council determines independently the size of its executive committee and its general committee, and regulates its own order of business. The tasks of these bodies are described in the constitution as "the autonomous regulation of questions pertaining to the particular industry or trade."

Out of these national councils and their regional or trade subdivisions is created the Central Joint Industrial Council, the *Zentralarbeitsgemeinschaft* for all Germany. Its purpose is that of "solving by common effort all economic and socio-political questions affecting German industry and trade, as well as all matters of legislation and administration pertaining to same." It has two national organs—a Central Executive Committee (*Zentralvorstand*) and a Central General Committee, or Board of Directors (*Zentralausschuss*).

The Central Executive Committee is composed of twenty-three representatives each of employers and employees, each of the fourteen branches of industry having the right to at least one from both sides. The election of the twenty-three workers' representatives is one of the chief bones of contention in the present fight in the Free Trade Unions. The Central Board of Directors varies in size, but it has one fixed quantity in the provision that it shall have, besides delegates from the joint national councils, "nine representatives to be designated by the central federations of employers and employees." The functions of this Central Board of Directors are defined as follows:—

The tasks of the Central Board of Directors consist in the discussion and regulation of all questions that are common to all national joint industrial councils, in other words, to the entire industry and the entire trade of Germany, as well as such questions as go beyond the jurisdiction of the individual national councils. The Central Board of Directors is the final authority on questions at issue between the various national joint industrial councils.

Unless there are provisions to the contrary in the collective agreements between employers and employees, the national joint industrial councils have the right and duty of interpreting collective agreements and of mediating in the event of differences between the bosses and the workers.

Such, then, is the general structure of the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* system. What next are the questions which it undertakes to solve?

The report for 1922 is not yet complete, so that my more recent data are not from official reports, but were supplied by the labour secretary of the *Zentralarbeitsgemeinschaft* in Berlin. For the years 1919 and 1920, however, a detailed printed report is available, from which can be seen the wide range of subjects touched upon.

One of the first tasks was that of clarifying the relations of this voluntary association to the National Economic Council, and the Ministry of Labour, bodies created by the new German constitution.

Conferences brought about the official recognition of the joint industrial councils, which were given consultative and nominative powers. Relations having been established with the Government, the councils got to work. I will not deal with the various national sub-councils, but rather review the work of the *Zentralarbeitsgemeinschaft*, for all questions of national importance came before that body. Chronologically, the following are some of the things with which the Central Joint Council dealt :—

Protested against separation of Saar Valley from Germany, and against provisions of Versailles Treaty; obtained representation of the joint council in delegation to Versailles; worked out plan for restoration of devastated areas in France and Belgium, which was frustrated by France's refusal; sought to stimulate production of coal by placing miners in a specially preferred category, the proposal failing of adoption; issued an appeal for greater production in name of patriotism, and opposed shortening of work day; protested against chaotic conditions prevailing in the railway system; brought about reorganisation of the National Economic Council; proposed an extra duty on exports to improve social insurance, which collapse of the mark and Governmental delay brought to nothing—Government agreed to this extra tax, but put it in the general treasury; and co-operated in the establishment of national employment bureaux.

The above topics, taken from the official report for 1919 and 1920, indicate the problems with which the Central Industrial Council concerned itself in that time. According to the Labour secretary of the council, more recent activities include:—

On the question of the eight-hour day, the council agreed that "in principle" the eight-hour day must be adhered to, but that under certain conditions overtime work must be permitted, in view of the economic plight of Germany; "stimulation of production," insisted upon by the bosses, brought about by winning over unions to agreements with the bosses for overtime work; prevailed upon railroad workers to accept compromise on pay for time when held in readiness for service, at 50 per cent. to 70 per cent. of regular wage; sought to prevent strikes by securing automatic rise in wages as index figures for cost of living rose.

Having traced the origin and composition of the joint industrial councils, and having shown with what kind of questions they concern themselves, I shall now try to give as objectively as possible the two points of view prevailing in the organised Labour Movement as to the advantages and disadvantages of the scheme to the workers themselves.

Those who favour the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft* advance several arguments in substance as follows: That in comparison with the times when trade union leaders were jailed for trying to organise, the granting of formal equality in the joint councils is a big step forward; that the joint councils are a training school for the workers in learning the management of industry; that the joint councils afford favourable conditions for carrying on the class struggle on the basis of equality with the employer; and finally, that the scheme is, after all, nothing more than an extension of collective bargaining.

This point of view is held by the official leaders of the trade unions, and was urged strongly before the Tenth Congress of the General Federation of Free Trade Unions of Germany at Nuremberg in 1919, when already grave objections to the scheme were voiced. It was put forward with even greater emphasis before the Eleventh Congress at Leipzig in July, 1922.

The attack against the joint councils was led chiefly by the Communists, but was also supported by those Socialists who until

recently constituted the Independent Socialist Party, and even by a number of Majority Socialists, and rested upon arguments somewhat as follows:—

The fundamental idea underlying the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* is that of industrial peace. This, says the militants, is something we do not want, for there cannot be peace until the workers have been victorious. Victory cannot come through joint councils of workers and bosses, but only through wiping out the boss-worker relationship—through the abolition of capitalism. To go into the joint councils is to prop up the capitalist system.

Secondly, experience has shown that almost every worker delegate to a joint council loses his Labour viewpoint. He soon sees matters through the eyes of the employer. He becomes filled with pride at the thought of being on an equal footing with the boss and suddenly thinks the employer not such a bad fellow after all. Also, the employers, having great financial resources, can send as their delegates men who are skilled in making argument most attractive and innocent looking, and who “put one over” on the workers without their being aware of it until it is too late.

Thirdly, say the militants, the joint councils do not at all place the workers on equality with the bosses. Part of the “equal” representation of the workers is made up of delegates, like those from the “Christians” and *Hirsch-Dunkers*, that are so many tools of the bosses, and ready in decisive moments to betray the interests of the workers.

As for the argument that the joint councils are a training ground for management of industry, this is stoutly denied by the militants. The bosses use one set of data and figures in these councils and another set in their own employers’ and manufacturers’ associations. And finally, the militants challenge the defenders of the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* to name a single advantage thus far gained that could not better have been secured by the workers in their own organisation, dealing with the employers, not as joint councils for industrial peace, but as exponents of the class struggle.

Such is the line up on this great issue in Germany to-day. The movement against the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* is growing stronger. One national union—the shoe workers’—has withdrawn from the joint councils. How fast the others will follow suit depends upon

the degree of strength the militants can muster. Certain it is that the Communist members of the General Federation of Free Trade Unions stand unalterably opposed to the idea, and that the great majority of the former Independent Socialists favours cutting loose from the semi-fraternal relationship with the bosses. To the extent that the German workers regain their spirit, and recover from the general weariness now prevalent, the struggle against the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* will once more sweep the great German Labour Movement into the active class struggle. With growing turmoil in the industrial and political life of the German nation these joint councils and the question of collaboration within them are becoming the storm centres of the Labour Movement.

PROLETARIAN POETRY—I

By A. BOGDANOV

PROLETARIAN poetry is, first of all, *poetry*, a definite form of art.

There is no poetry, just as in general there is no art, where there are no living images. If we put the multiplication table or the laws of physics into verse—no matter how smooth and finished the verse may be—this will not be poetry, for abstract ideas are not living images.

There is also no poetry, just as in general there is no art, where there is no harmony in the combination of images, where there is no conformity and connection between them, no “arrangement” one might say If, for instance, the figures in a painting are not connected by uniformity of plan, or if they are arranged in a casual, disorderly manner, there is no picture, and the result has nothing to do with the art of painting.

It is necessary to know and remember this maxim : art is the arrangement of living images ; poetry is the arrangement of living images in verbal form.

Poetry began where human speech itself began. The spontaneous cries which accompanied the efforts of primitive men were the embryos of words, the first indications ; they were natural and intelligible indications of those actions during which they sprang up. And these labour cries became also the origin of the labour song. Song was not simply a matter of amusement or distraction. When labour was being done in common it served to unite the efforts of the workers, giving them a certain harmony, a rhythmic regularity and coherence. Consequently, song was a means for the organisation of collective effort.¹ This same significance is preserved by it at the present day.

In the war song, which developed later, this same organisational significance is manifested in a somewhat different way. It was

¹ c.f. Hauling songs and chants—*Translator*.

usually sung before battle, and it creates a uniform mood, unity of the collective spirit, the first condition for concerted action in battle. It is, so to speak, the preliminary organisation of the forces of a collectivity for the difficult task before it.

The second root of poetry is the myth. The myth is also the beginning of knowledge in general.

Originally words indicated human actions. But only by means of these same words could men communicate with each other about the phenomena of external nature and of its elemental forces. Thus it happened that, in every tale or description, even the most crude, nature inevitably became personified. No matter what was spoken of, animals or trees, the sun or moon, a river or the sea, the impression was always conveyed that some man was being talked about—the sun “walks” over the sky, in the morning he “rises,” in the evening he “goes to sleep,” in winter he “sickens, becomes weak,” in spring he “gets well again,” &c. This involuntary transference of ideas from the human to the elemental is called the “primary metaphor.” Without it, thinking of the surrounding non-human world would be impossible, and consequently knowledge could not be created.

Later on, thought little by little assimilated the distinction existing between itself and external surroundings, but it did not completely emancipate itself from the primary metaphor. The word “*mir*” (the Russian for “world”) is one of its vestiges, for it means a community, a collectivity of men, and in some provinces *mir* means simply “the village” or the village community. And in poetry the primary metaphor has always retained its great rôle: the personification of nature is still the most important method of poetry.

Originally there was no element of fiction in the myth. When a father related to his children all that he knew from experience about the changing fortunes of the sun during its annual cycle, this crude lecture on astronomy invariably took the form of a tale about the adventures of a man, powerful and good, carrying on a struggle against hostile forces which sometimes had to retreat before him, and sometimes overpowered and defeated him, &c. In the course of time poetical myths developed out of this tale, such as the Babylonian epic of the hero Gilgamesh, or that of Hercules amongst

the Greeks. If a man wished to inform his less experienced friend that the corpses of the dead are harmful to the living, that they cause sickness or even death, he could do so only in the form of a tale about the wickedness of the dead, about their enmity to the living. In time this gave rise to the myth about ghouls. At that time this was the only possible form of imparting knowledge to others in society.

Poetry, prose, science, all these were inseparably fused in that indefinite embryo, the primitive myth. But the vital sense of the myth, its significance for society, was quite definite : it also was an instrument for the organisation of the social toiling life of men. Why is the knowledge of man about himself, about life and nature, gathered and handed down from generation to generation ? In order to harmonise the practical efforts of men, to direct them according to this knowledge, to arrange them—in a word, *to organise them upon the basis of this knowledge.*

The original sun-myth—a description of the seasons of the year—gave directions as to the cycles of agricultural work, and the times for hunting and fishing ; and these directions were necessary for men whose social organisation was based upon the systematic division of their labour according to the seasons. The myth about the dead furnished directions for the hygienic measures that must be taken with regard to corpses ; they must be buried deep enough, at a considerable distance from dwelling places, &c. In those times primitive poetic knowledge played the same organising rôle as modern exact science plays in modern production.

Has the vital significance of poetry changed in its essence since then ?

Let us recall what the epics of Homer and Hesiod were to ancient Greece : they were an important educational means. Now, what is education ? It is the fundamental organisational work which introduces new members into society. Human raw material is developed and prepared so as to become useful living links in the system of social connections, each occupying his own place and accomplishing his own part in the general social process. Education organises the human collectivity just as drilling, discipline, and instruction in the technique of war organises an army.

Those of our art theorists who, following the aristocratic or partly bourgeois traditions, consider art as an "adornment of life," a kind of luxury, do not understand to what extent they contradict themselves when they admit at the same time that art has an educational, *i.e.*, just a practical and organisational significance.

There are two bourgeois theories : the theory of "pure art" and that of "social art." The first maintains that art *must* be an end in itself, *must* be free from the interests and strivings of the practical struggles of humanity. The second maintains that art *must* carry out in life the progressive tendencies of these struggles. We may discard both theories once we discover what art actually *is* in the life of the world. Art organises the forces of life quite independently of whether it has any social aims or not. There is no need to attach any aims to art—they are only an unnecessary and harmful constraint on it. The artist can give the most harmonious arrangement to his living images when he does so freely, without compulsion or direction. But it would also be absurd to prohibit art from taking from its subject political and social themes. The material for art is the whole of life, without any limitation or restraint.

Lyrical poetry, the art of individual moods and emotions, is the "purest" type of poetry. What or whom can this type of poetry organise socially ?

If lyric poetry expressed personal emotions only felt by the artist, and nothing else, it would not be comprehensible or interesting to anyone beside himself—it would not be art. The significance of this poetry lies in the fact that it reveals a certain type of mood, which may be characteristic of various persons. It expresses an association of emotions felt also by a great variety of people. The poet reveals and elucidates to men the moods they have in common, and so he unites and welds them together unobserved, by the unity of mutual understanding in the sphere of sentiment, by the "sympathy" that he awakens in all of them. At the same time the poet educates this aspect of their souls in one direction, and thus deepens and broadens their congeniality, the durability of their group, class, or association. This makes for and develops the possibility of combined and co-ordinated action ; here also then, just as in the case of the war song, we have to deal with a

certain preliminary organisation of the forces of a group for the different expressions of their common life and struggle.

The poetry which represents and describes life, as the epic, drama, and the novel, has an organisational significance similar to that science, and serves to direct, on the basis of past experience, the arrangement of mutual relations between men. Thus, epic poems give living images of mass actions, of the connection in such acts between the "heroes," or leaders, and the "crowd" that follows them. They represent the struggle and reconciliation of the collective forces of the people. Most novels in their romantic aspect represent the solution, on the basis of concrete examples, of one type of problem : how individual men and women come together under different conditions to create elementary organisations in the form of families ; and then how different individuals adapt themselves to those who are around them, to their social surroundings. Drama represents in action organisational conflicts and their solutions, &c. In our times poetry and fiction in general, for the city population at least, is probably the most popular and important means of education, *i.e.*, of introducing the individual into the established system of social relations.

Modern society is divided into classes. These are collectivities separated by many vital differences ; therefore they organise separately, along dissimilar lines, one against the other. Naturally their instruments of organisation (*i.e.*, their ideologies) are different, disparate, not only out of harmony with each other, but simply excluding each other. The same is true with regard to poetry ; in a class society, poetry also is representative of the different classes : of the landlord class, the peasantry, bourgeoisie, or proletariat.

Of course, this should not be understood in the sense that poetry defends the interests of one class or another : sometimes this is the case, especially in political and social poetry, but comparatively seldom. The class character of poetry lies much deeper. It is rooted in the fact that the poet sees life from the viewpoint of a certain class ; he sees the world with the eyes of that class ; he thinks and feels in the way peculiar to his class because of its social nature. Behind the individual author is hidden the collective author, his class ; and poetry is part of its self-consciousness.

The individual author may not even think of it, not even suspect it. In the works themselves there is sometimes no direct indication of their class source, no mention of it at all. Take for instance the lyrical poetry of Fet. This beautiful poetry, in which the expressions of the life of nature are gracefully intermingled with the finest emotions of the poet himself, seems, at first glance, to be an example of "pure art," apart from every class element. And yet, even before Marxism was known in Russia, there were men who saw that it was "aristocratic" poetry. "Aristocratic," that means typical of the landed nobility; it originated in the moods, in the surroundings and the forms of life and thought, of a certain caste, a class in Russian society. And such is actually the truth of the matter.

That deep and absolute aloofness from all material, economic, prosaic cares, which is so characteristic of Fet's lyrics, was only possible for the truly aristocratic nobility of the countryside which had become more and more divorced from production and its struggles. Even the bourgeoisie, which was then developing and was concerned with profits and competition, could not cultivate those sort of subtle emotions and sentiments; and besides, being for the most part an urban class, it was not able to see and understand nature as sensitively as the gentry and the lords of the manor. It is quite easy to see that this poetry must have, indeed, served as an organising force for the landlord caste. This caste was already in a state of decadence, but, of course, it did not want to leave the historical stage, and was still vigorously defending its interests. Fet's poetry not only united the representatives of the landlord caste in a certain community and identity of mood, but at the same time it put them indirectly in opposition to the rest of society, and so strengthened their feeling of unity. It strengthened their consciousness of their spiritual superiority over all other classes of society, and consequently their consciousness of their right to a privileged position. It was as though this poetry said to them: "See, what æsthetic and sublime beings we are, how tender and subtle *our* souls are, how noble *our* culture is." And hence followed naturally the desire to defend this culture firmly and unitedly, so to defend the fundamental basis of this culture: material wealth and a ruling position.

In a society of classes there is *no room for non-class poetry*. But this is not to say that in every given instance poetry belongs to one particular class. Thus, in the poetry of Nekrassov there is a fervent defence of the exploited peasantry, and a deep and sympathetic understanding of its life, together with a vivid expression of the strivings, ideas, and sentiments of the urban "intelligentsia," a class then just developing, but restrained by the old *régime*. Nekrassov belonged to this class by his occupation. At the same time there are in his poetry remnants of the psychology of the landed gentry to which he belonged by birth. This is inter-class poetry. Such, for the most part, is also the democratic poetry of our own days : the elements of the peasant class, of the working class, and of the "intelligentsia" are here intermingled. This can also be easily seen in many of our modern poets, who rose from among the people.

The character of proletarian poetry is defined by the primary and vital conditions of the working class itself : by its position in production, by the type of its organisation, by its historical destiny.

The proletariat is a *toiling, exploited, struggling, developing class*. It is a class which is concentrated in masses in the cities, and the fellowship of co-operation is its characteristic. All these traits tend equally to *distinguish* proletarian poetry, and make it different from any other poetry.

Toil, exploitation at the hands of the ruling classes, the struggle against exploitation, the striving towards progress—do all these traits distinguish the proletariat from the poorer peasantry, from the lower strata of the toiling "intellectuals" ? Obviously not ; they are inherent in these groups too ; they bring them nearer to the working class. These groups have had earlier opportunity than the proletariat to create their poetry ; and in its first steps on the path of poetic creation the proletariat naturally joins with them. Its attempts are here still of an undefined class character : it is revolutionary-democratic poetry. Let us take, for an example, the beautiful song written by a young worker, Alex. Gmiriev, who died in the penitentiary under the *régime* of autocracy.

SCARLET

We are come to meet the sunrise. We are come,
And to freedom do we sing our scarlet song.

Hear the scarlet sounds resound above the earth;
They awaken, horrifying all, like songs of war.

As a summons to the proud of heart and soul,
Mightily our song resounds across the world.

We are come to meet the sunrise. We are come,
With the scarlet flag of freedom we march on.

See our banner with the Sun-blood for its hue,
See it burning, conquering eternal gloom.

Crêpe for the fallen is our standard's staff of black. . . .

We are come with scarlet banner, we are come
With a song of scarlet, on the scarlet road of Sun.

Long, incessant as the ages, is our way,
But it is the purest and most scarlet way.

We are few, we're small in numbers—have no fear—
Millions more are come to join us, and to bear

All our burdens, and our banner—freedom, blood!
We are madmen, but immortal as our love.

Let us then not tarry to mourn above the tombs,
Onward, onward, all who love the sun!

We are come to meet the sunrise, we are come,
And with song and scarlet banner we march on.

There is nothing about this song, except the personality of the author, to make it really proletarian. It could inspire workers to revolutionary impulse, or equally well inspire the former champions of the progressive intellectuals—the *narodovoltzi* (fighters for popular freedom)—or the peasant fighters for land and liberty. And the bulk of the old revolutionary poetry is of the same sort, whether it originates from among the intellectuals, the peasants, or the workers.

What essentially separates the proletariat from all the other democratic elements is the distinctive type of its labour and the way in which it works together.

The deepest breach in the nature of human toil was made when the "brains" became separated from the "working hands," when "managing" became separated from "execution," when one man started to think and solve problems for the others, and directed

them, while the others had to do what he ordered them, and do it in the way he ordered. This was the separation of the "organiser" from the "executor," it was the beginning of authority and subordination. One man became a superior being in relation to the others, and this gave rise to the feeling of admiration. On the basis of this feeling the religious view of life began to develop. Previously there was no such view of life, and there was even no room for it, for elemental nature with its sullen forces causes in man only animal fear, not the "fear of God." Man was in awe of these powerful hostile forces, but he had no idea of superior beings, or of meekness and admiration, the indispensable elements of religion. Authoritative co-operation, growing and deepening, saturated the whole consciousness of men with the spirit of authority : nature became subjected to ruling organisers—divinities ; each body received its ruling organiser—the soul.

By the very character of his work the organiser is a higher type, the executor a lower. The one has initiative, observation, control, for which he must use experience, knowledge, and exerted attention ; the other knows only mechanical execution, for which he has no need for all these qualities, but only for passive discipline, blind obedience. The slave, the serf, or the soldier in the army of an ancient despot does not need to take thought while doing his work ; on the contrary, thought might even prove harmful. He is only a living tool, no more.

The second breach in the nature of human labour is specialisation. Every specialist has his own task, his own experience, his distinct little world. The tiller of the land knows his field, plough, and horse ; the blacksmith knows his forge, bellows, hammers ; the shoemaker his leathers, awls, and blocks. No one wants or can afford to know anybody else's profession, because everybody is anxious to concentrate on his own business and master it to perfection. The breach is still more deepened by the separation and independence of the specialised enterprises, which meet only on the market, whither they come to exchange their goods. There, their mutual connection is completely hidden behind the struggle of all against all : the sellers against the buyers for prices, the sellers between themselves for sales, the buyers between themselves for the goods, if there is a scarcity of them.

This second breach in the nature of human labour gives rise to individualism. Man becomes accustomed in his thoughts and feelings to separating himself from all other men ; he looks upon himself as existing quite apart from all others, with distinct interests, independent of his social surroundings in his strivings and actions, an independent creative being. For him his own individuality, his personal "ego," is the centre of his view of life and of his sense of the world ; the freedom of his "ego" in his highest ideal.

Both these changes in the nature of labour run through all the consciousness of the old classes ; consequently they manifest themselves also in their poetry. The poetry of the purely authoritative epoch and of the epoch of feudalism is penetrated with the spirit of authority ; the myths and epics, such as the Book of Genesis with the Hebrews, the Iliad and Odyssey with the Greeks, the Mahabharata of the Hindus, the "Billinas" and the "Lay of Igor's Regiment" of the Russians, limit the whole course of life, all the chain of its events, to the activity of deities, heroes, kings, and leaders ; the lyric of this period—the best example of it are the Psalms of David—perceives nature as a revelation of the will of God, and is saturated with a spirit of prayer and submission. In the poetry of the bourgeois world individualism reigns supreme : there the centre is the individual, with his fortunes and experiences. The poem, novel, drama, describe the conflicts of the individual with the rest of the world, his relations to other people and to nature, his struggle for happiness or for his career, his creative activity, his victories and defeats ; lyric poetry is also limited to individual psychology, to the emotions and moods of the individual : his perception of nature, his joys, sorrows, dreams, disappointments, sexual love with its sufferings and exaltations

(To be continued)

EGYPTIAN NATIONALISM AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

By G. A. HUTT

FOR British imperialism Egypt means primarily three things. First, it means a source of raw cotton and a market for cotton piece goods. Second, it means a highly profitable field for investment and financial operations of all kinds. Third, it means the Suez Canal. Ever since Mohammed Ali introduced the culture of fine cotton into Egypt four years after the battle of Waterloo, British commercial interests have driven an extremely lucrative trade at Alexandria in this important raw material : about the middle of the century the Egyptian Government began to be wrapped more and more firmly in the toils of European financiers—English, French, and Greek : finally, with the development of imperialism, it became increasingly evident that British imperialism was intent on securing the monopoly in exploitation of Egypt. It is true that for many years critical relations subsisted between British and French imperialism in Egypt, and this period of crisis was not finally liquidated till the Anglo-French agreement of 1904, by which France found her *quid pro quo* in Morocco. In fact, however, the ultimate dominance of British imperialism in Egypt had been secured by Disraeli's notorious *coup* of the purchase of the Suez Canal shares in 1875. This acute stroke of imperialist policy arose very simply out of the needs of the political situation : for a glance at the map will show that, with sea communication between the Mediterranean and Red Seas, Egypt is the key position of the British Empire. It is unthinkable that British imperialism should lose control of Egypt and yet maintain its grip on India. And the imperialists of Britain realise this with perfect clearness. Egypt has been variously described as the "coping stone" or the "occipital nerve" of the British Empire ; and either metaphor will serve. Further, Egypt is the centre from which British imperialism can dominate the Sudan, the Hedjaz and Arabia, Palestine, Mesopotamia—and from which, too, it can exercise an effective surveillance

over the operations of French and Italian imperialism in northern and eastern Africa, to say nothing of the French Syrian mandate. But in Egypt itself the solidarity of the different imperialisms is complete. They group themselves naturally round British imperialism, as the one with the strongest hold, and nothing illustrated this more vividly than the way in which, on the outbreak of the 1919 mass revolts, the foreign commercial communities in Egypt unanimously took their stand behind Britain in the struggle with the rising. Those sections of Egyptian nationalism who still nourish hopes of a return to the dual control, whereby they may be enabled to play off Britain against France to the advantage of the nationalist cause, are indeed embracing a chimera. The struggle against British imperialism is for Egypt the struggle against all imperialism.

It should be noted that Egypt has achieved a more advanced stage of capitalist development than any other country in the Near East : the differentiation of classes on the basis of the class struggle is appearing in a very marked way. Of course, feudal relations still subsist, and anyhow the Nile Valley is likely to remain agrarian. But the British imperialist regime has meant that from a typical self-sufficing agrarian country Egypt has been transformed into (largely) a cotton plantation for the benefit of Lancashire cotton capitalists. This, although Egypt is eminently capable of developing economically on European industrial lines : for with the development of hydro-electric technique the potentialities of Egyptian water power become immense. However, it is clearly not to the interest of British imperialism to permit such a technical development to be utilised in Egypt. So the structure of British imperialism is here most plainly acting as a curb on the productive forces of Egyptian society. The fight for economic self-determination at once becomes an integral and vital part of the nationalist and anti-imperialist struggle.

There is no need here to trace in detail the course of the nationalist agitation against the British occupation which has occupied the last forty years. From the days of Colonel Arabi to the outbreak of war in 1914, this agitation changed very little, either in content or in the people engaged in carrying it on. It fluctuated in intensity from year to year and decade to decade with an almost completely moribund period in the early eighteen-nineties. The nationalists

were large landowners, officials, professional men, lawyers, intellectuals, and so forth—the so-called Pasha class. In 1906, when hopes of help from France in the carrying on of nationalist agitation had disappeared, a party known as the *Khizb-el-Uma*, or People's Party, was organised. It was essentially composed of the elements mentioned above, and was moderate to the pitch of loyalism in character. The more radical Left Wing formed the *Khizb-el-Watani*, or Nationalist Party, which took up the nationalist struggle as a revolutionary struggle against British imperialism, at the same time recognising the important part the masses of workers and peasants were destined to play in this struggle. In fact, as might have been expected, the leadership of the *Khizb-el-Watani* coming from the rising native capitalist class and the professionals, it dared not give the masses a fighting lead when the moment came for action.

With the war came the declaration of the British Protectorate over Egypt—"for the duration." At first the Egyptians were assured that they were only desired to maintain a benevolent neutrality in the struggle of imperialisms: but it was not long before requisitions of farm beasts and food supplies were in full swing, and the young fellaheen were forced to "volunteer" for the Egyptian Labour Corps by the most rigorous martial law brutality. The martial law regime roused the keenest resentment and fury among the Egyptian masses: and in addition their economic position grew steadily more deplorable. The first months of the war were accompanied by an acute fall in prices. The crops were not worth the cost of reaping them, and were left to rot; the distressed fellaheen wandered up and down the country in famine-stricken crowds, and the workers in the towns suffered considerably. After a time prices began to recover, and then swept upward to an unheard-of height. In 1919 prices were in many cases ten times more than they were in 1914: the average wage had only increased three times. When, on the cessation of the war, the British Protectorate and the hated martial law regime continued to exist without the least sign of abolition, the temper of the masses reached boiling point. The objective situation was undeniably revolutionary—but the masses were leaderless and unorganised. Who was the eagerly awaited leader to be?

It was hardly to be expected that the culturally backward masses would throw up their own leaders. Besides, Egypt had not yet experienced the bourgeois revolution. It was, therefore, not surprising that the man who came forward was a representative of the interests of the progressive capitalist class—an ex-Minister of Education, Zaghlul Pasha. Zaghlul organised the Egyptian deputation to the Peace Conference—the *Wafd-el-Mosri*—and applied to the British military authorities for passports, which were refused : at once the whole nation ranged itself behind Zaghlul, and virtually gave him a mandate to speak in the name of the nation. The subsequent deportation of Zaghlul and his companions led directly to the mass uprising of March, 1919. The workers struck, the civil servants struck, women demonstrated, students demonstrated, the fellaheen cut telegraph wires and tore up railway tracks. Repression, with all its accompaniment of imprisonment, exile, floggings, hangings, did not stop the revolt. The British Government was forced to allow the Wafd to come to London for negotiations : and out of these negotiations one vitally significant fact emerged, namely, that the Wafd, while using the mass revolt as a means of forcing a compromise on the British Government, while adopting the revolutionary slogans of the Nationalist Party to this end also, was essentially and fundamentally opportunist. The Wafd was a centre group, and formed a rallying point for the capitalist Right Wing of the Nationalist Party. Zaghlul himself, it should be noticed, retained his membership of the old People's Party. The initial negotiations of the Wafd with the British Government resulted in an impasse—the Zaghlulists declaring that the British terms meant a continuation of a veiled protectorate, while the more conservative followers of Adly Pasha were prepared to compromise to the fullest possible extent, in order to put an end to the (to them) unpleasantly tense political situation. The Zaghlulists, in thus affecting intransigence, were but swayed by the determined pressure of mass revolt.

Meanwhile the Milner Mission had visited Egypt, ostensibly to inquire into the causes of the "late disturbances," and had issued its report. One sentence in that report stands out : it is in the place where the Mission go out of their way to say polite things about the "moderate nationalists," who, it is said, are perfectly willing

to recognise special British interests in Egypt ; why, then, is there any need for a formal protectorate ?—

Would not an orderly and friendly Egypt, in intimate association with Great Britain, serve British purposes as well, or even better, while removing all sense of grievance and all spirit of revolt on the Egyptian side ?

This admirably expresses the aim of enlightened imperialism : it is the classic policy of “ rallying the moderates ; ” and the report went on to observe that this aim might best be secured by a treaty between Britain and Egypt, which would secure the protection of (a) imperial communications, and (b) all “ legitimate ” foreign interests in Egypt. To get an Egyptian Government which would sign and operate such a treaty became the object of British imperialist policy in Egypt right through the year 1921. Supported by the British power, Adly Pasha formed a Ministry. Zaghlul returned to Egypt, receiving a hero’s welcome from the masses of the population, and the political issue that at once arose was— would Zaghlul come to some agreement with Adly, and would the Zaghlulists agree to support Adly’s government ? In other words, would there be a consolidation of the thin upper strata of feudal lords and the bureaucracy represented by Adly and the progressive capitalists and professionals represented by Zaghlul ? As it happened, neither the Zaghlulists nor the British power were convinced that the time was ripe for such a step. More, the reactionary elements in British imperialism—Lord Curzon most notably, seconded by Field Marshal Allenby, the real ruler of Egypt—were not at all convinced that their policy of repression, of the maintenance of direct imperial rule over Egypt, was in any sense bankrupt. Popular feeling in Egypt against Adly was growing in intensity, and negotiations in London between Adly and Lord Curzon broke down. Adly resigned, and the formation of a new Ministry proved quite impossible. Zaghlul Pasha was again deported in December, 1921. This new crisis led to the gradual realisation that the policy of repression had failed, and at the end of February, 1922, the formal restoration of Egyptian “ independence ” was announced. It was a very formal restoration indeed, as the most important questions, such as the Suez Canal and the protection of foreign interests, were absolutely reserved for future discussion between the British Government and the Egyptian

Parliament, when elected. Practically, British imperialism, by this "Unilateral Declaration," was proclaiming to the world its monopoly-interest in Egypt, was crying "Hands off Egypt!" to the other imperialist Powers in order to tighten its own grip.

A Ministry was formed by Sarwat Pasha, a member of the Adly group. This Ministry dragged out an existence for several months, without being able to achieve anything that either the Egyptian bourgeoisie or the British power wanted. Suddenly, after the acting president of the Wafd had had a mysterious interview with King Fuad, and the Wafd had published a violent manifesto attacking the Government, Sarwat resigned. His resignation was virtually a dismissal, and in his stead Tewfik Nessim Pasha formed a Ministry. Nessim was pro-Zaghulist, and his Ministry meant an alliance between the Palace—and hence the British power—and the forces of native progressive capitalism organised in the Wafd. At last it seemed that British imperialism had realised the necessity for striking a bargain with the nationalists, of rooting itself more deeply in the organism of Egyptian society than it could by an alliance with the Adly-Sarwat feudal-bureaucratic elements. The struggle between the two classes, the old aristocracy and the new capitalists, as to which should share the exploitation of Egypt with British imperialism, now appeared definitely resolved by the victory of the latter. In future it appeared quite certain that imperialist exploitation would be carried out through the medium of the native bourgeoisie; the basis of British imperialist rule in Egypt had been significantly widened.

As it happened the alliance between the Palace and the Wafd was far from being a permanent one. The British power remained unconvinced of the immediate necessity of striking a bargain with the nationalists in order to make Egypt safe for imperialism. Consequently, from December of last year up to date a peculiarly tortuous series of political intrigues has been taking place in Egypt. The Nessim Ministry was forced by Lord Allenby to resign, early in February, nominally over the Sudan question (which nationalist opinion desires to unite with Egypt), and Adly Pasha once more was discreetly pushed to the front of the political scene by the British power. Meanwhile, the growth of mass unrest was symbolised by the increase of bomb outrages and terroristic

attentats on British troops and civilians. British martial law, still the only reality of Egyptian government, grew daily more brutal. Whole districts were held to ransom for outrages committed in their areas. Even *The Times* correspondent admitted that Egypt was suffering from:—

a martial law regime severer than in any previous period, not excepting in some respects the critical days of 1919.

After much hesitation Adly refused to form a Ministry : but there was no gainsaying Lord Allenby, and rumours soon began to spread that Adly was reconsidering his decision. Just at this moment of crisis, the anti-Adly polemic of the Wafd became mysteriously mild. Adly made advances to the Wafd, which were rejected, it is true, but in a manner that was far from precluding the possibility of such a union in the future. While a particularly violent series of outrages in late February and early March was horrifying imperialist opinion, the British power delayed the arrest of the leaders of the Wafd (which had earlier been threatened if the outrages continued), hoping against hope for a *rapprochement* between the Wafd and Adly Pasha. In a most revealing dispatch on March 5, *The Times* correspondent declared (a declaration the significance of which was only heightened by the very disingenuous "recantation" published, obviously under pressure from the British Residency, a few days later) :—

In view of the apparent bankruptcy of martial law, a solution may be found in a new orientation of policy—possibly in entrusting the maintenance of order and security to the Egyptian Government. If this policy were developed it would seem that the only possible course to take would be to release Zaghlul Pasha, the sole Egyptian strong enough to inspire a Government with sufficient power to maintain order without the British support given under martial law. . . . Zaghlul Pasha, or a Government enjoying Zaghlulist support, would also alone be able to "deliver the goods" the British Government requires—namely, an Indemnity Act, the settlement of the conditions of retirement of British officials, &c.

However, repression remained the order of the day : and a stop-gap "Ministry of Affairs" was formed by Yehia Ibrahim Pasha (previously Minister of Education), to deal with the vast amount of administrative business that had accumulated since Nessim's fall. Both the Adly-ites and the Wafd received the new Ministry with suspicious reserve : and the Wafd severely criticised the

(doubtless intentional) vagueness of Yehia Pasha's official utterances. Again the persistent rumour spread that Adly was making advances to the Wafd, which was alleged not to be meeting these advances with much enthusiasm. But the fact is now clear, beyond a doubt, that a consolidation of the feudal-bureaucratic elements under Adly with the bourgeoisie of the Wafd is a political possibility of the fairly near future. Adly has declared against the continuance of martial law, and has won thereby the approval (albeit guarded) of the Zaghulist Press.

Yehia Pasha's Ministry is unlikely to live long : there have already been rumours of a crisis. The enlightened sections of imperialist opinion are calling (as *The Times* dispatch above) for the release of Zaghlul and for a compromise with the Wafd as the only way out of the impasse. The *Manchester Guardian* correctly summed up the whole business by saying :—

With the release of the nationalist leaders and the resumption of normal law we can probably still get a representative Egyptian Cabinet willing to promulgate the new constitution in a form that will satisfy Egyptian aspirations, while reserving essential British interests.

It is with statements of this kind that the release of Zaghlul on March 30 (officially for reasons of health) must be related. The tide of imperialist opinion has now, it seems, finally turned. And the Wafd are fully aware of this : in a manifesto issued on the release of Zaghlul, expressing their satisfaction with the action of the British Government, they state that :—

The aspirations of Egypt are not in contradiction with the protection of foreign interests.

This, then, is the end of the opportunist centrism of the Wafd, of the nationalism of the Egyptian bourgeoisie—" independence " plus safeguards for imperialist interests, the very formula of the imperialists themselves !

The fact that emerges from the foregoing analysis of the nationalist movement is clear enough, namely, that a purely nationalist movement can never give real national independence to the Egyptians. When we turn to examine the nationalism of the Left Wing of the *Khizb-el-Watani*, depending on the discontented small traders and shopkeepers, lower grade civil servants, students, &c., substantially the same fact appears. Under the leadership of Dr. Hussein Pasha the Left Wing nationalists pursued

a revolutionary nationalist propaganda among the town workers and the peasant masses ; but it was typical petty bourgeois revolutionary nationalism—high-sounding revolutionary slogans and phrases, with a shrinking from the actual revolutionary struggle. And further, it was still, though anti-imperialist and to that extent revolutionary, concerned (like the similar Indian movement) with boycotts and non-co-operation—which could be carried to a certain point and then led nowhere. There was no fundamental appreciation of the impossibility of achieving a purely nationalist revolution : no realisation that only a revolution at once social and political, a revolution of the Egyptian labouring masses, led by the organised working class of the towns, could liberate those masses from both their foreign imperialist and their native bourgeois exploiters. Without such a liberation national independence must be either the shallowest trickery or the most hopeless illusion. The masses of the Egyptian people, in their struggle for national independence, are fighting, and will have to fight, both the forces of British imperialism and the combined forces of Egyptian feudalism and bureaucracy and the Zaghulist bourgeoisie. It is in this respect that the development of an organised Labour Movement in Egypt in the years since the war is of the first importance.

There are 2,000,000 workers (strictly speaking, an urban proletariat) in Egypt, 4,000,000 “ unclassified occupations and unemployed ”—chiefly agricultural labourers—1,000,000 poor peasants (with holdings of less than half an acre) and half a million only slightly less poor peasants (with holdings averaging just over two acres). These masses of workers and peasants were the driving force of the 1919 revolt. The spirit of mass revolt, lacking conscious direction as it did, forced nationalism into a revolutionary channel. The nationalists on their side, as has already been remarked, simply exploited the mass revolt in the hope of frightening British imperialism into a compromise satisfactory to the aspirations and interests of the Egyptian bourgeoisie. But gradually a working-class movement began to appear as an independent political force. The revolt of 1919, and the strikes of that year and of 1920, produced a great crop of trade unions, mostly small and local. A number of these federated in the General Federation of Labour in 1921, which body was stated to comprise 60,000 members. In

1921, too, had been formed the Egyptian Socialist Party (actually the Egyptian Communist Party), which itself was responsible for organising certain unions, and has considerable influence in the General Federation of Labour.

That the party is making itself a power in Egyptian politics is witnessed by the recent arrest of its secretary and several leading members while they were taking part in a strike demonstration at Alexandria. The police attacked the demonstration as it was leaving the offices of the General Federation of Labour, wounding several workers. The party offices, as also those of the General Federation of Labour, were closed by the police—acting, it is said, under the orders of the British military authorities—after all papers and documents had been removed. This was on March 18, though the news did not leak out in Europe till ten days later. No protests have been heard from the nationalists or from the British Labour Party.

The party is working to unite the forces of the town workers, and through this union to gain for itself a leading position among the masses of agricultural labourers and peasantry. The analogy of the Russian Revolution is evident.

The party has formulated a "popular and concrete" programme for the everyday struggles of the workers and the peasantry. For the town workers the programme includes :—

- (a) Labour protection laws.
- (b) Factory inspection.
- (c) The eight-hour day.
- (d) Recognition of trade unions and working-class political organisations.
- (e) Equal pay for Egyptian and European workers.
- (f) Establishment of industrial committees.
- (g) Formation of producers' and consumers' co-operatives.

The agrarian question is, undoubtedly, the most urgent of all the questions confronting the Egyptian working-class movement and the Socialist Party : everything turns upon it. The proposed agrarian programme of the party includes :—

- (a) Suppression of farm tenure, by which the landowner secures the larger half of the products of the soil.
- (b) Cancellation of debts of peasants owning less than thirty *feddans*.¹

¹ 1 *feddans* = 1.036 acres

- (c) Total exemption from land taxation for all peasants owning less than ten *feddans*.
- (d) State confiscation of all land holdings over 100 *feddans* (including Crown and Shrine lands)—the surplus land to be divided among the landless peasants or used to inaugurate communal farms. (It should be noted that 13,000 landowners own nearly half the cultivated land of Egypt.)
- (e) Organisation of committees of poor peasantry and agricultural labourers in the villages to agitate for these demands.

At the same time it must be emphasised that these are all provisional half measures. The full demand of the working class and the poor peasantry is the entire socialisation of the land.

In the matter of immediate political demands the Socialist Party stands uncompromisingly for the revolutionary nationalist struggle, recognising that insofar as the nationalist movement is anti-imperialist it is fulfilling an historically revolutionary rôle—and that also the bourgeois revolution, that the nationalist movement implies, represents an historic advance on the existing social condition of Egypt. The immediate political demands of the party are therefore :—

- (a) Union of the Sudan with Egypt.
- (b) Nationalisation of the Suez Canal.
- (c) Cancellation of the national debt.
- (d) Abolition of the capitulations.

The bourgeois character of these demands is not denied : they are put forward (for instance, the nationalisation—that is, the return to Egypt—of the Suez Canal) because of their anti-imperialist nature. It would be a profound misconception of the tasks of an Egyptian fighting working-class party to consider the nationalist struggle as one with which the party had no concern.

What is the attitude of the Labour Party towards the Egyptian nationalist struggle against British imperialism? Has this, the premier political party of the British working class, realised the true significance of the nationalist movement, and the movement, as yet unorganised and unled, of the Egyptian masses that lies behind it? A few statements taken at random of representative leaders of the Labour Party will provide the answers to these and similar questions.

In November, 1920, Mr. Arthur Henderson, concluding an

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article on Egypt in the *Daily Herald*, laid the gravest emphasis on the dangers to the British Empire resulting from a policy by which :—

a key position of imperial commerce and strategy (may be) made, instead of the home of a friendly, co-operating people, a centre of sedition and revolution.

This statement needs no comment. It is frankly and unashamedly imperialist. A year later, in the same paper, Mr. H. N. Brailsford wrote a long article in which he stressed the ease with which “we” (the British imperialists) might come to an agreement with the Zaghulists. He felt that “we” could not satisfy Egyptian claims to the Sudan, though he admitted that “we” only held it by right of conquest—and the rule there of “our” officials was more enlightened and efficient than the rule of Egyptian officials. But his main contention was contained in the words :—

The temper of the Egyptians makes it possible for the Imperial Power to do a seemingly generous thing at surprisingly little cost to itself. None of the real interests of British imperialism incur the slightest risk. It is hard to say whether we occupied Egypt chiefly because it is a rich field for investment, or still more because it is the half-way house to India. There would be under an alliance recognising the independence of Egypt ample recognition of both these interests.

This statement also requires no comment. Mr. Brailsford, author of “The War of Steel and Gold,” was as imperialist as Mr. Henderson. In January, 1922, the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and the Executive of the Labour Party issued a joint manifesto, in the course of which they mournfully deplored that the report of the Milner Mission (to judge from the tone of the manifesto, quite the last word in far-seeing statesmanship, so far as Egypt was concerned) was never adopted by the Government. The Milner report, they said :—

explicitly recognised the right of the people of Egypt to independence, and proposed measures “in order to establish the independence of Egypt on a secure and lasting basis.” It was incumbent upon the Government to take immediate steps to act upon the report of this commission and to establish Egyptian independence through a treaty negotiated between itself and a duly-elected Government of the Egyptian people.

It was a favourite expression on Labour Party platforms at this time—that the policy of the British Government was making a “second Ireland” of Egypt. When British imperialism achieved

its masterstroke of the Irish Free State, it was followed with blind adulation by the Labour Party. If British imperialism attempts, by a bargain with the Zaghulists, to make a "second Ireland" of Egypt in this newer—and, perhaps, more sinister—sense, there can be no doubt whatever that the leaders of British labour will come to heel as blindly as before. Mr. Ben Spoor, who was taking his holiday in Cairo this spring, declared, as a result doubtless of his observations on the spot that :—

No solution of the Egyptian question is possible until militarist control has been replaced by diplomatic control.

Could there be a more concise and perfect expression of the views of enlightened imperialism on the problem of Egypt ?

Mr. E. D. Morel, that valiant exposé of the iniquities of imperialist exploitation of backward races, described Zaghul Pasha quite accurately in an interview with the *Manchester Guardian* as an "Anglophile constitutional agitator," who was *persona grata* with Lords Cromer, Kitchener, and Milner : he went on to say that he was convinced that it would be perfectly easy for "us" to reach agreement with Zaghul on the "reserved points" (Suez Canal, protection of foreign interests, &c.). He did not approve of giving up the Sudan to Egypt, but thought this a matter that could be amicably settled between "our" Government and a Zaghulist Government. He concluded with these words :—

We should adopt towards Egypt the same policy so signally successful in the case of South Africa under the inspiration of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. To keep down Egypt by force would be a costly and difficult, dangerous and, above all, stupid policy.

The Labour Party have crowned their imperialist record in the matter of Egypt by the publication of a letter in *The Times* of March 29 signed by the best part of a hundred Labour M.P.s (including one or two "independent" minded members of other parties). This letter, while praising Lord Milner, and appealing (not in vain, for he was released a couple of days later) for the release of Zaghul, could actually say that :—

Among the signatories to this letter are many who had hopes of the success of Lord Allenby's policy in Egypt. There are none who question his sincerity and patience in endeavouring to make it succeed.

After which astounding piece of soft talk over reactionary imperialism at its worst, the letter, with scrupulous courtesy, points

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out the failure of the Allenby policy—and draws the moral on the approved Zaghlist lines.

The leaders of the Labour Party have, then, no conception of the true significance of the Egyptian nationalist movement. They do not even seem to have heard of the existence of an Egyptian working-class movement. They cannot view the rapidly advancing agreement between the British power and the Wafd as a part of the process of imperialist development. They cannot see that such an agreement, though it is a widening of the basis of imperialist rule, is at the same time an abdication of imperialism, is, in fact, a stage in imperialist decline, which offers a magnificent opportunity for the organisation of the further step in the Egyptian revolution—the revolution of the Egyptian toiling masses. The statesmen of His Majesty's Opposition follow all the time in the track of British imperialism. They do not view the Egyptian question as part of a universal struggle—the class struggle. But then the very outlook of the leaders of the Labour Party is itself a product of the imperialist stage of capitalist development. And those same leaders would be the first to deny that it is a party of the class struggle.

THE FRANKFORT CONFERENCE

ON Friday, March 17, the International Conference called by the Rhenish-Westphalian shop stewards met to formulate a working-class programme of action in view of the occupation of the Ruhr. The Conference derives its extraordinary importance from the fact that it is the sole attempt that has been made to unite the forces of the workers of Europe against both protagonists in the struggle for the undivided control of Lorraine iron and Ruhr coke.

Although the President of the Conference was a German Social-Democrat, the German Social-Democratic Party refused to take any official part in the Conference. This refusal was typical of similar parties in other countries—for instance, the I.L.P. and the Labour Party. The Communist International at once accepted the invitation to the Conference. Their letter of acceptance expresses clearly their willingness to collaborate with workers of all parties or of no party to plan and push forward united working-class action against imperialism.

We give this letter in full below :—

FROM THE EXECUTIVE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN FRANKFORT-ON-MAIN

WORKER COMRADES—

When the Executive of the Communist International received the invitation (sent to all organisations of the workers by the Rhenish Workers' Councils) to participate in an International Conference at Frankfort-on-Main, they did not hesitate a moment before accepting it. The Communist International places the whole of its influence at the disposal of those sections of the German proletariat which realise the nature of their international task. A special delegation of the Executive of the Communist International will bring to your Conference our messages on all the burning issues which have arisen out of the occupation of the Ruhr.

The Executive believes that it is vitally necessary to explain clearly, definitely, formally, to the entire working class of the whole world that the Second and the Amsterdam Internationals have again failed, that they have once more openly neglected to fulfil what was their most elementary duty.

All the resolutions recently adopted by the Second and Amsterdam Internationals, at their Peace Congress in the Hague, have become scraps of paper. One of the best-known leaders of the Amsterdam International, Edo Fimmen, recently declared that nobody dreams of carrying out these resolutions. Edo Fimmen tries to make out that the proletariat is responsible for this, saying that the international working class stands on one side divided and helpless.

Exactly the same method was used by various disguised Socialist Chauvinists in 1914 at the beginning of the war. They also tried to avoid responsibility for their wobbling and treacherous conduct, blaming the working class instead of their leaders. The Second and Amsterdam Internationals are helpless because they have no inclination to fulfil their duty. The working classes are helpless and divided because the Second and Amsterdam Internationals divide them and consequently make them impotent. If the leaders of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals were ready to set up a united front with the Communists, and make it a reality, the workers would be in a very different position. We ask the leaders of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals, once more, if they are willing to form a united front with the Communists. We are quite ready to negotiate with Social Democratic and Reformist trade union leaders, although our opinion of these leaders has been repeatedly confirmed in the most glaring way possible.

The principle enemy at the present moment is French Imperialism. The German workers can only be successful in overcoming this enemy after they have suppressed their own, the German, bourgeoisie and in that way have linked themselves closely with the revolutionary working class—with Soviet Russia in the first place, and also with the French proletariat.

The Communist International is ready to do all it can to build up a genuine united front with the workers who belong to the Second and the Amsterdam Internationals. But if certain leaders who dominate the Social Democratic Party machines succeed in wrecking the united front, the Communist International will in any case give a lead to the fighting sections of the German and the French proletariat.

Only the Communist Parties and the Revolutionary Trade Unions have done their duty up till now. Only the German and French Communist Parties, following the lead of the Communist leadership, have worked out a common line of action and begun to act upon it. Only the Communists have fulfilled their international duty in the fight against French Imperialism, and have found their way into the prisons of Poincaré the Brute.

The very fact that at such a critical moment two big Communist Parties, the German and the French, have consulted together is an event of the greatest importance for the workers of the whole world.

International conferences are, for us who are Communists, no mere parades or simple demonstrations. What we are striving to achieve is a real effort to link together the daily fight of the various sections of the international working class. Political life is now internationalised to a very high degree. The very reactionaries are forced to prepare international measures in common; the revolutionary movement of the workers has far more need to do so. The workers must learn not merely to pass resolutions in common, but also to act together, to unify their methods of fighting, and to plan common struggles.

As a milestone on the path towards the inevitable proletarian revolution, the Conference in Frankfort-on-Main cannot be disregarded. Stubbornly, remorselessly, and with inexhaustible energy the workers of the various countries must aim at creating a real combined fight.

The Executive of the Communist International sends the heartiest fraternal greetings to the much-tried workers of the Ruhr, to the fighting section of the French workers, and to the vanguard of the proletariat throughout the whole world.

Our slogans are yours also:—

Down with French Imperialism!

Down with the German Bourgeoisie!

Up the Revolutionary Labour Movement in France and Germany!

Moscow, March 16, 1923.

THE EXECUTIVE OF THE COMMUNIST
INTERNATIONAL.

In the *Bürgersaal* at Frankfort, guarded night and day against local Fascists by workers' defence groups—"centuries"—Communists sat in conference with members of other working-class parties and working-class militants from no political party. The President's opening remarks gave the note of the Conference—declaring that with the invasion of the Ruhr had sounded the hour for the preparation of international working-class action against world imperialism. An agenda was drawn up, comprising:—

(1) The situation in France.

(2) The situation in Germany.

(3) The occupation of the Ruhr and the danger of war.

Reports were delivered by French, German, and other delegates on the situation in their respective countries. Great enthusiasm was evoked by the reading of the declarations in favour of a united front of the German Social Democratic and Independent Socialist groups at the Conference. Both declarations condemned the anti-working-class stand taken up by those working-class organisations which had refused to participate in the Conference. In particular the declaration of the Majority Socialist (now United Social Democrats) group deserves reproduction, as a significant indication of the desire of workers in an avowedly reformist party to form a revolutionary united front with all other sections of the working class.

DECLARATION OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GROUP

By occupying the Ruhr, the French and Belgian imperialists have committed an act of war full of danger for the German workers as for the

workers of France and Belgium. The occupation of the Ruhr is an outrage like a whip-blow to the German working class. It is a grave menace to the French and Belgian working classes.

It signifies the danger of a new slaughter of peoples. Even if an agreement is arrived at between Poincaré-Loucheur and Cuno-Stinnes, this would only be to the detriment of the workers on both sides of the Rhine. The exploited masses of the three countries will be the victims equally of war or of peace between French and German capitalists.

The occupation of the Ruhr has given new strength to French and German chauvinism. In both countries Fascism is arming, with national defence as its pretext. In both countries Fascism desires, in order the better to enslave Labour, to provoke a new national war.

Face to face with this situation, the working class must form, both nationally and internationally, a united front of resistance against imperialism, against the danger of war created by the Ruhr occupation, against Fascism. The working class can only expect victory from its own unity.

Accordingly, we demand that the United German Social Democratic Party and the General Federation of German Trade Unions (A.D.G.B.), breaking with their policy of coalition and collaboration with the exploiters, enter into the struggle for the Workers' Government in the different States of Germany and in the Reich.

Similarly, the German bourgeoisie is in a large measure responsible for the war and the Ruhr occupation.

For union with the bourgeoisie must be substituted union with the revolutionary working class, by the alliance of the United Social Democracy and the German Communist Party. We can only realise a united front with the workers of France, of Belgium, of England, and other countries by fighting against the German bourgeoisie. In this great struggle we must place ourselves side by side with Soviet Russia, the first and only Workers' State. We demand from the Second and Amsterdam Internationals the support of their organisations in the international class struggle. The international situation is as serious as on the eve of the world war. We will not have a new 1914. We demand from the international organisations of the workers—
War Against War!

The Social Democratic group of the Frankfort Conference declares that it will do all in its power to encourage this will to action in the Social Democratic Party and the trade unions. United with the bourgeoisie the working class is damned. Forming a united front, national and international, it is invincible. We will conquer peace and freedom.

Long live the International United Front!

THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GROUP OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

In one of the outstanding speeches of the Conference, Losovsky analysed the Ruhr occupation and the resultant political problems facing the working-class movement, both nationally and internationally. The long resolution of the Conference on the Ruhr

and the danger of war embodies the salient features of Losovsky's address.

A further resolution, instructing the Committee of Action set up by the Conference to establish by all possible means a united front with the Right-Wing Internationals and their chief constituent parties is appended to the main resolution.

I

THE RUHR OCCUPATION AND THE DANGER OF WAR

The Frankfort International Conference—which has been summoned on the initiative of the Rhenish Westphalian Workers' Councils, and which has been attended by delegates from the most important countries in Europe, and by workers belonging to all political parties: Social Democrats, Independent Socialists, Communists, and Revolutionary Trade Unionists—resolves, in view of the situation created by the occupation of the Ruhr, as follows:—

(1) That the national and international struggle against the occupation of the Ruhr, especially in Germany, France, and Belgium, must be continued and intensified. The slogan is *Evacuation of Occupied Territory*.

(2) That in order to secure the annulment of all international treaties of spoliation, and above all the Treaty of Versailles, the most energetic struggle must be organised and carried on in all countries.

(3) That in pursuit of this struggle a systematic agitation must be carried on in the army in general and more particularly among the troops in occupied territory. The work of enlightening the white and coloured troops is one of the most important tasks of the present and the near future.

(4) That an unceasing propaganda of fraternisation must be carried on among the workers in occupied territory and the occupying troops, both equally wage-slaves whom the bourgeoisie are trying to set at each other. It is necessary to prove to the French, Belgian, and English soldiers that the German workers are in an equal degree the irreconcilable foes of the ruling class in Germany and France.

(5) That the necessary work of reconstructing the devastated areas must be carried out at the expense of the ruling classes in all countries, under the control of workers' organisations, till the reconstruction of the devastation caused by the war gives place to the general socialist work of reconstruction.

(6) That work among the young people, among women, ex-service men, and war invalids must be carried on much more seriously in every country. The Revolutionary Young People's organisations and the Ex-Service Men's International organisations, which have already made a successful beginning to their fight, are bound, just like the revolutionary women, once more to be drawn into the active fight of the entire working class against war, imperialism, and Fascism.

(7) That it is necessary to organise inquiries on the spot in the Ruhr, by representatives of the workers in the shops and in the trade unions of France, Belgium, and England, in order that the workers of these countries may get to know the position of the workers in occupied territory, who are exploited under the double yoke of their own employing class and of foreign imperialism.

(8) That German-French-Russian fraternal unions must be formed among the workers of the most important industrial groups at least, above all the railwaymen, the miners, and metal workers. It shall be the task of such fraternal unions to plan and carry out actions of solidarity and, further, to help in co-ordinating international action in concert with the Committee of Action.

(9) That control commissions, international as well as national, must be formed among the workers in those industrial groups which are employed in the transport and preparation of munitions (workers in the armament, aeroplane, and chemical factories, miners, seamen, railwaymen, and transport workers). These control commissions must be formed in the first instance on the frontiers, at railway junctions, and at the most important harbours.

(10) That special conferences of representatives of workers' councils and trade unions from Germany, France, Belgium, and occupied territory, especially from Paris, Brussels, and Rhenish Westphalia, as well as Berlin, must be immediately summoned for a discussion of all questions which are connected with the position of the workers in the occupied territories, in order to consider what may be the most practical immediate action.

(11) That from April 15-22 will take place an International Week of Protest against the occupation of the Ruhr territory. The demonstrations of this week must be the occasion for tremendous manifestations against the predatory Treaty of Versailles, against the danger of war, against Fascism. Workers' organisations of all parties, and especially the wide sections of the labouring masses who belong to no party, must be attracted to join in these demonstrations.

(12) That the demonstrations of this week must be supported by an agitation, both inside and outside Parliament and all public bodies, against the Ruhr occupation and the danger of war.

(13) That during this International Week of Protest the fight against any policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie must be taken up everywhere. The creation of a united working-class front and the organisation of an international strike in case of a threat of war can only be the fruit of a continual and unrelenting struggle against the capitalist offensive in all its forms.

(14) The International Conference appoints delegations which it empowers to negotiate with the Amsterdam and Second Internationals, the Vienna Union, as well as with the workers' organisations in the various countries with regard to the preparation and carrying out of this Week of Protest against the Ruhr occupation and the formation of a united working-class front in the fight against Fascism, war peril, and the Versailles Treaty. These delegations shall be made up of representatives of the various political tendencies represented at the Conference.

(15) The Conference elects an International Committee of Action of twenty-one members, from among the delegates of all the political and economic organisations represented at the Conference. If any organisations not at the Conference should, after its conclusion, join in the international united front they also can send their representatives to the International Committee of Action.

(16) As a body that is above party, the International Committee of Action

is instructed to set up and maintain amicable relations with workers' organisations, whatever their political tendency. When the leaders of the national and international organisations refuse to work with the committee, the latter is empowered to make a direct appeal to the masses, over the heads of their leaders, through the workshops, the works councils, and local organisations.

(17) The International Committee of Action has the task of uniting all the political and economic organisations of Labour in the struggle against international imperialism. For this purpose the International Committee of Action is to negotiate with all workers' organisations for the convening of a Workers' International Conference for the struggle against imperialism, war, and Fascism.

(18) The Conference authorises the International Committee of Action to set up a fighting fund to which all workers are invited to subscribe.

As the occupation of the Ruhr is a result of French-German-English conflict for European hegemony, the workers of those countries have special duties to perform in addition to their general duties.

The struggle must be still further intensified and widened in France, where the Communist Party and the C.G.T.U. have up to now splendidly sustained the fight against the imperialist designs of the French bourgeoisie.

Scrap the Versailles Treaty !

Get out of Germany !

These must be the slogans.

Agitation and propaganda must be followed up by public demonstrations against the rise in prices, against the tax on wages, against colonial exploitation, against the use of the army—and, above all, black troops—in the conflicts of Capital and Labour, and for the taxation of the propertied classes alone, for the emancipation of the colonies, for the abolition of standing armies, for the freedom of State officials to hold what opinions they please, for the arming of the working class.

The tactic of the united front which has already had good results in France must be carried on both by the political party and the revolutionary trade unions. Since in France works councils are only being formed, it is necessary to begin with a campaign for the summoning of congresses of delegates from all workshops, factories, and mines, firstly according to districts, and later on a national scale, to consider the question of the unity of the trade unions and the danger of war.

In Germany the duty of the revolutionary working class involves the struggle on two fronts. The immediate aim is the expulsion of the French imperialists from the Ruhr with the aid of the international action of the workers.

In opposition to 1914, the German working class is to-day the only force which can defeat the external foe and end the conflict in the interest of the working class. They thus stand for the interests of the wide mass of the population, whereas the bourgeoisie, in consequence of their readiness to come to an understanding with the French bourgeoisie for the common exploitation of the workers, is paralysing the defence of the Ruhr.

The workers are gathering and organising the *cadres* of the revolutionary

struggle against French imperialism, the only struggle by which Entente imperialism can be conquered. In order to defeat the imperialist aims of the French rulers and to create the strongest bond of international solidarity among the workers, what is required is to set going a mass fight for the overthrow of the Cuno Government and the formation of a revolutionary Workers' Government.

While the Social Democratic Party and the reformist Trade Unions subordinate the interests of the workers to those of the bourgeoisie, by supporting the Cuno Government, it must be the task of the revolutionary workers to bring together all the forces of their class, especially those outside the Ruhr district, for the struggle against the Cuno Government. That is only possible when everywhere—in opposition to the endeavour to lower wages and to lengthen the working day, and in opposition to the murder gangs of Fascist nationalists who are maintained by the big industrialists—the united revolutionary working-class fighting front is set up.

The works councils and workers' control commissions must increase their agitation against the rise in prices, for control of production, and for the creation of workers' "centuries" for defence against Fascism.

To the evasion of taxation by the propertied classes, the labouring masses have to oppose the claim for the seizure of values in kind by the Workers' Government. The working class refuses to stand the expense of the sham resistance of the German bourgeoisie to the French bourgeoisie. It is opposed to all policies of capitalist reconstruction.

The revolutionary workers of Germany are more than ever opposed to any new capitalist war. They would far rather hand over to the avidity of French imperialism the wealth accumulated by the German bourgeoisie—in order to gain the breathing-space necessary for building up the power of the working class—instead of sacrificing workers' lives in a capitalist struggle. If these efforts to maintain peace were wrecked by the greed of French imperialism, in spite of the enthusiastic support which a German Workers' Government would not fail to evoke in all countries, and if the forces of Entente imperialism did not give up their attempts to wage war on the German Workers' State, the German and Russian Red armies, allied with the revolutionary workers of the Entente countries, would be able to beat off the forces of imperialism and counter-revolution.

The revolutionary workers of Great Britain have as their task to urge the Labour Party and the trade unions to decisive action against the occupation in Germany, and against the danger of a new war. In the Press, in public meetings, in a ceaseless Parliamentary agitation, a great campaign must be carried on to enlighten the British working class on the situation in the Ruhr, and also on the results of predatory British imperialist policy in Ireland, in the Near and the Far East, especially in Turkey, in Egypt, and in India, and to unite them in opposition to this policy.

Propaganda in the army and the fleet is of the first importance. The wholesale unemployment, the capitalist attack on wages and hours, the taxation of the workers, and the housing question provide the opportunity for a fruitful agitation for the united working-class front.

In Italy, where is still going on the Fascist orgy, which has dragged the

labouring masses into an actual state of slavery, the more easily to drive them into new wars, the most urgent task is first the unification of all the revolutionary forces of the country, and then the reconstitution of the workers' mass organisations, and the concentration of the forces of the workers in town and country, without distinction of party.

A struggle must be carried on for the freedom of assembly, of the Press, and of association; for the release of political prisoners; for the guarantee to the workers of housing without rent increases: against wage reductions, wage taxation, the rise in prices and the arbitrary dismissal of workers and officials for their opinions; for placing all taxation on the propertied classes; for the guarantee of peasants' labour contracts; for the complete application of the eight-hour day.

Legal and illegal work must be vigorously carried on in the army and in the Fascist organisations. This work of organisation and unification of all the forces of the workers in the struggle for the defence of the vital interests of the labouring masses, relying on the solidarity of the international working class, will provide the necessary forces for the overthrow of the Fascist regime.

In Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Rumania, and Jugo-Slavia the Governments are directly controlled by French imperialism, and through these States French imperialism stretches its fingers out towards the frontiers of Russia and towards German territory. In these countries, when war is threatened, our slogans are: "*Down with the French financiers and their flunkys! Down with those who are pledged to sell the blood of the workers for French gold!*" In these countries which border upon Soviet Russia it should be specially noted that the workers, if war involved Soviet Russia, would fight on the side of the Workers' Republic. Here our work must be closely connected with that of the revolutionary workers of France and Germany. Agitation and propaganda must be closely bound up with the fight against unemployment, the rise in prices, oppressive taxation, political oppression, &c.

The Russian workers who have shown their international solidarity during the Ruhr crisis by big demonstrations, by collections of money, and by sending corn to the Ruhr, will give a decided support to the French and German workers in their fight against their exploiters. The revolutionary Governments of the future will receive unstinted support from the Russian workers, and will find them ready to enter into a common struggle in order to gain power for the workers and assure their rule. An alliance of the Russian Soviet Power with the victorious Workers' Governments of Western Europe will render the power of the working class invincible.

II

THE REFORMIST INTERNATIONALS AND THE UNITED FRONT

The Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions, the Second International, and the Vienna Union of Socialist Parties have not accepted the invitation of the German Works Councils to take part in the Frankfurt Conference, and indeed have not replied to the invitation. Nevertheless, the German Independent Socialist Party has sent a delegation to this Conference and Social Democratic groups have—despite the ban of the official organs of

their party—sent delegates. English trade unions, affiliated to Amsterdam, have sent fraternal greetings to the Conference. The great masses of the workers desire the united front of the working class in spite of the sabotage of their leaders. Accordingly, the Frankfort International Conference instructs the Committee of Action it has set up to invite the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions, the Second International, and the Vienna Union of Socialist Parties to organise, both nationally and internationally, the United Working-class Front against the occupation of the Ruhr and against Fascism, on the lines of the other resolutions of the Conference. Further, the Committee of Action is instructed to open direct negotiations with the most important sections of the before-mentioned International organisations.

The Conference spent some time in the discussion of Fascism and the organisation of the workers' struggle against it; and in her address on this subject, Clara Zetkin analysed Fascism as a symptom of social pathology, and pointed out its intimate connection with the whole question of the Ruhr occupation. Fascism, she said, divides the working class and infects it with the poison of nationalism, so that the sole force—the organised working class—capable of conquering at once the Comité des Forges and the German coal magnates, is threatened with destruction. It is not enough to dismiss Fascism as a White Guard movement. Fascism is distinguished from such movements by its demagogic appeals to the working masses, its attempts to organise its own trade unions, and so forth. It endeavours to demoralise the workers' movement from within in order finally to break it with the greater ease. It is at once a superior form of reaction and the incarnation of extremist militant nationalism. It has become, in a sense, a mass movement, rooted in wide strata of the petty bourgeoisie, the small peasantry, and even certain proletarian elements. But it has only become a mass movement because of the decay of capitalist society. This decay (following on the world war) has meant that large numbers of lower middle-class elements, intellectuals, small civil servants and State employees, unemployed ex-officers, &c., have lost the comfortable positions they held (or that their families held) before the war, and have been depressed to a level beneath even that of the working class. Further among the Fascist bands are to be found workers who were deceived by the unredeemable promises made by reformist socialists—promises of a gradual amelioration of conditions within capitalism, of a steady progress "towards Social Democracy." These various elements—political waifs they might

be called—form the basis of Fascism, which, with its glorification of the State, the neutral State above all classes and parties, its militant nationalism, and its extreme reaction, can only be described as the Bonapartism of the twentieth century. The policy of reprisals by individual workers against individual Fascists is suicidal. The reactionary force of Fascism can only be countered by the weapon of organised mass struggle.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM

It is the vital task of the workers to take up the struggle against Fascism, victorious in Italy, and in process of development in other countries. They must overcome Fascism politically; they must organise themselves to repulse Fascist attempts at force. To this end—

(1) Working-class parties and organisations of all political tendencies must set up a special body to direct the fight against Fascism. The duties of this body are:—

- (a) Collection of all information about the Fascist Movement in their own country.
- (b) Systematic enlightenment of the working class as to the hostility of the Fascist Movement to the working class by means of newspaper articles, pamphlets, leaflets, posters, meetings, &c.
- (c) Organisation of the workers' defence by the formation of armed "centuries"; organisation of workers' transport control committees to prevent the transport of Fascist bands and their supplies.
- (d) To win for this struggle all workers without regard to their political differences; to summon all Labour parties, trade unions, and all working-class organisations to a common resistance to Fascism.
- (e) To carry on a campaign against Fascism in all Parliaments and public bodies.
- (f) To devote special attention to the anti-Fascist enlightenment of the youth amongst whom the Fascists recruit most of their militant followers. To invite the organisations of working-class youth to take an active part in this work.

(2) Fascist organisation takes place on an international scale. It is therefore necessary to organise the struggle of the workers against Fascism internationally as well. For this purpose an International Workers' Committee must be set up. The duty of this International Committee must be, besides the collection of information, to organise an international struggle in the first place against Italian Fascism. In this struggle the committee will adopt the following methods:—

- (a) An international campaign for spreading information through newspapers, posters, pamphlets, and mass meetings as to the anti-Labour character of the Italian Fascist Government, and as to the systematic destruction of all workers' organisations and institutions by the Fascists.
- (b) Organisation of international mass meetings and demonstrations against Fascism, against the representatives of the Italian Fascist State in foreign countries, &c.

- (c) Employment of Parliamentary action; appeals to the Parliaments, especially the Labour groups in them, as well as to the international Labour organisations, to send delegations to Italy for investigating on the spot the position of the workers.
- (d) Demands for the immediate release of all imprisoned working-class fighters.
- (e) Material and moral support of the persecuted workers of Italy by collections of money, asylum for refugees, support of their work in foreign countries, &c. To this end the action of the Red International Relief must be extended to the victims of the repression, and all workers' organisations invited to collaborate with it.
- (f) Investigation of the possibility of a political, material, and moral boycott of the Fascist Government.

The International Committee of Action is instructed to put itself in touch with the Provisional Committee for the fight against Fascism and with the organisation which it has set up in order to establish a permanent committee.

It must be impressed on all workers that the fate of the Italian workers will be their own if they do not prevent by means of an energetic revolutionary fight against the ruling class the giving over of masses of the less class-conscious elements to Fascism. The workers' organisations must consequently apply all their energies in defence of the toiling masses against exploitation, oppression, and usury, *i.e.*, against capitalism, and oppose the sham revolutionary and demagogic watchwords of Fascism with a serious and organised mass struggle. Further, they must resist with all their strength the first attempts to transplant Fascism to their own country.

The World of Labour

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CANADA

Workers' Party Congress

THE Workers' Party in Canada has made noteworthy progress during the first year of its existence. On the occasion of its second convention, during the last week of February, 1923, the strength of the Party was declared to be 4,808, composed of the Finnish section numbering 2,028, the Ukrainian 880, and the general section with 1,900 members. Since the first convention a year ago the party has succeeded in organising groups in sixteen labour councils, over sixty local railroad bodies, two big metal mining camps; the railroad groups include representatives of thirteen out of the sixteen standard crafts, with three of the Big Four.

The policy of the party and its attitude to the question of the United Front against capitalism were discussed; the difference between European parties and those of U.S.A. and Canada was clearly shown in the resolution on the United Front. It was urged that the first essential was to work in the industrial field for the amalgamation of existing craft unions into a series of massive industrial unions, in which connection approval was expressed of the Trade Union Educational League work, and in the political field the chief work is to consist in being in the forefront of the Labour Party. To this end the Workers' Party decided to join and strengthen the sections of the Labour Party wherever they exist, and to help to create them where they are non-existent.

This co-operation with the Labour Party, the resolution declares, in no way signifies that the Workers' Party will sink its distinctive aims and principles; on the contrary, the maintenance of its independence as an organisation is rather regarded as an essential guarantee for the further progress of the Labour Movement in Canada.

It was therefore decided, in accordance with this policy, to work out a common programme of action to fight the following questions of immediate importance to all workers:—

- (1) Unemployment; (2) "open shop"; (3) eight-hour day; (4) free speech;
- (5) freedom to picket; (6) espionage, both by Government and employers;

(7) injunctions as a means of intervening in Labour struggles; (8) establishment of complete political and economic relations with Russia; (9) intervention of police and military forces of the State in Labour struggles.

In view of the wretched conditions of the farmers and their dependence on large corporations the Workers' Party decided to co-operate in their struggle against capitalism, pointing out, however, that the farmers cannot hope for success unless they gain the co-operation of the industrial workers in the cities.

It was decided to conduct a campaign against the immigration policy of the Dominion Government which aims at increasing the number of available wage-slaves in a country where unemployment is all too rampant.

FRANCE

Defeat of Moselle Miners

ON April 5 the delegates of the Moselle miners decided to terminate the strike which had begun on February 8 and involved 25,000 men. Negotiations with the employers broke down on February 12, when they refused to consider an increase in the wretched wages of the miners. Time strengthened the hands of the employers, for after a few days' embarrassment coal deliveries from England and America began to arrive and operate against the struggling French miners.

The strike, it must be pointed out, was supported by the Unity Confederation of Labour (C.G. T.U.), and the General Confederation of Labour (C.G. T.) issued instructions to its followers not to support the strike, though it is reported that they did down tools.

The demands of the miners were:—

- (1) Restoration of wages to the level before wage reductions took place and, to meet the increased cost of living, a general increase of 1.50 francs for underground workers, and 2.50 francs for surface workers.
- (2) Incorporation of the cost of living bonus in the wage.
- (3) Establishment of workers' councils to control loading and unloading.
- (4) Abolition of the deduction of income tax from wages.
- (5) Examination of the pensions system in force in Alsace-Lorraine, and of the special claims of the miners in Alsace-Lorraine.

The Moselle workers' wages were reduced by four francs since 1919, and are twelve to sixteen francs a day, and skilled hewers receive twenty francs. They have now returned to work unconditionally after a brave stand of eight weeks. More than 300 militants were imprisoned, and many were deported because of alleged pro-German tendencies!

GERMANY

Labour Government in Saxony

THE Social Democratic Buck-Lipinski Government in Saxony was forced to resign on January 30. The immediate cause of the fall of the Cabinet was the failure of the Home Secretary, Lipinski, to grapple with the growing Fascist forces. The then Cabinet was dependent on the Communist deputies' support for its majority, and when the Communists put forward a vote of no confidence in the Social Democratic Government,

which had only been in office since December 1, 1922, the bourgeois parties voted with them because they regarded the Government as too advanced.

On March 21 a new Cabinet was formed, with Dr. Zeigner as Premier. This decision was reached after long deliberations, the more reactionary Social Democrats favoured a coalition with the bourgeois parties; but the Social Democratic Congress in Saxony decided against any such coalition by a three-fourths majority and in favour of approaching the Communist Party. The Communist Party promised support on certain conditions, which were accepted by a delegate conference on March 20; the result is that the new Government is composed of left-wing Socialist elements.

A summary of the Communist demands, which the Zeigner Cabinet has accepted, is as follows:—

(1) The formation by the United Social Democrats and the Communists of a Workers' Defence Force, under the direction of the police, for the protection of the workers' demonstrations, meetings, and organisations.

(2) The establishment of special workers' commissions to control profiteering in all centres with more than 10,000 inhabitants, and elsewhere if necessary.

(3) A law to be enacted for the establishment of a Chamber of Labour, which should be based on the fact that the Chamber is a body of public justice. Amongst other duties it is to prepare laws and formulate complaints and proposals to be put before the Government and public bodies. The members of the Chamber are to be subject to recall.

(4) Amnesty to be granted by law to those imprisoned for crimes committed through economic want. Further, the Government should continue the present practice of granting amnesties to certain political prisoners (wholesale amnesty on this head is not insisted on so as not to include counter-revolutionaries).

On April 10 Dr. Zeigner announced his programme in the Diet in accordance with the above summary. He further declared that the Government would do everything in its power to substitute communal production for the present system of private enterprise; that it would defend the eight-hour day and support the workers' struggles for better conditions generally. The Premier pointed out that Fascism was organising its forces, and that unless drastic measures were taken to suppress these organisations the Government and the workers would be defenceless, hence the necessity for the formation of the Workers' Defence Force.

The chief Fascist organisation is the Storm Division (*Sturmabteilung*) of the German National Socialist Labour Party, composed chiefly of ex-officers, students, higher officials, who take an oath to "obey unconditionally" any call to duty issued by the organisation.

The acceptance by the Social Democrats of the Communist conditions is the first actual step in forming a united front, and it is generally expected will lay the foundation of a real Workers' Government in the province of Saxony.

Trade Union Collaboration

For the preservation of the common interests of all workers adhering to the German General Federation of Trade Unions (A.D.G.B.), the Federation of Clerical Employees (*Afabund*), and the General Federation

of German Civil Servants (A.D.B.) an agreement on the following basis has recently been entered into:—

(1) That the common good is to take precedence of private interests in questions of economic policy. The preservation of the republican form of government, as essential to the social advancement of the German workers, is to be worked for by all means at the disposition of the signees. The A.D.G.B., together with the other two organisations accessory to this agreement, declares for the International Federation of Trade Unions as a means for the advancement of united trade union action of all grades of workers.

(2) The A.D.G.B., Afabund, and A.D.B. undertake, as independent organisations, to work together in all matters appertaining to trade union, social or economic affairs involving the interests of the workers. Each organisation is to maintain its independence in questions which only involve the interests of a section, though discussion should take place with the other organisations prior to action on points that might influence the interests of other sections.

(3) The A.D.G.B. is to be regarded as the central organisation of the workers, the Afabund as that of the employees, and the A.D.B. as the central organisation of the civil servants. Accordingly the affiliated societies to each of the three central organisations should organise the various specific categories. Any departure from these rules must be mutually agreed on. Disputes not settled by agreement should be referred to arbitration.

(4) To further joint work between the A.D.G.B., Afabund, and A.D.B. in instances when common questions arise, delegates in a consultative capacity should attend executive and committee meetings as well as congresses. When necessary congresses and conferences can be jointly arranged from time to time. The rules as to voting and representation should be those of the A.D.G.B.

(5) Local and district organisation should work on the lines recommended in (4) for the central organisations. Groups of the A.D.G.B., Afabund, and A.D.B. in similar industries and trades should form joint committees.

(6) The agreement signed on April 12, 1921, between the Afabund and A.D.G.B. is in no way effected by this new arrangement.

This is generally welcomed as a step towards united action, at least amongst the right-wing trade unionists.

JUGO - SLAVIA

Election Figures

THE results of the recent elections in Jugo-Slavia, which were carried out under a shameful system of terror, are finally available, and show: Radicals 120 seats; Raditsch (the supporters of independence for the Croats) 70 seats; Democrats 50, Bosnian Mussulmans 18, Serbian Peasant Party 9, German Minorities 6, Rumanian Minorities 1, and the Socialists 3 seats (a loss of more than two-thirds).

The terror, aimed at the newly formed Independent Labour Party (*see* LABOUR MONTHLY, April) and the independent trade unions, did not prevent a considerable number of votes being given in various centres to the Communists viz., Belgrade 1,255 against 529 for the Social Democratic candidate, Laiback 866 (Social Democrat 132), Zagreb 1,249 (Social Democrat 286), Krain 5,589, and in the Styrian territories they gained 5,782 votes.

NORWAY

The Left Wing Movement

THE Communist Party in Norway is still called the Labour Party, and though its twenty-sixth congress at Christiania, February 23-26, decided to change the name of the official organ from "Socialdemokraten" to "Arbeiderbladet," the name of the party remains unchanged. This congress was faced with a difficult position due to divergent views within the party. The Tranmael section favoured accepting the decisions arrived at by the Communist International Congress last November, with certain reservations; whereas the Scheffo, or left-wing section, demanded the whole-hearted acceptance of the decisions of the World Congress.

After much discussion at the congress the Tranmael resolution was passed by a vote of 94 to 92. Subsequently Tranmael put a resolution, which was passed, in accordance with the decisions of the International; thus enabling the congress to decide on the reorganisation of the party so as to permit membership on an individual basis.

It must be recalled that the Norwegian Labour Party is built up on the trade unions which are affiliated *en bloc*, and hitherto there was no provision for individual members, hence non-Communist elements within the party were easily possible.

The congress was attended by 186 delegates, representing about 55,000 members; three delegates were present representing the Communist International.

Trade Union Congress

The reorganisation of the Trade Union movement in Norway has been contemplated for some time, and conferences have dealt with the question at great length. It was expected that a final decision would be made at the recent Trade Union Congress at Christiania, March 4-12; however, the present position is a compromise between the rival suggestions, which were: (1) The formation of local trade union councils from the existing local trade unions and the formation in every locality of groups of unions belonging to the same industry, thus realising the principle of industrial unionism; (2) the dissolution of both existing national and local trade unions and the formation of local trade union councils from the workshop and factory clubs.

The congress decided to adopt the recommendations of the Executive Committee, which involve:—

(1) Substitution of the present national Trade Union Federations by national industrial unions.

(2) Additional powers for local trade union councils, which are to be formed in every district.

(3) The place of work to be the unit of trade union organisation, to be represented usually by an industrial union.

These proposals are to be put into effect not later than June 30, 1924.

The question of international orientation was another important topic of

discussion. In October, 1922, withdrawal from the International Federation of Trade Unions at Amsterdam was decided on by a vote of 62 to 15 of the Representative Body. The congress, however, came to no definite decision on this issue; it approved withdrawal from the I.F.T.U. and appointed a committee to examine the question of affiliation to the Red International of Labour Unions at Moscow, this proposal received 151 votes to 64, with 7 abstentions. The procedure will entail submission of the committee's decisions to the vote of the members before October 31, 1923; after which the Representative Body will be responsible for the final decision. A considerable section of the congress favoured approaching the new Syndicalist International, a proposal which received the support of the Social Democrats as well as that of the Syndicalists.

BOOK REVIEW

DUAL UNIONISM AND ITS RESULTS

The Bankruptcy of the American Labour Movement. By Wm. Z. Foster.

ON page 6 of this booklet the writer, Wm. Z. Foster, astonishes us by declaring that the British workers have made wonderful strides towards acquiring a revolutionary point of view. But as the reader continues he will excuse him for this extravagant remark, for he will realise that Mr. Foster is seeing the British Labour Movement through American horn-rimmed spectacles. It is somewhat of a shock to find our unions here quoted with envy as instruments of industrial unionism; to be told that the leaders of the British Labour Party have advocated, to a greater or less extent, class solidarity and class action. And yet Mr. Foster is by no means of the moderate school of Labour; he is one of the leading, if not the leading spirit of the left-wing movement in America.

The explanation of this seeming paradox is to be found in the low level of the American Labour Movement. Industrially it is years behind English and European Labour—politically, it hardly exists. Out of a population of 110,000,000, not more than 3,500,000 are organised in trade unions. That is, the proportion of trade unionists to the general population is 1 to 31 in America, while in Germany it is 1 to 4½ and in England 1 to 7½. But not only are the American unions weak in numbers; both structurally and spiritually they lag behind the industrial movements in most other countries of western civilisation. In spite of the consolidation of the capitalist forces, they have made little progress towards organisation by industry, and, with the notable exception of the United Mine Workers of America, still cling to the old craft union basis. This policy has been fostered by the reactionary leadership of the American Federation of Labour, inspired by its President, Samuel Gompers. Mr. Gompers' policy of keeping the American Federation of Labour weak and functionless has been the source of his own strength. By zealously guarding the privileges of the craft unions, and fighting every attempt to strengthen the power of the national organisation, he has bought the loyalty of the majority of the Labour leaders. It is difficult to believe that among these leaders are to be found known crooks and convicted criminals, and that many officials have become enormously rich through robbing both employers and workers.

Nor have the American workers been better served by their own Press. British Labour, with its one daily, has often envied the American Movement with its scores of Labour papers. But Mr. Foster shows how a Labour Press can be used against the interests of the workers when in corrupt and reactionary hands. For example, during the great steel strike of 1919 (which Mr. Foster has described in his book on the subject), the three Pittsburgh Labour papers helped the employers to defeat the strikers.

But, curiously enough, Mr. Foster does not blame Mr. Gompers, the arch-reactionary, or the corrupt Labour leaders, for the bankruptcy of the American Labour Movement. He points his accusing finger to Daniel de Leon, the rebel, and to the militants of the I.W.W. and other revolutionary movements. To their policy of "dual unionism," he declares, the American

Labour Movement owes its present collapse. Hampered at every step by the corrupt trade union bureaucracy, it seemed so much easier to these revolutionary idealists to leave the reactionary unions to stew in their own juice, and to start afresh with the disciples of the faith. In 1905 the Industrial Workers of the World was launched by Eugene Debs and Bill Haywood with a blare of trumpets, and swept into its ranks all the left-wing elements of American Labour. To-day, with far fewer members than it had at the beginning, it is a voice crying in the wilderness. This policy of building up separatist organisations: drained the existing trade unions of all life and vitality, and left them to the complete control of the tools of the employers. "In stultifying and ruining the trade unions," declares Mr. Foster, "dual unionism condemned to sterility every branch of the entire Labour Movement, industrial, political, and otherwise." Thus, the Socialist Party, which in 1912 had a membership of 118,000, and was for some years the chief vehicle of revolutionary thought in America, is to-day a negligible factor with a membership of less than 10,000. This collapse Mr. Foster attributes to the fact that the party was not based on the every-day struggle of the workers, expressed through their industrial organisation.

The one redeeming feature in this gloomy picture is the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. This union developed out of the work of an organised minority in the old United Garment Workers, and only broke away from the reactionary parent union when they could carry the rank and file with them. This union has just issued its Documentary History, together with the proceedings of its fifth Biennial Convention held in May last year, which is a record of remarkable achievement.

A new era has, however, dawned for the American Labour Movement. With extraordinary rapidity the doctrine of dual unionism has been overthrown and the militants have gone back to the unions to infuse them with new life. This change in tactics was apparently brought about by the strong stand against dual unionism taken by the Third Congress of the Third International and the First Congress of the R.I.L.U. in 1920. This movement "to keep the militants in the organised mass" is centred round the Trade Union Educational League, formed in November, 1920. The object of the league is to establish a left bloc of all the revolutionary and progressive elements in the trade unions, locally and nationally. In order to facilitate organisation by industry, national industrial sections are being organised in all the big industries, with the result that amalgamation schemes are at present "sweeping the country like a prairie fire." At its first national conference held in August last, the League adopted a programme of which the chief aims are the abolition of capitalism, repudiation of the policy of class collaboration, and the adoption of the principle of class struggle, and affiliation of the American Labour Movement to the R.I.L.U. Although it has been at work with this programme only a few months, the league has made great strides, its chief success being the promotion of amalgamation schemes; also it has secured the affiliation of many local unions and central labour councils to the R.I.L.U. The league also publishes a monthly journal, the *Labor Herald*, which Mr. Foster edits. Mr. Foster has managed to get into sixty-two pages an extraordinarily clear and comprehensive survey of the American Labour Movement, though some aspects of it perhaps suffer somewhat through congestion.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Business Methods and Accountancy in Trade Unions.* By Joseph Lynch. Labour Publishing Company, 12s. 6d.
- Through the Russian Revolution.* By Albert Rhys Williams. Labour Publishing Company, 7s. 6d.
- Un Livre Noir (Diplomatie d'avant-guerre d'après les documents des archives russes, novembre, 1910-juillet, 1914).* Tome Second. Preface par René Marchand. Correspondances d'Islovsky et de Benckendorf, Rapports de Sazonof et de Kokovtsef, &c. Librairie du Travail, 96 Quai de Jemmapes, Paris, 20 fr.
- Job Analysis and the Curriculum.* By Edward K. Strong and Richard S. Uhrbrook. Williams & Wilkins Company, Baltimore, \$1.50 and \$2.50.
- Production.* By George Belt. Foreword by George Lansbury. The Herald League, 3s. 6d.
- Shall Trade Unions be Regulated by Law?* Affirmative by Samuel Untermyer. Negative by Morris Hillquit. Hanford Press, New York.
- Guild Socialism.* A syllabus for class and study circles. National Guilds League, 6d.
- Apprenticeship in Modern Industry.* By G. W. Thomson. National Guilds League, 3d.
- The Real Enemy and other Socialist Essays.* By Dan Griffiths. Foreword by J. Ramsay MacDonald. Grant Richards, 2s. 6d.
- The Revolutionary Act.* By Frederick Engels. Translated by Henry Kuhn. Appendix by Daniel de Leon. New York Labor News Company. (London Agency: L. Cotton), 9d.

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NOTES of the MONTH

A MONTH that began, in Britain at least, with a May Day so unlike a real demonstration of the will and vigour of the working class that it seemed almost meaningless, has seen the swift development of events that threaten the working classes of all countries with the blackest terrors of reaction and of war, and is ending with the loosing of forces which neither capitalism nor the workers can control. No body of workers in Central or Western Europe has yet achieved the solidarity necessary to resist these forces, but as they come into the daylight the workers everywhere are beginning, slowly, to realise their strength and aim, and to see the links that bind them together in the framework of modern Imperialism. In every field of the class struggle these events have come so nearly simultaneously that this fact alone would seem almost enough to prove that they are parts of one historical process. The British Ultimatum to Russia was followed in two days' time by the murder of Vorovsky ; and these two events came just at the time when the King of England was engaged in bestowing honours and compliments on Mussolini, the most striking figurehead in the ranks of the Terrorist reactionaries of Europe. The results of the Labour Party's mediation between British workers and capitalists were made clear at the moment when the Labour Party was trying, with perhaps even more disastrous results, to mediate between the Russian workers and the capitalist rulers of Britain. When the accession to power of Witos in Poland, with a programme of war and repression before him, was being expected almost daily, the resignation of Bonar Law came, and the path was open in this country for the Diehards to secure control. It is these events that shape the issues that the workers have to face, and it is their decision on these issues that will dictate the progress or failure of the working-class movement throughout Europe.

WHEN any one of the issues that have to be decided becomes so clear, and touches so directly and immediately the interests of the whole working class that there scarcely seems room for any disagreement within the movement, it is seen at once that the clearer these issues

become, the more obviously do they converge on one central point. Wages, hours, hunger, war—whenever the issue on these is sharply cut, and almost every organisation in the movement is forced by the obvious determination of the workers to line up on a common policy, this simplicity is found to be due to one fact. *The class struggle has for a moment, on this point, appeared plainly in the open.* As yet there is only one main issue that has become really clear in this way—the question of war with Russia. But half a dozen others are sharply enough defined ; mediation by Labour leaders in industrial disputes, analysed in these notes last month, has been lifted out of the class of debatable questions by the award of the arbitrator on building wages and by the action of the Norfolk farmers during the past month ; the position as between the Communist Party and the Labour Party received its most adequate illustration when the chief bodies that go to make up the Labour Party in London formally refused an offer of Communist assistance in a demonstration against war with Russia ; and the tangled morass of the Labour Party's attitude and declared policy in foreign affairs has, in the same way, had a piercing light thrown upon it by the Russian debate in the House of Commons on May 15 when the Government's most effective arguments were drawn from the writings of J. R. Clynes and Philip Snowden.

THEIR attitude towards the attack on the Russian Workers' Republic does not, for the workers of this country who have any consciousness of class whatever, admit of argument. It is the clearing of this issue that has shown up the others in sharper relief. What the rank and file think, and what they are determined to do, has already been shown ; anyone who has been in the big industrial centres during the past fortnight must be aware of the volume of protest that is gathering force every day. In clear distinction to this is the formula, put forward by Ramsay MacDonald, that the Labour Party's duty in international affairs is to perform the " great and godly work " of leading the Government out of its difficulties. This smoothing of the path for Imperialism is seen at once to be exactly on a level with the principle of mediation in industrial disputes, and it is worth while turning for

a moment to the demonstrable results of this principle as applied to the builders' struggle before considering its almost disastrous results with regard to Russia.

THE building trade workers were induced to submit all their position on wages to arbitration. What was that position? Their rates of pay were supposed to be governed by a sliding scale, varying with the cost of living, and this scale could be revised *by agreement* if the state of trade was exceptionally good or bad. They had agreed to the first revision put forward; accepting owing to the state of the industry a reduction in wages beyond the fall due to the decrease in the cost of living. A second such revision was demanded, and the builders refused. The volume of protest against the employers' terms from the branches was greater than in many first-class strikes. Division amongst the employers was in sharp contrast to the solidarity of the men. And the strongest point in the builders' position was that the employers were breaking the original contract by insisting on a revision of the wage-scale *without agreement in the Council*. The whole of this position has now been given away; the sliding scale has been altered to give a larger decrease in wages for a given fall in the cost of living, and an immediate cut is being enforced. These are the results of mediation and of arbitration.

HOW can the Labour Party leaders be said to have "mediated" in the case of Russia? The British Government's ultimatum is not a single act, unconnected with other international developments. It is obviously to be linked with the visit of Viscount French of Ypres to Roumania, where a group of British staff officers have been "studying old battlefields," and the similar visit of Lord Cavan, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, to Poland just after Marshal Foch had spent some time in that country. Poland's attitude during the trial of Czepliak and Budkievich (both of whom were in communication with the Polish Government while Russia and Poland were at war) was provocative in the extreme; and before these lines are in print a war govern-

ment may be in power in Poland, practically led by Korfanty, the invader of Silesia. Lord Curzon's ultimatum, therefore, has got to be taken as one move in the diplomatic preparations for a new war. That the leaders of the Labour Party realise this to some extent is obvious from their speeches. But instead of exposing the flimsy basis of the charges against Russia that are heaped together in the Note, Ramsay MacDonald laid stress on what he considers the disquieting nature of the Russian Government's ordinance forbidding the teaching of religion in the schools. Accused during the debate of having slurred over this question, he intervened to boast that he had emphasised it. In effect he admitted the validity of Lord Curzon's arguments, pleading only that these arguments should not be carried to their logical conclusion until time had been given for discussion and negotiations. Once the Government promised, not to negotiate, but to "explain the terms" of the Note with Krassin, the Labour leaders ceased their opposition, and withdrew their amendment. Their failure to press the debate to a division enabled the Government to judge accurately the quality of the opposition they had to face. What the result of this will be may be clearer by the end of the month; a foretaste has been given by the Government's refusal to guarantee that relations would not be broken off while the Commons were in recess.

THE Labour Party Conference which meets in June may be faced, not with these policies alone, but with their results—results which future action can repair to some extent, but which cannot be reversed. Yet the Conference is almost the only place where issues as significant as these can be brought forward by actual representatives of the rank and file of the Party. Nine-tenths of the representation at the Conference is mechanical; it is part of the official machinery of the Trade Union Movement or of the Party itself. But amongst the representatives of the local organisations, however few these are in proportion to the rest, there are workers who can fight to reassert the control of the Party membership over the Executive and the Parliamentary group. The latter are at present carrying out a policy of co-operation with the opponents of the working class. None of tactics or strategy by

which this policy is put into effect have ever yet been sanctioned by the Party as a whole. This policy if not stopped in time, will be found to have bound the Party, helpless, to serve the needs of the Capitalist State. At the Labour Party Conference it is possible at least to ask : " Why have you not fought for the workers in industry, in the Ruhr, in Russia ? " And it is possible at least to fight, once again, for the first and most important need of the working-class movement—the need for unity in action.

THE constant pressure to reduce wages and extend hours, the struggle for industrial control of Europe waged by methods that impose crushing burdens upon the working class, and the attack on Soviet Russia, are all parts in a movement that can only be described as the capitalist offensive. Against this offensive the working classes are forced, by every condition of their lives, to fight wherever it touches them. But because the workers have never yet been organised, or have organised themselves, to fight internationally, and because they are still prevented from doing so by " Internationals " composed of leaders who are swayed by national patriotism, international action has so far been made impossible, and the struggle to organise such action has had to meet the sabotage of the " moderates " as well as the opposition of the governments. Because there is no clear conception of what is working-class policy in this country, and no possibility of rank and file control of the Labour Movement, each section of the workers has to struggle along alone ; and the influence of the accredited representatives of other sections, or of the whole movement, is thrown on the side of the capitalists.

UNITY of the working-class movement cannot be secured by a policy of inaction or of compromise. No one can expect a unity of aim or action between those who are struggling and those who are assuming the offices of an arbitrator. The formal unity established by the General Council has had absolutely no results whatever. Nothing can persuade the workers of the Ruhr to consider the Labour Party's consultation with French

and Belgian "Government Socialists," or their reports (blessed by Lord Curzon) as effective action on their behalf. The workers of Russia and of the Continent, organising to prevent the attack on the Soviet Republic, must find in the manifesto that states "there are faults on both sides" little sign of real support. Unity can only be achieved in action; and resistance to the capitalist offensive in all its forms and phases, is the only test by which working-class policy can be judged. The policy of mediation will leave the whole movement divided and impotent. It is the business of the delegates to the Labour Party Conference to see that this policy is not passed by without a vigorous protest from the rank and file.

T. L.

THE LABOUR PARTY'S APPROACH TO POWER

By R. PAGE ARNOT

THE Labour Party is now accepted as the next Government of this country. It is accepted by the other Parliamentary parties, by the Civil Service, and by the Court. It has become the official Opposition, His Majesty's Opposition, the alternative Government. It is accepted by the Press even when they fight against it. True, it may or may not win at the next election : there is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip. But the actual fortunes of war are of less importance than the general acceptance of the idea of a Labour Government in the near future. It is " accepted " : that is the cardinal fact.

How has this enormous change in public opinion come about ? Ten years ago the Parliamentary Labour Party was despised, was being sneered at as " the tail of the Liberal dog." The idea that the Liberals might be displaced by Labour was the Utopian vision of " fanatics like Snowden." The idea of Labour men on the Treasury Bench was regarded not so much with horror as with incredulity. How comes it that incredulity has given way to expectancy, and horror been replaced, at any rate in some quarters, by equanimity ?

The process has been extraordinarily rapid. The year that saw the end of the war saw also the end of the old Labour Party, a class-organisation as it seemed, a federation of trade unions and socialist societies, pursuing certain common aims ; and the beginning of a new party, open to men of all classes who accepted the vision of a new social order, to be attained by strictly constitutional means. In the four years that followed the new party grew towards maturity. The follies of youth were shed, the influx of former Liberals brought in men of ripe judgment and experience in parliamentary tactics. With them came a new atmosphere, an increasing awareness of exactly what would and what would not " go down with the electorate."

It began to be felt, more strongly than ever, that so long as the party appeared to be concerned only with the interests of one

class, even though that was a subject class, it could never win general acceptance, far less a general election. Everything had to be done to make it clear that Labour stood for the interests of the community as a whole, that community comprising both an employing class and a working class. The Labour Party, it was stated again and again, was "not a class party." But fine words butter no parsnips. It began to be recognised that in its composition, in its policy, and in its action, the Labour Party must approve itself in the eyes of the public. So long as the Parliamentary Labour leaders gave, however qualified a backing to great strikes (a class-struggle activity), so long as acknowledged Communists (pledged to an unrelenting class-war) remained within the Party, so long as the charge could be brought that the Labour Party were "out to break up the Empire," so long the electorate would fight shy of it. These matters had to be remedied. Accordingly Labour leaders began to appear as mediators in industrial disputes, even at the cost of antagonising some of the unions concerned.¹ The repudiation of the Nationalist movement in India and the abstention from any agitation against General Smuts' provocation of a rebellion on the Rand and subsequent shootings of workers. took away the reproach of "empire wreckers." The affiliation of the Communist Party was firmly rejected and the door was bolted and barred by a resolution which limited the right of unions or local labour parties in the choice of their delegates.

But if it was remarkable how quickly in the last few years the Labour Party learnt the art of making an appeal to all classes in the community, it was nothing compared to the development of the last six months. The difference is made still more remarkable by the altered character of the new Parliamentary party. The Parliamentary party returned in the 1918 election was what would be called extreme right-wing in its outlook. The Jingo election of 1918 had rejected almost all Labour members of a pacifist tendency. The

¹ Apart from earlier incidents, the most significant act of this kind before the General Election was the intervention of Mr. Arthur Henderson in the engineering lock-out of a year ago. Sir Allan Smith had refused to meet the Amalgamated Engineering Union except on the basis of a document which the A.E.U. were unwilling to accept. The Ministry of Labour failed to bring the parties together. Where the Ministry of Labour had failed, Mr. Arthur Henderson, by signing a basis of agreement, succeeded.

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1918 Parliamentary Party had supported the war, demanded reparations and stood by the Treaty of Versailles. One would have thought that a Labour Party with such recommendations would have been received with the utmost respect by the others. But it was not so, and if there was a double-headed coalition on one side of the House, there was a double-headed opposition on the other. No one was ever quite sure whether Mr. Adamson or Sir Donald Maclean was the Leader of the Opposition.

The new party is different in its composition. It contains a large number of pacifists—most of the party are members of the I.L.P.—and the small but energetic group from Glasgow includes personalities most unacceptable to the Old Etonians and Harrovians sitting on the Government benches. If composition and personality were anything, one would expect the new party to be greeted with horror. Precisely the opposite has happened. It is with this new party that the rapid developments of the last six months have occurred.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has filled the rôle of Leader of the Opposition in an irreproachable manner. He has dined with the King, and with hardly any comment the Labour Party has accepted that fact. Other Labour leaders have come into close contact with their Majesties, and the circle of Labour leaders to whom this privilege is extended is being widened month by month. At the moment I am writing this Mr. Will Thorne has been explaining to a newspaper man what he said to the Prince of Wales with whom he had just been dining. He found the Prince of Wales "broad-minded," and he said to the Prince, "I shall have some dirty bouquets thrown at me for this."

Mr. Thorne's remark is significant because he clearly felt that he was right in what he was doing, though he knew that members of the working class would object to his doing it. It is a little over four and a-half years since Mr. Thorne made another significant remark which really sums up the policy and success of the Labour Party. He was urging the Labour Party Conference, just before the 1918 General Election, not to withdraw its support from the Lloyd George Government. Some phrases about class struggle had been used in that Conference, and Mr. Thorne met at once his interrupters and his memories of the past by saying: "If you go

into Parliament you must be prepared to play the parliamentary game."

If you go into Parliament you must be prepared to play the parliamentary game. That sentence, and not "Workers of the World Unite" might well become the slogan of the labour parties. If it is correct then all the rest follows—the extreme correctitude of the front Opposition bench, the country house parties, the Astor dinners. What is this game, this parliamentary game? It is the capitalists' game that they are playing. The bourgeois party system makes certain demands which are all unknown to the ordinary labour man who thinks that by simply voting in a majority of the House of Commons at the General Election a Labour Government is thereby assured. It is not so. There are traditions, there are principles and methods of government, there are certain questions of policy and outlook which must not rest upon the chances of a snatch General Election.

Again and again in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords on certain fundamental issues which arise it is proudly stated by the Leader of the Opposition and proudly accepted by the Government that "the question is one on which there can be no division of opinion," that "every section of the House stands behind the Government in its attitude on this matter." Fundamental issues of this kind are usually those of foreign and imperial affairs (with which are connected the Army and the Navy), or questions of the maintenance of law and order inside this country. If there were any chance that a General Election might be a revolution, then you may be sure Conservatives would fight against the advent of Liberals or Labour men with other methods than those now employed. If victory of a party meant victory of a class then it would be resisted by every conceivable means. But it is understood that party changes will operate only on a certain limited range of matters: that certain other matters are, in the cant phrase, "above party." What are these matters that are above party? They appear to be now one thing, now another, but a very little thought reduces them to one single conception—that is, the assured continuance of the rule of the bourgeoisie. It is the continuance of capitalist civilisation as we know it that is above party. These "certain matters that rise above party issues," these be Your Gods,

O Israel. The Labour Party have entered the House of Rimmon, and they must bow themselves before Rimmon. *If you go into Parliament you must be prepared to play the parliamentary game.*

Still, it may be said that it is possible to do much for the working class within the framework of the British Constitution, that the interests of the community as a whole are very largely the interests of the largest section of it. That is a profound mistake. The interests of the community as a whole are largely the interests of the governing section of it. What has playing the game meant in the last few months, even with the new and militant parliamentary party? It has meant already that the Labour members, long before they form the Government, have raised no objection to certain questions that are "above party." When it was clear upon what official programme the Labour Party had won the Election, it was possible to prophesy that unless the Election programme was reversed the Labour Party must be more and more compromised with imperialism. But it did not seem likely that the process would have been so extraordinarily rapid. Writing in another article in this magazine last December, I said :—

It is not necessary to enter into formal relations with bourgeois parties in order to become a supporter of the existing system. To compromise the working-class position it is only necessary to refrain, in a significant manner, from wrecking the capitalist plans. When in the Reichstag elections of 1907 the Social Democrats endeavoured to curry favour with the jingo electorate by not voting against the war credits, they lost the future of European Socialism. Their tacit consent was given to the enormous expansion of German navalism which rushed neck and neck with the building of British Dreadnoughts to the catastrophe of 1914. There was no need for them to make a pother about voting the war credits in August, 1914. They had sanctioned them in advance by their election programme of 1907.

Within five months the Labour Party in the House of Commons refrained from opposing the Naval Estimates. The Naval Estimates were on May Day; and it had been arranged that the business to be taken that day should be non-contentious, that is, one of these "certain matters that rise above party."

A further instructive example was furnished by the debate on Soviet Russia on May 16. There was a division of opinion amongst the parliamentary parties as to the policy which should be pursued towards Soviet Russia. The Leader of the Opposition was at pains

to make his disassociation from Soviet Russia rather more clear than his disassociation from the particular policy of the British Government. No one who heard it could have had any doubt as to the honesty of Mr. MacDonald when he repudiates, as he has often done, any idea that the primary issue is the struggle between the workers of every country against their oppressors. On questions of foreign policy there may be a difference of opinion with the Government of the day ; there can be no question of taking the part of a " foreign government " against " our own."

Nor is it only the attitude of Mr. MacDonald. The most telling points in the reply of the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in this debate were the passages he cited from articles, speeches, and behaviour of members of the Labour Party. The situation has entirely changed from the time of 1920. Here again there is a threat of war, but this time there is no determination to resist that war expressing itself in a Council of Action. In 1920 the Polish jingo propaganda received short shrift from the Labour Party members : here it was some of the best-known left wingers who allowed themselves to accept the anti-Soviet propaganda of " religious persecution."

Some of the moves in the parliamentary game have to be played outside the House of Commons. Reference has already been made to the necessity for mediation in strikes rather than partisanship. In the last two months this policy has had new and startling developments. The farm labourers' strike was a most hopeful movement of resistance by the most sweated section of the British proletariat. The Bishop of Norfolk, a paid advocate of industrial harmony, had failed to induce the farm labourers to accept a settlement. The Ministry of Labour, after it in turn had failed, made way for the Leader of the Opposition : the strike was settled by Mr. MacDonald, and the labourers were induced to accept terms by which they will receive 27s. for a 54-hour week—an offer which they had unanimously rejected during the negotiations. From the point of view of the labourers, Mr. Harry Gosling, who has never been an extremist, could write in the *Daily Herald* of April 23 :—

I regard the settlement as the poorest one regarding wages with which I have ever been connected.

That is the one side of the picture. The other side is reflected in the laudatory comments of the capitalist press. The *Manchester Guardian* said :—

It is an excellent thing that Mr. MacDonald should not only have resumed neutrality himself, but have been regarded as neutral. The suspicion that the Labour Party is, as its name implies, a class party will, whenever it takes office, make its handling of labour disputes a kind of touchstone for public opinion. If Mr. MacDonald has helped to dispel the suspicion, there is something gained.

The matter could not be put more plainly. For the sake of the prestige of the Labour Party as a non-class party the farm labourers of Norfolk have been sacrificed.

Greek wrestlers used to anoint themselves with oil to prevent their opponents from getting a firm grip : modern parliamentary parties in their struggles are rather like those wrestlers. It would give the bourgeois parties a firm grip if they could prove that the Labour Party was a class party, and thus rouse on the other side the class instincts of every section of the bourgeoisie. The possibility of their gaining that grip is being steadily removed. The attempts of papers like the *Evening Standard* to raise prejudice by calling it the Labour-Socialist Party, and by allegations of class bias read like feeble slanders contrasted with the unwavering repudiation made by the Labour leaders, both in speech and in action, of any taint of class feeling. They are admirable tacticians. They out-general the bourgeois parties at their own game : they are playing the parliamentary game, and they are playing to win.

In the history of English sports it is known that after a game has been played long enough it tends to fall into the hands of professionals. From the point of view of many of the workers the parliamentary game appears to be one of these old English sports. The importance of this comes out in considering the relation of the Parliamentary Labour Party to the Labour Party. It has for many years been an anomaly that there should be no control exercisable over the parliamentary group either from the executive or the conference of the Labour Party. It might have been thought that after the strength of the Party in the House had been doubled, the question of the relations between the two bodies would have arisen. A fact of enormous significance in the agenda for the forthcoming conference is that the question is

not raised. There is not the slightest sign that any local labour party or any other constituent body realised that the positions of the two bodies had reached a new stage of development. Yet it is perfectly clear that the raising of the Labour strength to nearly 150, Labour members occupying the position of the official Opposition, called upon to decide their tactics in the urgency of debate, means that henceforward the Parliamentary Party is bound to decide the policy of the Labour Party as a whole. It is they who will commit the whole party to policy after policy, to issues of strategy as well as day to day tactics. Even if they overstep the mark they are certain to receive an indemnity from a Labour Party conference, unwilling to give the bourgeois parties any chance of saying that the prestige of the Labour leaders is lowered, or that "they cannot control their followers." Gradually the Labour Party as a whole is bound to develop in the direction of a mere electoral caucus : at the best it will be like the National Liberal Federation. From the lines on which the Labour Party has developed there seems no escape from this future. This forthcoming Conference agenda is noticeable on the one hand for the flood of resolutions on purely electoral questions—in future the main business of the local parties as such—and secondly by the absence of any attempt to settle the broadest issues of policy. The feeling seems to be that there is no longer need to do anything except trust the Labour M.P.'s. The significance of this future development is that it assimilates the structure of the Labour Party as closely as possible to the traditional structure of the bourgeois parties. Thus the Labour Party is still further introduced within the British party system.

Of course, the grosser abuses of the capitalist parties do not exist in the Labour Party. There is no secret war chest, there is no buying a seat in the House of Lords, and the suggestion that if you cannot buy one in the House of Lords you can buy one in the House of Commons either if you are a wealthy trade union or a wealthy ex-Liberal would be treated as merely flippant and cynical.

All these things to which attention has been drawn have happened within the last six months. In the ordinary course of parliamentary history it will be at least a year or two before the Labour Party come near their goal, but already the consciousness

of the approach to power is producing this extraordinary effect : this determination to play the parliamentary game, and to sacrifice everything in order to win it. Let us see what is likely to happen when the position is reached of actually discussing whether to assume power or not and on what conditions. Let us remember the traditions of British politics. It is true that the idea of coalition is at once banned by the Labour Party, and condemned by the Independent Liberals and the Conservatives as well. It is, therefore, clear that an open coalition is unlikely, but the Labour Party resolution which excludes any alliance or electoral arrangement does not and cannot prevent the sort of tacit understandings which we are told inevitably arise in the atmosphere of the House of Commons. These understandings, of course, are perfectly legitimate for the purpose of Opposition. It is when the combined Opposition has been successful that the difficulty will arise. Now what has been the practice ? For over fifty years—and, if we include the Peelites, for a much longer period—the two-party-system of British politics has, in practice, always included a third party. That party does not enter into coalition : it holds the balance. The Government exists upon sufferance : the party that holds the balance can make terms. In the 'eighties the Irish were the third party. From 1906 to 1914, with the advent of Labour, one might say that there were two third parties in the House. In the present House of Commons the Liberals are now that *tertium quid*. If the Labour Party is to consider this when faced with the problem of taking power it will not feel that it has to do something for the Liberals, but it will understand quite definitely that the Liberal support is conditional on certain things not being done. Labour may get into power, but before it does so it will have to make the final renunciation. It has shed the follies of its youth, it has shed the revolutionary wing : it must finally shed its programme.

Further, we have to face the thought of the next election. The Labour Party can go into that election with the conviction that, whatever it says, it is bound to get the trade union and working-class vote. No need therefore to waste any words in wooing it. All its energies must be bent on gaining the good will of the middle-class electorate. Pledges will be made that no radical change will be made without a further reference to the country, and in the

excitement of the election the nerve of some of the leaders is bound to give way. That has happened already. In 1918, Winston Churchill announced that the Government would nationalise railways : in the heat of the election. In 1922 election several of the Labour members lost their nerve and began to wobble on the capital levy. The Labour members will return next time shackled with pledges given to the capitalist section of their constituents.

So far in everything that has been said the matter has been considered from the outlook of the Labour Movement. It is necessary also to consider the outlook of the bourgeoisie. What had they to see when they looked out on the world after the war ? Ahead of them they saw nothing but trouble : they saw their Empire likely to crumble. Already at the bidding of the American bourgeoisie they have abandoned their 200-year old naval supremacy : Britain is no longer mistress of the seas. Again, they are forced meekly to accept the refusal of all their creditors to pay them a penny, while they themselves will have for many years to pay an annual tribute of many millions to the American bourgeoisie. Hastily, by a mingled show of force and fraud they have tried to patch up the position in India, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. In all these countries the aim is to ally the British imperialist bourgeoisie with the native bourgeoisie, and renew the bonds of Empire on the basis of this joint exploitation of the workers. But worse is to come. They know now that they cannot rely on their self-governing dominions. Canada is becoming planetary to the United States, and is insisting more and more on its status as an independent country. In Europe France holds the leadership. From Eastern Europe for 6,000 miles eastwards, there stretches the territory of a new power standing outside all the others, fundamentally the most dangerous. Attempts to crush that power by a combination of all the capitalists failed in 1919 and 1920. In the two years succeeding, under the Lloyd George pacifist policy, the bourgeoisie were almost deceived into thinking that the revolution could be killed by kindness and commerce. Lloyd George could say " they are abandoning Communism." Now with the failure of Genoa and the Hague, the bourgeoisie have realised that they

cannot crush Soviet Russia by force or undermine it by capitalist commerce. The proletarian State maintains its monopoly and careful guardianship of foreign trade. With the failure of the Lloyd George policy in Europe, and his consequent dismissal from power the aims and the policy of 1919 have returned in full force. The *Morning Post* had never been deceived into thinking that Lenin was becoming a good bourgeois or an ordinary Labour leader, and now all of them see that the *Morning Post* was right ; that the real menace to their power is this possibility of proletarian rule. More and more their minds turn to the desperate policy that they must crush it, this idea of proletarian rule, by intervention abroad and Fascism at home. Nothing else but Fascism can stop it they feel, unless—*unless*—. It is at this point that our Die-Hard section of the bourgeoisie has adopted Fascism. The others begin to feel, perhaps, that their safest bulwark against a proletarian revolution is something like what they had in Australia or in Germany after the war, a Labour Government. That is what they mean when they accept the idea of a Labour Government : they mean something which will be the bulwark against revolution : something which can be trusted to shoot down strikers as Noske did if it is necessary for internal order. It is, perhaps, not so surprising that the Labour Party is “ accepted ” as the next Government in this country.

If the Labour Party proceeds along these lines of development there may be great hope for a Labour Government : there will be little hope for the workers. But if it is to reverse the present policy then it must mean a reversal of most of what has been done during the past five years. It means the assertion of control by the Labour Party over the Labour M.P.'s. It means an alteration of the whole constitution as well as the policy and composition. But to deal with the problem of how a real Workers' Party is to be built, and the question of how far the Labour Party can become that Workers' Party is impossible to treat of here. It is sufficient to point out that this is one of the tasks that lie before the workers of this country.

THE RUPTURE OF THE TRADE AGREEMENT

By C. J. HUNTLY

WITH the ending of the world war in November, 1918, the capitalist Powers were free to turn their attention to a more serious problem—Revolutionary Russia. The Soviet Government had then been established for a year ; the Soviet idea had spread through most of Central Europe ; even the Allied armies had shown signs of infection. It was no use trying any longer to pretend that the Russian revolution was merely an elaborate piece of the Kaiser's propaganda—the dreadful thing stood out blatantly as what it was : the rising of the workers against the capitalist system. The first stage of the social revolution had begun.

For a time there was considerable hesitation on the part of the capitalist governments. The old type of statesman, such as Clemenceau, wanted to strike at the revolution wherever it reared its head—whether in Russia, Hungary, Austria, or Germany. The new type of politician, such as Lloyd George, with more than one eye on the home situation, wanted above all to keep things quiet, and was prepared to come to an arrangement. The statesmen finally triumphed over the politicians with the comparatively easy overthrow of the Soviet Government in Hungary, and it was only after two years of armed struggle with the Russian revolution that the politicians once more assumed control.

The last stage of the attempt to overthrow the revolution by force—the Polish invasion of 1920—was intended to stop the negotiations for a trade agreement between Great Britain and Russia, which Lloyd George had at last opened. The plan succeeded sufficiently to check the progress of the negotiations ; and in spite of the early collapse of the Polish and of the new Wrangel attacks the trade agreement was not signed until March, 1921. Similar agreements had already been made between the new Baltic States and Soviet Russia ; but the agreement with Britain was of far greater importance, and seemed to mark the acceptance by the capitalist world of the revolution which they could not overthrow. This agreement was followed by a number of others—with Germany,

Norway, Italy, &c. ; and simultaneously with these developments, the "New Economic Policy" was introduced in Russia, seeming to foreshadow the continuous modification of revolutionary tactics in response to capitalist approaches. The capitalist politician seemed to have succeeded where the capitalist armies had failed. The revolution was to be undermined, or at least rendered harmless, by peaceful penetration.

In fact, 1921 was a year of crisis for the capitalist world. The slump in industry and employment which developed towards the end of 1920 was undoubtedly an important factor in stopping any suggestion of further war on Russia, and in determining capitalism to seek the Russian market, even though it were a Communist market. For the revolution, also, 1921 was a critical year. The strain of seven years of war had almost destroyed Russia's industries and transport ; and the disastrous crop failure in the Volga provinces seemed to threaten an inevitable collapse. The way to recovery it was hoped might be found in some kind of joint work with the capitalist world. Very large schemes for the participation of foreign capital in Russian industry were worked out, and there is no doubt that a large section of the Soviet Government thought that these schemes would materialise. To the capitalists the revolution seemed to have lost its sting ; the workers in all countries were being defeated all along the line ; Soviet Russia was in difficulties, and there seemed to be every prospect of combining business with the pleasure of stultifying the revolution. To revolutionary Russia, the capitalist world appeared to be cracking, and there seemed to be a fair chance of making it serve the immediate needs of the revolution.

The year 1922 shattered the illusions on both sides. Capitalism began to realise that it had not quite understood the New Economic Policy in Russia. Far from opening the door wide to every form of capitalist exploitation, the new policy, in its most important aspects, merely involved the Food Tax, which won the support of the peasants, and the State Trusts, which enabled the separate industries to drop the worst features of war-time bureaucracy while remaining national property. Above all, to the intense indignation of the capitalist world, the monopoly of foreign trade was rigorously maintained. True, private shops had opened, and some private

business was being done in Russia ; but over 90 per cent. of Russia's main industries remained under State control, and there were no signs either of the collapse of the Communist Government or of any real change in Communist policy.

For its part the Soviet Government began to realise that the benefits it had hoped to derive from an agreement with foreign capital were largely illusory. The Genoa and the Hague Conferences showed that capitalism was not prepared to compromise with revolution : there must be nothing short of complete surrender. Russia might, if she liked, call herself revolutionary, but she must pay tribute to capital, and capital would not lend money for reconstruction by a revolutionary Government. In spite of the willingness of some individual capitalists to come to terms, organised capital, acting through the western governments, would do nothing. The Hague Conference finally destroyed all hope that foreign capital would consent to help revolutionary Russia.

The mutual abandonment of faith in the possibility of an alliance between the revolution and foreign capital has been the keynote of Russia's relations with the outside world since the middle of 1922. It is difficult to say with any certainty that this has also governed the course of events in other countries. But it must be remembered that the whole of the Near East episode—the Greek attack on Angora, the Lloyd George threat of war which led to his downfall, and the Lausanne Conference—was intimately connected with the growing prestige of Russia in the Near East. Another aspect of capitalist disillusionment was, undoubtedly, the growth of Fascism : revolution must not be compromised with ; it must be destroyed. Now we have the Polish preparations for war, and Marshal Foch's visit of encouragement ; and, probably, the termination of the trade agreement by the deliberate act of the British Government.

The signing of the trade agreement in 1921 marked the end of the first period of war on the revolution, and the beginning of the period of attempted compromise. It is fitting that the termination of this trade agreement should mark the end of compromise, and the renewal of armed attempts to suppress the revolution.

Why has the attempt at compromise failed ? To a certain extent because the financial interests, in the last resort, have been

able to hold the purely trading interests in check. But to a far greater extent, because there has not been that continuous pressure from labour in capitalist countries which might have forced a capitalist compromise. In 1919 and 1920 the menace of revolution was constantly before the eyes of the capitalist governments. Safety lay in compromise with labour at home and the "ring of steel" round Russia. That policy was only too successful; and though the industrial slump of 1921 created some danger from the large numbers of unemployed, at the same time it weakened the unions and created a general sense of hopelessness in the ranks of labour. By 1922 labour had lost the courage even to strike against constant reductions in wages; revolution was out of the question. Fascism rose in Italy and Germany; Militarism revived in France; Conservatism, shaking off the compromising Liberal politicians, formed its own government in Britain. Under the skilful handling of British Labour leaders the rising spirit of the workers in the spring of 1923 was crushed, and the way lay open for an international Fascism.

But what of Russia at the present juncture? What effect has the failure of compromise with foreign capital already had, and what will be the result of the renewed capitalist offensive?

In the worst period of 1921 it seemed to many that the only hope of permanent success lay in an alliance with foreign capital. Substantial concessions would undoubtedly have been granted if the Western Powers had come forward quickly.

But even Lloyd George could not take quick enough action. The Genoa Conference was delayed because the Western Powers still had some hopes that the famine might bring about the fall of the Soviet Government. Their hopes remained unfulfilled, and by the time the Conference opened an enormous improvement in the Russian situation had become clear. Even the famine had been unable to check the recovery of industry; the transport system had proved itself capable of coping with the immense new needs caused by the famine; the Soviet Government emerged from the crisis stronger than ever, and the new system was realised by the workers and peasants to be their one secure defence against

threatened disaster from internal causes, as it had already proved to be their one defence against danger from without. Above all the sowing campaign had been unexpectedly successful, weather conditions had been excellent, and a good harvest for 1922 was assured. Russia sent her delegates to the Genoa and Hague Conferences in a new spirit of confidence : Soviet Russia was making good in defiance of the outside world. She came to the Conferences as an equal, not as a suppliant. The refusal of western capitalism to treat on those terms did not cause dismay in Russia, but rather seemed to remove the dangers inherent in an uncertain situation. From then on Russia must build by herself.

And as the months went by the confidence of the earlier part of the year was strengthened. The harvest exceeded all expectations ; the State Trusts steadily developed their operations, and production during the whole of 1922 showed a substantial improvement on the previous year's level. Transport, too, was improving, partly owing to the import of over a thousand locomotives from Germany and Sweden, but even more to the steady progress in the repair shops and in organisation. The State's financial position had improved : by the end of 1922 over fifty per cent. of expenditure was being met out of revenue, as compared with five per cent. in the preceding January.

The recovery had actually been strengthened by the realisation that no help of any importance could be got from foreign capital. Instead of pressing forward proposals for foreign capital, all efforts and resources were devoted to setting Russian industries on their feet. The metal industry, in particular, to which no substantial funds had previously been devoted, was given a fillip by the placing of large orders for locomotives and other railway material which had previously been obtained from abroad. All other industries have maintained the progress begun last year ; real wages are rising month by month, keeping pace with the industrial recovery ; and the prospects for the 1923 harvest are very good. The area under grain has been raised to 80 per cent. of the pre-war figure ; cotton and flax cultivation is also increasing. Thrown back on her own resources, Russia is making a recovery more rapid than many of her leaders thought possible. The early part of 1923 finds Soviet Russia securely consolidating her position, and although the break-

ing off of trade with Great Britain would affect the immediate situation in certain industries, it would not be an irretrievable disaster—for Russia. Great Britain is a good market for Russian produce, but it is not the only one ; other western countries, too, can supply Russia's needs. Great Britain stands to lose more than Russia from the stoppage of trade.

It is probable that the western capitalists have begun to realise the steady improvement in Russia's internal position. They realise that the new economic policy has not, as they apparently expected, modified the fundamental principles of the revolution. Private property has not been restored ; the central and local authorities are still composed mainly of Communists ; foreign capital cannot ruthlessly exploit the Russian workers and peasants. Nevertheless, the Soviet Government is now the senior government in Europe, and the most secure for the future. The revolution is firmly established, and if Russia continues to progress she will soon be leading not only the imagination, but also the industry of the world.

At all costs, therefore, Russia must be destroyed. Fascism must act internationally as well as nationally. Compromise might have been possible with a weak and crumbling revolution ; but a successful revolution can only be met by force.

This, then, is the position. Lord Curzon is not playing a lone hand, nor are the stakes merely the little matter of trade between Britain and Russia. The British Note was merely the movement of one piece in a series of moves running through the Border States and the Near East. The breaking of the trade agreement would be useless to the capitalists by itself, and it would not have been engineered but for the further moves to follow it. The ring of steel must be set up once more round Russia ; and Germany must be persuaded to abandon her Russian connections by a show of friendship from Britain. If diplomatic measures fail, Poland is ready to act : an invasion of Russia, even if repulsed successfully, would stop Russia's progress.

Therefore British labour must not imagine that the present situation is not urgent. We are on the eve of a throw-back to 1920, Polish invasion and all. At that time only the Council of Action averted disaster : but where is the Council of Action now ?

THE DOMINION OF CANADA

By H. P. RATHBONE

IT is hardly possible to emphasise too strongly the anomalous position occupied by Canada in the British Empire. Racially she is still disunited. The French-Canadian element has remained, since the cession of Quebec by France to Great Britain in the seventeenth century, in reality unabsorbed into the remaining population of European emigrants. It is estimated that there are now 3,000,000 French Canadians in Canada, or roughly 40 per cent. of the total population. Furthermore, this population is largely concentrated in the Easternmost provinces. In the province of Quebec, for instance, out of a total of 2,350,000 in 1921, 87 per cent. consisted of French Canadians. This element has remained from the beginning almost entirely an agricultural and petty land-owning class ; and what industries there are in these Eastern provinces are mainly developed by immigrants from Europe or the United States.

Geographically, even more than racially, Canada is an artificial entity. Her southern boundary, the 48th Parallel of Latitude, was drawn without any reference to natural formations. Consequently there have been many disputes in the past with her southern neighbour, the United States, over both the actual settlement of the boundaries and such questions as defence on the Great Lakes, and fisheries on both east and western coasts.

Owing to the more rapid growth of the United States towards becoming a highly-industrialised state the position of Canada has become even more anomalous. In what follows, we will describe, firstly, the growing economic and consequent political influence of the United States in Canada ; and secondly, in a great measure the result of this Americanisation, the increasing number of points of difference between the interests of the Canadian bourgeoisie and those of the Imperial Power.

Now Canada, though still largely a wheat-growing country, has very considerable mineral resources. It is estimated by Eckel

(“Coal, Iron, and War”) that she has roughly 286,000 million tons of coal, or 7 per cent. of the total world reserves, mostly concentrated in British Columbia. Her neighbour, Newfoundland, a separate British colony, has a reserve of iron ore estimated by the same authority, Eckel, at 4,000 million tons. The eastern provinces of Canada, though they have but little coal reserves, have immense supplies of water power. Many other minerals, such as copper, aluminium, zinc, asbestos, gold, and silver, are found in large quantities, while the forest lands are of immense size. These resources are only now becoming fully developed and, as we will proceed to show, this has been effected, for the last eight years mainly with capital from the United States.

The effect of Americanisation and the growing mood of *intransigence* to control by British imperialism, is reflected in the changed position of the bourgeois political parties in Canada.

Before the war the configuration of the bourgeois parties, was to some extent, akin to that of Great Britain, for the Liberals represented largely the petty-trading bourgeoisie, while the Conservatives stood for the heavy industrial and privileged classes. The Free Trade Liberals received also support from the bulk of the farmers.

The war and its after-effects, however, modified the policy of both parties, and has produced a third party, the Party of the Western Farmers. The influx of American capital and American immigrants into Canada has created a definite split in the solid Conservative vote of the industrial districts ; for these new American interests are opposed to tariff barriers. In the election of 1921, the Liberals, to the surprise of the English press, made serious inroads into the Conservative bloc in Ontario, the big industrial province of Canada. Accordingly the Conservatives, in order to retain their industrial vote, have thus had to modify their attitude towards reciprocity and have also tended to lose some of their loyalist outlook and have become more and more nationalist. It is, for instance, a most significant fact that it was a Conservative Prime Minister, Sir Robert Borden, who insisted on the right of Canada to separate representation at the Peace Conference. In spite of the fact that the Liberals continually endeavoured so to modify their policy as to obtain the support of the western farmers,

these farmers have not been prevented from forming their own party, the Progressive Party, based on the now immensely strong co-operative productive and selling organisation, the United Grain Growers, Ltd. On the question of free trade and reciprocity this Party, therefore, acts as a kind of radical wing of the Liberals.

It is thus clear that the Liberals once successfully accused of "disloyalty" by the Conservatives, are now rapidly approaching the day when they will be able to take the lead in a definitely anti-British direction and will have no fear from the proportionately dwindling band of imperialists. Further, that while nationalism is well on its way to becoming a united policy of all three bourgeois parties, the future division will lie between Canadian nationalism and political, as well as economic, union with the United States.

U.S.A. INVESTMENTS IN CANADA

In no other foreign country has American capital penetrated to such a large extent as in Canada. Even before the war, when American foreign investment was almost unknown elsewhere, quite a considerable amount of American capital was exported over the border to Canada. This is brought out in the following table which gives the total sales of capital for government and municipal as well as for industrial enterprise :—

Period	SALES OF CAPITAL FOR CANADIAN ENTERPRISE		
	Canada	Great Britain	United States
	\$	\$	\$
1908-14	285,644,000	1,419,849,000	177,503,000
1915-18	1,487,991,000	65,775,000	593,568,000
1919-21	1,020,543,000	17,256,000	600,645,000

This shows very clearly at once the enormous stride which the United States made during the war in its investments in Canada and the still more striking falling off to practically nothing of the flow of British investments. Furthermore, it shows that with the conclusion of the war Britain has proved totally incapable of regaining any measure at all of her pre-war foothold in Canadian industry ; it also shows that the United States has still further increased its grasp on Canadian industry—a grasp which it has again increased in 1922, while Britain has made no headway at all.

In 1918 the Canadian Department of Commerce estimated that the capital invested in Canadian industrial enterprise amounted

to a total of about \$1,675,000,000. It further calculated that 34 per cent. of this total was held in the United States, compared with only 9 per cent. in Great Britain, and 56 per cent. in Canada itself. The proportion held by America according to all accounts has now increased to about 50 per cent.

These are the actual figures. But as we will now proceed to show this growth in the economic influence of the U.S.A. in Canada has been first achieved and then strengthened by many and various means.

(a) *The Branch Factory*.—This was already a factor of some importance even before the war in districts of Canada just over the United States border. It became of increasing importance after the failure of the proposed reciprocity treaty between Canada and the United States. United States capitalists found that it was more profitable, on account of the Canadian tariff regulations, to erect factories over the border in Canada, in order to manufacture certain classes of goods to be sold within her borders, than to export them to her. Consequently, especially since the war, and hastened by the "Made in Canada" campaign at the end of the war, American factories have greatly increased in number. Before the war it was estimated that there were 350 of these American branch factories. In 1921 they had increased to 575, and by the beginning of this year it was estimated (by the *Financial News* of January 18), that the number had now approached to 800. This compares with an estimated total of 20 British branch factories at the beginning of 1922, the latest date for which information is available.

The importance of this development to British capitalists has lately been much taken up by the British capitalist press. They have pointed out that the establishment by America of these branch factories in Canada means that the Americans can in this way take advantage of any trade and tariff preferences which are accorded to Canadian commodities by other British or foreign countries. *The Times Trade Supplement* of September 9, 1922, refers, for instance, to the establishment by a large American motor company—believed to be the General Motors Corporation of America, the largest motor manufacturing combine in the world—of an extensive plant in which will be concentrated the whole of this combine's export business.

The point of view of a Canadian capitalist (unnamed) who visited Great Britain in 1922 in order to interest British capitalists in Canadian development, is worth quoting here (from a report on Canada for 1922 by the Department of Overseas Trade):—

The United States manufacturer regards a branch factory in a foreign country, whether in Canada or Europe, as a decentralised portion, but still a unit of the organisation. As such the branch is subject to the same rigid inspection and management as the main or parent concern, and has therefore been a source of profit in a great majority of cases. The British manufacturer, on the other hand, looks upon a branch as a foreign investment, an agency which will detract from the business of the home plant, and for this reason not a particularly desirable form of expansion.

(b) *Loans to Public Authorities.*—As we said above, the flow of capital from Britain to Canada practically ceased with the declaration of war in 1914. But Canada in consequence of the war was compelled to borrow large sums in order, as the *Manchester Guardian Commercial* said (January 11, 1923), “to meet her military expenses, to help finance the export of wheat and other foodstuffs and of munitions of war.” Consequently her Government and municipalities were compelled to turn to the United States. No details are available of the amount of Government or municipal loans floated in the United States during the war, but for the years 1919-1922 the Guaranty Trust Company in its survey for January, 1923, gives the following figures :—

	1919	1920	1921	1922
	(Millions of dollars)			
Canadian Government and Municipal Loans				
sold in New York	12	84	74	100

During this period it is known that neither the Federal Government nor any of the States or municipalities applied for a single loan publicly on the British market. The result of this has been that not only have the United States got a firm if not a dominating hold on the industries of Canada, but they have now also entered into effective competition in a field of financing which was almost exclusively the property of British financiers before the war.

(c) *Educational and Other Influences.*—The influence of the United States on Canadian education has become predominant. Technical apparatus for research, demonstration or laboratory work in all the numerous universities, colleges and technical schools are loaned free of any charge by United States manufactur-

ing concerns. This results in a natural leaning towards American products. For as the Department of Overseas Trade report on Canada for 1921 points out : " Owing to the fact that the Canadian mechanic has been educated in the use of United States tools, and also on account of the accessibility of supply, most machine tools are still being imported from the United States."

American films are reported to have, more than in other countries, a predominating place in Canada. Though the following quotation, from an article from a Canadian correspondent emphasising the influences of the United States, is probably intentionally alarmist, it is of interest nevertheless as showing a tendency:—

The Americans have recognised the importance of the influence of the moving picture business in Canada. Over 75 per cent. of motion pictures exhibited in Canada are the product of American brains. This results in Canadian audiences almost unwittingly so accustoming themselves to the American view-point as to become Americanised in their thinking. The film news service is largely permeated with pictures calculated to draw attention to the people, places, and things of the country to the south of the Canadian border. The possibilities of the moving-picture film for purposes of trade propoganda are now receiving the earnest attention of the great American manufacturers.

(Yorkshire Post, April 18, 1922.)

Again, United States magazines have become increasingly imported into Canada. During a debate on this question in the Canadian Parliament in March of this year, a member stated that in ten years the value of American magazines entering Canada had grown from \$800,000 to \$3,000,000.

Lastly, Canadian merchants and importers have very largely adopted the American trading customs and rules. This facilitates commerce with the U.S.A., and in the same measure hinders transactions with Great Britain.

ECONOMIC CONFLICT BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND U.S.A.

The growth of United States influence has naturally been viewed with alarm by British capitalists interested in Canada. The latter, especially through the press, have persistently stressed the importance of British capitalists devoting attention to the Canadian market and the exploitation of Canadian resources. They put forward patriotic grounds for maintaining that the economic development of Canada must be undertaken by themselves and not by the U.S.A. It is implied, but usually not expressed, that

it is the patriotic duty of Canada to leave its resources undeveloped rather than submit to American overtures. A revealing declaration by the Canadian correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* (March 26, 1923), inadvertently exposes the "economic sacrifice" demanded of Canada for the sake of patriotism.

Speaking of the possibility of there being a movement for annexation to the United States in Western Canada, it says :—

But in these apprehensions the pessimists forget that if the national problem of Canada was purely an economic one there probably never would have been any Canada. There would certainly be no Canada now. Even if it is true that Western Canada is called upon to make an economic sacrifice for the sake of a patriotic idea, the West will not thereby be differentiated from Eastern Canada. For if there was no international boundary it is conceivable that the provinces of Ontario and Quebec would by now have populations comparable with those of the States of New York and Pennsylvania. Were there no international boundary the centre of the motor industry of America might be in Windsor, Ontario, instead of across the river at Detroit; and the seaport of Montreal, owing to its far inland position, would undoubtedly be a close rival of New York. It is not economics that preserved Canada's identity on the American continent. And it is not likely that "Snappy Stories" (referring to the flood of American literature into Canada) and such like will succeed in Americanising Canada where serious economic pressure has failed.

The significance of this quotation lies in its clear statement of the contradictions between the interests in Canada of British and American imperialism. It implies, in fact, the accusation that British imperialism is responsible for holding up the economic development of Canada, which, if it had not been for Great Britain, would have been undertaken by the United States.

In opposition to the attempt in the above quotation to prove that patriotism is more important than economics, we find the following frank statement of the Canadian correspondent to the *Yorkshire Post* whom we have already quoted. He says, for instance :—

There is probably no better way of exerting influence upon another country than by investing in it large sums of capital. That this is true is evidenced by the adoption in Canada, to a very large extent, of United States standards of living and business conduct. . . . He (the American) is investing immense amounts of capital in Canadian industries by the purchase of the securities of these Industries. Underlying these securities are mortgages of property and equipment, permitting Americans to dictate to a large extent the destinies of many important Canadian business organisations.

Or again, take the Empire correspondent to the *Financial News* on January 18, 1923, who, though he was arguing in this case from the general, *i.e.*, from all the colonies of Great Britain, to the particular, *i.e.*, Canada itself, realised only the "economics" of the matter:—

"We are trying," he said, "to increase the production of the United Kingdom by increasing our exports to Dominions which want to import less as they are determined to manufacture their own. The Dominions are arranging among themselves tariff agreements which provide for reciprocal preference and which will tend to increase the volume of business between them and lessen that with the home country. Branches of English firms, as I suggest establishing, would be entitled to profit by these Dominion agreements. The business men of the United States have sized up the position in this way and are arranging their plans accordingly."

It is, therefore, significant that the chairman of the British Empire Producers' Organisation, the most influential and most directly connected with industry of all the imperialist propagandist societies in Great Britain has just recently made a speech objecting to the investment of United States capital in Canadian industries (reported in *The Times* for February 26, 1923).

TARIFF RECIPROCITY WITH THE UNITED STATES

Until recently the demand for reciprocal tariff concessions between Canada and the United States was put forward only by one section of Canadian capitalism, *viz.*, the Liberal Party, representing small landowning interests. The Conservative Party, representing the British-loyal manufacturing interests, stood for high tariffs to prevent the entry of American manufactured goods. With the growth of American penetration there has been a corresponding movement of opinion away from Britain and in favour of friendly relations with the United States. Consequently the question of tariff reciprocity with the United States has developed from a purely Liberal issue to a nationalistic demand like that for a status of greater independence within the British Empire. The history of the development is as follows :

As early as 1891 the Liberals appear to have been advocates of unrestricted reciprocity with the United States. The influential supporters of the Liberals comprised the French-Canadian landowning-farmers, the tenant-farmers of the west, and immigrants

from the United States. They demanded free trade for the purchase of agricultural machinery and the sale of livestock, &c. ; and were anti-English and pro-U.S.A. in their general tendency. The Conservative opposition consisted of manufacturers and British-born Canadians who were strongly loyalist and pro-British and in favour of tariff restrictions against American competition. They were, undoubtedly, supported by the imperial power in their opposition to reciprocity. According to the *Manchester Guardian* 1920 Supplement on Canada, the 1891 campaign was defeated owing to fear of the possible effect of reciprocity on the British connections.

When the Liberal Government, headed by Sir Wilfred Laurier, was in power in 1910-11, the issue again came to the front largely owing to pressure from the western farmers. In response to their agitation Sir Wilfred Laurier began negotiations with the United States, and in 1911 an agreement was signed (the Taft-Laurier agreement). This agreement never came into operation. Fear of the consequences with regard to relations with Great Britain led to the defeat of the Liberal Party. They lost the General Election owing to the "loyalty" campaign waged against them. Mackenzie King, the Liberal leader, records in the *Manchester Guardian* Canadian Supplement that "the protected and privileged classes made a vigorous campaign against the agreement." Thomas A. Crear, now leader of the Farmers' or Progressive Party and President of the United Grain Growers, Ltd. (the western farmers' co-operative productive and selling organisation), states outright in the same paper:—

Reciprocity, on which the farmers had set their hearts for its enormous economic advantages to them, was defeated by a "loyalty" campaign, which its chief sponsors find unpleasant to recall.

Finally we have Professor Berridale Keith (an acknowledged upholder of imperialism, associated with the Colonial Office) in an article in the *Manchester Guardian* for December 8, 1921, describing reciprocity as a

scheme which seemed to involve political consequences unfavourable to the British connection.

The reciprocity issue remained shelved until after the war.

In 1919 the agreement again came to the fore, but this time

it was the United States which came out against it. In Canada in 1919, the Liberal Convention with Mackenzie King as leader of the Party, adopted a tariff programme in close accordance with the demands of the western farmers. Besides a demand for the acceptance of the reciprocity agreement, it provided for other substantial reductions in the tariff and also an increase in the British preference to 50 per cent. of the general tariff. In the United States, however, the farmers of the western States, who were afraid of the importation of livestock, &c., from Canada, were putting pressure on the Republican Party to repeal the agreement. Already they were responsible for causing Mr. Taft, the negotiator of the agreement, to lose many votes in the Presidential contest of 1912. In May, 1921, they triumphed in securing the inclusion of a clause repealing the reciprocity agreement (which had never been ratified) in the United States Emergency Tariff Act.

The issue was reopened in Canada immediately the Liberal Party won at the General Election at the end of 1921. After a visit of both Mackenzie King, the new Prime Minister, and W. S. Fielding, the Finance Minister, to Washington, it was reported (*Times*, March 2, 1922), that the United States would carefully consider the proposal for reciprocity put forward by the Canadian Ministers. According to the Department of Overseas Trade report on Canada, 1922, Mr. Fielding himself referred to it in his Budget speech on his return. The next move, he said, must come from Washington. *The Times* comment on this situation in Canada was :—

There is no doubt that the Taft-Laurier agreement would now be accepted by the Canadian Parliament. . . . The general feeling throughout Canada is more favourable to closer trade relations with the United States than was the case eleven years ago . . . It will be remembered that the Taft-Laurier agreement affected natural rather than manufactured goods, and it is possible that even amongst manufacturers there is less fear of the treaty than when it was submitted to the country by the Laurier Government.

This latter statement is very significant because, to take one particular and direct instance only in the Taft-Laurier agreement, agricultural machinery was included in the duty free list. At that time the International Harvester Company, the American agricultural machinery trust, had not yet set up any factory in Canada.

It follows, therefore, that what agricultural machinery manufacturing interests there were in Canada had good reason to "fear" this agreement. But by 1922 the American Trust had obtained a completely dominating place in the manufacture of agricultural machinery in Canada itself through its establishment of a branch factory therein. The independent Canadian manufacturers were no longer in possession of the field, and there was thus no longer the same resistance to the importation of agricultural machinery from the U.S.A.

Meanwhile, however, in the United States, Harding and the Republican Party had come into power, a position which they partly owed to the support of the American western farmers. Now, as we have pointed out, these western farmers were opposed to the 1911 agreement. This would appear to be because of the competition of Canadian livestock, which would result from any conclusion of a reciprocity agreement. It thus seems that for the time being, at any rate, the opposition of the United States will prevent the conclusion of the reciprocity agreement.

Sufficient evidence has now been given of the increasing grasp of American capitalism on Canada. The effect of this development on Canadian politics and outlook has also been indicated. A further article must trace the result of this tendency on the relationship of Canada to the British Imperial Power; and show how the economic conflict for the possession of Canada between American and British imperialism has resulted in the strengthening of Canadian nationalism and the consequent increasing desire of the Canadian bourgeoisie, if not to become an independent nation, at least to become strongly critical of any control from Downing Street. The two alternatives therefore before the bourgeoisie of Canada will be in the immediate future not Liberalism or Conservatism, but full Canadian Nationalism or—Union with the United States.

PROLETARIAN POETRY—II

(Concluded)

By A. BOGDANOV

IT should be noted that the poetry of the bourgeois world still preserves a great deal of the authoritative consciousness, because bourgeois society has preserved also many elements of authoritative collaboration, of authority and subordination. The variety of the bourgeois groups—big capitalists and petty ones, higher intellectuals, landowners, backward and progressive, stock exchange speculators, rentiers, &c., together with the different intermixtures and combinations of these groups—naturally gives rise to a variety of forms and subject matter in their poetry, but the basic type is general for all of them.

In machine production the fundamental divergences in the nature of labour begin to disappear. The “working hands” are no longer merely hands, the worker is not a passive mechanical performer. He is subordinated, but he also *rules* his “iron slave”—the machine. The more complicated and perfect the machine, the more his labour is reduced to observation and control. The worker must know all the aspects and conditions of the work of his machine, and interfere in its motion only when necessary; while, at the inevitable moments of caprice or derangement on the part of the machine, he must be capable of quick perception, initiative, and resolution. All these are fundamental and typical traits of organisational work, and for them one must possess knowledge, intelligence, the capacity for exerted attention, which are the traits of the organiser. But there still remains the physical effort; together with the brains, the hands also have to work.

At the same time sharp distinctions between the workers also begin to disappear; specialisation is transferred from them to the machines, the work at different machines is in its essential “organisational” contents almost the same. Thus there is room for contact and mutual understanding in work done in common, an opportunity to assist each other with counsel and action. Here is the origin of that fellowship in collaboration which is the basis upon which the proletariat constructs all its organisation.

This form of labour is characterised by the fact that organisational work is closely connected with execution. Here the organiser and the executor are not individual persons, but *collectivities*. Things are discussed and solved in common, and executed in common ; everyone takes part in working out the collective will and in its accomplishment. Organisation is accomplished not through authority and subordination ; instead of these there is fellowship, initiative, and management on the part of all, fellowship discipline controls every individual.

There have been germs of fellowship collaboration before, but only in our epoch has it become a primary type of organisation of a whole class. It grows in depth to the degree of the development of technique; it grows in width in the degree that the proletarian masses are gathered in the cities, to the extent that they are concentrated in gigantic enterprises.

This concentration of the proletariat in the cities and factories has a great and complicated influence upon the psychology of the masses. It contributes to the development of the consciousness that in labour, in the struggle against the elements for existence, the individual is only a link in a great chain and, taken separately, would be a powerless plaything of external forces, a shred of fabric cut from a mighty organism and unable to survive alone. The individual "ego" is reduced to its actual dimensions, its proper place.

But while the masses are gathered in the cities, they become removed from nature. The latter reveals itself to the proletariat only as a force in production, not as a source of live impressions. At the same time city life affords the proletariat very few joys and amusements, however many it may give to the ruling classes ; and so the workers' longing for live nature becomes greater, a longing which sometimes passes into a feeling of anguish. This is also one of the reasons for his dissatisfaction, for his struggle to organise new forms of life.

Comradely collaboration is not a ready-made form—it is in a state of development, and has reached different stages in different places. It is followed by the consciousness of fellowship, which is, however, of slower development. This is the primary line of the course of the proletariat. But it is still far from accomplishment

even in the most advanced countries. Its accomplishment will be Socialism, which is nothing else than a fellowship organisation of the whole life of society.

The spirit of authority, the spirit of individualism, the spirit of fellowship, these are the three consecutive types of culture. Proletarian poetry belongs to the third, the highest phase.

The spirit of authority is strange to proletarian poetry, it cannot help but be hostile. The proletariat is a subordinated class, and is struggling against subordination.

However, the proletariat is a young class, and its art is still in the stage of childhood. Even in politics, where their experience is greater, millions of the proletarians of Germany, England, and America still follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie. This may happen all the more easily to proletarian poets. So far the poetry of workers is, for the most part, not real poetry. This is not due to the individuality of the author, but to the viewpoint. The poet may not even belong to the working class by his economic position ; but if he has become deeply familiarised with the collective life of the proletariat, if he has actually and sincerely become imbued with its strivings, ideals, with its way of thinking, if he exults in its joys and suffers in its sorrows, if, in a word, he has fused his soul with that of the proletariat, then he may be able to give the proletariat artistic expression, he may become the organiser of its forces and its consciousness in poetic form. Of course, this can very seldom happen, and in poetry, as in politics, the proletariat should not count upon allies outside its ranks.

A small prose-poem by a worker—a poet and economist :—

WHISTLES

When the morning whistles resound over the workers' suburbs, it is not at all a summons to slavery. It is the song of the future.

There was a time when we worked in poor shops and started our work at different hours of the morning.

And now, at eight in the morning, the whistles sound for a million men.

A million workers seize the hammers at the same moment.

Our first blows thunder in accord.

What is it that the whistles sing?

It is the morning hymn to unity.

From "The Song of the Workers' Blow," by A. GASTEV.¹

¹ Gastev says : " My poems should be read in an even voice, with definite rhythm, like that of paper being fed into a printing machine."—*Translator*.

This is lyrical poetry, but it is not the poetry of the individual "ego." For the worker as an individual the whistle is, of course, a reminder of his involuntary labour, it is sometimes even a torturing sensation. But for the growing commune its significance is quite different. The actual creator of the poetry, expressing itself through the poet, is not the same as before, and the things it finds in life are also different. It is the spirit of fellowship.

The investigator must have a foothold in reality. We were in a difficult position at one time, as the few enthusiasts for proletarian art, when we had to speak of things which could not be found in life, when we could not say clearly: "Here, this is real proletarian art; by this model you may judge, with this you may compare." And I must cite here the poem in which I personally found my foothold.

In the year 1913 there was printed in the *Pravda* a little poem of Samobitnik:—

TO A NEW COMRADE

See the wheels that whirl around,
 See the mad belts dancing here. . .
 Comrade, comrade, have no fear!
 Let the chaos of steel resound,
 Though its many fires be drowned,
 Quenched by bitter sea of tears—
 Have no fear!
 You have come from peaceful haunts,
 Quiet fields and brooklets clear.
 Comrade, comrade, have no fear!
 Here the limitless is bound,
 The impossible come round. . .
 This is the dawn of coming years—
 Have no fear!
 Foaming crests of waves resound
 With our fortune coming near. . .
 On our kingdom gloomy, drear,
 A new sun is shining down,
 Burning brighter now than e'er—
 Have no fear!
 Like a giant carved in stone
 At the mad belts stand and steer. . .
 Let the wheels go turning still,
 Closer now the ranks are drawn—
 You're a new link forged in here—
 Have no fear!

It is not the artistry that interests us most in this poem. What is most striking is the purity of the contents. I doubt whether one could be more proletarian in feeling and thought.

The thing happened during the old *régime*. A new worker has come to the factory straight from the village. What is he to the old habitual worker? A competitor, and a most inconvenient one, too: for he lowers the wages, his demands are smaller, and he can hardly assist in the general cause since he is unable to defend even his own interests. Of the general cause he has no idea at all. His thought is slow, his feelings narrow, his will limited, his heroism small. . . . It is hard to rely on him should there arise a need for concerted action. But observe the attitude of his fellow-worker, the poet, towards him, the strange newcomer. With what chivalrous attention, with what gentle care, he encourages the timid novice and leads him into a world which is unknown, incomprehensible, strange, and even fearful to him! With what simplicity and force, in few words, but with clear images, the poet tells him all that he should know and feel in order to become a comrade among comrades: he draws for him the picture of the gigantic forces of the "steel chaos" of modern technique, he tells him the bitter truth about the "sea of tears" which it costs humanity, and the joyous tidings of the "new sun" of the great ideal, of the proud fortune of common strife. Touching is the recollection of the wonderful far-off nature, of the peaceful haunts, "quiet fields and brooklets clear" amidst stone and iron—the heart of the proletarian is longing for nature, but it is seldom that he gets the joy of meeting with her. But everything will be accomplished by the growing, steady, irresistible effort of the collective creative will. . . . Victorious confidence sounds in the concluding lines:—

Closer now the ranks are drawn—
You're a new link forged in here—
Have no fear!

It is the introduction of a new brother into the knighthood of the Socialist ideal.

Well, is not the poet the organiser of his class?

Proletarian poetry is still in its embryo stages. But it is developing. It is a necessity, because the proletariat wants a full undivided

self-consciousness, and poetry is part of this. It is still in its childhood. But even when it grows up the proletariat will not satisfy itself with this poetry alone. It is the legal heir to the whole of past culture, and the heir of all the best things in the poetry of the feudal and bourgeois worlds.

It must acquire this inheritance in such a manner as not to submit to the spirit of the past which reigns in these works—many proletarians have done this before now. The inheritance should not rule the heir, but be a tool in his hands. The dead should serve the living, but not restrain, not chain them.

And for this reason the proletariat must have its *own* poetry. In order not to submit to this alien poetic consciousness strong in its centuries-old maturity the proletariat must acquire its own poetic consciousness, immutable in its clearness. This new consciousness should unfold and enclose the whole of life, the whole of the world, in its creative unity.

Let proletarian poetry then grow and mature, let it help the working class to become what it is destined by history to be—a fighter and destroyer only from external necessity, a creator by all its nature.

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THE METAMORPHOSIS OF MR. C. DAS

By EVELYN ROY

ON the eve of the Gaya Congress Mr. Das published his sensational programme calling for the destruction of the Reform Councils, the boycott of British goods, and the organisation of labour and peasant societies with the object of preparing the country for what was termed "the final blow"—a complete and protracted national strike, accompanied by the simultaneous and wholesale resignation of services under Government all over the country (especially in the ranks of the police and army), and a general declaration of civil disobedience in the form of non-payment of taxes. By this series of steps, as outlined in his short-lived organ, the *Bangalar Kasha*, did Deshbandhu Das and his coterie of personal followers propose to restore life to the fast-ebbing nationalist movement and to attain the rapid consummation of Swaraj. This skeleton programme called further for the formation of an Asiatic Federation, the organisation of foreign centres of Congress propaganda to enlist "the support of all lovers of freedom in all free countries," and for the drafting of a Swaraj constitution which would fully define the goal towards which Indian Nationalism was striving.

The country had little time to discuss the project in full, launched as it was within a few weeks of the annual session of the National Congress, whose function it was to adopt a programme of action for the ensuing year. What comment there was time for concerned itself more with that other programme, published about the same time and precipitated upon the country in the third week of December—through the dubious connivance of Reuter—the programme of Social Democracy, drawn up for consideration at the Thirty-seventh Congress by the Communist Party of India. If the bureaucracy had hoped to kill two birds with one stone, to convict Mr. Das of being in collusion with Indian Bolshevism, and thereby damn his programme in advance, as it sought to damn that of the "Vanguard," it was doomed to disappointment. The Deshbandhu was acquitted by the unanimous voice of his own countrymen of being in collusion with anybody but himself, but it

was, nevertheless, considered by those who differed from him that his ideas bordered dangerously near to Socialism, if not dipped in the deeper dye of Bolshevism. His repeated protestations that he stood for the constructive programme, subject to the alterations mentioned above, and his declarations of faith in the revival of cottage industries, as exemplified by the sacred *Charka*, could not save him from the taint of dangerous heterodoxy. His frequent references to a need for change in tactics made him an object of suspicion to the high priests of orthodox Gandhism, while his apocryphal utterances about the "masses" alarmed the propertied classes and brought him into the limelight of official displeasure.

Thus, on the eve of Gaya, Mr. Das stood practically alone with his own conscience; no party had yet rallied to his banner, though the air was thick with speculation. What he said and did may be regarded for all practical purposes as the utterances and acts of an individual mind, undeterred and uninfluenced by party responsibilities and allegiances. All factions awaited his presidential address at Gaya—here was the key which would unlock the mystery of his intentions and reveal the full purpose of the new leader. Negotiations behind the scenes there must have been and were, on the part of those discontented elements seeking a new standard to rally round, but as to which of those elements, exclusive of the rest, would relieve the isolation of the Deshbandhu and elect him their chief, Gaya alone could determine.

The presidential speech at Gaya is a monumental record of Mr. Das's legal mind at war with his poet's soul. It is the *Gottendämmerung*, where the gods of the earth and heavens wrestle in titanic conflict for supremacy. Beginning with an eloquent exposition of historical precedents, a host of facts is marshalled before his thousands of auditors (and for the benefit of the listening bureaucratic ear), to prove the legality of revolution. Then the Deshbandhu proceeds to prove, by another set of historical facts, the utter futility of exercising this indubitably legal right to rebel, and ends in a grandiose and self-contradictory climax, which seeks to demonstrate that India will succeed in doing that which history has failed to furnish any precedent for—the conquest of Swaraj by non-violence, such as will start a new chapter of human relationships and usher in a new historical era of peaceful revolutions.

The inaugural address may be taken as the complete expression of the Deshbandhu's individual philosophy and political ideology, worked over for many weeks with meticulous and loving care. It is likewise the last expression of pure Deshbandhuism, since events following rapidly on the conclusion of the Congress session swept Mr. Das and his personal devotees into the strong current of party politics, where his dominant personality no longer reigned supreme. A study of the Gaya presidential address is, therefore, a revelation of the full mind and heart of Chittaranjan Das, an authentic document of his own making at what may be regarded as the turning point in his career.

There is little that is new. His speech at Dehra Dun, the statement to the Press at Amraoti, and the statement of policy in Calcutta appear to have been incorporated bodily in this wider and all-comprehensive document, wherein its author conscientiously attempts to indicate a new path for the national movement to follow. Of greater interest than its objective statements are the subjective forces of his own mind that struggle for supremacy, now the cool, reasoning brain of the lawyer, now the passionate warmth of the rebel, and again the imaginative idealism of the romantic poet. In the beginning the lawyer reigns supreme, and Deshbandhu the barrister treats his hearers to a masterly exposition of "Law and Order" as the basis of all tyranny, and the legal right of the subject, as furnished by good historical precedents, to rebel against the tyrannical dictates of this doctrine. His arguments are irrefutable, and one imagines they are intended less for his *Khaddar*-clad auditors, the majority of whom, perhaps, could not understand the language he addressed them in, than for that august tribunal of bourgeois justice and morality—western civilisation and history—that he proceeded later to hold up to such scorn. Here spoke the product of bourgeois English education, quoting English historical precedent to substantiate his country's claims to freedom, and hoisting the British rulers of India on their own petard, so to speak, by proving from the Revolutions of 1640 and 1688 the legal right of a people to rebel. He concludes this part of his thesis as follows :—

This, then, is the history of the freedom movement in England. The conclusion is irresistible, that it is not by acquiescence in the doctrines of law and order that the English people have obtained the

recognition of their fundamental rights. It follows, firstly, that no regulation is law unless it is based on the consent of the people; secondly, where such consent is wanting, the people are under no obligation to obey; thirdly, where such laws profess to attack their fundamental rights, the subjects are entitled to compel their withdrawal by force or insurrection; fourthly, that law and order is and always has been a plea for absolutism; and lastly, there can be neither law nor order before the real reign of law begins.

To all of which arguments there is and can be no answer, and were British rule in India a mere question of legal quibbling, the representatives of that haughty Empire must withdraw in confusion, and leave India bag and baggage for sheer lack of any adequate defence. But, unfortunately, British rule in India is based, not upon the justification of law courts, but upon the strength of armies, and Mr. Das would have done better to have based his arguments upon the latter supposition, or to have saved his breath.

However, having concluded this phase of his pleading, Mr. Das takes his stand on another ground to prove the right of the Indian people to freedom—this time, not by historical precedent, but by "sacred and inalienable right." And once more, to the confusion of his Christian preceptors, he quotes the Bible, and the words of Christ. Here he warms to his task and plunges into a dissertation on the sacred and inalienable right, not alone of individuals, but of whole peoples, to resist unjust oppression and "to take their stand upon Truth."

For myself, I oppose the pretensions of "law and order," not on historical precedent, but on the ground that it is the inalienable right of every individual and of every nation to stand on truth and to offer a stubborn resistance to ruthless laws. . . . The development of nationality is a sacred task—if, therefore, you interpose a doctrine to impede that task, why, the doctrine must go.

By this narrow bridge, Mr. Das, the lawyer, passes over into the precincts of Deshbandhu Das, the patriot and friend of the country. The realms of dry historical facts are forsaken for that richer field of political speculation and philosophy, already enriched by the minds of Jean Jacques Rousseau and his successors. But the tools of the lawyer are not abandoned—the appearance of proving his point by logical deduction, the falling back upon authority and precedent, this time not mundane but divine. The next part of the address is devoted to an exposition of Mr. Das's theory of nationality, wherein western ideas and education are forgotten, and

the Vedanta school of Spiritual Imperialism is given full play. The patriot, the poet, and the mystic are happily combined, and Mr. Das becomes once more intelligible to his own people as he soars into the realms of metaphysics :—

What is the ideal which we must set before us ? The first and foremost is the ideal of nationalism. Now what is nationalism ? It is, I conceive, a process through which a nation expresses itself and finds itself—not in isolation from other nations, not in opposition, but as part of a great scheme by which, in seeking its own expression and identity, it materially assists the self-expression and self-realisation of other nations as well. Diversity is as real as unity. And in order that the unity of the world may be established, it is essential that each nationality should proceed on its own line and find fulfilment in self-realisation.

Mr. Das then goes on to declare that his ideal of nationality must not be confused with that conception which exists in Europe to-day :—

Nationalism in Europe is an aggressive nationalism, a selfish nationalism, a commercial nationalism of gain and loss—that is European nationalism.

And in contradistinction to this horrid spectre he conjures up a vision more pleasing and familiar to his auditors, fed with the same spoon from other hands, that of the new nationality of spiritual India which is to be realised through soul force, non-violence and love, and which will save the world.

Throughout the pages of Indian history I find a great purpose unfolding itself. . . . The great Indian nationality is in sight. It already stretches its hands across the Himalayas, not only to Asia, but to the whole world; not aggressively, but to demand its recognition and to offer its contribution. . . . True development of the Indian nation must necessarily lie in the path of Swaraj. A question has often been asked as to what is Swaraj. Swaraj is indefinable, and is not to be confused with any particular system of government. Swaraj is the natural expression of the national mind, and must necessarily cover the whole life history of a nation. Nationalism is the same question as that of Swaraj.

Here is the transcendentalism of Mahatma Gandhi, highly flattering to a people accustomed to think of itself as a special creation of Providence, and charged with a spiritual mission to save mankind from the materialistic abyss towards which it is speeding. The Mahatma was wont to declare: "First realise yourself, then Swaraj will come of itself"; the Deshbandu affirms: "Let each nation realise itself, then Swaraj will come, the Swaraj

of entire humanity." The soul of the poet had not purged itself of the mysticism bred of solitary confinement nor of the tendency to make politics a metaphysical adjunct of speculative philosophy. Mr. Das belongs by nature to the school of Transcendentalists who have picturesquely adorned the pages of Indian history in her transition from mediævalism to modernism, and are now rapidly becoming extinct in the march of events.

We cannot leave the subject of the presidential address without reference to a few more pronouncements which provide a key to the ideology of India's new leader. Mr. Das reaffirmed in strong words his faith in the doctrine and tactics of non-violent non-co-operation, and gave as his reasons therefore, "apart from any question of principle," the "utter futility of revolutions brought about in the past by force and violence." Taking the French, American, English, Italian, and Russian Revolutions as historical precedents (the ghost of the lawyer still lingers), he proceeds to demonstrate to his own satisfaction, and presumably to that of his auditors, that it is impossible to attain Swaraj by violent means (Swaraj here taken in its mystical sense as described above). Says Mr. Das :—

I maintain that no people has yet succeeded in winning freedom by force and violence. The use of violence degenerates those who use it, and it is not easy for them, having seized power, to surrender it. Non-violence does not carry with it that degeneration which is inherent in the use of violence.

He seeks to prove this assertion by a hasty and dogmatic analysis of those great historical convulsions described as "national" revolutions, which in the past have ushered in new political institutions to correspond with fundamental changes in the economic and social orders. The vast upheaval in France from 1789 to 1812 means nothing more to Mr. Das than a struggle "as to which of the various sections shall rule France." He fails to glimpse beneath the apparent clash of individual hatreds and ambitions, the grim struggle between two opposing and mutually-exclusive classes, the corrupt monarchy and decayed feudal order on the one hand, and on the other, the rising bourgeoisie whose allies were drawn from the ranks of the exploited peasantry and city proletariat. Against this struggle the whole of Absolutist Europe ranged itself, for the challenge of the French bourgeoisie was a challenge against feudal absolutism and corruption wherever it existed ; and so we find

civil war and terror within, accompanied by invasion, starvation and blockade from without. Napoleonism was the answer of the new social order, determined to maintain itself ; and the overthrow of Napoleon, followed by the reaction that overswept Europe, could not delay forever the inevitable triumph of the French bourgeoisie, and of the bourgeoisie in every country. The great French Revolution, the English Revolutions of 1640 and 1688, the American and the Italian Revolutions were successful, in that a new class came to power, shaping its own political institutions in accordance with the dictates of its economic needs and interests. Modern bourgeois democracy is not the Utopia dreamed of by Jean Jacques Rousseau, nor the abstract Reign of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and Reason proclaimed by the Jacobins—but it remains, nevertheless, the logical heir and successor of the mediæval feudal autocracy which reigned in Europe before its advent, and it represents one step forward on the road of progress that will lead mankind to its ultimate goal. The victory of the bourgeoisie over feudalism is but the prelude to another and fiercer class struggle, now being waged, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat ; which must end in the victory of the latter and the abolition of all classes with the institution of private property which gave them birth. The present-day politics of Europe bears this contention out.

Such is history as viewed in the light of the Marxian dialectics, which reads success or failure, not in approximations to an abstract ideal, but in the development of new productive forces and the corresponding rise of new social classes, ideas and institutions. The faulty and shallow analysis which Mr. Das and all bourgeois libertarians bring to bear upon the great revolutions of the past is the result of their lack of understanding of the underlying social and economic forces involved. We can expect nothing better when we read, further on in the presidential address, that Mr. Das “ looks upon history as the revelation of God to man.” With such an attitude towards history, where every event is a special dispensation of Providence and not the result of material economic laws, no wonder that Mr. Das fails to draw useful analogies from the great revolutionary movements of the past to apply to the Indian struggle, and no wonder that he declares that India will not repeat the history of other nations, but will offer the world something unique.

And yet Deshbandhu Das and his associates are playing out their unconscious rôle as the leaders of India's bourgeois revolution against the decayed feudal autocracy of the native princes, and the absolutism of the imperial overlord. The Congress and its leaders are but the tools and instruments of those powerful social forces that have been silently developing themselves within the past century—a native bourgeoisie, reinforced by a rebellious peasantry deprived of its land, and by an exploited industrial proletariat, the product of machine industry and a ruined system of handicrafts. The struggle of these social classes for supremacy is masked beneath vague phrases and idealistic abstractions about "Swaraj," "Self-Realisation," and "Truth," even as the struggle of the French bourgeoisie, exploited peasantry and city proletariat was concealed beneath the eloquent perorations on "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das and his fellows, despite their sentimental Utopianism, are the Dantons, the Patrick Henrys, and the Garibaldis of the Indian Revolution, whose unexpressed and as yet half-conscious purpose it is to usher into power the Indian bourgeoisie.

But is not Mr. Das something more, one is tempted to inquire, in the light of his eloquent pronouncements on the subject of "the masses," whose cause he champions so valiantly against the "classes." Is his rôle to be not that of eighteenth century Republicanism of America and France, but of a twentieth century Messiah of the masses? How nobly he champions their cause in his speech at Gaya, and on innumerable occasions before and after. Does he not say :—

Many of us believe that the middle classes must win Swaraj for the masses. I do not believe in the possibility of any class movement being ever converted into a movement for Swaraj. If to-day the British Parliament grants provincial autonomy in the provinces with responsibility in the Central Government, I for one will protest against it, because that will inevitably lead to the concentration of power in the hands of the middle classes. I do not believe that the middle classes will then part with their power. How will it profit India if, in place of the white bureaucracy that now rules over her, there is substituted an Indian bureaucracy of the middle classes? . . . I desire to avoid the repetition of that chapter of European history. It is for India to show the light to the world—Swaraj by non-violence, and Swaraj by the people.

And how does Mr. Das propose to realise this "Swaraj of, by, and for the people"? By the revival of the ancient Indian *Panchayet*, or village community, which he terms "real democracy." According to his idea, "the most advanced thought of Europe is turning from the false individualism on which European culture and institutions are based to what I know to be the ideal of the ancient village organisation of India." We do not know if Mr. Das confuses, in his ignorance of the facts, the idea of the Soviet system with that of the *Panchayet*. If he does, we would point out to him that the analogy lies, not between the Soviet and the *Panchayet*, but between the *Panchayet* and the ancient Russian village *Mir*, which like the old Teutonic *Mark*, constituted the basis of primitive village self-government. Such "ideal" democracies are to be found in the early history of every country, not alone in India, during the stage when agriculture was the prevailing mode of production and the small peasant proprietor was the dominant social class, in that remote past before feudalism, with its complicated social and political institutions; superseded this very primitive stage of decentralised government. It is useless to discuss the kind of democracy enjoyed by these village communities, except to observe that being founded upon the system of private property, it contained the germ of modern bourgeois democracy into which, by slow and painful process of evolution, it has evolved, through the intervening stages of feudalism. Useless to discuss it we say, since even were it desirable, how were it possible to revive this archaic institution, which may have corresponded to the economic development of our remote ancestors, but which cannot possibly meet the manifold requirements of this twentieth century world in which we live, with its internationalised system of production, distribution and exchange? If decentralisation is desired, why seek to revive the *Panchayet*? Its own natural extinction in the process of evolving society is the best proof of its own unfitness to survive. The very desire to hark back to an imagined Golden Age is but an indication of Utopianism on the part of Mr. Das and his fellow-worshippers of India's mythical past, which savours strongly of reaction. Did not Jean Jacques Rousseau paint in glowing colours the "ideal democracy" of the primitive American Indians, whom those other seekers after democracy, the fathers of the American Revolution,

were busily engaged in killing off to make room for themselves and their more advanced institutions ?

But Mr. Das goes further in his advocacy of the cause of the "masses." In his presidential speech, as well as on other occasions, he specifically urged the organisation of labour and peasant societies "to further the cause of Swaraj," and earned thereby the appellation of "Bolshevik." We reproduce his words on this subject from the Gaya address, in order to discover if such an adjective is justified :—

I am further of the opinion that the Congress should take up the work of Labour and peasant organisation. . . . Is the service of this special interest in any way antagonistic to the service of nationalism ? To find bread for the poor, to secure justice to a class of people who are engaged in a particular class or avocation—how is that work any different from the work of attaining Swaraj ? . . . We have delayed the matter already too long. If the Congress fails to do its duty, we may expect to find organisations set up in the country by labourers and peasants detached from you, disassociated from the cause of Swaraj, which will inevitably bring into the arena of the peaceful revolution class struggles and the war of special interests. If the object of the Congress be to avoid this disgraceful issue, let us take Labour and the peasantry in hand, and let us organise them from the point of view of their own interest and also from the point of view of the higher ideal which demands the satisfaction of their special interests and the devotion of such interests to the cause of Swaraj.

We think Mr. Das should be absolved from all allegations of Bolshevism, and even of a pink shade of Socialism. What he advocates here is pure Hedonism—"pig-philosophy,"—let us help Labour in order to secure their help and to prevent their being used against us. No doubt this is put in such a utilitarian form in order to convince the more bourgeois among his audience—but it is the special pleading of what is at best, a bourgeois Utopian Liberal's plea directed towards a bourgeoisie more hard-headed, less romantic and unsentimental than himself. That is the essential quandary of Mr. Das—to be a humanitarian bourgeois liberal intellectual, fallen among orthodox Gandhians and "Responsive Co-operators,"—each faction listening critically to all he had to say, ready to follow him if he voices their particular aspirations and unexpressed interests, but equally ready to pounce upon him and rend him to pieces should he violate any one of their cherished traditions or prove himself the standard bearer of a new economic

class, which is not yet really represented in those chaste deliberations. We allude to the turbulent class of the industrial workers and landless agricultural proletariat, whose incipient spirit of revolt against unbearable economic conditions constitutes the only real menace to the established order of things in India, and upon whose dynamic power of mass action the Congress seeks to base its tactics of civil disobedience, without committing itself to a programme of economic reform which might antagonise the vested interests behind the bourgeois nationalist movement.

The inaugural address at Gaya closed with Deshbandhu Das, the poet and sentimentalist, riding in the saddle of Pegasus, with the discomfited barrister lost amid the cloud pictures of an India reborn, waging "spiritual warfare" against the unnamed foe—a warfare waged by "spiritual soldiers" free from all anger, hatred, pettiness, meanness and falsehood. A quotation from the "Prometheus Unbound" of that other poet-mystic and knight-errant of Liberty, Percy Bysshe Shelley, constituted the climax and close of an undeniably eloquent oration, which equally undeniably is a masterpiece of contradictions and sentimental confusion.

The die was cast. It remained for those who had heard to choose sides and elect their leader, either from among the doughty champions of No-Change or the Don Quixote of Pro-Change *cum grano salis*. The week of discussion and resolution-making came to an end, and Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, "Friend of the Country" and champion of the masses, found himself the head of a new party called the "Congress-Khilafat-Swaraj Party," pledged to work within the Congress for the achievement of Swaraj by non-violent non-co-operation, but along the lines of its own programme. This programme, it was announced, would be drawn up and submitted to the public for approval in the early months of 1923. Mr. Das, finding himself and his party in the minority, honorably resigned his post of Congress President, and betook himself to a tour of the country to rally his forces. The principal clauses of his temporary programme, as announced before the Congress session, included the capture of the Reform Councils, to mend or end them, the boycott of British goods, and the organisa-

tion of peasant and Labour unions, with the object of declaring a national strike for the speedy attainment of Swaraj.

The names of those who rallied to Mr. Das's side and swelled the ranks of the new party included as a preponderating majority, that group of "Responsive Co-operators" who, in various provinces, had been long and vainly chafing against the leading strings of orthodox Gandhism, and who beheld in this eloquent exponent of "Pro-Change," a captain who would lead them on to storm the citadel of the Reform Councils. While the question of Council entry was a secondary consideration in Mr. Das's programme, the whole issue of the Gaya Congress turned upon this disputed point, and to the new faction which unexpectedly swelled the ranks of the "Congress-Khilafat-Swaraj Party" this question was all-important and supreme. Wherefore we find that by sheer force of numbers they overwhelm Mr. Das, and make this point supreme for him as well. It begins to figure in every speech and declaration of policy as the decisive point at issue, on the part of the leaders of the new party. On the other point—that of the organisation of the Indian workers and peasants—the statement of Mr. N. C. Kelker, one of the Chiefs-of-Staff of the new party, and veteran leader of the Tilak School of "Responsive Co-operation," is exceedingly interesting. In an article called "The New Party," published in the *Mahratta* of January 14, 1923, the first comprehensive statement of the purpose and intentions of this organisation is given from the viewpoint of that rationalist faction which constitutes its chief strength. Mr. Kelker's views about Labour, as compared with those of Mr. Das's, are significant :—

The new party will, I think, whole-heartedly favour the formation of Labour unions and peasant unions. And while the formation of co-operative societies may represent its constructive activity, its destructive activity may, if occasion demands it, be represented by the advocacy of Labour strikes for a just cause and the non-payment of unjust taxes or dues by the peasants, not necessarily in the big name of Swarajya, but as a legitimate measure of resistance to unlawful acts of authority.

This measured statement of the case comes like a cold douche after the warm-hearted advocacy of the Deshbandhu, and should have somewhat prepared the unwary for a further shock that came towards the end of January in the form of a statement by the first

convention of the Congress-Khilafat-Swaraj Party on the "Rights of Private Property." This statement takes the form of a special clause in the first draft of the party programme that "private and individual property will be recognised, maintained, and protected, and the growth of individual wealth, both moveable and immovable, will be permitted and encouraged." This clause, it is remarked by contemporary journals, "seems to have been particularly included in order to counteract the statements made in some quarters that the non-co-operation movement represented a form of Bolshevism." But the fact that such a statement was published, far in advance of any other clause of the party's programme is an important indication of the true nature of the men who lead it. It is a frank declaration of class-affiliation and class-consciousness on the part of the rising Indian bourgeoisie, whose special interests the Swaraj Party is dedicated to defend. Under the influence and pressure of this class the school of liberal intellectuals to which Mr. Das belongs, is being willy-nilly converted from the erstwhile champion of the exploited masses, into the protector of bourgeois property rights. This is, indeed, a metamorphosis little expected on the part of those who were carried away by the eloquent speeches of the Deshbandhu in the cause of Labour and the Indian masses, but not very surprising to those who have learned to draw a hard, clear line between sentimentality on one hand, and class-interest on the other. The presence of a class-conscious bourgeois party within the ranks of the National Congress is rapidly beginning to crystallise the political ideology of the non-co-operation movement as a whole. The leaders of the new party are determined to protect their class-interests from the very outset against the rising flood-tide of mass-energy that may some day find an outlet in revolution. The day is fast approaching when Mr. Das must either abandon his own party and the social class to which he belongs, to throw in his lot with a purely proletarian movement conducted on the lines of the class-struggle against capitalist exploitation, both foreign and native, or give up altogether his sentimental effusions about the masses and take his stand unequivocally by the side of the propertied classes.

The new party has been captured by a very clear-headed set of individuals who have long been the standard bearers of political

rationalism inside the Congress ranks, and who will do their best to guide the movement back into the folds of parliamentarism and constitutional agitation, where they will eventually become His Majesty's most loyal Opposition. The difference between this "Responsive Co-operation" and the co-operating Moderates is slight indeed. Mr. Das now finds himself in the anomalous position of being the nominal head of a party which will end by negating the very principles of non-co-operation upon which it was originally founded. As he was isolated on the eve of Gaya, a solitary figure of dreams and illusions, so is he isolated now—pushed into a minority within the ranks of his own party whose guidance has passed into other hands. Deshbandhu Das may be no less the friend of the country, no less the champion of the oppressed masses than he was before his spiritual kidnapping by the Responsive Co-operators. But he is caught upon the horns of a dilemma which correspond to the poles of his own temperament—the lawyer in him struggled to escape from the metaphysical toils of orthodox Gandhism and so fell into the meshes of bourgeois rationalism, against which his poet's soul rebels. He still talks about "the masses," still dreams of the coming of an Indian millenium wherein peace and prosperity shall descend upon the people through the medium of the village *Panchayet*. Even in his most recent utterances before the third session of the All-India Trade Union Congress, celebrated in Lahore towards the end of March and over which he presided, he declared :—

If the middle classes ever win Swaraj, and I live to see that day, it will be my lot to stand by the workers and peasants and to lead them on to wrest power from the hands of the selfish classes.

But ere this day dawns the metamorphosis of Mr. Das from bourgeois liberal intellectual and Don Quixote of the masses into a true leader of the Indian working class must be complete.

The World of Labour

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BULGARIA

Election Terror

ELECTIONS to the Bulgarian Parliament took place on April 22 under terroristic conditions. Prior to the elections the Proportional Representation law was suspended, hundreds of left-wing propagandists were arrested and the lands of the Communist peasantry threatened with confiscation. As a result the Agrarians have secured 215 seats, the Communists 16 (a loss of more than half their seats), the Bourgeois bloc 14, and the Socialists 1. The election was openly proclaimed to be a fight between the Agrarian Party and the Communists, and the former desisted from no measures to secure a "victory."

FRANCE

United Front

A GAIN the French Communist Party has tried to form a united front with the Socialist Party on the occasion of the May Day celebration, and again nothing has been attained. The Socialist Party, in the face of the intensified capitalist offensive and the occupation of the Ruhr, refused to join issue on the following points laid down by the Communist Party:—

(1) A joint propaganda week against the occupation of the Ruhr, against the Versailles Treaty, against the imperialist policy of the Nationalist *bloc*, and the economic consequences detrimental to the workers caused thereby; such as the increase in the cost of living, reduction in wages, suppression of the eight-hour day law, &c.

(2) Joint action on May Day by giving the trade unions the full support of our followers.

(3) Support of the principle of a world congress, as decided by the International Congress held at Frankfurt.

On the majority of these problems it is certain that we advocate different solutions; but the realisations of those solutions is dependent, in both cases, on the awakening of the conscience of the working masses and the active collaboration of our supporters.

Only the United Front can realise the first condition.

GERMANY

Workers on Cuno Note

BOOTH in the Reichstag and the Prussian Diet much opposition to the recent Government Reparation proposals has been offered by the Left Wing Parties, notably the Communist Party, many of whose members have been suspended. The position to be adopted by the Communist Party to the Cuno Note was discussed and the party decision drawn up as follows:—

(1) The workers must continue a more intensive international struggle than ever against the policy of brigandage of the French imperialists, and against the reparation which the Entente countries demand for France.

(2) The Allies must be forced to evacuate the Ruhr and the occupied territories. Any manner of international occupation of the Ruhr (neutralisation or internationalising) must be fought against with the same energy as the Franco-Belgian occupation.

(3) The workers cannot make any offer to pay reparations until all the forces of resistance, both national and international are mobilised. The workers must conquer the reins of power so as to mobilise all the forces of defence.

(4) The working class can only take the responsibility for such an offer under the following conditions:—

- (a) Immediate and complete evacuation of the occupied territories;
- (b) Seizure of values which assure the State a preponderating influence in the important branches of key industries, in commerce, banks, and in agriculture so as to transfer the burden of reparations solely to the possessing classes.
- (c) The reconstruction of the German economic position side by side with the reconstruction of the devastated region in Northern France, and above all, the guarantee of sufficient nourishment to the working masses, which have been under-nourished for years.

(5) As regards the Cuno Government offer, the workers can in no respect be held responsible. The proposal proves once again that the Cuno Government is anxious to solve the question at the expense of the workers. The big industrialists and lords of finance have refused the guarantees of payment asked, and Cuno's Government, like its predecessors, is submissive, just as it was in January last. Big Business having refused to pay, Cuno and the parties which support him, whether actively or passively (People's Party, Centrists, Democrats, and Social Democratic Party) make an offer diametrically opposed to the workers' interests. This offer entails the imposition of new taxes and presupposes the aggravation of the exploitation of the workers in the factories. This is a mean manœuvre of the German bourgeoisie and will not terminate. It has been made with a view to rousing British and American capital against Franco-Belgian capital. Should this manœuvre succeed—but it will not—it will mean that the workers will be placed between Charybdis and Scylla. Instead of becoming a Franco-Belgian colony, Germany will become a colony of French, Belgian, British, and American capital. At the same time the German bourgeoisie weaken the defence against French imperialism on two decisive points: The question of the transport of coal and by bungling financial and fiscal policy.

In its own interest German capital has opposed the Ruhr workers' efforts to prevent the French from transporting coal. It was also self-interest that made capitalists sabotage the action to consolidate the mark, and lower real wages. The present situation must lead to a catastrophic *debacle*, to complete capitulation, at the expense of the workers, to French imperialism.

(6) The only possible solution for the workers is the united front against the bourgeoisie; it should take over the continuation of the struggle against Poincaré by overcoming Stinnes and Co.

(7) All coalition Governments, just as the Cuno Government, are incapable of taking up the fight against big industry and finance. The great coalition in process of preparation by the Social Democrats is only another form of the dictatorship of Stinnes supplemented by Fascism.

Only a workers' Government can save the working class from a catastrophe and total enslavement, because it will have the support of the united proletariat and its organs and because it will have the confidence of the proletariat in the Entente countries and of Soviet Russia.

(8) Factory councils and committees of control must become the nuclei of the proletarian united front and develop the struggle both against the internal and external enemy. The sabotage of the Social Democrats necessitates the intensification of the class struggle to create a basis for the workers' Government.

ITALY

Maximalist Congress

THE Congress of the Italian Socialist Party held in Rome in October, 1922, expelled the Reformists or Turati section from the party by a vote of 32,106 to 29,119. This decision left two possible courses open: either the Maximalists, under Serrati, should join the Communist Party or form an Independent Socialist Party. At a congress of the Maximalists held at Milan on April 15 it was decided by a vote of 5,361 to 3,698 not to join the Communist Party. The feeling of the congress was entirely against an independent party, and the formation of a united Communist Party, as proposed by the Communist International, is regarded as merely a question of time.

RUSSIA

Twelfth Communist Congress

THE Twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party opened in Moscow on April 17. Although for the first time Lenin was absent, he provided the basis for the most important discussion, which centred on a couple of articles that he had written earlier in the year on the dangers of bureaucracy in Soviet Government.

Lenin's proposals to reform the Central Commission and Central Committee of the Communist Party had led to a vigorous discussion in the Press, and the matter was finally thrashed out at this Congress. The chief question at issue was the rôle of the Communist Party. Krassin put forward the view that the problem of economic reconstruction was fundamental, and no interference on the part of the party ought to hinder this work. Ossinsky went even further, declaring in favour of the Communist Party concentrating on propaganda and agitational work and leaving the tasks of government solely to the Soviet organisations. His main proposals were: (1) The Council of People's Commissaries to become a purely administrative body; (2) the All-Russian Central Executive Committee to be the only legislative body; (3) the Central Committee of the Communist Party to be propagandist only; (4) contact to be maintained by half of the members of the Central Committee being members of the Council of People's Commissaries. On the other hand, the view of the majority of the Central Committee and that arrived at by Lenin himself was that it was necessary to intensify the political control of the party.

Anticipations of a serious split were gleefully heralded throughout the foreign anti-Russian Press. Nothing of the kind occurred. After the complete discussion at the Congress the resolutions elaborated by the Central Committee of the Party were all unanimously adopted. The resolutions confirmed the inviolability of the State foreign trade monopoly, insisted on the importance of union with the peasants and emphasised the necessity of a division of labour between the Soviet and party organisations. It was unanimously agreed that the party must have the lead in all political and cultural work and that the dictatorship of the proletariat could only be expressed through the Communist Party.

The second most important subject for decision was the report on the development of Russian industry submitted by Trotsky. His theses, which were unanimously adopted, dealt with the development of State industry on Socialist lines. Krassin again brought forward criticism from the point of view that Trotsky's programme for the restoration of industry was on too small a scale, and that it was necessary to obtain greatly increased assistance of foreign capital through concessions and loans, but the weight of the argument went against him.

The result of the Congress was a new assertion of the supreme importance of the Communist Party in the life of Soviet Russia. A new Central Executive of fifty members was elected, including nineteen members taking office for the first time. Among prominent Communists who failed to secure re-election were Krassin, Ossinsky, Chicherin, Litvinoff, Krestinsky, and Joffe.

BOOK REVIEW

A JOURNALIST TELLS THE TRUTH

Through the Russian Revolution. By Albert Rhys Williams. (Labour Publishing Company. 7s. 6d.)

ANY student of modern journalism who reflects on the reaction of the Press towards the Russian revolution will find a most striking exposure of the common fallacy (recently restated by Mr. Norman Angell in one of his latest books) that newspaper proprietors are simply concerned with the commercial profit to be derived from constantly exploiting the popular love of sensationalism. It is only necessary to read *Through the Russian Revolution* to understand that the Russian workers' struggle for power provided material for a "scoop" with a far greater appeal to the imagination than, for instance, Sir Philip Gibbs' despatches from France. The duty of the Fleet Street News Editor, however, is not simply to thrill his million net readers with "human stories," but consciously to select only that news which suits the proprietor's class interests; about other events—irrespective of their historical or news value—the well-trained journalist must lie or be silent. Mr. Albert Rhys Williams' book is evidence that our Press has been the duller in consequence.

Through the Russian Revolution is not a profound history of Bolshevism, such as Mr. Philips Price's work; it is simply a record of the experiences of an American socialist journalist who has lived through revolution as an active and enthusiastic observer. Mr. Williams is gifted with a style comparable to John Reed's, and the period he covers is not ten days, but four years.

Mr. Williams opens his Introduction by introducing us to the Cadets:—

Looking at the red-flagged troupe from his window, Milyukov exclaimed: "There goes the Russian revolution—and it will be crushed in fifteen minutes."

But it was the Cadets, with their Liberal foresight and their attitude of contemptuous tolerance towards the proletariat, who were to be crushed:—

It was mainly the workers and soldiers who made the revolution. They had shed their blood for it. Now it was assumed that they would retire in the orthodox manner leaving affairs in the hands of their superiors. The people had taken the power away from the Tsarists. Now appeared on the scene the bankers and lawyers, the professors and politicians, to take power away from the people.

They said:

"People, you have won a glorious victory. The next duty is the formation of a new State. It is a most difficult task, but fortunately, we, the educated, understand this business of governing. We shall set up a Provisional Government. Our responsibility is heavy, but as true patriots we will shoulder it. Noble soldiers, go back to the trenches. Brave working men, go back to the machines. And peasants, you go back to the land."

Now the Russian masses were tractable and reasonable. So they let these bourgeois gentlemen form their "Provisional Government." But the Russian masses were intelligent, even if they were not literate. Most of them could

not read or write. But they could think. So, before they went back to the trenches, the shops, and the land, they set up organisations of their own—*Soviets*.

. . . deputies were elected by trades and occupations, not by districts. The soviets consequently were filled, not with glibly talking politicians, but with men who knew their business.

The *intelligentsia*, with the capitalists and landlords, lined up behind the Provisional Government, while, on the other side, the workmen, soldiers and peasants rallied to the soviets. And when the Communists won the confidence of the soviets came "the refusal of the *intelligentsia*":—

Among the delegates were scores of these intellectuals. They had made the "dark people" the object of their devotion. "Going to the people" was a religion. . . . the *intelligentsia* had made a god of the people. Now the people were rising . . .

But the *intelligentsia* reject a god who will not listen to them and over whom they have lost control. . . . They disavow all faith in their former god, the people. They deny their right to rebellion.

• • • • •

The *intelligentsia*, as usual, wish to compromise the issue by a coalition of all parties. "Only one coalition possible," is the retort, "the coalition of workers, soldiers, and peasants."

That was the position at the opening of the historic Second Congress of Soviets in Petrograd on November 7, 1917, and when, indignant at the revolutionary will of the people expressing itself, Martov, Kutchin, and Abramovich, with some eighty delegates, rose to leave the Congress: "Let them go," cries Trotsky, "let them go! They are just so much refuse that will be swept into the garbage-heap of history." By 6 a.m. the following morning the Provisional Government had been declared overthrown.

When the intellectuals deserted the revolution they also isolated themselves; they found themselves rejected by the masses whom they had tried to patronise. The attitude of the intellectuals had made that situation inevitable for some months before the actual break occurred. Mr. Williams describes the meetings, at which bored audiences listened to the half-hearted and platitudinarian sentiments expressed by the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, until suddenly enthusiasm would be awakened by the appearance of Lenin, Zinoviev, or some other Bolshevik leader, whose critics and opponents would be instantly shouted down.

Mr. Williams spent fourteen months among the peasants, he addressed meetings of Red sailors, he was present at the capture of the Winter Palace, he journeyed across Siberia; in every one of its phases and from Kronstadt to Vladivostok he saw the revolution. The chapter headings, "Mercy or Death to the Whites?" "The War of the Classes," "Building the New Order," "The Steppes Rise Up," "A Red Funeral," only hint at the scope of his experience. He was personally responsible for organising a foreign detachment of the Red Army, and in his military connection was for a time associated with Kuntz, a life-long Tolstoyan, who, to defend the revolution, took up arms.

The book is enlivened with many individual character sketches and personal anecdotes. It contains numerous excellent photographs, a well-

documented appendix, and nine coloured reproductions of Bolshevik posters; by means of the latter, as the author explains, "What ever the Soviet does, it strives to make the people understand the reason."

Through the Russian Revolution is already well known in the United States, and the English edition has now been printed from the American plates.

A. E. E. R.

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- Trade Unionism and Munitions.* G. D. H. Cole. (Economic and Social History of the World War, British Series.) Published on behalf of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace by Humphrey Milford, Oxford, at the Clarendon Press.
- Workshop Organisation.* G. D. H. Cole. (Economic and Social History of the World War, British Series.) Published on behalf of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace by Humphrey Milford, Oxford, at the Clarendon Press.
- The Workers' Register of Labour and Capital, 1923.* The Labour Research Department. Labour Publishing Company, 5s. and 3s. 6d.
- Report on an Inquiry into Working-Class Budgets.* G. Findlay Shirras. Labour Office, Secretariat, Government of Bombay, Rs. 3-14-0.
- The Community's Credit.* C. M. Hattersley. Credit Power Press, 5s.
- Workers' Opposition in Russia.* Alexandra Kollontay. Dreadnought Publishers, 6d.

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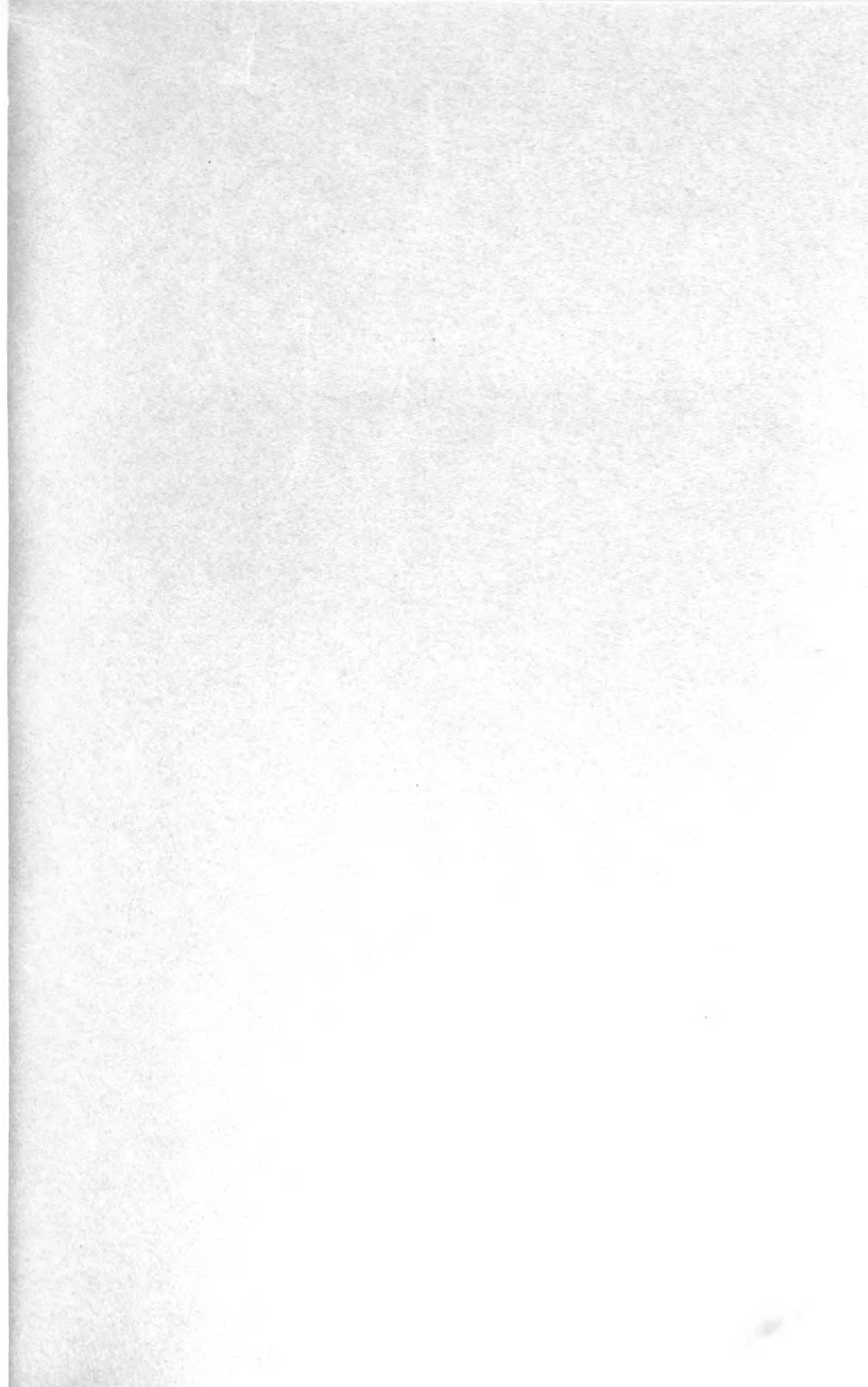
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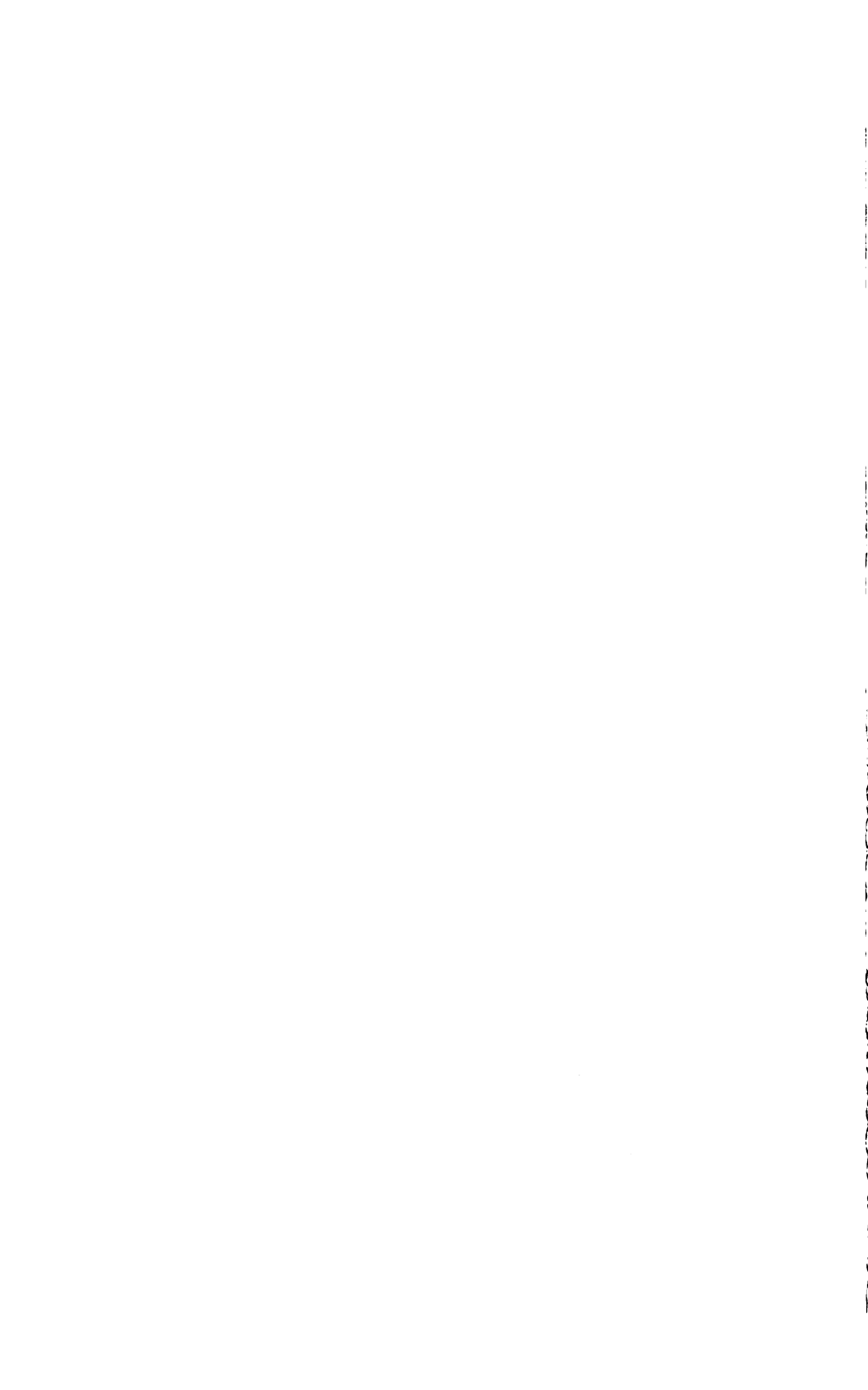
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TO
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NOTES of the MONTH

*Unity—Disunity—The Alternative—Back to Reality—War and
Fascism—Inaction and Reaction—The Left Wing—
Communist Affiliation*

UNITY of the working-class movement, both within each country and internationally, has been an acknowledged aim of most sections of the movement since European Socialism first took shape. Yet unity has never been achieved. In Britain two great institutions, the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress, stand out as representative of the organised workers in politics and industry ; but neither of these bodies can be said to have succeeded in mobilising for action, whether “political” or “economic,” more than a fraction of the energy latent in the masses of this country. They have failed to secure, not a neutral consensus of political opinion as to aims, but an actual rallying and rousing of energy for the tasks immediately ahead. Internationally, the new Labour and Socialist International and the Amsterdam Trade Union International are formed of, and controlled by, elements in the movement that have already shown themselves unable to arouse mass enthusiasm for even the most elementary and obvious needs of the European working class. When, from time to time, some development of the long agony of the decay of capitalism, or some new effort of the capitalist rulers of Europe to make their position more secure at the expense of the working class, has aroused the anger of the conscious workers in one country or in many, the leaders of the new international have been found restraining the workers from action. They have not attempted to organise their spontaneous movements into a concerted effort. And this failure—apart from considerations of intellectual honesty and courage that are not easy to measure accurately—is due only to a very slight extent to the inevitable difficulty of securing agreement as to ultimate aims or the ideal constitution of a Socialist State ; it arises directly from the failure to fight for the immediate and dominant interests of the working class.

THE word "failure" recurs in this summary of the most important reality in Europe to-day—the disunity of the working class. It is a word that has to be written across the working-class movement as a whole—the movement that in the end can know no failure. Parliamentary successes and a measure of acquiescence gained from the bourgeoisie, by the sacrifice of specifically working-class items of policy, are nothing in the balance as against the continual retreat in face of the capitalist offensive. But before we go on to consider the policies of disunity and their results, it is necessary to deal first with an event that is of extraordinary present importance and holds out a wide promise for the future. We refer to the international conference of the transport workers at Berlin, at which effective unity for action was achieved.

AT this conference differences of political tendency or theory were not discussed, and no new international union or federation was formed. Instead, a Council of Action was set up to perform certain definite tasks and to prepare for the greater tasks that can be clearly seen ahead. The policy worked out, agreed upon, and immediately put into practice was directed against the dangers that definitely threaten the European workers, or are already oppressing them with an intolerable burden—militarism, the threat of war, the continuance and spread of Fascism. The reasons for this policy are obvious: *War and Fascism are realities*. The hopes of peaceful reform fostered by Labour and Socialist politicians are seen, from Poland to France, to be unreal; in Britain where moderate Labour has had to face the realities of local government disillusion has been immediate and sweeping, and nationally the illusions of reformism are dying slowly as the Labour Party in Parliament grows more and more out of touch with the workers and elaborates a technique of class co-operation that differs little from that employed by Mr. Lloyd George, the arbitrator *par excellence*, before the war. But while the illusions of reformism fade, and the workers pass to indifference or despair, the forces that are bringing down the fabric of European economic life grow stronger and more violent.

THE conditions under which the masses of the people live and work are ruthlessly depressed. Armaments weigh continually more heavily on those who can gain nothing whatever from any war. (Two columns of a recent issue of the *Manchester Guardian* contained a detailed statement of the first steps that are being taken to put Britain on an equality with France in air power, a description of the reorganisation of the Rumanian army by General Lerond, and the reasons why Yugo-Slavia is planning to build a navy. It is scarcely possible to read any newspaper to-day without coming across similar details.) And while, for the moment, Lord Curzon and Mr. Urquhart have failed to carry the British bourgeoisie with them in a crusade against the Soviet republics, the possibility of war in the autumn, when the harvests offer loot, draws continually nearer. The running sore of the Ruhr still festers. In Czecho-Slovakia, the one centre of comparative stability apparent in Central Europe, the forces of aggressive nationalism are only withheld by the prestige of President Masaryk, who is seventy years old and is stated by *The Times* to be in failing health. (Benes, whose international reputation looms so large, could not hold the Czecho-Slovakian bourgeoisie together owing to his personal unpopularity with the nationalists.) The issues of Lausanne are undecided still, and in Bulgaria a bourgeois nationalist Government has replaced the dictatorship of the richer peasants. While war is thus an overwhelming danger, the menace of Fascism in Germany continues, and Lord Curzon's policy of offering no resistance to the French seems to be based on the calculation that a nationalist reaction will be provoked in Germany strong enough to crush the workers, and sufficiently right minded to make it possible to add Germany to the Anglo-Italian Alliance. These are the dangers that any international working-class policy inevitably has to face.

THE striking lead given by the transport workers shows that there is an alternative to the policy of inaction pursued by the Amsterdam International as a whole. If the Amsterdam Transport Workers' Federation can meet the Russian unions (who, in this case, represented all the transport

unions affiliated to the R.I.L.U.) and find agreement on a policy of action, it is possible to work out a programme of immediate tasks, by the execution of which the trade union movement of Europe might become the dominating factor in the international situation. But the executive of the Amsterdam International has disassociated itself from the action of the transport workers. The Hamburg Conference of the new political International refused even to give a hearing to the representatives of the International Council of Action established at Frankfurt. Instead of moving towards unity, all the forces of official socialism, trade unionism, and Labour seem to be concentrated upon opposition to the Communists.

THERE are, however, sections and tendencies within the new International whose aim it is to secure a working agreement with the Communists. Representatives of the Independent Labour Party are said to have made an attempt, within the Organisation Commission of the Hamburg Conference, to secure an invitation for representatives of the Communist International. Their desire for unity was not strong enough to lead them to make any statement or protest in open conference, but this may have been due to the fact that the declared policy of most sections of the conference was to avoid discussion of points on which differences of opinion might arise. This policy—which is certainly one way in which any amount of unity can be obtained—was specially in evidence when Fritz Adler's final report of the Organisation Commission came up for discussion. A French delegate at once put forward the opinion that, as Adler's report was of extraordinary importance, and as there were differences of opinion among the various sections on many points in this report, no discussion should be held; the report should be adopted unanimously. To this example of socialist logic the conference, in all solemnity, agreed. A precedent was perhaps created at Hamburg that will tie the hands of the left wing organisations within the Labour Party, and prevent them risking that Party's fictitious unity of inertia in an attempt to secure a real unity of action. But if the political left wing is content to decay slowly in

this way, the workers are not. The Labour Party Conference is not easily influenced by the rank and file of the working class ; the opinions of Mr. J. H. Thomas have more effect on the conference than any number of resolutions from branches of the N.U.R. But none the less, the rank and file will be directly represented in the conference discussions.

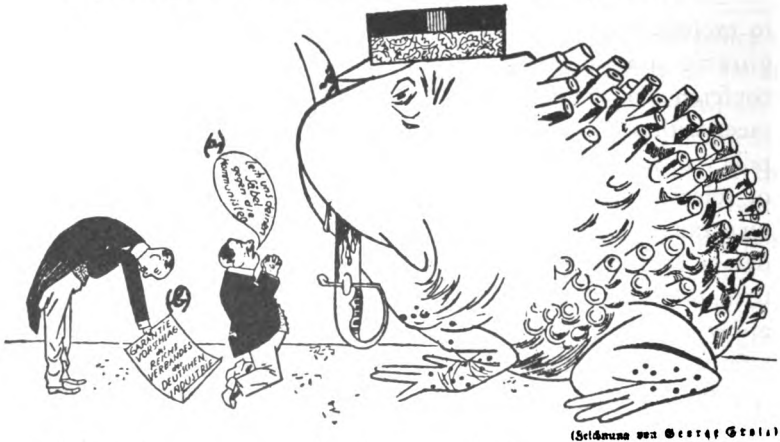
THE representatives of the rank and file come to the conference mainly from the local Labour Parties and the Trades Councils. Amongst them will be members of the Communist Party, sent by organisations that are unwilling to accept dictation from Eccleston Square in respect to the delegates that they elect. In a few cases Communists will be present as executive members of national trade unions. And although the block vote of the great unions, controlled largely by the union officials, may be used to out-vote the rank and file delegates—even if joined by sections of the Independent Labour Party—the delegates from the local bodies can be relied upon to put up a fight. This is important, for the leaders of the Labour Party are not deceived by their own stratagems. They know that a direct attack on the Communist delegates, a refusal of credentials, or an attempt to exclude them in other ways would bring into being a rapidly growing opposition which could rob the further proceedings of the conference of any appearance of tranquillity or agreement. If they meet with a determined opposition they are likely to mould their policy towards the Communists during the coming year on lines of tolerance, in order to avoid widening the breach within their own ranks. They might even remember suddenly that Mr. Henderson said last year, at Edinburgh, that the resolution now being used to justify the exclusion of Communists was not intended to apply to them. It has to be admitted that, faced with the alternatives of growing division within their own ranks on this question, or of ceasing their attempts to drive Communists out of local Labour organisations, the leaders of the Labour Party are quite capable of choosing disunity. That course will only be chosen, however, if they feel that they can afford to disregard the opposition. It is for the delegates to the London Conference who

believe in working-class unity to make it clear that they cannot be disregarded. The question of Communist Party affiliation is the most important that can come up at the conference, because the realities of the present position in Europe make working-class unity imperative.

T. L.

The cartoon, reproduced below, illustrates, from the working-class point of view, the latest phase in the relations between the capitalists of France and Germany, as described by M. Philips Price in his article in this issue.

LUTTERBECK and STINNES : "HELP, FOCH, HELP!"



- (a) "Lend us your sword against the Communists."
 (b) "'Guarantee offer' of 'Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie' (the Federation of German Industries)."

—*Rote Fahne*, June 5

A NEW PHASE IN THE RUHR STRUGGLE

By M. PHILIPS PRICE

THE disorders at the end of May in the Ruhr can have been unexpected only by those who did not see from the first what was going on behind the scenes. It will no doubt come as a surprise to those in the British Labour Party who have not yet cast off their Liberal skins that the resistance to the invader has been from the first inspired not by a mystic nationalism, uniting all classes against a militarism which is a monopoly only of France, but by a complex series of motives, often conflicting, in the different sections of the Ruhr population. As far as the German Socialist movement is concerned, what has happened will dash the hopes of those crusted bureaucrats at the head of the German trade union machine and of the Social Democratic mandarins who are dreaming of a great Coalition Government in Berlin from Stinnes to Scheidemann. Not that the "great coalition" is not a possibility even now, but if it comes into existence it will be fixed up in the lobbies of the Reichstag without the knowledge of the rank and file and will be paraded to the public as the last trump card to save the sinking Fatherland. For the new phase in the Ruhr struggle has brought the Reformist Labour leaders in Germany up against the hard facts of the class war. For the first time since the French occupation there is abundant evidence that the Ruhr workers, without perhaps understanding the true significance of what they are doing, have thrown down the glove not only against the French militarists and the Comité des Forges, but also against the Cuno Government and the "Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie." The "united front against the French militarists" has been shown to be a myth.

What are the developments which have led up to this new phase in the Ruhr struggle? The Ruhr has seen many military occupations in the last four years. When Noske marched his White Guards in March, 1919, to suppress the general strike and arrest the Workers' Council leaders, and a year later when the notorious

General Watter marched in to disarm the miners in the name of President Ebert, who had just been reinstated in his Presidential chair largely as the result of the actions of these miners, a bloody massacre and wholesale imprisonments were the lot of the working-class population of the Ruhr. The French invasion, on the other hand, was a mere bagatelle to begin with. The French military chiefs did everything in their power to favourably impress the workers and to assure them that they would even agree to socialisation of the mines if the miners would agree to work reparation coal. A competition between the German and French bourgeoisie commenced, as to who could offer the most tempting terms to the workers, the one to work on reparations account and the other to refuse to carry out any orders of the invader. The German employers and State officials granted 100 per cent. wage rises immediately after the Ruhr occupation, and agreed to an unemployment benefit amounting to two-thirds of a normal wage. Enormous credits were opened by the State to the employers, so that they should have no difficulty in meeting these promises and paper money began to flow like water. Seven billion marks were printed in less than two and a-half months. It was a paradise—of paper and on paper!

But these halcyon days were obviously not going to last for ever. The mere fact that the German industrial capitalists were fighting, not over the principle of whether the future form of industrial organisation on the banks of the Rhine should be a Franco-German trust or not, but on the percentage which the French and German shareholders should receive in the new combine, already accepted in principle, prevented them from allowing the struggle to develop to a point where an agreement might be compromised and where they might fail to receive a share of the booty. Moreover, amongst the small middle classes and the better-paid sections of labour, where the consciousness of the class struggle was but feebly developed, the "no more war" feeling was uppermost and the struggle was carried on half-heartedly. Among the vast majority of the working-class population of the Ruhr the feeling was strong from the first that the whole affair was the concern of two capitalist groups, and that in any case they would be the loser.

Meanwhile the German industrial chiefs had decided to fight for their percentages on the combine by using the credit of the

State to support the mark and gain the sympathies of the English business world against France by making a pretence at stabilisation. The mark was suddenly pushed down from 30,000 to 20,000 to the dollar, and held there till nearly the middle of April. This was done by the Reichsbank, which threw during this period a large amount of gold and foreign values on the money markets. How large the amounts sacrificed for this purpose were is not publicly stated, but from the returns of the Reichsbank it is possible to see that the gold reserves of the Reichsbank during this period diminished by 160 million gold marks, while the amount of foreign currencies sold amounted to 600 million gold marks. Not all of this should be regarded as Reichsbank gold reserve, for a part of these sums were found by the sale of currencies accumulated on reparations account and diverted for this purpose immediately after the French invasion. The German bankers, however, made no secret of the fact that they regarded this whole action as artificial and one which was only intended to bring about a political effect to keep the Ruhr workers quiet and interested in the maintenance of passive resistance. Speaking before the Parliamentary Commission for Inquiry into the Fall of the Mark, Herr Loeb, from the banking house Mendelssohn, on June 4 said: "It was clear from the first that by the technical method of selling foreign currencies and the gold reserve it was impossible to continue the action indefinitely. Therefore there was general agreement that the action must be supported by a rigid curtailing of credit by the Reichsbank. This point of view was predominant during the first two months. In March, however, a change was observed and money began again to be plentiful. The only thing, then, to save the situation was the successful floating of the Gold Dollar Loan, secured on the remaining gold of the Reichsbank. With the failure to float this loan confidence in the possibility of continuing the action departed and everyone began to buy foreign currencies to lay up for future eventualities." Reduced to ordinary language this is an admission that powerful interests began to get to work in Germany about the end of March to gradually liquidate the state of economic war which had been going on between France and Germany since January. Someone had proved stronger than the bankers, and that someone was the heavy industry trusts, particularly the Stinnes

Rhine-Elbe Union. Credit had suddenly become plentiful about the end of March, because the industrial trusts had threatened to throw large blocks of marks on the market if credits were not forthcoming. The Gold Dollar Loan was unsuccessful because the industries had passed round the word to boycott the one remaining chance of maintaining the mark for a few months longer at its then-existing level. The industrial chiefs in Germany had proved stronger than the financial chiefs, and particularly the chiefs of heavy industry had taken the lead to defeat the financiers. They were interested in a fall in the mark, partly because they wanted to pay back the three billion marks which they had borrowed from the Reichsbank since January in still more depreciated paper currency and partly because they felt that the time was coming to prepare the way for the Franco-German heavy industry combine.

The German heavy industries were, from the first, never interested in a fight to a finish. The "Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie" has had, since its foundation in April, 1919, two wings: one of them representing the interests of the heavy and the other of the finishing industries. Already before the war there were two capitalist organisations in Germany, the "Zentralverband der deutschen Industrieller," which comprised the heavy industries, and the "Bund deutscher Industrieller," which comprised the finishing industries. These two bodies used to represent two conflicting policies in the industrial world. The heavies were supporters of a high protective tariff against foreign coal and iron products, while the finishing industries wanted cheap raw material, and hence free trade. This same conflict of interest between the basic and finishing industries has appeared since the war in another form. The manipulation of the exchanges has taken the place of the raising of tariff walls, because, after all, a low exchange is one of the most effective means of counteracting foreign competition. The heavy industry trusts in Germany to-day are in a position to make large profits on the export of coal and on half-finished iron products by forcing the mark down. On the other hand, the finishing industries, who have not got the same independent source of raw material as the heavies, are interested in a relatively stable currency, because they have often to buy from abroad. The struggle, therefore, which before the war was fought out between

the two separate industrial organs, has since 1919 been fought out within the ranks of the "Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie," which was a union of forces to meet the revolutionary dangers of the years 1918-19.

During the last three years the German finishing industries have been emancipating themselves somewhat from the monopoly of the heavies. They have extended their operations into the raw material industry. One of the most powerful industrial federations in Europe to-day is that of which the A.E.G., Krupps, and Otto Wolff (Cologne) is the centre. It has acquired large coal and iron properties in Germany and has international banking connections. But in spite of this its main interest is in the sale of finished products, and here the success of its operations is dependent less on a falling mark than on high technical efficiency. The Wiesbaden agreement in 1921 between Loucheur and Rathenau represented the policy of this German industrial group to secure a share of the profits of the electrical reconstruction of the devastated areas of France with a French heavy industry group, and to secure a gradual stabilisation of the mark through payments in kind. It was fought tooth and nail by the Stinnes trust, whose main activity has always been the sale of coal and iron products on the world markets. For him a falling mark was and is a necessity. Thanks to his efforts the Wiesbaden Agreement became abortive. In recent months the Stinnes trust has extended its sphere so as to absorb several industrial undertakings in Upper Silesia with a view to preventing his rival, the finishing trust, from getting control over fresh sources of raw materials. He has also tried to corner the oil trade in Germany by forming a new oil trust. The A.E.G.-Krupp-Wolff concern has replied by concluding, through the Roland A.G. (Bremen) and the Kosmos Dampfschiffahrline, an agreement with the Harriman Steamship Line, thus cutting off Stinnes from an important international connection.

This struggle between the two trusts, between the heads of the raw material and finishing industries in Germany, is reflected also in the reparations policy of Germany, and particularly in the struggle on the Ruhr. Stinnes wants to come to terms with the heads of the Lorraine industries. His coke has its natural outlet there and he requires the Lorraine minette. The de Wendel group

of French heavy industry is interested in the same solution, and both are ready on certain terms to agree to an exchange of shares in each other's undertakings. The whole reparations question for them is little more than an interchange of shares and an agreement to combine forces in a common price policy and a common attack on labour. A falling mark and franc has no terror for them once they are secured of raw materials in abundance. Not so the A.E.G.-Krupp-Wolff concern, which has influential connections in England and America, and can obtain large credits from the City and Wall Street through the bank of Kleinwert and Kuhn, Loeb. It would continue the fight against the French occupation of the Ruhr, and continue the action for the support of the mark, if necessary by negotiating an international loan, as part of a reparation settlement.

Again the Stinnes trust will not hear of any reparation settlement on the basis of an international loan in which the German industries are to contribute their share of the guarantee, unless it gets the railways of the Reich into its hands. This is bitterly opposed by the competing concern, because the conversion of the German railways into a private monopoly would be of advantage only to the heavy industries, which are the chief purveyors of coal and metal for this public undertaking. These, then, were the two opposing policies in the "Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie" during the month of May. The successful attempt of Stinnes to obstruct the Gold Dollar Loan and to put an end to the stabilisation of the mark by the Reichsbank enabled him to force his point of view on the Reichsverband, which in the last week of that month accepted his proposals to "offer" a guarantee to the German Government if it gave up the railways to private monopolies. The victory of Stinnes means the gradual liquidation of the resistance on the Ruhr, the opening of negotiations with the Lorraine industrialists, and the setting up of an economic dictator in Germany. The pro-French heavy industries have for the moment at least triumphed over the finishing industries, allied with international banking capital.

The same developments have taken place in France, where, at the end of April, de Wendel was elected president of the Comité des Forges in place of J. and Eugene Schneider. Now Schneider-

Creusot is the centre of a big finishing industry trust and has no material interest in a settlement in the Ruhr, based on an exchange of coke and minette. On the contrary, this group is much more interested in continuing the struggle till the Ruhr metallurgical industries capitulate and can be taken over after paying off the German holders in cash. There is no chance of an amicable agreement between Schneiders and the Ruhr industry chiefs. But the rejection of Schneider by the members of the Comité des Forges shows that the policy of the French coal and minette owners is dominating. The way for a Franco-German capitalist solution of the Ruhr struggle has been prepared both in Germany and in France. Can London City and Wall Street upset the plan? The next few months will show.

But now a new factor has come upon the scene, quite apart from the international banking interests of London and New York, who would like to hinder this settlement. The Ruhr workers have begun to move. Is it the awakening from sleep or only the last convulsions before death? The liquidation of the struggle on the Ruhr and the creation of the Ruhr-Lorraine industrial combine requires political preparation in the public mind. Someone has to bear the responsibility for the political retreat; somehow the blame for failure to secure the unconditional withdrawal of the French army of occupation from the Ruhr has to be shifted on to somebody's shoulders. The legend of the "stab in the back" has to be revived and the workers of the Ruhr provoked to take such action that the front of the passive resistance will be broken through. The German Communist Party is in possession of information to the effect that during May an understanding was reached between prominent members of the "Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie" and the Minister of Finance of the Reich, a nominee of the former, that no further credits would be forthcoming for the payments of increased wages for the next two months. Having secured this the Stinnes group at once began to force down the mark by buying large amounts of foreign currency. In a few days the dollar rose from 40,000 to 80,000 marks, and was quickly followed by the prices of food and necessaries, which in the Ruhr rose 100 per cent. in ten days. The heavy machine of the trade union bureaucracy began to work, and negotiations dragged on in Essen and Berlin

with the employers and members of the Government. Meanwhile the Reichsverband was preparing its "offer" of reparations guarantee to the Government, the acceptance of which was to be the condition of permitting a rise in wages to cover the collapse of the mark. The game, however, was spoiled by the metal workers and miners in a number of towns spontaneously and together downing tools and electing a strike committee to enforce unconditionally their demands for an adequate rise. Impelled by instinct, the rank and file knew that while their social democratic leaders were frittering their time away in the Government and employers' offices, someone was selling the pass. At the same time a number of control committees sprung up in the strike areas to supervise the prices on the local markets and punish by confiscation local profiteers. In this way some acts of plunder were committed. The employers got their Fascist organisations to work at once and bands of "bürgerwehr" began to clear the streets, arrest strike leaders, and reinforce the police. The strikers replied by creating a local labour militia of organised trade unionists, who disarmed the Fascists and took over the responsibility for local order. This took place in Gelsenkirchen and Bochum. In other places the Fascists withdrew voluntarily and no labour militia was formed. The whole thing was spontaneous and the victory over the Fascists was complete; plundering was sternly suppressed, and the strike continued under perfectly orderly conditions. For the first time since the Kapp days in March, 1919, it has been shown that the German workers can by mass action overpower the armed thugs of the German employing class. The leadership of the movement fell naturally to the Communists, the "Union der Hand und Kopfarbeiter," the Syndicalists, and the "Allgemeine Arbeiter Union." The first union is largely under the leadership of the Communists, and the latter of the Syndicalists and Anarchists. The Communists in the Ruhr actually paying party fees are about 40,000, and the "Union der Hand und Kopfarbeiter" has about 70,000 paying members in the whole industrial area of Westfalia. The Syndicalists and their union are very difficult to number, but they certainly have less. It is doubtful if there were more than 150,000 leading a strike which was affecting up to three-quarters of a million. All the rest were members of the Social Democratic

Unions, the Catholic and the "Hirsch-Dunker" (Democratic) Unions. Yet although the leaders of these latter unions condemned the strike, refused strike pay, and continued their negotiations with the employers, their rank and file to a man followed the lead of the Communists and Syndicalists. The disarming of the Fascists by the labour militia, however, so put the wind up the representatives of the trusts that they quickly patched up a truce and agreed to an immediate advance of 50 per cent. in wages as from June 1. At once the order went out from the strike committees to return to work. The Ruhr workers had won their first big victory on the internal front since November, 1918. The plans of the Reichsverband were for the moment scotched, and the "offer" with the demand for denationalising the railways was published to the world with the Ruhr workers in possession of their wage advance. The Reichsverband will now have to engineer another mark collapse (which it is doing) and fight another strike with all its risks for themselves, if it is to make good its claim that the Ruhr workers have broken the Fatherland's front.

In order to prepare for the future the Reichsverband and the German Government, through its representative Herr Lutterbeck (the secretary of the "Socialdemocratic," Oberpresident, Herr Grützner), had written an astounding letter to the French Commander-in-Chief in the Ruhr, which must for ever remain a classic in the history of the class struggle. Its principal passages are as follows:—

Since the disarming of the German Green Police by your orders in February, the increase of disorders in the Ruhr has been everywhere noticeable. A large number of thefts and burglaries have taken place. The elements which are hostile to the State, the Communists and Syndicalists, have used this situation to their advantage and have been organising their "corps of hundreds." . . . I consider it my duty to tell you the true position. The French command seems to be under the impression that the Gelsenkirchen rebellion was only an episode. Nothing could be more dangerous to imagine that in a repetition of the same thing in future it would remain a local disorder. The success of the rebels in Gelsenkirchen can only encourage the elements hostile to the State to make new attempts, and so threaten the bases of "kultur" and of the productive system in such a way as to endanger their very existence. France is playing a dangerous game if she thinks she can control the situation in this way. The whole world at the present moment fears the situation, and if the

French command thinks that it can allow a rebellion to go unpunished, then it will come under the suspicion that it wishes at all costs to undermine German authority in the Ruhr, even at the expense of allowing European civilisation to be threatened by mob rule in the Ruhr. It is a dangerous game for France herself. The French army of occupation is not merely a collection of rifles, guns, and tanks, but these instruments are served by human beings who have eyes and ears for what is going on about them. They will bring the seeds of a new learning home with them, and this seed may bear bitter fruit on French soil. It is, therefore, the duty of the French command, even if it does not take action itself, to give a free hand to the German authorities to carry out their duties. . . . I should like to remind the French command that in the rebellion of the Commune in 1871-2 the German High Command allowed the French authorities every freedom for the purpose of suppressing the rebels. We are only asking the same facilities now in case of future developments. I ask, therefore, for agreement to the principle that we send armed police from the towns of Dusseldorf, Duisburg, and Hamborn to danger points of the industrial areas.

Comments on this amazing document are needless. It will, one may hope, dispel the illusion that the events on the Ruhr are part of a struggle of two nations. For in actual fact it shows like a flash of lightning in a dark forest the grim outlines of the class struggle.

The German heavy industries are preparing for the capitulation on the Ruhr on the condition that they become junior partners to the plunder in future. No doubt the process will need some stage-managing. An ultimatum from a united Entente will probably sooner or later be asked for by the German Government in order to make the retreat easier, and another juggle with the exchanges, another raiding expedition on the real wages of the Ruhr metal workers and miners may, perhaps, provoke the disorders necessary to drown the coalfield in a sea of blood and throw the blame on the workers. But should the German Communists succeed in keeping the masses in hand and repelling the attack in whatever form it comes, a new chapter will have opened in the post-war history of Germany.

THESES ON INDUSTRY

By L. TROTZKY

(The following Report was presented to the Twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party at Moscow in April, and was unanimously adopted)

§ 1.—*The General Rôle of Industry in the Socialist Structure*

THE mutual relations which exist in our country between the working class and the peasantry rest in the last analysis on the mutual relations between industry and agriculture. In the last resort the working class can retain and strengthen its rôle as leader not through the State apparatus or the army, but by means of the industry which gives rise to the proletariat. The Party, the trade unions, the youth associations, our schools, &c., have for their task the education and preparation of new generations of the working class. But all this work would prove as if built on sand did it not have for its basis a continually expanding industry. Only the development of industry creates the unshakable basis for the dictatorship of the proletariat. At present agriculture is of primary importance in the economic life of Soviet Russia, although the technical level on which it stands is still very low.

Only in proportion as industry makes real progress and as the heavy industries—which form the only firm basis of the proletarian dictatorship—are restored, and in proportion as the work of electrification is completed will it become both possible and, indeed, inevitable to alter the relative significance in our economic life of agriculture and industry and to shift the centre of gravity from the former to the latter. The Party must work systematically and perseveringly, whatever the sacrifice or labour, to accelerate this process, especially as regards the rapid restoration of heavy industry.

How long the period of the predominant importance of peasant economy in the economic system of our federation will last will depend not only upon our internal economic progress, which in view of the general conditions mentioned above can be but very gradual, but also upon the process of development taking place beyond the boundaries of Russia, *i.e.*, before all, upon the way the revolution in the West and in the East will proceed. The overthrow

of the bourgeoisie in any one of the most advanced capitalist countries would very quickly make its impress upon the whole tempo of our economic development, as it would at once multiply the material and technical resources for socialist construction. While never losing sight of this international perspective, our Party must at the same time never for a moment forget or omit to keep in mind the predominant importance of peasant economy, when it is estimating the consequences of any step it is on the point of taking.

Not only ignoring but even paying insufficiently close attention to this circumstance would involve incalculable dangers, both economic and political, since it would inevitably undermine or weaken that unity between the proletariat and the peasantry—that feeling of trust of the peasantry towards the proletariat which during the present historical period of transition is one of the most fundamental supports of the proletarian dictatorship. The preservation and strengthening of this unity is a fundamental condition for the stability of the soviet power and consequently represents the most fundamental task of our Party.

It is necessary to remember the resolutions passed by former Party congresses which very justly emphasised that the support of the peasants for socialist methods of production can only be won by actual ocular demonstration, during a number of years, that such methods are economically more advantageous, more rational, &c. In the domain of finance, the policy of economising State resources, of a correct system of taxation, of a correctly constructed budget—which we have now adopted and which must and shall be unflinchingly adhered to—will only achieve decisive results on the condition that the State industries show energetic development and substantial profits.

Owing to the extreme diminution of the army, now practically reduced to skeleton formations, and the consequent gradual transition to a militia system, the problem of national defence is reduced to a question of transport and war industries.

Consequently, the construction of our budget, the State credit policy, the measures taken with a view to the military protection of the State, in fact all State activity in general, must bestow its first and greatest care upon the planned development of State industry.

In view of the general economic structure of our country, the restoration of State industry is narrowly bound up with the development of agriculture. The necessary means for circulation must be created by agriculture in the form of a surplus of agricultural products over and above the village consumption before industry will be able to make a decisive step forwards. But it is equally important for the State industry not to lag behind agriculture, otherwise private industry would be created on the basis of the latter, and this private industry would in the long run swallow up or absorb State industry.

Only such industry can prove victorious which renders more than it swallows up. Industry which lives at the expense of the budget, *i.e.*, at the expense of agriculture, could not possibly be a firm and lasting support for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The question of creating surplus value in State industry is the fateful question for the soviet power, *i.e.*, for the proletariat.

An expanded reproduction of State industry, which is unthinkable without the accumulation of surplus value by the State, forms in its turn the condition for the development of our agriculture in a socialist and not in a capitalist direction.

It is therefore through State industry that the road lies which leads to the socialist order of society.

§ 2.—*Active and Passive in the First Period of the New Economic Policy*

The healthy effect of the new economic policy on the economic life of the country is incontestable. It is expressed in the revival of industrial activity, in increased production in many important branches of industry, in the rise in the productivity of labour and in the quality of the products, in the indubitably very considerable improvement in the position of the workers, and, above all, in the much more correct approach to both fundamental and detailed economic problems.

And this latter is the basic condition for their effective solution in the future. Nevertheless, the actual position of industry remains very serious. The revival of light industry, which naturally finds its explanation in the fact of the restoration of the market in conjunction with the satisfactory harvest, is very far from implying that all enterprises and branches of light industry can be guaranteed

a further healthy development. In spite of the fact that the prices of the products of light industry are extremely high, especially in comparison with the prices of agricultural products, these high prices are often far removed from the price of reproduction, that is to say they do not guarantee the expansion of production. An increase in the activity of a whole number of trusts has been achieved at the expense of old stocks of raw materials, the replenishing of which is at the present time one of the most acute problems of State economic policy.

On the other hand, heavy industry has barely come into contact with the market. It depends essentially upon State orders, and needs for its restoration that the State should make large and well-thought-out investments in it. This also applies to a considerable extent to railway and water transport.

Thus, as a result of the total economic conditions, a healthy regulation of prices in light industries remains as yet unattained. This, and the backwardness of heavy industry in comparison with light industry, represents the chief items of the debit side of the first period of the new economic policy. It is as much the result of the general economic conditions, existing before the new economic policy, as of the inevitable crippling of economic relations during the transition to the new economic policy.

The attainment of a price regulation, on the basis of the market, better corresponding with the needs of industrial development, the establishment of more normal correlations between the branches of the light industry and those branches of industry and agriculture which provide it with its raw materials, and finally the straightening out of the front of the heavy and light industry—these are the root problems of the State in the sphere of industrial activity in the second period of the new economic policy now beginning. These problems can only be solved by a correct correlation between the market and the State industrial plan.

§ 3.—*The Problems and Methods of Planned Industrial Activity*

In Soviet Russia, where the chief means of industry and transport belong to one owner, the State, the active interference of the latter in industry must of necessity take the form of a State industrial plan. In view of the predominating rôle of the State as an owner

and a master, the principle of a uniform plan acquires at the very outset an exceptional importance.

The whole of previous experience has shown, however, that a plan of Socialist economy cannot be established *a priori* in a theoretical or bureaucratic manner. A real Socialist economic plan embracing all branches of industry in their relations to one another, and in the relation of industry as a whole to agriculture, is possible only as a result of a prolonged, preparatory economic experience on the basis of nationalisation, and as the result of continuous efforts to bring into practical accord the work of different branches of industry, and to correctly estimate the results achieved.

Thus for the coming period our task is to determine the general direction, and is, to a considerable extent, of a preparatory character. It cannot be defined by any single formula, but presupposes a constant and vigilant adaptation of the guiding economic apparatus, of its basic tasks, methods and practice to the phenomena and conditions of the market. Only at the final stage of their development can and must the methods of planned industry subordinate the market to themselves, and by this very fact abolish it.

Hence we can perceive quite clearly two dangers accompanying the application of State methods of planned industry during the present epoch, viz., (a) If we try to outstrip economic development by means of our planned interference, and to replace the regulating function of the market by administrative measures which have no basis in actual experience, then partial or general economic crises are inevitable, such as occurred in the epoch of military communism; (b) If centralised regulation lags behind the clearly matured need for it, we shall have to solve economic questions by the wasteful methods of the market in cases where timely economic-administrative interference could obtain the same results in a shorter space of time and with a smaller expenditure of effort and resources.

In so far as we have adopted marked forms of economy, the State is bound to grant to individual enterprises the necessary freedom of economic activity in the market without trying to influence this free activity by administrative means. But if, on the one hand, each trust, in order to function successfully, must feel free to orientate itself and be conscious of full responsibility for

its work, the State, on the other hand, must regard the trusts and other associations as organs subordinate to it, by means of which it is able to sound the market as a whole, and thus render possible a number of practical measures which transcend the market orientation of individual enterprises and associations. A central economic organ may, for instance, come to the conclusion that it is necessary to liquidate a certain trust long before experience brings home to the latter the hopelessness of its position.

The question of the mutual relations between light and heavy industry can by no means be solved in accordance with supply and demand, since this would lead in a few years to a smashing up of heavy industry with the prospect of its subsequent restoration as a result of market pressure, but, in that case, on the basis of private property.

Thus, in contra-distinction to capitalist countries, in our country the principal plan is not confined to individual trusts and syndicates, but embraces industry as a whole ; more than that, the State plan must cover the mutual relations of industry, on the one hand, to agriculture, finances, transport, trade—home and foreign, on the other.

In other words, in so far as the State remains not only the owner but the active master-spirit with regard to the majority of the productive forces of industry and transport, and with regard to the means of credit, the principal plan under the conditions of the new economic policy will remain much the same as obtained during the epoch of military communism, but it differs in the most radical manner in its methods. The administration of the chief committees is substituted for economic manœuvring.

In its administrative application the campaign must develop in this sphere with extreme cautiousness by way of a very careful sounding of the ground.

The preparation must be based on economic foresight and consist in conveying instructions to the corresponding economic organs with regard to various phenomena which will either inevitably or in all probability arise at such and such an economic juncture (in connection with the appearance of corn of the new harvest on the market, with the flow of money to the village, &c., &c.), and in making such foresight as definite as possible in its

application to individual branches of industry or to particular districts, in publishing model calendars supplying directions as to the necessary measures which are to be taken in order to make the best use of the expected situation.

It is quite evident that the fundamental planning of industry cannot be attained within the industry itself, *i.e.*, by way of strengthening its guiding administrative organ (the Supreme Council of National Economy), but must form the task of a separate organisation which stands above the organisation of industry, and which connects the latter with finance, transport, &c. This is the function of the State Planning Commission. It is necessary, however, to define more clearly its position, to organise it more strongly, to give it more definite and incontestable rights and, especially, duties. It ought to be established as an immovable principle that not a single economic question which concerns the State as a whole may be dealt with in the higher organs of the Republic without consulting the State Planning Commission. This latter must in all cases, whether the initiative is taken by itself or by some other department, analyse the new question, form some project or proposition in connection with the whole of the remaining economic work, and by the means of this analysis define its specific gravity and its importance. It is necessary to take note in the most unflinching manner of the efforts of various departments and establishments, be it at the centre or in the provinces, to obtain this or that decision by a roundabout way under the pretext of urgency, of pressure of circumstances of improvisation—considering such efforts as manifestations of lack of economic foresight and as the most pernicious remnants of administrative partisanship.

In estimating the success of the work of each department, one must very largely take into consideration whether it presents its proposals in good time to the State Planning Commission for their detailed elaboration; the success of the work of the State Planning Commission itself must be estimated from the point of view of the timeliness with which it starts economic questions, of the correct foresight of what will take place to-morrow, and of how insistently it spurs other departments to a timely estimation of the forms of collaboration to be arranged between branches of their work.

It is necessary to fight by the means of the State Planning

Commission against the creation of all sorts of temporary and casual commissions of inquiry, together with directive, advisory, and provisional committees, which are the greatest evil of our State work. It is necessary to secure regular work through normal and permanent organs. Only thus the improvement of these organs and the development of the necessary suppleness becomes possible—by way of their many-sided adaptation to the tasks allotted to them on the basis of continuous experience.

Without deciding beforehand the question whether it will be necessary to confer upon the State Planning Commission—the general staff of the State economy—this or that administrative right, it seems to be sufficient for the near future to lay it down that if compulsory force is necessary in order to exact conformity to the plan decided upon, the sanction for such compulsion must be obtained from the corresponding organs of the central power (from the individual economic commissariats—the Council of Labour and Defence, the Council of People's Commissaries, the presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee).

§ 4.—*The Trusts, Their Rôle, and the Necessary Reorganisation*

The State is the owner of the basic means of production and transport. Individual economic departments, and inside these departments the separate organs, establishments, and associations (the trusts), manage the sections of the State economy entrusted to them with that degree of independence which the requirements of management under present market conditions necessitate and which is determined from above, *i.e.*, by the superior State organs.

The right of the State to dispose of the whole property of those trusts which are free from obligations and of the railways, &c., remains absolute. In practice the limit and form of State interference with the present work of the economic organs and of these latter with the present work of the independent establishments of the trusts, &c., are determined exclusively from the point of view of economic expediency and are regulated by corresponding statutes (or standing orders).

The greater part of State industry is organised in the shape of trusts, *i.e.*, as associations which are endowed with a wide measure of economic autonomy and which appear on the market as free

trading organisations. The fundamental problem of these economic associations, as well as of the separate enterprises of which the former are composed, is the extraction and the realisation of surplus value for the purpose of State accumulation which alone can guarantee the raising of the material level of the country and the Socialist reconstruction of its whole economy.

The State enterprises which work for the immediate satisfaction of the most important needs of the State, as, for instance, its military needs, must also be completely subordinated to the requirements of the increase of the productivity of labour and of the decrease of the cost on each unit of production.

In view of the fact that the transition itself from military Communism to the new economic policy proceeded to a considerable extent by methods of military Communism, the grouping of the enterprises, their breaking up into trusts, the distribution of means among the trusts, possessed, and to a considerable extent possess even to the present day a provisional and bureaucratic character. From the point of view of economic work according to plan, these are but rough-draft essays, and it is not by speculative methods that they can and must be corrected and reshaped, but on the basis of examining them in the light of experience, in the light of the combined elements of commercial and administrative experience from day to day.

Complaints of the lack of means of circulation do but bear testimony to the fact that on the introduction of the new economic policy the State undertook the management of too great a number of industrial enterprises so that its strength was overtaxed, enfeebled as it was by several years of civil war and blockade. As a consequence, there is the instability of the enterprises, the work going on by fits and starts, and, what is still more important, the freighting is insufficient, which in its turn leads to a great increase of the cost of production and to the narrowing down of the market with all the economic difficulties ensuing therefrom.

The way out of the difficulty is a radical concentration of production on those enterprises which are technically the most perfect and geographically the most conveniently situated. All sorts of indirect and secondary considerations put forward against it, however essential they may be in themselves, must be pushed aside

in front of the fundamental economic problem, namely, the providing of the State industry with the necessary circulating means, the lowering of the cost of production, the expansion of the market, the extraction of profit.

The re-examination of the construction and composition of the trust, both from the purely productive and from the commercial points of view, must be perfectly free from the prejudices in favour of a bureaucratic uniformity in the work of combining the enterprises either only according to the horizontal or according to the vertical principle alone. We must be guided in our revision not by formal but by material considerations with regard to the connection and the mutual dependence of the enterprises upon one another, to their relative geographical situations, and with respect to transport and market (combinations, &c.), and so on and so on. While sweeping aside departmental or local claims in so far as they come into conflict with the principle of a more advantageous and a more profitable organisation of production, it is necessary at the same time to take into careful consideration and listen attentively to the voice of the interested trusts and separate factories, in so far as their living experience has proved the necessity of withdrawing from some of our organisation projects.

The lowering of the cost of production must be aimed at, not for the sake of transient successes in the market, but with a view to the regeneration and the development of the economic power of the country.

A mode of calculation in which the prices of raw materials are falsified by being given according to out-of-date quotations, nothing to do with the lowering of cost, must be severely punished as a dissipation of State property.

Equally wrong and ruinous would be a policy of temporarily lowering prices at the expense of causing a direct or indirect loss to heavy industry. Without the restoration of the latter, light industry, as well as the whole process of economic construction, would be deprived of its foundation. Coal, naphtha, metal—these are the branches of industry the successful development of which will insure both the economic prosperity of the Republic and its external safety.

Only a firm and constant guidance of the trusts on the part of

the Supreme Council of People's Economy, uniting—in the spirit of the above directive principles—all the basic elements of industry ; foreseeing and preparing their necessary combinations ; guaranteeing the timely, full, and proper use of all the factors of production at every stage (fuel, raw material, semi-manufactured articles, machines, labour power, &c.), will insure not only partial but general progress on the industrial front.

(To be continued)

SELECTIONS *from the* LITERARY REMAINS OF KARL MARX

By MAX BEER

I

(We intend to publish from time to time the most characteristic selections from the literary remains of Karl Marx, as far as they have not yet been translated into English. We have particularly in view the three volumes, Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels, taken mostly from Marx's newspaper work on the Neue Rheinische Zeitung, 1848-9, and republished by Franz Mehring, 1901-3; then the four volumes, Marx-Engels Briefwechsel, edited by Bebel and Bernstein, 1913-4; finally, some of the scattered letters republished at various times in the Neue Zeit. The selections, translations, and notes have been undertaken by our contributor Max Beer.—Ed. LABOUR MONTHLY.)

THE DEFEAT OF THE PARIS PROLETARIAT, JUNE, 1848

AFTER many years of democratic, republican, and social reform propaganda, the opposition elements, headed by the Paris workers, broke out in revolution on February 24, 1848. King Louis Philippe took to flight; a Provisional Coalition Government, consisting of republicans, radicals and two socialists, was formed, at the head of whom was Lamartine, poet and orator. Instead of social reform the workers got national workshops or workhouses at large. The general election, April-May, 1848, resulted in an anti-socialist Government who finally provoked the Paris proletariat to a social revolutionary upheaval in the last week of June, 1848. It was ruthlessly crushed by the republican General Cavaignac. Here are the comments of Marx on those events:—

“ COLOGNE, JUNE 28, 1848.¹

“ The workers of Paris have been crushed by superior numbers, but they have not succumbed. They are beaten, but their republican enemy is defeated. The momentary triumph of brutal force has been paid for with the destruction of the illusions and conceits of

¹ *Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Marx und Engels*, Vol. III, p. 115 199.

the February revolution, with the disappearance of the old Republican Party, with the open disruption of the French nation into two nations—into a nation of owners and a nation of proletarians . . . The old remnant of the February revolution, the Labour Commission, has melted away like a hazy scene before the reality of things. The pathetic oratorical rockets of M. Lamartine have been transformed into the scorching and tearing shells of General Cavaignac.

“The *fraternité*, the brotherhood of the classes, of which one exploits the other, this *fraternité* which was proclaimed in February and which blazed up in big letters on the brow of Paris, has found its true, frank, and unmistakable expression in the civil war, in the war between Labour and Capital. This *fraternité* reflected its lights from the windows of Paris on the evening of June 25, when the Paris of the bourgeoisie illuminated, while the Paris of the proletariat was burning, bleeding, and agonising.

“Pedants of the old revolutionary tradition of 1793; socialist system makers who, like modern mendicant priests, were begging at the doors of the rich on behalf of the poor and who were allowed to deliver pathetic sermons as long as the proletarian lion had to be lulled to sleep; republicans who demanded the whole bourgeois order *minus* the crowned head; legitimists who do not wish to put away their livery, but to change its cut—all these elements were the allies of the proletariat in the days of February. What it instinctively hated in Louis Philippe was not Louis Philippe himself, but the crowned rule of a class, or of capital on the throne. Generous as the proletariat always has been, it believed itself to have destroyed its own enemy, while in reality it had destroyed only the enemy of its enemies, the common enemy.

“The February revolution was the glorious revolution, the revolution of mutual sympathy, because the antagonistic elements were wrapped up in a general enmity against royalty, because the social war which formed the background had only an aerial existence, the existence of a phrase, a word. The June revolution was the infamous revolution, the repulsive revolution, because in the room of the phrase there stepped in the real thing, because the republic revealed the head of the monster by striking off its protecting crown.

“Order! This is the battle-cry of General Cavaignac, as it was before the watchword of Guizot, and as it is now the brutal echo of the National Assembly and the republican bourgeoisie. None of the many upheavals of the French bourgeoisie since 1789 was an attack on ‘order,’ for they left undisturbed the class rule, the slavery of the proletariat, and the bourgeois order in general, no matter how many changes they may have wrought in the public organisation of society, in the form of government or the mode of slavery. The June revolution did assail that order. Hence woe to the June! . . . The deep social gulf that was before our eyes must not mislead us into questioning the value of struggles for political reforms or for changes in the form of government. Such struggles are not meaningless or illusory. Only weak, petty minds can seriously raise such questions. The collisions which spring from the conditions of bourgeois society itself must be fought out, they cannot be burked. The best form of government is that in which the antagonistic social forces are not obscured nor forcibly, that is, artificially, suppressed. The best form of government is that in which they are brought to a head and thus to their natural solution.”

II

GERMAN REVOLUTION AND OPPRESSED NATIONALITIES

When the Frankfurt National Assembly was discussing the relations of Germany to Poland, Italy and Bohemia, Marx called upon the representatives of Germany to prove their revolutionary ardour by giving freedom to Poland, Italy and the Czechs, that is, by renouncing all ambitions to govern their neighbours.

“COLOGNE, JULY 2, 1848.”²

“To set nationality against nationality, to use the one to oppress the other and to secure by this means the continuance of despotic rule, this has been hitherto the whole art and science of kings and their diplomats. The German principalities have in this respect distinguished themselves. Taking but the last seventy years into account we see that the German princes sold their subjects for gold to the British Government, who employed them

² *Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Marx und Engels*, Vol. III, pp. 108-113.

to fight the North Americans engaged in battle for independence; when the first French Revolution broke out it was again Germans who were let loose like a pack of mad hounds upon the Frenchmen; it was a German prince, the Duke of Brunswick, who in his manifesto threatened to have Paris razed to the ground; it was Germans who conspired with the French nobility against the new order in France and were paid for this by England under the title of subsidies. When the Dutch conceived during two centuries the only reasonable idea of putting an end to the miserable mess of the House of Orange and proclaiming their country a republic, it was again Germans who turned into executioners of liberty. Switzerland can tell the same tale. Even as far as Greece did the Germans go to support the little throne of dear King Otto. And the Holy Alliance Congresses after 1815; the Austrian expeditions against Naples, Turin, the Romagna; the imprisonment of Ypsilanti; the support lent to the Portuguese and Spanish reactionary princes, like Don Miguel and Don Carlos; the arming of Hanoverian troops in the service of English reaction; the mangling and "Thermidorising" of Belgium, the bolstering up of Tsarist despotism by German bureaucrats and nobles; the flooding of Europe with Coburgs, Wettins, and other scions of German dynasties! With the assistance of German soldiery was Poland despoiled and parcelled out; with German blood and treasure were Lombardy and Venetia enslaved and robbed, and the whole Italian movement for liberty and independence kept down by Austrian bayonets, gallows, prisons, and galleys. The black book of Germany contains many more pages—let us close it!

"The responsibility for these misdeeds does not rest on the shoulders of the Governments alone: the German people must share it. Without its infatuation, its servility, its fitness for soldiering, its willingness to serve as tools of the princes 'by the grace of God,' the German name would not be as hated, cursed and despised abroad, and the nationalities oppressed by Germany would have long ago entered on the path of full development. Now, when the Germans are about to shake off their yoke, their whole policy towards other nationalities must change. Germany will only be free in the same proportion as she frees her neighbouring countries."

III

ENGLAND AND REVOLUTION

In a retrospect on the eventful year 1848, Marx deals with the meaning and effects of the European upheaval. He expresses the opinion that even a successful proletarian revolution in France could have for its result only the political emancipation of Europe, that is, freeing the oppressed nationalities and sweeping away the remnants of feudalism and absolutism, while a social revolution on the Continent depends on a victory of organised English Labour. Marx writes:—

“COLOGNE, DECEMBER 31, 1848.”³

“The country, however, which transforms whole nations into proletarians; which with its gigantic arms encompasses the whole globe; which has already once defrayed the cost of the European counter-revolution; and in which class antagonism has reached a high degree of development—England appears to be the rock on which the revolutionary waves split and disperse and which starves the coming society even in the womb. England dominates the world markets. A revolution of the economic conditions of any country of the European Continent or even of the whole Continent, is but a storm in a glass of water, unless England actively participates in it. The condition of trade and commerce of any nation depends upon its intercourse with other nations, depends upon its relations with the world markets. England controls the world markets, and the bourgeoisie controls England.

“The [political] emancipation of Europe, either in the form of raising the oppressed nationalities to independence or of the final overthrow of feudal absolutism, is conditioned upon the victorious rising of the French working class. But any social revolutionary upheaval in Europe must necessarily miscarry, unless the English bourgeoisie or the industrial and commercial supremacy of Great Britain is shaken. Any aspiration for a lasting, though partial social transformation in France or any other part of the European Continent must remain an empty, pious wish. And old England will only be overthrown in a world war, which alone would give the Chartist Party, the organised English Labour Party, the possibility of a successful rising against its stupendous oppressor. The

³ *Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Marx und Engels*, Vol. III, p. 230 sqq.

Chartists at the head of the English Government—only from this moment would the social revolution emerge from the realm of Utopia and enter the sphere of reality. . . .”

IV

IMPORTANCE AND WEAKNESS OF ENGLISH LABOUR

In 1869, the General Council of the International Working Men's Associations, who also functioned as Regional Council of England, was assailed from two opposite sides—from Baknuri Cintro's Geneva paper, *Egalité*, and from some English members, both opposition elements demanding a division of function, that is, the severance of the English Regional Council from the General Council. In a meeting, held for this purpose on January 1, 1870, the General Council rejected the motion of the Baknurists in the following reply formulated and drafted by Karl Marx:—⁴

“ Long before the *Egalité* was founded the motion to sever the General Council from the Regional Council was repeatedly brought forward and supported by two English members of the Council. It has always been rejected with practical unanimity. Our opinion is that, while the revolutionary impulse may perhaps come from France, it is surely England only that can be made into a lever for a lasting economic revolution. It is the only country which has no peasantry to speak of, and where landed property is concentrated in a few hands. It is the only country where the capitalist form, that is, combined living and mechanical labour on a large scale controlled by capitalist employers, has got hold of the whole production. It is the only country where the great majority of the population consists of wage workers. It is the only country in which the class division and the organisation of the working class through the trade unions have attained a certain degree of maturity and comprehensiveness. Owing to her predominance on the world markets England is the only country where a transformation of its economic conditions must immediately react on the whole world. If landlordism and capitalism have their classical seats in that country, so are also all the material conditions of their destruction

⁴ Reprinted in *Neue Zeit*, Stuttgart, Vol. XX, part 2, p. 475. This article (“Importance and Weakness”) was a “Confidential Circular” of the General Council to the branches of the International.

most highly developed there. The General Council, by functioning also as Regional Council, is in a position to get immediate hold of that great lever of proletarian revolution. How stupid, how criminal would it be to surrender such an instrument into English hands only!

“The English possess all material requisites of the social revolution. But they lack the spirit of generalisation and revolutionary passion. Only the General Council is able to inspire them with those qualities and thus to speed the revolutionary forces in that country and consequently everywhere. The only means to attain that object is to secure an unbroken contact of the General Council with English Labour. As General Council and Regional Council we can set on foot movements (as, for instance, the Land and Labour League) which appear in the eyes of the public as spontaneous manifestations of the English working class.

“Should a Regional Council be formed apart from the General Council, what would be the immediate effect of such a step? What authority would it enjoy when placed between the General Council of the International and that of the trade unions?

“England cannot be looked upon as simply a country like any other country. She must be considered as the metropolis of capitalism.”

THE DOMINION OF CANADA—II.

(Concluded)

By H. P. RATHBONE

IN a previous article we showed the influence of American capitalism on the policy of the Canadian bourgeoisie, and indicated that this was due not so much to the geographical situation of Canada and racial differences within as to the increasing hold of United States capital upon her rapidly-developing industries. This last development has resulted in a conflict of interest with British capitalism and has also provided an impetus to the nationalistic feelings of the Canadian bourgeoisie—their desire if not for a complete break with the British Empire at least for a greater degree of independence within it. These influences and these desires have reacted on the bourgeois political parties of Canada ; so that the Liberals, who before the war with their policy of reciprocity with the United States, could be defeated on the charge of disloyalty to the Imperial connection, are now considered to express in that policy “Canadian national feeling ;” while the Conservatives in turn, who until the end of the war could be relied upon for their loyalty to the British Empire, are now definitely questioning the right of Great Britain to dictate the policy of the Canadian bourgeoisie.

In this article we will describe the result of these reactions and will show how the policy of the Canadian bourgeoisie towards the British Imperial Power has produced conflict after conflict between the Canadian and British Governments.

VERSAILLES, &C., AND CANADA'S SIGNATURE

First of all, we will take the Peace Treaty. In the *Manchester Guardian* for October 20, 1919, there appeared certain quotations from the correspondence published in Canada between Sir Robert Borden, the Canadian Prime Minister, and the British Government with regard to the signature by Canada of the Peace Treaty.

As the *Manchester Guardian* put it in their Canadian Supplement, issued in June, 1920:—

By her claim to debate the Peace Treaty for herself, to rank at least with Haiti and Venezuela in the counsels of the world, and to have her own ambassador in the capital of her great neighbour, she (Canada) has taken the lead in pioneering a change in imperial relationships, of which the full significance is not yet seen.

The means adopted by Canada to obtain these rights are clearly set forth in this correspondence. It appears that when Lloyd George cabled to Canada on October 27, 1918, foreshadowing an early conclusion of an armistice and suggesting the immediate attendance of Sir Robert Borden, the latter replied pointing out certain features of the situation ; he suggested that there might be possible difficulties as to the representation of the Dominions, and he warned Lloyd George of the " dangerous feeling " that would be aroused if " these difficulties are not overcome by some solution which will meet the national spirit of the Canadian people. The new conditions," he said, " must be met by new precedents." Lloyd George replied, refusing to discuss the position any further by cable and declared that Sir Robert Borden's departure was more imperative than ever. When the latter arrived, this discussion was resumed, and, as Mr. Arthur Sifton, Canadian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, admitted in a Treaty discussion at Ottawa, after considerable debate and in face of the objections of " the most conservative representative of the British Government and the representative of the most conservative people in Great Britain," the points raised by Canada were admitted. The Dominions were accorded the status of minor nations, and their plenipotentiaries attached their separate signature to the Treaty.

The second stage in the controversy arose over the ratification of the Treaty. Lord Milner, the British Colonial Secretary, on July 14 advised the Canadian Government that he expected the ratification of the German Treaty by three of the Allied Powers by the end of July, the British Empire being one of them. Sir Robert Borden pointed out in reply that he was pledged to submit the Treaty to the Canadian Parliament before it could be ratified by Canada ; he concluded the cable somewhat tartly as follows :—

No copy of the Treaty has yet arrived, and Parliament has been prorogued. Kindly advise how you expect to accomplish the

ratification on behalf of the whole of the British Empire before the end of July.

The idea, as the *Manchester Guardian* points out, that the Canadian Parliament should be allowed to discuss the Treaty, evidently came as a complete surprise to Lord Milner. In a further cable he urged the immediate necessity of ratification, asserting that there was nothing in the British Constitution which makes it necessary for the King to obtain the consent of Parliament before the ratification of the Treaty; "With perfect constitutional propriety the King can ratify on the advice of his Ministers." If, however, Sir Robert felt that he must carry out his pledge, he urged him to summon Parliament at once. But Sir Robert in his reply said :—

There is considerable doubt whether, under modern constitutional practices, the King could ratify without first obtaining the approval of Parliament.

In a further reply to another cable urging haste, Sir Robert finally stated that:—

I cannot emphasise too strongly the unfortunate results which would certainly ensue from ratification before the Canadian Parliament has had an opportunity of considering the Treaty.

Thereupon, according to the *Manchester Guardian* version, Lord Milner capitulated. The *Manchester Guardian's* comments on this controversy emphasised that :—

It reveals the Conservative Premier of Canada insisting with great determination upon absolute equality of status and treatment for his own country. Sir Robert Borden has long been claimed by imperialists in Britain as their faithful ally, and if words have any meaning they can count on him no longer, and he can henceforth be regarded as quite as sound a Canadian Nationalist as Mr. Henri Bourassa or Mr. J. S. Ewart. He has had no criticism from Conservatives for his attitude.

Thus it would appear that the Conservative Party, which had always been looked upon as loyal supporters of the British Empire, and who had showed themselves as such in their attitude to the 1911 reciprocity agreement (mentioned in our previous article), had already in 1919 gone well on the way towards becoming almost as much a Nationalist Party as the Liberals themselves.

The significance of this controversy on its obverse side came out clearly enough in a debate in September, 1919, on the ratifica-

tion of the Treaty in the Canadian House of Commons. In this debate Mr. Lapointe, a leading Liberal and afterwards Minister of Marine Fisheries in the Liberal Government of December, 1921, objected to the Treaty on the grounds that the Canadian Parliament should be the only arbiter as to whether Canadian soldiers should take part in a war declared by the British Government. He said :—

It must be made clear that no Canadian soldier can ever be forced to go to war or sent anywhere but by the consent and authority of Parliament. . . . I am strongly opposed to any schemes of centralisation which would result in Canada being governed by a Central Imperial body. Canada would never consent to be governed in any place but Ottawa.

PARTICIPATION IN BRITISH WARS

Subsequent events have proved that this statement by Mr. Lapointe was no empty outburst by the Liberals in opposition of a difference of opinion with the British Government, but was, indeed, an accurate reflection of the growth of Canadian Nationalist feeling. For on two occasions since has Canada recently come into conflict with Great Britain on questions vitally affecting the strategy of Britain's aggressive foreign policy. The first fracas took place over the proposed renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty to which Canada displayed such hostility as to compel the British Government to give way. The second fracas occurred in 1922, when Lloyd George issued his appeal for the supply of troops from the Empire to fight the Turks. Canada's attitude, though not appearing to be actively hostile, showed no signs of unquestioning assent to a war decided on by the Home Government.

The position of Canada in relation to the problems of Imperial defence has been kept undefined like many other of the aspects of her relationship with Great Britain. According to Professor Berriedale Keith (a recognised exponent of imperialist constitutionalism, closely connected with the Colonial Office), while military organisation in Canada is well advanced, no settlement has been reached so far as to the share or responsibility of Canada in Imperial naval defence, except that Canadian ports are accessible to the British navy.

Following on the precedent insisted on by Sir Robert Borden, described above in the section on the Peace Treaty, that the Treaty

must be submitted to the Canadian Parliament before ratification, and further, owing to the fact that under the League Covenant, as members of the League, the Dominion's territorial integrity and existing political independence are guaranteed by the other members of the League under Article X., certain important reservations were made in the Anglo-French Treaty of June 28, 1919. This Treaty—though the Dominions were not made parties to the engagement—expressly provided that it should impose no obligation upon any of them unless and until it was approved by their Parliaments.

Early in 1920, Lord Jellicoe, Governor-General of New Zealand, made a tour of the Dominions on behalf of the British Government with the object of arriving at an undertaking with the Governments on the naval defence of the Empire. "He considered," according to the *Statesman's Year Book: 1920*, "that the interests of the Empire were likely to demand within the next five years a Far Eastern fleet, comprising vessels of the Royal Navy, the East Indian Squadron, and the Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand Navies." His reception in Canada was very doubtful. *The Times* of February 17, 1920, took pains to point out that in consequence of the fact "that it was not made clear enough at the outset that Lord Jellicoe came at the invitation of the Canadian Government, the autonomists were quick to discover a plot to betray the country into the hands of the centralisers in England." It seems more than probable, however, in view of the real object of the visit, that the invitation to Lord Jellicoe from Canada was merely "formal," and that in reality he had been sent by the British Government. The fears of those whom *The Times* calls the "autonomists" seem, therefore, to have been well grounded. These fears expressed themselves in many protests against the project of an Imperial Navy under central control, advocated by a body called the Canadian Navy League. The Nationalist opinion expressed by John S. Ewart (an advocate of complete sovereignty for Canada under the British Crown), argued "that the British Government opposes our limitation of Japanese immigration, and that, while we may count on the United States to concur with us in the policy of exclusion, we cannot be certain in case of trouble with Japan that the British Navy will not be fight-

ing on the side of our opponents." "Few other writers," proceeds *The Times* "take such an extreme view as Mr. Ewart, but many influential journals pronounce against an Imperial Navy and any premature commitment of Canada to a system of Imperial organisation upon which the Dominion have not been consulted." In conclusion *The Times* stated :—

The weight of opinion, in so far as there is expression of public feeling, clearly favours a Canadian Navy, but there could be no greater mistake than to think that all those, or many of those, who oppose a navy under central authority are uneasy under the imperial connection or opposed to the assumption by Canada of its fair obligation for defence. . . . There is also a general underlying recognition of the great fact that the next Imperial Conference probably will finally determine the political destiny of Canada. And it would be foolish to deny that *in Canada there are advocates of independence, and even those who favour political union with the United States.*

The Times of December 2, 1920, quoted from an interview with General Smuts, published in the *Toronto Mail and Empire*. In this interview he was reported to have declared that the idea of an Imperial Cabinet with legislative or administrative functions was untenable, and that at the Conference of Dominion Prime Ministers in 1917, he and Sir Robert Borden were of one mind. Referring to the fact that war was declared in 1914 without consultation with the Dominions, he said :—

I do not think that it can happen again. The self-governing Dominions in future must exercise the right to say whether, after full deliberation, they will join in a war in which any part of the Empire is engaged.

The *Toronto Globe* (which, although a Liberal paper, had backed conscription when Sir W. Laurier was trying to stave it off), in discussing the proposal for an Imperial Council, favoured the retention of the power which it said Canada now possessed "to determine the measure of aid she should give to the Mother Country." In practice, so it said, "in any Imperial Council the Dominion opinion would always be overruled by the sheer weight of numbers of the Mother Country." In any case "what representations" the *Globe* added, "would Canada or any other Dominion make on questions like Anatolia, Greece, Russia, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Persia, or any one of the problems which are now engaging British diplomacy."

Finally, in discussing the agenda of the meeting of the Imperial Conference in 1921, the Canadian Parliament, though it rejected a resolution prohibiting any decision to change the relationship of Canada with Great Britain or to embark on a policy which would involve Canada in new expenditure for naval or military affairs, nevertheless, according to *The Times*, made it quite clear that it was opposed to either of these two questions being dealt with at the Conference.

When the Imperial Conference met (in June and July, 1921), the Canadian Prime Minister, Mr. Meighen, laid down two conditions of success for the preservation of what he called "the Britannic Commonwealth of Nations." One was that such conferences should be held as frequently as possible, and the other that there should be the widest publicity to their proceedings. Though there might be certain questions which needed privacy he contended that "it was better in the long run to err on the side of publicity than on the side of secrecy." That this contention was not complied with is proved by the fact that after the Japanese Alliance incident, claimed by *The Times* to have been disclosed by itself alone (described below), Mr. Meighen entered a second protest against the veil of secrecy which had enveloped the Conference.

On June 30 *The Times* reported that Mr. Meighen spoke against the renewal of the Japanese Alliance, pointing "to the geographical position of Canada with her frontier marching with that of the United States, and laid stress on the importance of this fact in relation to any policy by which the United States might conceivably be, or might consider itself affected." From then onwards the Conference went completely underground. *The Times* understood, however, that Mr. Meighen had said that if the Treaty were renewed, the military clause in the existing Treaty should be omitted from any new Treaty : further, that the Dominions should not be bound by any new Treaty unless and until it had been ratified by their Parliaments.

Then came the incident which closed any further discussion of the Treaty. According to an article which looked very much as if it had been inspired by Mr. Meighen himself in the *Manchester Guardian* (July 4, 1921), it happened as follows. In the discussion

it was found that both General Smuts and Mr. Meighen were against any form of renewal. Despairing of their conversion, Lloyd George then summoned the Lord Chancellor and, as the *Manchester Guardian* implies, told him to say that the Treaty, as it had not been denounced twelve months beforehand, automatically continued for another year. The *Manchester Guardian* points out that there are many reasons why Canada does not want to agree to anything which might offend the United States. "In-harmonious relations between the two neighbours must be fraught with unpleasant consequences for both and particularly for the weaker State. . . . Under such circumstances Canada cannot be expected to endorse any move in foreign policy which the United States will interpret as directed against themselves." That Mr. Meighen in this instance received the support of the Liberals is confirmed, said the *Manchester Guardian*, by a leader in the *Manitoba Free Press*, "perhaps the most influential paper in Canada," which declared that :—

Canada is united behind Mr. Meighen in opposition to the Japanese Treaty, and her people will ratify no Japanese Treaty to which the United States does not give its assent.

The second incident in which Canada quite clearly did not see eye to eye with the British Government arose out of Lloyd George's appeal in September, 1922, to the Dominions for troops for his Turkish War.

According to *The Times* of September 19, 1922, Mr. Mackenzie King, the Prime Minister in the Liberal Government, was reported to have asserted that the communication received from the British Government was not sufficiently informative, and that therefore he had asked for further particulars. In the same issue below this statement, *The Times* printed various messages purporting to prove that the whole Canadian nation were united in urging the Cabinet to take immediate action to support Lloyd George. "There is no hesitation in accepting responsibilities," said the report. "There is a clear recognition of Canada's obligations as a signatory of the League of Nations." However, the very day after these messages were sent, *i.e.*, on September 18, it appeared to be necessary for Mackenzie King to issue an official statement, reported in *The Times*, September 20, 1922, saying that "Parliament must

authorise the dispatch of any contingent:” Apparently to counter-balance the effect of this message it first produced quotations from the French Canadian Press, throwing doubt as to the advisability of responding to Lloyd George’s appeal and then contrasted them with the following :—

The English (as opposed to the French-Canadian) Press is alive to the gravity of the situation, and is *almost* unanimous as to the necessity of Canadian recognition of its treaty obligations and practical co-operation in measures essential to the welfare of the Empire (our italics).

The machinations of *The Times* were only equalled by those of the British Government itself. According to statements made in the Canadian House of Commons by the Prime Minister on February 1, the Canadian Government first heard of the appeal by Lloyd George from the Canadian papers. Further, when the dispatch arrived, the Canadian Government, having asked the opinion of the British Government as to the desirability of summoning Parliament, received the reply that the British Government “saw no necessity” to do so. Finally Mackenzie King stated that the Canadian Government had :—

repeatedly asked the British Government if it might be at liberty to bring down the correspondence (*i.e.*, to publish it). The British had, in the most clear and emphatic way, indicated its wish that the correspondence should not be laid before Parliament.

E. D. Morel, on questioning the British Government in the House of Commons as to the position in reference to this statement, was told that “it had been thought advisable, in the public interest, not to publish the text of these communications, many of which were of a secret and confidential nature.”

THE SIGNING OF THE HALIBUT FISHERIES TREATY

The most recent, and in some respects the most significant, evidence of the strained relations existing between the Canadian ruling bourgeoisie and the British imperial power has been provided by the Canadian signature of a seemingly inoffensive Treaty with the United States for the regulation of the halibut fisheries on the Pacific coast. The Canadian Government maintained, to the hardly-veiled disapproval and alarm of the British Government, that owing to the recognition of Canada’s attainment to full nation-

hood in the separate signature which she appended to the Versailles Treaty, there was no need for Sir Auckland Geddes, the British Ambassador at Washington, to sign the Treaty as well as the Canadian Government's representative, Mr. Lapointe, the Minister of Marine Fisheries.

The fisheries on the Pacific coast had long been a source of controversy between Canada and the United States. Territorial as well as commercial questions had been involved owing to the serrated nature of the coast of British Columbia and to the existence of the American State of Alaska to the north. Consequently in this case the British Government maintained that the proposed Treaty was of a political nature, and therefore necessitated the direct adherence of the British Government through their American Ambassador as well as the adherence of the Canadian Government. The latter, however, considered that as the points to be settled directly concerned Canada alone, the signature of the British Ambassador was unnecessary.

The controversy arose in the following manner, according to correspondence which was published on March 16 by the Canadian Government, and summarised in the British Press. A draft Treaty, the terms of which had been negotiated by Mackenzie King in a visit which he made to Washington in July, 1922, had been submitted by the American Secretary of State to the Canadian Cabinet. In a telegram from the latter dated January 2, 1923, Sir Auckland Geddes was requested to substitute the words "Dominion of Canada" for "Great Britain" as one of the signatories of the Treaty. After repeated telegrams Sir Auckland Geddes at last replied that he had sent a message to Mr. Hughes, the United States Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs :—

omitting to mention the substitution of the words "Dominion of Canada" for Great Britain.

A few days later Sir Auckland Geddes sent another telegram intimating that he had been instructed by the British Government to sign the Treaty in association with Mr. Lapointe, the Minister chosen by Canada as its representative. Meanwhile the Canadian Government had been endeavouring to obtain full plenipotentiary powers for Mr. Lapointe from the British Government. The latter delayed, but these powers eventually were given.

But when the Canadian Government received the above quoted telegram from Sir Auckland Geddes, they immediately sent off a cable intimating that Mr. Lapointe's signature was considered sufficient ; that in view of Sir Auckland Geddes's message evidently the British Government assumed that the action he was instructed to take was their wish. "The view of my Ministers, however," the message concluded, "is that the Treaty being one of concern only to Canada and the United States, and not affecting in particular any Imperial interest, the signature of the Canadian Minister should be sufficient." On this the British Government capitulated, and Mr. Lapointe signed the Treaty on March 2 without the assistance of the British Ambassador.

It was not until March 13 that the British Press fully realised what had happened. They appear to have been instigated to action by the extensive comment in both the Canadian and American Press ; in both cases the tendency was to regard this action of the Canadian Government as an entirely new step forward in the constitutional status of the Dominions. The *Chicago Tribune* went so far as to head its story of the events with the following warning to the unity of the British Empire :—

Canada rejects British Domination.

The British capitalist Press at once attempted to argue that the procedure was thoroughly constitutional. Yet most of them were unable entirely to eliminate from their writing the fear that after all the *Chicago Tribune* had correctly summed up the facts of the situation. The very fact that one and all thought it necessary to give such time and space to the question, proved that the question was by no means of such little importance as they tried to prove it to be.

Thus we find *The Times* in a leader of March 13 going into an elaborate argument as to whether Lapointe received his instructions as plenipotentiary directly from the Crown or on the advice of the Ministers of the British Government. Yet the writer cannot but help putting the obvious problem as to what would happen to "the unity of the Commonwealth

if ever the Imperial Government declines to support the enforcement of some treaty concluded by a British Dominion."

It therefore urged that the special Imperial Conference on constitutional relationships between the Dominions and the home government resolved on in 1917 should not be indefinitely delayed.

That the other Dominions had also decided that Canada's action raised fresh problems can be seen from a report of a speech in *The Times* for March 16, delivered in the Australian Parliament by the imperialist-minded Prime Minister, Mr. Bruce.

Canada's decision raises the question whether Great Britain will in future be responsible for the action of one of the Dominions, and the effect of this new development may be far reaching. In any event, the position created is much more serious than appears on the surface, and emphasises the need for an early meeting of the Imperial Conference.

On March 19 Professor B. Keith, in a letter to *The Times*, managed to contribute his share in the endeavour to belittle the consequences of this situation. He emphasised the fact that the Treaty can only be ratified with the full sanction of the Imperial Government. The only innovation is that the formal signature of the British Ambassador has been waived: "these formal signatures have never meant anything of value as the real control is exercised through the issue of powers and ratification and the decision to dispense with it is manifestly wise." Yet even he could not help ending with a final warning:—

That they (the Dominions) should have independence in treaty matters is wholly incompatible, in my opinion, with the maintenance of the British Empire.

As might be expected the *Morning Post* took up the controversy in a much more blatantly imperialist way than *The Times*. In a leading article of March 20 it stated that though the Minister of a Dominion was a properly accredited representative of the Crown, "should he take independent action, in doing so he undoubtedly deprives the Dominion Government of the full weight and authority of the Imperial Government." Canada, it alleged, had taken independent action in this case. This action might be regarded as a precedent: "in which case," the *Morning Post* continued, "we may be allowed to suggest that such a precedent is not to the advantage of Canada." This seemed an obvious threat that if Canada was involved in a war as a consequence of any such action, Great Britain would be released from any obligation to support

her if she, Great Britain, did not think it was to her own interest to do so.

A further complication arose when it became known that the United States Senate had added a stipulation that the Treaty should be applicable to every other part of the British Empire as well as to Canada. This point was quickly seized upon by the Conservative Opposition in Canada and by the Press, both in Canada and England. In the case of the former, Mr. Meighen put a leading question to the Government as to what they intended to do. The Government affirmed that concurrent legislation in the United States and Canada would be passed to deal with the matter. Mr. Meighen then followed up this reply by inquiring if as the British Ambassador was "denied the courtesy of signing the Treaty, His Majesty would do the utmost in his power to prevent infringement, as promised." The *Daily Telegraph*, affirmed by this amendment to the Treaty that "The American Senate has apparently placed Mr. Mackenzie King's administration in a perplexing and embarrassing situation as a result of the first essay in the field of independent diplomacy." The *Telegraph* added that it was expected that the Canadian Government would decline to accept the amendment.

Meanwhile the Conservative Press in Canada had taken up a definitely hostile attitude to the Treaty. The *Toronto Mail and Empire* for instance, put the following rhetorical question:—

Is the document to which Plenipotentiary Lapointe put his name, at Washington, merely a treaty affecting halibut fishery on our Pacific coast, or is it also the withdrawal of Canada from the British Empire.

The *Montreal Gazette* accused the Government of meaning mischief: the Treaty, it alleged, indicates "the desire, if not the purpose, to carry the principle of Dominion autonomy one step further."

The *Times* in England again took up the question and again endeavoured to argue away the matter as merely a slight deviation from accepted formalities; but no doubt the storm that Canada's action had raised, and the interest it had evoked had affected the desire of the *The Times* to belittle the issue; for at the conclusion of its argument it stated:—

The problem may be formal rather than constitutional, but, nevertheless, it holds the seeds of dissension within the British Empire.

On the following day, the 23rd, the *Manchester Guardian* proceeded to join in the endeavour to allay the growing uneasiness. It began by sympathising with those who were worried over the issue; it then proceeded to deal with the position with such masterly sophistry that it was able to reassure the worried Imperialists, such as the Australian Prime Minister, that "the absence of the British Ambassador's signature is no more than the ending of an established custom" or as it put it further on, such an omission "is not likely to prove more than a minor precedent in the broadening out of the Empire into a company of co-operative states with a common centre to which they look for the safeguarding of their interests."

But the situation seemed still to require further "delicate handling," for the *Montreal Star* produced a leading article in which it stated that there had been no constitutional departure in the procedure. "Mr. Lapointe signed as His Majesty's Minister, and if he did not sign 'Imperially,' his signature was not worth the ink with which he wrote it. If the Canadian Government asked for the privilege of signing alone, that fact, if significant at all, is a reflection on the progressiveness of British Ministers in failing to take the initiative. Canada should not have been compelled to ask"

The South African *Cape Times* also produced a long comment on the situation. It seemed amazed at the storm that the action of the Canadian Government had raised.

After the precedent of the signature of the Versailles Treaty, it cannot see any justification for the objections raised. The alarm of the English *Times* it stated, was due to the misconception of the Empire as a body politic.

It is no longer a body politic, but a partnership of States with one monarch, who is advised by his ministers in each of the component States of the partnership. The possibility of conflicting advice being given by ministers in Britain and a Dominion, or in two or more Dominions, exists, but it is a possibility the risks of which can be reduced to a minimum by mutual consultation and forbearance in the interests of the whole partnership. Such risks are almost negligible compared to the risks of an attempt to reassert that the treaty-making power of the Dominions must always be subject to the explicit endorsement of British ministers.

In an attempt to answer these two expressions of opinion, *The Times* once more tried its hand. This time it was eminently reasonable: it emphasised the fact that the "controversy was mainly about constitutional forms," "opinions differ at the moment not on purposes and principles, but on forms." It was only to the form of the conclusion of the Treaty that objection could be raised. For this form was not strictly in accordance with the principle of equal status of all the Dominions and India. For instance, such a Treaty might involve them in an international dispute, or even in war; if they realised this they would "then desire that this ultimate responsibility should somehow be registered at the moment of its conclusion."

Consequently *The Times* suggested a permanent body of some kind who could sign treaties.

It would be mainly a matter of form. But constitutional terms are seldom quite unimportant. If they are slurred over or dispensed with, the responsibilities they register may too easily be forgotten.

With this article there closed for a moment the controversy as to this Treaty. At any moment it may be revived again, either when Mackenzie King presents the Treaty to be ratified, or when the decision as to whether it can apply to the whole British Empire is reached between Sir Auckland Geddes and the Colonial Office, who are reported to be now in correspondence over this particular matter, or finally not until the meeting of the Imperial Conference itself which has hastily been announced as fixed for October 1 this year.

It seems, however, clear that no permanent body with powers to sign treaties will ever be accepted by Canada. Firstly, because she is opposed, as we have already pointed out above, to any centralised control whatever. Secondly because she would with very great difficulty be persuaded to give up the hardly-won right to have even the modicum of diplomatic status that she is accorded at present. Thirdly, because she had already early in 1920 requested the Imperial Government so to amend the British North America Act (her constitution), as to permit amendments to be made in it by the Canadian Parliament, and not, as at present, only by the British House of Commons. This latter move is all the more significant, when it is remembered that one of the chief

objections that the United States raised to Canada's insistence at the Peace negotiations to the full status of a nation, was owing to this very fact that Canada's constitution was governed by the British North America Act which Canada herself was powerless to amend.

The bourgeoisie, Marx told us, are the architects of their own ruin. More and more this becomes clear seventy-five years after this was demonstrated. The cry of self-determination was a weapon to be used against the Central Empires, with their congeries of small nationalities. But there is no such congeries of nationalities as the British Empire itself.

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The World of Labour

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FRANCE

Communist Trial

MARCEL CACHIN, Monmousseau, Albert Treint, Semard, and many other leading Communists were arrested by the French Government in January last. They had been instrumental in setting up, at the commencement of the Ruhr Occupation, the Committee of Action against Imperialism and War, which had begun a wide agitation among the masses of French workers. They were accused of "conspiracy against the internal and external safety of the State." The court before which they should nominally have appeared was the Assize Court of the Seine—a jury court; but the French Government, fearing a verdict of acquittal, refrained from bringing the accused to trial. Eventually, it was decided to arraign the accused before the Senate, sitting as a High Court: pending these proceedings, Marcel Cachin and ten others were released on May 7. The Senate assembled to hear the case on May 24. To the consternation of the Poincaré Government, by 148 votes to 104, the Senate refused to proceed with the trial. M. Jousselin, the investigating magistrate, on the case being referred to him on June 13, advised the judicial authorities to drop all proceedings against the accused, with the exception of Vaudeputte, Gabriel Péri, Maurice Laporte, and some others who are specifically accused of "Press offences." It seemed that the Government would accept M. Jousselin's verdict of "no true bill" with the best grace it could muster, when the Attorney-General, acting on the instructions of the Council of Ministers, opposed the verdict. The case must now come before a Grand Jury.

Emil Hoellein, the German Communist deputy, who was arrested in Paris in March and imprisoned, has been released and expelled from France (June 14), after several days' hunger strike during May.

JAPAN

The United Front

ONE of the most significant events in the history of Japanese trade unionism, and, indeed, in the history of the whole working-class movement of Japan, was the attempt made last year to form a united front. It should be remembered that the trade unions of Japan are still in a

very primitive stage of development, split up, localised, and without any strong central body. Under these circumstances, the proposal to form a united front meant nothing less than the creation for the first time of a conscious national working-class movement. The pressure of external events—the world slump, which began in Japan, was still, in 1922, impelling the employers to make still greater attacks on the workers—compelled the proletarian organisations to come together.

From April, 1922, onwards numerous meetings of the arrangement committee made a prelude to a first general conference, held at Osaka on September 30. The delegates present numbered 106, representing fifty-nine trade unions of varying size. Of the delegates, more than sixty represented unions affiliated to Kodo-Sodomé (the General Federation of Labour of Japan), while of the remainder a certain number belonged to Kojo-Kai (the General Federation of Munition and Governmental Workers), and others to the Shinyu-Kai (extreme "left" or syndicalist tendency, opposed to Sodomé).

To unite these dissident elements was not easy, and it proved too great a task for this first conference. The rock on which they split was Article II of the proposed rules, by which power was to be given to the new body to amalgamate rival unions, either locally or nationally, along the lines of organisation by industry. This was not simply a question of structure; the idea behind it was the concentration of the fighting force of Japanese labour. The opposition of the Anarcho-Syndicalists caused a modification of the rule to be put forward, by which it was suggested that rival unions should first federate on the understanding that this would be simply a step towards complete industrial union. This compromise, however, was not accepted, and the conference dissolved without having created the machinery for carrying out the united front. Nevertheless, the mere occurrence of such a conference, though without results, is of great significance, and has had an effect on the working class. Already the workers, in the early months of 1923, have themselves begun to move towards a united front. When the workers themselves are leading, no theoretical dissensions will keep them apart.

Agitation against Reactionary Laws

A great demonstration against three new reactionary laws now being proposed took place on February 11, 1923, at Tokio, Japan, under the auspices of an *ad hoc* federation of trade unions composed of the General Federation of Labour of Japan, the General Federation of Miners of Japan, the General Federation of Land Labourers, the Shinyu-Kai (anarchist trade unions), and many others. More than 5,000 people gathered in the Shibauru Ground, but before any speeches or demonstration could be made the police interfered. A number of prominent fighters were detained, while some were arrested and taken by motor car to the police station. Speeches were made by many militant speakers against the proposed three reactionary laws.

The three reactionary laws are:—

- (1) Law against the Radical-Social Movements.
- (2) Law against Trade Unions. (The object of this Bill is to destroy all existing trade unions except the trade unions which are convenient to the Government.)

- (3) Conciliation of small tenant disputes. (This Bill is very oppressive to the small tenant.)

After several speeches had been delivered, the people formed a procession and marched through the main streets, finally arriving at Fukagawa Park, when the demonstrators came into conflict with the police. At the park there were more speeches, after which the crowds dispersed. In all, more than 150 people were arrested by the police.

Another similar disturbance, organised under the auspices of the Tokio Federation of Engineering Trade Unions, took place on the same day.

This demonstration took place in Yokoamicho Military Munition Factory Ground, where more than 3,000 people gathered. Speeches were made and the crowds marched through the main streets to Kameido Temple Park, where the demonstration broke up. Many people were arrested here too.

Yet another demonstration occurred at Osaka, under the auspices of the Osaka Federation of Kodo-Sodomé, in Nakanoshima Park. This procession consisted chiefly of members of the Kojo-Kai (National Federation of Munition Workers), the Federation of Korean Labour, the Women's Labour Union, and many other unions. Speeches were made by militant speakers. The procession, 4,000 strong, marched the main streets of Osaka until they came to the entrance of Tennoji Park. At the park gates a number of policemen gathered at the head of the procession and barred the way. Bloody conflicts with the workers occurred, especially with the Korean labourers, of whom about 200 were arrested and taken to a police station near the park. The police station was stormed by the workers. A few of the arrested men were released, and after returning to the park the demonstration broke up.

Similar disturbances occurred all over Japan on the same day, accompanied by violence and bloodshed.

SWEDEN

Great Lock-Out Ending

THE great lock-out of workers in the forest industries, paper-making, saw mills, and iron smelting, which began on February 1, has not yet completely ended, but the more important unions are now back at work.

Agreement was reached in the paper-making industry on June 6. This part of the dispute, affecting 16,000 workers, ended in a victory for the men. Wages are raised by about 3 per cent. over the 1922 average, and the agreement is retrospective to November 1, 1922. The agreement holds good until the end of 1924.

The timber workers signed on February 20 an agreement that is to a large extent unfavourable to the workers, of whom 15,500 were involved. Strong opposition to the agreement has developed among the forestry workers, and men whose work is connected with floating the logs down the rivers are still locked out.

The dispute in the saw mills came to an end at the beginning of April. Wages are stabilised at the level prevailing before the lock-out, but payments for work during holidays are reduced by 20 per cent.

The fight in the iron works still continues. About 20,000 workers in forty-seven enterprises are affected, and the deadlock is complete. The workers are determined to hold out. The iron masters are beginning to realise that they have made a mistake; the result of the lock-out is that Sweden is importing iron from England and other countries, the demands of the electrical industry being particularly large.

Other Disputes

Since the beginning of 1923 there has been an increase in the number of small disputes, many of which are still going on. One of the most important of these was the strike at Gothenburg docks, involving 1,500 workers and lasting from February 15 to May 22. It had a negative result, but wages were not reduced. A lock-out in the building materials industry affecting 5,000 men ended on April 6, also on the *status quo*, which in this case represents a fall in wages of 45 per cent. since 1920.

General

The membership of the central organisation of the trade unions decreased during 1922 from 300,000 to 293,000. The number of unemployed at the end of March, 1923, was 43,400, a decrease of 5,800 on the February figures.

The Branting Government fell during April as a result of its failure to produce a policy on unemployment and relief satisfactory to the bourgeoisie. The new government, formed on April 14, is not in a very strong position, and functions only as a government of administrators. The Premier, Tryggar, is one of the directors of the Iggesund Company, a big timber and saw mill firm.

On May 3 Parliament prolonged the operation of the law on the eight-hours day for three years. The Premier is its bitterest enemy, and yet is forced to supervise its operations.

BOOK REVIEWS

WORKERS' REPUBLIC OR SOCIALIST EXPERIMENT?

The Russian Revolution. By R. Page Arnot. (Labour Research Department. (Syllabus No. 6.) 6d.)

The Soviet Constitution. Edited by Andrew Rothstein. (Labour Publishing Co. 2s. 6d.)

Bolshevism in Retreat. By Michael Farbman. (Collins. 15s.)

LATE in the summer of 1917 a London paper gravely warned the Russian Government that if they continued to accept "the dictation of a mere public meeting" in foreign affairs the Allies could not possibly reach any agreement with them. The mere meeting referred to was a session of the Petrograd Soviet.

Outside Russia, the great change that came in November, 1917, has been treated from many points of view, and Western Socialism has argued and fought and puzzled more over the question of how to regard the Russian revolution than over any other. While the contemptuous attitude of "a mere public meeting" still persists in the diplomacy of Lord Curzon, there has grown up amongst the intellectual adherents of the Labour and Socialist Parties of the West a rather illogical conception of the revolution—especially of its present phase—that deserves a word of analysis. The Russian revolution is treated as an unhappy product of Tsarist oppression, for which allowances must be made. The Labour Party's attitude during the recent Anglo-Russian crisis seems to have been: "We cannot defend the Russian revolution or any of the acts of the Russian Government. But you really ought not to attack Russia, you know." Speakers carried on their campaign on the line that there was something to be said for revolutions and even for Soviets in Russia, and that the Russian Government had made certain efforts towards a socialist policy, although their rashness and lack of constitutional training had led them into blunders. These very prevalent attitudes spring directly from middle-class conceptions of the revolution.

How far can a clear view of the Russian workers' rising in 1917, and of subsequent events, be gained from the three books under review?

Page Arnot's book is an achievement. He has compressed into a few thousand words of narrative a history of the vastest political change that has ever occurred. He traces the forces that shaped the Russia of 1917 from the ninth century to the murder of Rasputin; the March revolution, the growth in power of the soviets, the episodes of Kerensky and of Korniloff, are sketched in three pages—and each page is a summary that makes it possible to read the polemics and propaganda of the time without the feeling, "What is it all about?" The chapter on the November revolution gives a key to the epic of John Reed's "Ten Days," and to a multitude of other books that have appeared since 1917.

But the thing that distinguishes this booklet from a simple syllabus that is intended to help a student's reading is the chapter headed "Cronstadt." This summary of the transition to the "new economic policy" gives a clear

account of the reasons that led the Russian Communist Party to reverse their previous policy in industry and agriculture—a reversal that was in itself a victory almost equal in importance to the seizure of power.

The new economic policy, once the fundamental facts about Russia are grasped, falls into its place as part of a natural development of the revolution—in the conditions of economic collapse and foreign capitalist hostility that dominated the Russian situation in 1921. But in order to get straight the fundamental facts of the revolution, one thing has to be made plain beyond any doubt: What is the Soviet “system”?

If you ask a Russian Communist to explain some point in the “Soviet system,” he will reply that it is not a system at all. He will speak of the “Soviet power.” This is universal in Russia. The organ of the People’s Commissariat for Home Affairs is called *Vlast Sovietov* (“The Soviet Power”). A pamphlet on local government will be headed: “The Soviet Power in the Provinces.” And this phrase alone shows how false to facts are the arguments of Liberal pro-Russians who talk of the Soviet system as a “more democratic system of representative government than the parliamentary.” On paper this may or may not be true—a question for the pedants of political science to play with. In actual life the working of the Soviets and of a capitalist parliament show a sharper difference than any arising out of differences of degree of democracy.

Page Arnot stresses the flexibility of the Soviets, enabling them “to embody the will of the workers in a rapidly changing situation.” But the Soviets are more than organs of expression or even of power. They are instruments of *mobilisation*, and have been since they were first formed. They form the machinery by which the great party leading the Russian workers has brought every section of the masses, not merely to express their views or to fight for and maintain power, but to the actual work of realising in life all aspects of a working-class policy within their reach.

Russia is a country in which the workers are in power—not a State in which socialist experiments are being carried out or theories of democracy tested. With this one fact in mind it is possible to gain much from Page Arnot’s book, from *The Soviet Constitution*, and even from Mr. Farbman’s volume, large portions of which have already appeared as articles in the *Observer*.

The Soviet Constitution contains a definitive translation of the fundamental law of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic—“a constitution for the present period of transition.” These pages—the product not of political theory, but of the actual experience of twelve months’ working of the Soviets, as the editor points out—will always rank high among the greatest documents of world history. After the “Declaration of Rights of the Labouring and Exploited Masses” comes a statement of general principles beginning:—

The principal object of the Constitution . . . consists in the establishment (in the form of a strong Soviet Government) of the dictatorship of the urban and rural workers, combined with the poorer peasantry, to secure the complete suppression of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man, and the establishment of socialism, under which neither class divisions nor State coercion arising therefrom will any longer exist.

These are words that have a meaning—a meaning that Western socialists anxious to “defend Russia” have to tone down or slur over. It is a reality; and it is unpleasant to the bourgeoisie, to whom Western Socialism largely addresses itself in an appeal for intellectual recognition or moral sympathy.

In addition to the actual text of the Constitution, the volume contains all modifications to the Constitution enacted up to and including the amalgamation of the separate federal republics into a single union, recently decreed and not yet completed. The last fifty pages consist of a series of short but detailed articles on the powers and functions of the various bodies that govern Russia. The editor says of these that they—

illustrate the broad principle running through the whole of the Government machinery built up by the Russian proletariat—namely, that the administrative machinery exists, not for the purpose of satisfying pedants or bureaucrats, but in order to minister to the daily requirements of the masses, whose life and development it reflects.

This seems an understatement; the administrative machinery of the Soviet Republic cannot be disassociated from the “representative,” and both are means evolved by the masses to enable them to minister to their own needs—and to see that no other political force hinders them from doing so. But the value of the booklet as a whole, for any clear realisation of a workers’ State in being—though labouring under immense difficulties—cannot be over-estimated.

We can discover no good excuse for dealing at length with Mr. Farbman’s essays in eclectic journalism. His book is a curious mixture. With a real and wide knowledge of the superficial aspects of the revolution, and some appreciation of the forces that lie beneath, he combines an amazing capacity for inventing motives and deducing utterly unreal conclusions. Thus he is obsessed by the idea that the Communist Party has become imbued with Russian nationalism and with “the militarist mentality.” Practically no instances of either tendency are given, except for a purely ridiculous story about Trotsky sending an armoured train “to suppress a detachment of Red Guards” the moment they “refused to submit to the new Bolshevik discipline.” The value of the book lies in the sidelights it gives, especially those that show Lenin’s qualities of leadership in high relief. But full value from Mr. Farbman’s astounding analysis of what he calls the “Russian Thermidor” can only be gained by those gifted with a sense of irony and an appreciation of the ludicrous.

T. L.

ANOTHER HIRELING

The Romance of Trade. By A. W. Kirkaldy, M.A., B.Litt. (H. B. Saxton, King Street, Nottingham. Cloth, 3s. 6d.; paper, 2s. 6d. net.)

WITH such a title, the book might be expected to be bright and chatty; the reader will not be disappointed. It is full of good bits, and the breathless rush from primitive man to Lord Leverhulme is punctuated with unconscious humour. Thus we read, on page 19, that the Indian philosophers held that “only a very wicked person would have

anything to do with usury or profit out of the loan of money." Gradually, however, the Jews and Romans modified their opposition to usury, and (page 21) "we say interest instead of usury at the present time." The value of organising ability is illustrated (p. 107): "Take the King and his ministers, judges, the necessary officials of State, they all . . . have assisted in a system of government under which we get security. Take away that system of government and there would be chaos." Therefore, Kirkaldy argues, the King and all his horses and men are productive labourers.

But you must not think Kirkaldy is unsympathetic: "One has the greatest sympathy with those whose lot is cast in slums."

With a deft touch he disproves the labour theory of value: for are not the same things differently priced? Marx and all his works and pomps are therefore dismissed: "We must also realise the utter wickedness of class warfare as taught by Marx and those who follow him. It is based on a mistake, and Marx must have known it before he died."

Curiously enough, the book seems to have value to some people: Sir George B. Hunter, K.B.E., writes a foreword, and Sir John Turney, Kt., "most generously bore the expense of an edition of 2,000 copies."

May they not come our way!

C. J. H

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Vom Menschewismus zum Kommunismus. By A. Martynow. Foreword by Karl Radek. (Published in Germany for the Comintern by Carl Hoym. Nachf. Louis Cahnbley, Hamburg.)

Ascent of Man. By Samuel W. Ball. (Central School of Practical Psychology, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A. 25c.)

Fourth Congress of the Communist International: Abridged Report of Meetings held at Petrograd and Moscow, November 7-December 3, 1922. (Communist Party of Great Britain. 1s. 6d.)

Resolutions and Theses of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International. (Communist Party of Great Britain. 1s.)

Canada To-day, 1923. (Canada Newspaper Co. Ltd. 2s. 6d.)

[We draw the attention of American subscribers to our arrangement with Messrs. The H. W. Wilson Company (Publishers of Indexes and Reference Works, including *The United States Catalog Series*), of 958-964 University Avenue, New York City, whereby the indexing of the *LABOUR MONTHLY* has been begun in the *International Index to Periodicals* as from January, 1923, for the information of publishers and public libraries, in accordance with the announcement that appeared last year in *The Wilson Bulletin*.]

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NOTES of the MONTH

*Imperialist Common Sense—The Labour Party—Leaders and Workers
—The Conference—Communist Exclusion—Pre-requisites
of Power—Coalition in Fact—Coalition in
Form—Inevitability*

THE development of the working-class movement in any one country cannot be considered apart from the international position of the workers and of capitalism. The approach of British Labour towards power, in particular, can only be seen in the right perspective when it is linked up with the development of the other forces that are shaping the rapid changes of the whole post-war world. British capitalism has possessions and interests in every corner of the world: the trade of South America, India, or Asia Minor matters just as much to the City as the trade of Hull or Manchester. And the trade of Europe matters vitally. This immediate dependence of British capitalism on the economic condition of the world as a whole has its reflection within the British Labour Movement: the Labour Party is so much under the influence of capitalist ideas that it cannot but be affected by the needs of commercial imperialism. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald says that "the Labour Party has asked for a British policy inspired by economic and political common sense." The economic and political common sense of a capitalist society is different from that of a working-class society—a fact well illustrated by the article in the *New Leader* from which this quotation is taken. For Mr. MacDonald's idea of political common sense is that British policy should be one of open antagonism to France, and that if "France gets angry" and threatens war, "we must still have courage." This would seem common sense to most armament manufacturers and to many industrial employers who remember war-time profits. But so far from being common sense from the viewpoint of a socialist historian of the future, it would seem to him strong evidence in favour of a verdict of "suicide while of unsound mind."

WHETHER that verdict is to be passed on the British Labour Party only, or on the British working class, or on all the workers of Central and Western Europe, will be determined within the next few years. It will be determined by the struggle of the working class to acquire consciousness of itself and of its tasks, and to achieve its first main task: the conquest of power. And it is with regard to this struggle that the Labour Party has to be analysed. Is it—whatever its faults—an instrument of the workers in this struggle? Is it an institution which fits a certain phase in the development of the workers as they move towards that struggle? Or is it a body which, though nominally united, contains elements so different and antagonistic that what is true of one section is untrue of the others?

THERE are plenty of very distinct and separable elements within the Labour Party. But the one clear and permanent cleavage, which has been widening steadily for the last three years, is that between the leaders of the party and the rank and file. The party derives its strength, actual and potential, from a revolt of the working class against capitalism and imperialism, the workers' gradual movement towards consciousness both of their power and of their needs. But its leaders have no stable political outlook or clear conception of social theory. They know nothing of the realities of capitalism, and they refuse to face facts. They refuse even to consider the inevitable processes of the class struggle, which must be undergone if Socialism is to be achieved. Because of this the Labour Party is continually responsive to middle-class criticism, and is swayed by it. The party is more and more tending to accept, tacitly or implicitly, those pre-requisites for a party aspiring to power which capitalist opinion considers fundamental. Meanwhile the rank and file of the party have lost, not merely control over, but even touch with, their leaders and spokesmen in Parliament.

AT the Labour Party Conference the "previous question" was moved whenever a controversial point came up on which the Executive might be subjected to damaging criticism, or the party committed to definitely working-class policy.

This closure was carried, every time, by the block vote of the great unions. The majority was almost always the same: 2,800,000 votes against a few hundred thousand. *The Times*, in a leading article praising the temper of the conference, says: "Awkward and difficult questions did arise. Impetuous individuals were occasionally a menace to the harmony of the proceedings. Extremists had succeeded in placing on the agenda proposals the adoption of which would have done the party irretrievable harm in the opinion of the country. Skilful piloting took the conference past many points of danger." The Labour Party Conference was thus made safe for opportunism: and in perspective it will be found that the London Conference marks a definite stage in the party's progress towards the tacit acceptance of a policy satisfying all the most important requirements of British capitalism.

THIS acceptance of the things that must be accepted, by an "alternative Government" which will commend itself to the middle classes, will lead the Labour Party into power. It will reach power not by its strength but by its weakness. And those who reach power will not be the Labour Party as a whole, certainly not the rank and file whose delegates were closed at the Party Conference; it will be the politicians and ex-Liberal moderates of the Party who will act in the name of Labour. It is these people who are now manœuvring Labour into such a position that the rank and file have no say in policy. And they are manœuvring successfully. At only one point have they failed: the exclusion of the Communists from the Labour Party has not been secured. Affiliation of the Communist Party was turned down by the usual block-vote majority; the Labour Whip was refused to Mr. Newbold. But the famous "Edinburgh amendment" of last year has been found unworkable. Policy for the coming year, towards the Communists, will be based on an unwilling tolerance—a possibility foretold in these Notes last month. But in every other way the party has moved steadily towards accepting the conditions laid down not only by capitalist opinion but inherent in the structure of capitalism—conditions that must be fulfilled before a capitalist party can reach power.

A THOROUGH-GOING acceptance of imperialism is the first and most important of these conditions. The possibilities of revolution in Central Europe and of a revolt of the colonial countries dictate the policies of British imperialism abroad—which are at least as important as the policies adopted to divide and withhold the workers at home. The second main pre-requisite for power is just this ability to divide and hold back the workers, in which the leaders of the Labour Party have already shown their skill, particularly with regard to mediation in industrial disputes. They are doing their best to convince capitalist opinion that their party already has all the essential qualities to ensure safe and smooth progress when it reaches power; that it is not a class party; that its opposition to armaments will never be translated into action; that it is ready to pursue the policy of Mr. Baldwin and Lord Curzon in Europe. It is this acceptance of (or more truly insistence upon) a forward policy in Europe that marks most clearly how far the Labour Party has gone towards active coalition with the bourgeoisie.

MR. GARVIN says, with regard to the reception of the Prime Minister's new move on the Ruhr question, that we have practically returned to coalition government. The *Daily Herald* boasts that Mr. Baldwin may have to rely on Labour votes in order to carry through his foreign policy in the future. Mr. MacDonald writes that the "Government has set its foot upon the road which we have indicated. Naturally we look forward with some expectation to the development of a policy which in its inspiration is apparently the same as ours." And yet this new policy is not one of disarmament or of real reconstruction. It is one of direct preparation for war. The *Daily Herald* is practically the only paper in Britain which has definitely demanded severe pressure on France "to pay us the immense sums owing to us." This is far in advance of the Cabinet's cautious progress towards a new 1914. It is more nakedly imperialist than Lord Curzon's policy, which seems to have been opposed within the Cabinet by those who know the realities of the military situation. The policy of Messrs. Baldwin and MacDonald has met with only two

arguments on the capitalist side: the National Liberals have said that it does not go far enough or rapidly enough towards blank antagonism to France, while the *Morning Post* has argued that Britain cannot face the consequences of antagonising France, because Britain lacks the military power to meet the consequences of such a policy !

FURTHER than this the leaders of the Labour Party can scarcely go in their efforts to serve the "community." But they have already realised that the "community" does not yet fully trust them. That is why they are preparing for a coalition with the remnants of middle-class Radicalism that still remain outside their party. It looks as if the *Daily Herald* is to be allowed to die a lingering death, while the *Daily News*—which already has Mr. Ramsay MacDonald as a permanent contributor—will open its columns to selected Labour leaders. After all, when Mr. Snowden appears as the leader of an attack on the Soviet Government, demanding action which even Lord Curzon now feels impossible, and it is left to Commander Kenworthy to defend the Workers' Republic, what distinction need be drawn between Labour and Liberalism? There are internal differences in the bloc formed by these two parties, but these cut across the party boundaries and are not of great moment—to the politicians who aspire to leadership and a career in the Cabinet.

THE Labour Party Conference decided against a resolution, put forward by the I.L.P., calling for a refusal to vote military and naval estimates. None of the leaders of the Labour Party, who are also members of the I.L.P., spoke on this resolution. It was put forward under rank-and-file pressure; its failure shows that the rank and file of the I.L.P. are as powerless against the dead weight of their party leadership as the local Labour parties within the larger body. And this refusal to oppose the piling up of armaments, the maintenance of all the weapons of imperialism, is not simply the sign of a political heresy in a party that calls itself Socialist—it is a

threat to the workers so definite, urgent, and immediate that no worker who has known war can feel safe once the bare fact of this refusal is realised. It is a sign that in all probability Labour's first Government will not only be a coalition; it will be a Government of "national defence." If that comes about, the progress of Western Europe will be rapid, but the direction of its progress will be incomprehensible to Mr. Webb. It is hard for the pilots of bombing aeroplanes to appreciate the "inevitability of gradualness."

T. L.

FASCISM

By CLARA ZETKIN

IN Fascism, the proletariat is confronted by an extraordinarily dangerous enemy. Fascism is the concentrated expression of the general offensive undertaken by the world bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Its overthrow is therefore an absolute necessity, nay, it is even a question of the every-day existence and of the bread and butter of every ordinary worker. On these grounds the whole of the proletariat must concentrate on the fight against Fascism. It will be much easier for us to defeat Fascism if we clearly and distinctly study its nature. Hitherto there have been extremely vague ideas upon this subject not only among the large masses of the workers, but even among the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat and the Communists. Hitherto Fascism has been put on a level with the White Terror of Horthy in Hungary. Although the methods of both are similar, in essence they are different. The Horthy Terror was established after the victorious, although shortlived, revolution of the proletariat had been suppressed, and was the expression of vengeance of the bourgeoisie. The ringleaders of the White Terror were a quite small clique of former officers. Fascism, on the contrary, viewed objectively, is not the revenge of the bourgeoisie in retaliation for proletarian aggression against the bourgeoisie, but it is a punishment of the proletariat for failing to carry on the revolution begun in Russia. The Fascist leaders are not a small and exclusive caste ; they extend deeply into wide elements of the population.

We have to overcome Fascism not only militarily, but also politically and ideologically. The reformists even to-day consider Fascism to be nothing else but naked violence, the reaction against the violence begun by the proletariat. To the reformists the Russian Revolution amounts to the same thing as Mother Eve's biting into the apple in the Garden of Eden. The reformists trace Fascism back to the Russian Revolution and its consequences. Nothing else was meant by Otto Bauer at the Unity Congress at Hamburg, when he declared that a great share of the blame for Fascism rests on the Communists, who had weakened the force

of the proletariat by continual splits. In saying this he entirely ignored the fact that the German Independents had made their split long before the demoralising example was given by the Russian Revolution. Contrary to his own views, Bauer, at Hamburg, had to draw the conclusion that the organised violence of Fascism must be met by forming defence organisations of the proletariat, because no appeal to democracy can avail against direct violence. At any rate, he went on to explain that he did not mean such weapons as insurrection or a general strike which did not always lead to success. What he meant was the co-ordination of parliamentary action with mass action. What was to be the nature of these actions Otto Bauer did not say, but this is the very point of the question. The only weapon recommended by Bauer for the fight against Fascism was the establishment of an International Bureau of Information on world reaction. The distinguishing feature of this new-old International is its faith in the power and permanence of bourgeois domination, and its mistrust and cowardice towards the proletariat as the strongest factor of the world revolution. They are of the opinion that against the invulnerable force of the bourgeoisie the proletariat can do nothing else but act with moderation and refrain from teasing the tiger of the bourgeoisie. Fascism, with all its forcefulness in the prosecution of its violent deeds, is indeed nothing else but the expression of the disintegration and decay of capitalist economy, and the symptom of the dissolution of the bourgeois State. This is one of its roots. Symptoms of this decay of capitalism were observed even before the war. The war has shattered capitalist economy to its foundation, resulting not only in the colossal impoverishment of the proletariat, but also in deep misery for the petty bourgeoisie, the small peasantry and the intellectuals. All these elements had been promised that the war would bring about an amelioration of their material conditions. But the very opposite has happened. Large numbers of the former middle classes have become proletarians, having entirely lost their economic security. Their ranks were joined by large masses of ex-officers, who are now unemployed. It was among these elements that Fascism recruited quite a considerable contingent. The manner of its composition is also the reason why Fascism in some countries is of an outspoken, monarchist character.

The second root of Fascism lies in the retarding of the world revolution by the treacherous attitude of the reformist leaders. Large numbers of the petty bourgeoisie, including even the middle classes, had discarded their war-time psychology for a certain sympathy with reformist socialism, hoping that the latter would bring about a reformation of society along democratic lines. They were disappointed in their hopes. They can now see that the reformist leaders are in benevolent accord with the bourgeoisie, and the worst of it is that these masses have now lost their faith not only in the reformist leaders, but in socialism as a whole. These masses of disappointed socialist sympathisers are joined by large circles of the proletariat, of workers who have given up their faith, not only in socialism, but also in their own class. Fascism has become a sort of refuge for the politically shelterless. In fairness it ought to be said that the Communists, too—except the Russians—bear part of the blame for the desertion of these elements to the Fascist ranks, because our actions at times failed to stir the masses profoundly enough. The obvious aim of the Fascists, when gaining support among the various elements of society, must have been, as a matter of course, to try and bridge over the class antagonism in the ranks of their own adherents, and the so-called authoritative State was to serve as a means to this end. Fascism now embraces such elements which may become very dangerous to the bourgeois order. Nevertheless, thus far these elements have been invariably overcome by the reactionary elements.

The bourgeoisie had seen the situation clearly from the start. The bourgeoisie wants to reconstruct capitalist economy. Under the present circumstances reconstruction of bourgeois class domination can be brought about only at the cost of increased exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie is quite aware that the soft-speaking reformist socialists are fast losing their hold on the proletariat, and that there will be nothing for the bourgeoisie but to resort to violence against the proletariat. But the means of violence of the bourgeois States are beginning to fail. They therefore need a new organisation of violence, and this is offered to them by the hodge-podge conglomeration of Fascism. For this reason the bourgeoisie offers all the force at its command in the service of Fascism. Fascism has diverse

characteristics in different countries. Nevertheless it has two distinguishing features in all countries, namely, the pretence of a revolutionary programme, which is cleverly adapted to the interests and demands of the large masses, and, on the other hand, the application of the most brutal violence. The classic instance is Italian Fascism. Industrial capital in Italy was not strong enough to reconstruct the ruined economy. It was not expected that the State would intervene to increase the power and the material possibilities of the industrial capital of Northern Italy. The State was giving all its attention to agrarian capital and to petty financial capital. The heavy industries, which had been artificially boosted during the war, collapsed when the war was over, and a wave of unprecedented unemployment set in. The pledges given to the soldiers could not be redeemed. All these circumstances created an extreme revolutionary situation. This revolutionary situation resulted, in the summer of 1920, in the occupation of the factories. Upon that occasion it was shown that the maturity of the revolution makes its first appearance among a small minority of the proletariat. The occupation of the factories was therefore bound to end in a tremendous defeat instead of becoming the starting point for revolutionary development. The reformist leaders of the trade unions acted the part of ignominious traitors, but at the same time it was shown that the proletariat possessed neither the will nor the power to march on towards revolution. Notwithstanding the reformist influence, there were forces at work among the proletariat which could become inconvenient to the bourgeoisie. The municipal elections, in which the social democrats gained a third of all the councils, were a signal of alarm to the bourgeoisie, who immediately started to seek for a force which could combat the revolutionary proletariat. It was just at that time that Mussolini had gained some importance with Fascismo. After the defeat of the proletariat in the occupation of the factories, the number of the Fascisti was over 1,000 and great masses of the proletariat joined the Mussolini organisation. On the other hand, large masses of the proletariat had fallen into a state of indifference. The cause of the first success of the Fascisti was that it made its start with a revolutionary gesture. Its pretended aim was to fight to retain the revolutionary conquests of the revolutionary war, and for this

reason they demanded a strong State which would be able to protect these revolutionary fruits of victory against the hostile interests of the various classes of society represented by the "old State." Its slogan was directed against all the exploiters, and hence also against the bourgeoisie. Fascism at that time was so radical that it even demanded the execution of Giolitti and the dethronement of the Italian dynasty. But Giolitti carefully refrained from using violence against Fascism, which seemed to him to be the lesser evil. To satisfy these Fascist clamours he dissolved Parliament. At that time Mussolini was still pretending to be a republican, and in an interview he declared that the Fascist faction could not participate at the opening of the Italian parliament because of the monarchist ceremony accompanying it. These utterances provoked a crisis in the Fascist Movement, which had been established as a party by a merger of the Mussolini adherents and the representatives of the monarchist organisation, and the executive of the new party was made up of an even number of members from both factions. The Fascist Party created a double-edged weapon for the corruption and terrorisation of the working class. For the corruption of the working class the Fascist Trade Unions were created, the so-called corporations in which workers and employers were united. To terrorise the working class, the Fascist Party created the militant squads which had grown out of the punitive expeditions. Here it must be emphasised again that the tremendous treason of the Italian reformists during the general strike, which was the cause of the terrible defeat of the Italian proletariat, had given direct encouragement to the Fascists to capture the State. On the other hand, the mistakes of the Communist Party consisted in their regarding Fascism as merely a militarist and terrorist movement without any profound social basis.

Let us now examine what Fascism has done since the conquest of power for the fulfilment of its intended revolutionary programme, for the realisation of its promise to create a State without class. Fascism held out the promise of a new and better electoral law and of equal suffrage for women. The new suffrage law of Mussolini is in reality the worst restriction of the suffrage law to favour the Fascist Movement. According to this law, two-thirds of all the seats must be given to the strongest party, and all the other parties

together shall hold only one-third of the seats. Women's franchise has been nearly entirely eliminated. The right to vote is given only to a small group of propertied women and the so-called "war-distinguished" women. There is no longer any mention made of the promise of the economic parliament and National Assembly, nor of the abolition of the Senate which had been pledged so solemnly by the Fascists.

The same can be said about the pledges made in the social sphere. The Fascists had inscribed on their programme the eight-hour day, but the bill introduced by them provides so many exceptions that there is to be no eight-hour day in Italy. Nothing came also of the promised guarantee of wages. The destruction of the trade unions has enabled the employers to effect wage reductions of 20 to 30 per cent., and in some cases of even 50 to 60 per cent. Fascism had promised old age and invalid insurance. In practice the Fascist Government, for the sake of economy, has struck off the miserable 50,000,000 lire which had been set aside for this purpose in the budget. The workers were promised the right of technical participation in the administration of the factories. To-day there is a law in Italy which proscribes the factory councils completely. The State enterprises are playing into the hands of private capital. The Fascist programme had contained a provision for a progressive income tax on capital, which was to some extent to act as a form of expropriation. In fact the opposite was done. Various taxes on luxuries were abolished, such as the automobile tax, for the pretended reason that it would restrict national production. The indirect taxes were increased for the reason that this would curtail the home consumption and thus improve the possibilities for export. The Fascist Government also abrogated the law for the compulsory registration of transfers of securities, thus reintroducing the system of bearer-bonds and opening the door wide to the tax-evader. The schools were handed over to the clergy. Before capturing the State, Mussolini demanded a commission to inquire into war profits, of which 85 per cent. were to be restored to the State. When this commission had become uncomfortable for his financial backers, the heavy industrialists, he ordered that the commission should only submit a report to him, and whoever published any of the things that transpired in

that commission would be punished with six months' imprisonment. Also in military matters Fascism failed to keep its promises. The army was promised to be restricted to territorial defence. In reality, the term of service for the standing army was increased from eight months to eighteen, which meant the increase of the armed forces from 250,000 to 350,000. The Royal Guards were abolished because they were too democratic to suit Mussolini. On the other hand, the carabinieri were increased from 65,000 to 90,000, and all the police troops were doubled. The Fascist organisations were transformed into a kind of national militia, which by latest accounts have now reached the number of 500,000. But the social differences have introduced an element of political contrast in the militia, which must lead to the eventual collapse of Fascism.

When we compare the Fascist programme with its fulfilment we can foresee already to-day the complete ideological collapse of Fascism in Italy. Political bankruptcy must inevitably follow in the wake of this ideological bankruptcy. Fascism is unable to keep together the forces which helped it to get into power. A clash of interests in many forms is already making itself felt. Fascism has not yet succeeded in making the old bureaucracy subservient to it. In the army there is also friction between the old officers and the new Fascist leaders. The differences between the various political parties are growing. Resistance against Fascism is increasing throughout the country. Class antagonism begins to permeate even the ranks of the Fascists. The Fascists are unable to keep the promises which they made to the workers and to the Fascist Trade Unions. Wage reductions and dismissals of workers are the order of the day. Thus it happens that the first protest against the Fascist trade union movement came from the ranks of the Fascists themselves. The workers will very soon come back to their class interest and class duty. We must not look upon Fascism as a united force capable of repelling our attack. It is rather a formation, which comprises many antagonistic elements, and will be disintegrated from within. But it would be dangerous to assume that the ideological and political disintegration of Fascism in Italy would be immediately followed by military disintegration. On the contrary, we must be prepared for Fascism

to endeavour to keep alive by terrorist methods. Therefore, the revolutionary Italian workers must be prepared for further serious struggles. It would be a great calamity if we were satisfied with the rôle of spectators of this process of disintegration. It is our duty to hasten this process with all the means at our disposal. This is not only the duty of the Italian proletariat, but also the duty of the German proletariat in the face of German Fascism.

After Italy, Fascism is strongest in Germany. As a consequence of the result of the war and of the failure of the revolution, the capitalist economy of Germany is weak, and in no other country is the contrast between the objective ripeness for revolution and the subjective unpreparedness of the working class as great as just now in Germany. In no other country have the reformists so ignominiously failed as in Germany. Their failure is more criminal than the failure of any other party in the old International, because it is they who should have conducted the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat with utterly different means in the country where the working-class organisations are older and better organised than anywhere else.

I am firmly convinced that neither the Peace Treaties nor the occupation of the Ruhr have given such a fillip to Fascism in Germany as the seizure of power by Mussolini. This has encouraged the German Fascists. The collapse of Fascism in Italy would greatly discourage the Fascists in Germany. We must not overlook one thing: the prerequisite for the overthrow of Fascism abroad is the overthrow of Fascism in every single country by the proletariat of these countries. It behoves us to overcome Fascism ideologically and politically. This imposes enormous tasks on us. We must realise that Fascism is a movement of the disappointed and of those whose existence is ruined. Therefore, we must endeavour either to win over or to neutralise those wide masses who are still in the Fascist camp. I wish to emphasise the importance of our realising that we must struggle ideologically for the possession of the soul of these masses. We must realise that they are not only trying to escape from their present tribulations, but that they are longing for a new philosophy. We must come out of the narrow limits of our present activity. The Third International is, in contradistinction to the old International, an International of all races without any

distinctions whatever. The Communist Parties must not only be the vanguard of the proletarian manual workers, but also the energetic defenders of the interests of the brain workers. They must be the leaders of all sections of society which are driven into opposition to bourgeois domination because of their interests and their expectations of the future. Therefore, I welcomed the proposal of Comrade Zinoviev (speaking at a session of the Enlarged Executive Committee of the Communist International in June of this year) to take up the struggle for the Workers' and Peasants' Government. I was jubilant when I read about it. This new slogan has a great significance for all countries. We cannot dispense with it in the struggle for the overthrow of Fascism. It means that the salvation of the wide masses of the small peasantry will be achieved through Communism. We must not limit ourselves merely to carrying on a struggle for our political and economic programme. We must at the same time familiarise the masses with the ideals of Communism as a philosophy. If we do this, we shall show the way to a new philosophy to all those elements which have lost their bearings during the historical development of recent times. The necessary prerequisite for this is that, as we approach these masses, we also become organisationally, as a Party, a firmly welded unit. If we do not do that, we run the risk of falling into opportunism and of going bankrupt. We must adapt our methods of work to our new tasks. We must speak to the masses in a language which they can understand, without doing prejudice to our ideas. Thus, the struggle against Fascism brings forward a number of new tasks.

It behoves all the parties to carry out this task energetically and in conformity with the situation in their respective countries. However, we must bear in mind that it is not enough to overcome Fascism ideologically and politically. The position of the proletariat as regards Fascism is at present one of self-defence. This self-defence of the proletariat must take the form of a struggle for its existence and its organisation.

The proletariat must have a well organised apparatus of self-defence. Whenever Fascism uses violence, it must be met with proletarian violence. I do not mean by this individual terrorist acts, but the violence of the organised revolutionary class struggle

of the proletariat. Germany has made a beginning by organising factory "hundreds." This struggle can only be successful if there is a proletarian united front. The workers must unite for this struggle regardless of party. The self-defence of the proletariat is one of the greatest incentives for the establishment of the proletarian united front. Only by instilling class-consciousness into the soul of every worker will we succeed in preparing also for the military overthrow of Fascism, which, at this juncture, is absolutely necessary. If we succeed in this, we may be sure that it will be soon all up with the capitalist system and with bourgeois power, regardless of any success of the general offensive of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. The signs of disintegration, which are so palpably before our eyes, give us the conviction that the giant proletariat will again join in the revolutionary fray, and that its call to the bourgeois world will be: I am the strength, I am the will, in me you see the future!

THE HAMBURG CONGRESS AND THE NEW LABOUR INTERNATIONAL

By M. PHILIPS PRICE

UP to the Hamburg Congress the international Labour movement outside the Communist International was divided into two camps, which had in the past shown important, if decreasing, differences of outlook. The two schools of Socialist thought, which characterised these differences, are best known as the Revisionist and the Centrist schools. In the old International before the war, tendencies corresponding to these differences existed, but the coming of the war made them acute and resulted in a rupture, which has now been healed in Hamburg. Were those differences of a serious, far-reaching nature? The answer to that question will show us the nature of the new Labour and Socialist International.

In the days before the war, when capitalism was developing in Western and Central Europe into its imperialist stage, the working classes of the industrialised lands were securing some benefit from the exploitation of the colonial areas of the earth. A labour aristocracy had arisen in every capitalist land, which derived advantages from the fact that the profits of capitalism obtained in colonies through the exploitation of cheap unskilled labour enabled them to monopolise the skilled jobs both at home and in the colonies at higher rates of pay. And as long as surplus values were extracted from labour in different degrees from different categories and flowed automatically into the colonies, returning in accumulations of investments to the Mother Country, the Labour movement in the highly capitalised lands was bound to assume an aristocratic nature, and to acquire the nationalist ideology and imperialist methods of the ruling class. No wonder that Edward Bernstein, the ablest theoretician of the international labour movement before

the war, preached the need to work within the capitalist system, so that Labour might secure by reforms all the improvements that it needed. This was Revisionism, which revised the theoretical basis on which the far-seeing Karl Marx, living before his time, had tried in *The Communist Manifesto* to organise the working classes internationally. It is no accident that the rise of Revisionism in Germany coincided with the rise of German capitalist Imperialism, and the same developments took place in England and France.

As time went on and as the capitalist Imperialism of England, France, and Germany had carved out the greater part of the available colonial areas of the earth, and as the menace of armed struggle for the few that remained loomed on the horizon, doubts as to the wisdom of the theory that the working classes could derive any permanent benefit under the existing system began to increase. Another school of thought began to crystallise in the Labour International. But instead of taking up the theses of Marx, laid down in his *Communist Manifesto*, which recognised that the blind forces of capitalist machine production were driving the world into a series of wars, revolts, famines, and disasters, and placing against this evolutionary material mechanism the revolutionary counter-action of the international working class, the new school sought to avoid the issue by sentimental phrases and the construction of pacifist paradises. It sought a short cut to Socialism, whereby Labour would avoid the unpleasant task of fighting for its right to live, and of dictating, when necessary, the new order of society. Since Imperialism was driving civilisation to destruction, all that needed to be proved was that there was no need for Imperialism, which was not the inevitable result of the capitalist system, but was due to accidents and the cussedness of human nature in individual monarchs and diplomats. The spiritual leader of this school of thought was none other than Otto Bauer, who played an important rôle at the Hamburg Congress. It was centred in Vienna, where the enervating atmosphere of the Austrian capital favoured insipid philosophies of this kind.

The World War divided the Revisionists from the Centrists. In Germany the split took place in the political parties, and the Reformists got away with the party machine. In Austria the Centrists got the upper hand. In Britain, owing to the peculiar

nature of the Labour movement, both Revisionists and Centrists remained in the Labour Party, but fought each other outside. In general the war smashed up the Labour International. The Revisionists, more logical and clear-headed than their former Centrist colleagues, felt that, once they had tied themselves to the chariot wheels of capitalism, in the hopes of getting crumbs that had fallen from the rich man's table, they had better follow that chariot in a war, which, if it was won, might bring increased advantages to the labour aristocracy. And so they went dining with generals at the front, while Centrists were squealing like frightened chickens at events which their brains were too muddle-headed to understand. But when the "accident" of war was over, the cause for the separation of these two schools of Socialist thought had disappeared. The sham peace broke out, and the Centrist illusions could be married once more to the calculating opportunism of the Revisionist. And that was the basis of the reunion of the German Majority Socialists with the Independent Socialists at Nurnberg in September, 1922, which in its turn was the prelude to the Unity Congress of the International at Hamburg last May,

The Hamburg Congress reflected the outlook of both Revisionists and Centrist philosophy, the opportunist phraseology of the one being intertwined into the pacifist phraseology of the other, like a patched-up quilt. Nowhere was this more clearly in evidence than in the resolution dealing with the peace treaties and reparations. The essence of this was : revise, but do not abolish the Versailles Treaty; Germany must pay according to her capacity; Wilsonism and the League of Nations must be called in to form an impartial tribunal; Germany's obligations must be limited to the "actual amount of material damage"; "international credit operations" must be set going to provide France with the necessary cash and Germany with the possibility of paying off in interest and sinking fund the burdens imposed upon her. The only thing which made this programme differ from that of the Baldwin Government's reparations policy was that it expressly excluded war pensions and allowances from the reparations scheme. Yet what was meant by "material reparations" was left quite unclear, and one could quite well see any capitalist government interpreting this as an obligation on the part of Germany to cover costs outside the restoration of the

devastated areas. No specific mention was made of the devastated areas at all, and nothing whatever about the need to reconstruct by direct labour and without the intervention of capitalist trusts, drawing profits from these operations. The policies of the national bourgeoisies of the two most powerful Entente States in Europe could be read in this resolution and in the debate which accompanied it. There was Leon Blum protesting that the "Treaty, which closed the world war between 1914 and 1918, is much less repressive and violent than the treaties of Vienna and Utrecht, which closed the great wars of 100 and 200 years ago. One speaks much about French militarism. It is true that there is a militarism in France, which is attributable to old and glorious traditions. It is also true that there is a certain national pride in France which is too often mistaken for chauvinism." So spoke the voice of the French *petit bourgeois*, the little *rentier*, who hopes to see the value of his War Bonds rise through a French Budget, in which German gold payments, not French supertaxes, provide the bulk of the revenue. And there was the sinister M. Vandervelde trying to excuse his signature to the Versailles Treaty by whining that he did it in order to secure Belgium's freedom from German military occupation! Besides, the German Social Democrat, Hermann Müller, put his signature also to the document! The contemptible behaviour of Vandervelde at the Congress over his political record caused many comments from delegates who were by no means extremists.

In the part of the resolution which called for an international credit operation to assist the French bourgeoisie to the necessary cash, and to extract more easily taxation for interest and sinking fund from the German working masses, one could hear the voice of the British and American governments and of the bond-holding aristocrats of the City of London and Wall Street. And the prominence which was given to the financial juggling to accompany this "solution" of the reparations problem was rather a proof that in the struggles behind the scenes at the Congress the British Government point of view prevailed over that of the French Government point of view. Baldwin, not Poincaré, carried the day at Hamburg, as far as reparations was concerned. But what this had to do with international Socialism nobody had the courage to ask from the Congress platform, although doubts were whispered

here and there by delegates. Revisionism triumphed in resolution Number 7 of the Hamburg Congress. The foreign policy of capitalist governments was laid down as the foreign policy of the new Labour International, which showed itself incapable of having one of its own, and could only consider the merits of one capitalist solution of the post-war economic crisis in Europe over the merits of another capitalist solution. The idea of imposing the war burdens on the capitalist class of all Europe on an international scale by capital levies or State mortgages on industry was never even discussed.

One of the most significant features of the Congress was the complete absence from it of any representatives of the coloured workers from Asia, Africa, and the colonial areas of the earth. It was not even an international of the aristocracy of labour throughout the world, but only of the aristocracy of white labour. Just as Moscow seeks to gather round it the dusky millions of the exploited, so did Hamburg seek to gather round it the élite of labour. There were no resolutions of sympathy with the struggling national movements of Egypt and India, and in this respect Arthur Henderson was abundantly right when, during the Morpeth election, he met the accusation of the *Times* and *Morning Post*, that the new International was run by Germans, by pointing to British predominance upon it. British government policy was certainly predominant upon it in all matters concerning the colonial areas of the British Empire. On the other hand the Congress was asked to wax indignant at the treatment of Georgia and Armenia. In those areas of the Middle East, where Standard Oil and Royal Dutch Shell are casting longing eyes on the oil fields of Maikop, Grozny, and Baku, nationalised by the Russian Soviets, the Hamburg Congress could consider unwarranted the presence of the Red Army of Russian and Caucasian workers and peasants along the pipe line connecting the oil fields with the Black Sea and blocking the plans of the concessionaires. Personally, I don't think that any member of the British delegation had any responsibility for this declaration of the Congress. Indeed, it was the British delegation which acted as a brake on those who wanted to make this very sinister demonstration against the Russian Revolution even worse than it was. If the British delegation did not bring in any reference

to the colonial races of the British Empire, it was content to leave the Caucasus oil fields alone, all the more so as a certain political common sense told them that, at a moment when Lord Curzon was launching an ultimatum against Soviet Russia, which might result in a breach of trading relations with Russia and possibly even in war, it was not desirable to stab the Soviets in the back by a hostile resolution. The I.L.P. delegates in particular did admirable work in counteracting the intrigues of the infamous Abramovitch and of other political bankrupts of the Russian " Socialist " emigrants, who tried to lead the Congress by the nose on everything concerning Russia. It would be interesting to know from what source these gentlemen get the money for the propaganda which they have been carrying on for so long against the Soviets, and whether one of the continental Social Democratic parties provides them from time to time with the necessary sinews of war against the Russian Revolution. It is certainly a matter which the Russian Government would be entitled to raise if no satisfactory answer is given to this question and if the members of the London International complain about the Third International supporting Communist parties outside Russia.

In spite of the predominance of the Revisionist and Centrist philosophies in the resolutions and deliberations of the Hamburg Congress, there was nevertheless a third element present, which tried from time to time to make itself felt. That was an element which was evidently in close touch with the rank and file in its particular country, demanding a united front of all sections of the labour movement in opposition to Fascist reaction and the capitalist economic offensive against the working class. The French Socialist Party is entirely innocent of these elements, which have mostly gone over to the French Communist Party. The same is true of the German Social-Democratic Party, whose former militants went over to the German Communist Party after the Independent split at Halle in 1920. And in order to prevent even the moderate opposition within the present German Social-Democratic Party from appearing at Hamburg, the wire-pullers in Berlin saw to it that the delegates were not elected from the provincial branches of the party, but were appointed by the National Executive. And so at Hamburg the predominating types from France and Germany

were the French *rentiers'* solicitor and the Potsdam parade sergeant, dressed in civilian clothing. There only remained the English gentleman with a smell of oil, but he was not very conspicuous by his presence and largely, I think, because of the presence of the I.L.P. delegates. For the same reason that a strong Communist Party in France and Germany makes the French and German Social-Democratic parties the symbol of petty bourgeois opportunism, so the existence of a numerically small Communist Party in England causes the I.L.P. to contain elements who are sincerely out to fight capitalist Imperialism, even though they may do so with unclear phrases. They were joined by some of the Italian Socialists under Modigliani, and small left-wing groups in Poland and Czecho-Slovakia. To them is due the fact that the constitution of the new International contains the following paragraph:—

The Labour and Socialist International is a union of such parties as accept the principle of the class struggle for the economic emancipation of the workers from capitalist domination and the establishment of a Socialist Commonwealth as their object, and the independent political and industrial action of the workers organisations as a means of realising that object. The object of the Labour and Socialist International is to unify the activities of the affiliated parties and to arrange common action and to bring about the entire unification of the Labour and Socialist Movement on the principles of this constitution.

Acting also on the principle laid down in this paragraph, the I.L.P. received a deputation of the Council of Action, set up at the Conference at Frankfurt in March, of Red Trade Unions and Communist shop stewards for the purpose of promoting the united working-class front. That the deputation did not get the opportunity of officially discussing its programme with representatives of the Congress was not the fault of the I.L.P. delegation. Again the sharply-worded resolution of protest against the second British ultimatum to Russia, accepted unanimously by the Congress, was the work of the I.L.P.

But in spite of this, the dominant tone of the Congress was that of the old Second International, and whether the third element will be able to breathe a spirit of reality into the corpse emanating the fumes of Revisionism and Centrism is a question which only the future can decide. The resolution No. 8 on the fight against

Fascist reaction was largely the work of Otto Bauer, the Centrist leader of the Austro-Marxian school, and was very typical of the philosophy of this school. While condemning Fascism and Imperialism, it could only propose as a means of dealing with them an intensified propaganda for showing up their activities. The same old illusion was present as before and during the war. Fascism and Imperialism are seen as phenomena in themselves, and not as one of the aspects of capitalist machine production in its declining stage.

THE SITUATION IN THE MINING INDUSTRY

By NESS EDWARDS

THE most advanced, and therefore the most libelled, section of the working class in this country again takes the limelighted stage of industrial warfare. During the last ten years the British miners, with the Clyde engineers, have formed the spearhead of the organised working class in this country; and because of this one must analyse their activities in order correctly to assess the drift of the working class towards its historic goal. Regard must be had for the economic importance of the industry when judging the power of the worker in that industry. Only when regard is had for this fact can one properly understand the variations in the pace of progress in the mining industry. The immense power which the miners had in 1920 and their impotence in 1922 are only explicable when related to the economic position of the industry in the first place, and the attitude of the dominant policy existing among the miners in relation thereto in the second.

A revaluation of the factors has to take place before a correct policy can be enunciated. A review of the past may hold the key of the future.

Up until about the year 1900 the mines of this country were still worked in a relatively crude fashion. A fairly ready demand existed for the output, and an "economic" price was obtainable because of this demand. The expansion of the heavy steel industry and the consequent railroading of the whole world was the chief cause of this. Economic pressure to apply scientific methods was therefore not very intensive.

Since 1900 the coalfields of other lands have been developed to an amazing extent. Competition between the national coal

producing units has become intense, and has consequently influenced the method of production. This influence has expressed itself in three ways chiefly.

First, the amalgamating of small private firms into large combines owning many collieries.

Second, the application of scientific methods and machines in the mines, in which are included the bye-product plants and processes. (It may be mentioned here that this was conditioned by the existence of large quantities of capital in the hands of the combine.)

Third, price-cutting, which is reflected in the incessant struggles over wages which have taken place in the industry the world over.

These three factors influence and intensify each other.

This process continued steadily up to the outbreak of the war, when its action was partially postponed by the artificial conditions created by the State control of production.

During the war, coal was what Mr. Lloyd George called the "life blood of the nation." Our munitions, transport, navy, and allies depended upon it, and this gave to the miner an enormous power. This power was used to obtain increased wages, which, however, were first conditioned by increased prices of coal.

Under government control the productive capacity of the mines was decreased through a great deal of mismanagement and sabotage on the part of the mine owners. That the productions of 1913 and 1919 were 73,400,118 tons and 35,249,578 tons respectively is evidence of this.

In 1919 the Sankey Commission condemned the present method of ownership and control of the mines, an attitude which has been amply justified by the condition of the industry during the last six years.

In 1921 the artificial conditions of government control were removed and the forces of competitive national capitalism began to operate.

At this time the price of British coal was much higher than American, German or French coal. Orders fell off, and America stole much of our export trade, whilst the reparations coal to France

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and Italy robbed us of two great buyers. The full effect of the Versailles Treaty can be seen by the following table:—

	<i>France</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Belgium</i>
Normal British exports to	12,775,909.	9,647,161	2,031,077
Reparations coal (tons per annum) . .	27,000,000	8,500,000	8,000,000

The bottom was knocked out of the British coal trade by these two factors. The general depression in other trades had a great effect upon the inland trade. An unexampled depression occurred, and the coalowners took steps to reduce the wages of the miners. This brings us to the national lock-out of April 1, 1921.

After a lock-out lasting thirteen weeks, the miners returned to work on wages which placed them in a worse position than they were in 1914. Many collieries remained closed, thousands upon thousands were unemployed, and short time was general. The full force of the depression, which had just manifested itself before the lock-out, was now being felt. The following list of prices will give an indication of this :—

BEST ADMIRALTY LARGE, F.O.B. CARDIFF

September, 1920 ..	115/- to 120/-	January, 1923 ..	28/6 to 30/-
December, 1920 ..	107/6 ,, 115/-	February, 1923 ..	29/- ,, 33/-
January, 1921 ..	57/6 ,, 85/-	March, 1923 ..	33/- ,, 39/-
August, 1921 ..	18/6 ,, 25/-	April, 1923 ..	39/- ,, 44/-
January, 1922 ..	24/6 ,, 27/-	May, 1923 ..	40/- ,, 42/6
July, 1922 ..	24/6 ,, 30/-	June, 1923 ..	40/- ,, 30/-
December, 1922 ..	25/6 ,, 29/6		

Since January, 1922, a steady increase in prices has taken place. This increase was occasioned by the continental demand due to the Ruhr affair; but as the Ruhr coal mines are resuming production, the prices and orders in the country are decreasing. The depression is about to manifest itself again unmitigated by cross tendencies or neutralising factors.

We have not here dealt with the effects of the increasing use of oil fuel upon the mining industry.

There are two conclusions to be drawn from this short survey. First, that international competition is fast driving out of production those mines which are not geologically well placed and scientifically worked; and that this country suffers as much in this respect, if not more, as other countries.

Secondly, that this competitive struggle decreases prices and rate of profit, until we find that the country whose mines are badly placed will lose markets and go out of production, whilst a general attempt will continually be made to keep the miners' wages below the average for the country, so that the profit may approximate to the average for the country. The mechanical limits of capitalism in the British coal-fields are fast being reached.

Since the early part of 1919, the Executive Council of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain has continuously mismanaged and misdirected the power of that organisation. No executive has so defied the instructions of its rank and file as the executive of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain during the last few years, since the Hodgean star became dominant.

The acceptance of the Sankey Commission was a direct betrayal of the rank and file who had voted for a stoppage by a five to one majority. Again, in the struggle of 1921 over the National Pool, the Executive Council went behind the back of the rank and file, abandoned the Pool, and concluded the struggle with the National Agreement. This after ten weeks of a grim struggle with starvation on the part of the miners. On June 17, 1921, the result of the ballot on the acceptance of the coal-owners' offer and the abandoning of the principle of the National Pool became known. The overwhelming decision to fight on for the Pool was staggering even to the most optimistic of the "left" element. *Seven days* afterwards the Executive Council decided to meet the Government and owners to effect a wages settlement and abandon the instructions of the rank and file. On June 26, Mr. Frank Hodges and Herbert Smith were at "Chequers" discussing terms with Lloyd George! By Tuesday, June 28, the Executive Council had decided to recommend the National Agreement to the members, an agreement which contradicted every principle and mandate decided upon by ballot votes of the members. It would be superfluous to outline here how that agreement was thrust upon the rank and file without a ballot, or to describe the "brilliancy" of Mr. Hodges' betrayal tactics in the Black Friday incidents.

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For all this Mr. Hodges has defended himself. In a reply to his critics he stated: "Leadership, now born of desperation, asserts itself. Suffering now breaks down the democratic formula that the rank and file must lead the leaders," and this was a few days after his fighting speech which commenced with the rhetorical "Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh" phrase. Hodges likes his own benevolent autocracy and dissembles his love like a Don Juan. Herbert Smith has delivered himself of similar "betrayal" effusions, the both of them regretting that they had not defied the rank and file earlier in the stoppage!

The existence of the miners under this agreement has been one of prolonged starvation. Lone districts, especially the most advanced, have suffered much greater privation than others. Unemployment has been rampant and the organisation was broken. The men returned to work in front of the lash of the tongues of their own leaders. Complete demoralisation set in, and for a time no healthy criticism of the agreement was forthcoming. The rebel element was too much concerned with the way the agreement came. They considered that their conditions were due to the progress of the Hodgean policy, a policy which has been marked with failure upon failure. The Sankey Commission, Black Friday, the National Agreement, Hodges' concealment of the German miners' appeal for help, the conscience money in reply to the American miners' appeal, and the continued defying of the miners' demand for the abolition of the National Agreement have all had the sponsorship of Hodges.

This struggle over the National Agreement now holds the field. This agreement guarantees the standard profits for the owners. The industry has not that risk for the owner which the old economists argued was the factor for which the capitalist receives a high rate of profit, equal to 17 per cent. of the wages paid to the employees.

On the other hand, the miners' return is a low one. His risk is great and his labour greater still. With the cost of living where it is, the miners have lost 20 per cent. of their 1914 standard of living. This cannot be reclaimed as the owners' losses can.

The term "costs" in the agreement covers a wide field of expenditure—directors' fees, extension of the industry, managers'

fees and houses, compensation costs and charges, litigation fees in fighting the workmen, and a host of other "small details." This clause in the agreement allows the owners to obtain "extra income" in a multitude of ways. The rank and file are extremely suspicious of this clause. It allows the value of the industry to be enormously increased, upon which bonus shares can be issued to the shareholders. . . . The inclusion of compensation charges in this term enables the owners to contest every claim in the law courts, and in this way to keep the workmen's organisation financially weak. Every miners' district, without exception, is being crippled because the owners' expenses are being borne by the industry, whilst the workmen's expenses come out of the union funds.

Local leaders are told that they should help reduce the "costs" of the industry so as to leave a greater portion of the "proceeds" for division among the workmen (83 per cent.) and the owners (17 per cent.). The introduction of machinery, the dismissing of surplus labour, the return to "eight hours," the introduction of a Sunday shift, speeding up, abolition of old customs—all these tactics we are told are in the interests of the miners under the present agreement! This would give us increased wages!!

Mr. Hodges has described the agreement as the "greatest wage-producing principle ever introduced into this country." During a boom period, when a record output has been obtained, the wages of the miner only permit a standard of living forty points below that of 1914. Forty thousand workmen in South Wales were going home from January, 1922, to June, 1923, with £2 or less per week. Other coalfields have suffered in a similar fashion. Mr. Hodges himself has said that some coalfields in this country were famine areas.

But the greatest blunder of all was the formation of District Wages Boards, which determined the wages for each coal field. This made the Miners' Federation of Great Britain into a formal organisation with no power in actuality. Each coal field has its own, but a different, wages problem, whilst one or two coal fields are satisfied with the wages they obtain. The result is that miners' national action is most difficult to obtain, and a set of conditions

exists which allows the reactionary leaders to play one coal field off against the other.

Generally speaking, conditions have been intolerable, and a movement has started to end the agreement. *When miners, who have not enough wages to buy food, are told that they owe the coal owners four, five, or nine weeks' wages they begin to think and talk.* (This has been the case under this agreement in more than one coal field.)

An expression of this desire to end the agreement was manifested in a Miners' Federation of Great Britain conference in July, 1922. South Wales moved to end the agreement. Hodges was the chief spokesman against this, and on his suggestion it was carried that the new Executive Council should consider the matter and report to a later conference. On December 21, 1922, the conference was called to hear the Executive Council's report. At this time South Wales was joined by Lancashire, who also had had enough of the agreement. The Executive Council now recommended that they should interview the owners and the Government, Hodges again leading the attack on the "agreement ends." Action was again postponed. The Executive Council met Mr. Bonar Law and the owners and all they had was a threat to further reduce wages and increase the hours of labour.

A conference was then called on March 27, 1923. By this time the wages in all the districts had decreased, most of them being down to the minimum. Hodges was busy making speeches, advising the men not to strike to end the agreement. At this conference again he was the champion of reaction and peace-at-any-price, carrying out his word to the public that he would not do anything to hamper our reviving trade. The fight between Hodges and the left elements became more intense. He prophesied increased wages as a result of the boom if the districts would wait for the April and May ascertainment, and it was this prospective increase he dangled before the eyes of the conference to get it to postpone action. Again his policy carried, and the Executive Council's recommendation defeated the Lancashire amendment to end the agreement by 438,000 votes to 305,000. The recommendation, which was carried, instructed the Executive Council to interview the owners again, and to attempt to get the Minimum

Wage Act amended so as to provide a living wage for the miner. All this was an excuse for postponing action, in the hope that by the time the next conference was held wages would have risen in the districts and the need for action disappeared.

The owners refused to concede the Executive Council's application and the Parliamentary Labour Party had not been able to obtain facilities for bringing in the Bill. The next conference was announced for May 30, and a few days before the 30th it was made public that W. Adamson had received facilities for "bringing in" his Bill. Here was another excuse for postponing action, although the Executive Council must have known that the Labour members were insufficient to carry the Bill. Again Hodges begged that the Parliamentary Labour Party should have their chance. The conference split up into coal field group meetings. On the advice of the leaders these groups defied their mandates and postponed action. Since then the Bill has been rejected in the House of Commons. One hoped that the last card in the hands of the Hodgean group had been played, and that now the autocrats would have to carry out the instructions of the rank and file. But treachery knows no limits, and it appears that despite a majority mandate the Hodgeans will attempt to prevent the abolition of the agreement during next week. (This is being written on July 8.) The writer of Trade Union Notes in the *Daily Herald* writes : "The time has now arrived to make a decision, but, notwithstanding the strong majority for the ending of the agreement at the last special conference, I believe the miners will decide to give it a little further trial." The rank and file have given a mandate to end the agreement; only cowardice and treachery can nullify it. The Hodgeans are looking for satisfaction inside the limits of capitalist enterprise. Satisfaction for the miners cannot be achieved inside these limits. Some time the miners will be compelled to surge up against and over these limits. Hodges and his clique seek to postpone that day ; to that extent are they the most treacherous traitors inside the Miners' Federation of Great Britain.

THESES ON INDUSTRY

II

By L. TROTZKY

(Conclusion of report presented to the Twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party in Moscow last April and unanimously adopted)

§ 5.—*Industry and Trade*

Without a properly organised sale, increased production will again lead to partial gluts, *i.e.*, to *crises of trading helplessness*, which cannot be justified even by the extremely limited market of the present day. The perfection of the lowest links of the trading apparatus, even though only capable of insuring the smallest number of genuine connections between industry and the peasant market, is of paramount importance. The formation of syndicates in the near future should be conducted with the greatest circumspection and with due consideration to the state of the market and the resources of the trusts. The transformation of the syndicates into trading “chief committees” would only obstruct trading activity and swell the burden of additional expenses. Compulsory syndication must be economically prepared for and commercially justified.

The increased operative independence of the trusts and separate enterprises, the more flexible activity of the syndicates, and the whole position of our industry in general require an incomparably greater co-ordination as to the relations between the purely productive and the purely commercial spheres of activity. This applies both to home and to foreign trade. Without predetermining the forms of organisation that this co-ordination will take, it ought to be already established that the systematic study of the experience which is accumulating in this sphere and the elaboration of practical methods of co-ordinating industrial and commercial activity constitute a vital problem, the solution of which is possible only through the combined efforts of the Supreme Council of People's Economy, the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade, the Commissariat of International Trade, and with the active participation of the State Planning Commission under the general guidance of the Council of Labour and Defence.

§ 6.—*The Factory*

The root of success or failure in production is to be found in the basic industrial unit, *i.e.*, in the factory or mill. The question, therefore, of properly organising each separate enterprise, and that not only from the technical-productive, but also from the commercial point of view, is of decisive importance.

While retaining the general guidance of the enterprise in its hands and centralising those productive and commercial branches and operations which are ripe for it, the trust must at the same time avoid by all manner of means that sort of centralisation which strangles, which extinguishes initiative, and it must avoid mechanical invasions into the work of its enterprises.

The independent accounts of each factory must not only provide the means of determining its profits and its growth or decline, but must also serve as the general basis of a premium system strictly adjusted to the peculiarities of the enterprise.

§ 7.—*Calculation, Balance, and Control*

Under present conditions material results form the only serious and reliable empirical verification of whether mutual relations between the enterprises, the trusts, and the State are satisfactory, as well as providing the sole test of the success or otherwise of our methods of economic management as a whole. Only from the careful tabulation of *balance sheets* can we judge our commercial position, for without a system of correct book-keeping which embraces State economy from top to bottom, without scientific accounts to show the real cost of the products of State industry, there is no guarantee against the gradual dissipation or dilapidation of nationalised property, and the trusts in this case might but serve as channels for pumping over State property into private hands.

To work out methods of uniform book-keeping, to see to it that it be really carried out and made more and more accurate, all this must constitute one of the most important problems of the leading economic establishments in general and of the State Planning Commission in particular, this work having for its aim the attaining of *a single real balance* from which can be estimated the position of State industry, and, later on, of the whole State economy in general.

The Council of Labour and Defence must organise a State audit of commercial and industrial accounts and balance sheets. The absence of a competent and skilled control on such lines makes all other kinds of economic inspection useless, and spreads a sense of irresponsibility incompatible with a properly organised economy.

§ 8.—*Wages*

The system of wages adopted during the period that has just expired has on the whole confirmed the soundness of the decisions of the eleventh Party Congress and the fifth Trade Union Congress, as well as that of the conclusion of collective agreements between the trade unions and economic organisations.

During the year just elapsed a considerable increase of wages for all categories of workers can be recorded, and this has resulted in a considerable increase of the productivity of labour.

The general wages policy must for the future be directed towards a greater or smaller levelling up of the average wage in all branches of production with the necessary modifications on the basis of the average skill in such a manner that workers of similar or equivalent skill should be drawing approximately equal remuneration in different branches of industry, and as far as possible independent of the fluctuations of the market ; at the same time the individual wage in reality should be proportional to the actual output. The corresponding State organs must, hand-in-hand with the trade unions, direct their efforts towards coming to a more favourable agreement in a given branch of industry which will serve the interests of the workers not only of this or that branch, but also those of the working class as a whole, by increasing the earnings in the backward branches and, above all, in the heavy industry and transport.

While striving in every way to improve the condition of the working class, the State organs and the trade unions must at the same time remember that a continuous and all-embracing improvement is possible only on the basis of their own development as a profit-bearing industry. From this point of view measures which retain poorly-furnished enterprises in operation, or employ in a mill a number of workers not proportionate to the actual productivity of the enterprise, constitute the most expensive and irrational

form of social insurance, and are therefore against the interests of the future of the working class.

The burdening of industrial enterprises with all sorts of additional expenses neither necessitated by production itself nor provided for by law are highly detrimental to the enterprises in question and to the State, however important the purpose for which they are incurred, for they undermine the possibility of an accurate mode of calculation and impose upon the State in a semi-disguised manner an expenditure which under the present conditions it is beyond its strength to bear. Arbitrary donations on the part of the trusts, *i.e.*, donations unauthorised and unregulated by the State, are nothing but a dissipation of State property, and as such must be punished by law.

It is necessary to undertake a close inquiry into the practical application under present conditions of the Labour Code and, in general, of all the statutes on labour power, wages, length of the working day for different categories, deductions for social insurance, cultural and educational needs, &c., &c., with a view, on the one hand, to satisfying the interests of the workers in the highest degree that is compatible with the present state of industry and, on the other hand, to setting aside or altering for the time being statutes which are manifestly unrealisable in existing circumstances. Industrial managers and trade unionists must co-operate in collecting, in the most objective manner, closely examined and well-sifted facts which would serve as a basis for the above-mentioned legislative alterations or administrative measures.

§ 9.—*Finance, Credit, Custom Duties*

A necessary condition for the restoration and development of industry, especially of heavy industry, is the proper drawing up of the State Budget in the sense of bringing it into close correspondence with the real State resources and with their expenditure according to plan.

It is necessary to do away completely with that greatest of evils—forced upon us, it is true, to a considerable extent by objective conditions—namely, the lack of unity and the discrepancy between our productive schemes and those resources which were at our disposal for their realisation. This sort of scheming inevitably spelt

chaos—industrial and financial—and badly shook the stability of the most important economic establishments.

Exactly the same consequences resulted from the practice of requisitioning the products of industry (chiefly of the mechanical, metallurgical, and fuel industries) by the State—chiefly for the benefit of the military and the transport departments either without any payment at all or else at arbitrary prices which did not cover the cost of those products.

Should future discrepancies crop up between the incoming revenues and the estimated allocations, and should a necessity of curtailing expenditure result therefrom, the reductions should be effected not under some mask or other, but openly, by way of reconstructing the Budget and reducing allowances for transport and industrial enterprises, the army, &c., always according to a definite plan.

The system of providing industrial credit constitutes not only a financial or banking problem, but the most important part of activity in the business of organising and guiding industry. It is necessary, therefore, that the business of financing the State industry should be as far as possible concentrated in one credit establishment which should be very closely connected with the Supreme Council of People's Economy.

The imposition of taxes and excise duties, in strict conformity to the ability of industry to pay and the capacity of the market, must be closely studied, while the effect which higher or lower duties on different imported articles may have on corresponding branches of home industry (from the point of view of protecting them) ought to be carefully considered.

Purchases and orders from abroad, even at prices which are lower than in the home market, must be unhesitatingly pushed aside in all those cases in which they are not absolutely necessary, for the placing of the order inside the country may serve as a considerable spur to the development of the corresponding branch of our State industry.

It is only a system of Socialist protectionism carried out in a consistent and determined manner that can insure at the present transitional period a real development of industry in our Soviet State, surrounded as it is by a capitalist world.

§ 10.—*Foreign Capital*

The experience of the past year has confirmed the fact that the process of State Socialist construction under the new economic policy is quite compatible (within certain by no means narrow limits) with the active participation of private—foreign as well as home—capital in the sphere of industry. Further systematic measures are necessary in order to attract foreign capital to industry in all those forms the expedience of which has already manifested itself up till now : concessions, mixed companies, leasing. A careful study of which domains of industry and which enterprises can be left to foreign capital and on what principles, with advantage to the general economic development of the country, is essential in the formulation of future plans by our leading economic organisations.

§ 11.—*Managers, their Position and Problems ; the Education of a New Generation of Technicians and Managers*

The mutual relations between trade unions and administrative bodies defined by the resolutions of the eleventh Congress of the Party, the correctness of which is confirmed by the experience of last year, must continue to be developed and strengthened in the spirit of those resolutions.

The system of real unity of power must be carried through in the organisation of industry from top to bottom. The selection of workers and their transference or dismissal constitute in the hands of the leading administrative organs a necessary condition for the real guiding of industry and for enabling them to bear the responsibility for its fate. The recommendations and attestations of the trade unions must be fully and sympathetically taken into consideration, but they should under no circumstances release the corresponding administrative organs from their responsibility, as the existing statutes leave to the latter full freedom of selection and appointment.

Heaviness, immobility, lack of enterprising spirit form the weak side of the State industry and trade. The reason for it lies in the fact that the managing staffs are as yet very far from being the best fitted for their jobs, that they lack experience, and are not sufficiently interested in the progress of their own work. It is

necessary to take regular and systematic measures towards improvement in all these directions. In particular, the remuneration of the managers of enterprises should be made to depend upon the credit or debit balance, as wages do upon output.

The work of leading administrative workers (trade-corporation controllers, directors of mills and factories, chairmen and members of the boards of trusts), in so far as their task consists in lowering the expenses of production and in extracting profit, is beset with extremely great difficulties frequently resulting in conflicts, dismissals, and transferences. Two dangers always confront an administrator : (a) that his strict demands will stir up against him the workers of the enterprise and their representative organs or the local Party and Soviet establishments ; (b) that following the line of least resistance in questions of the productivity of labour, wages, &c., he will endanger the lucrateness, and therefore the future, of the enterprise. It goes without saying that a director of a Soviet factory must take into the most sympathetic consideration the material and spiritual interests of the workers, their feelings and frame of mind. But at the same time he must never forget that his highest duty to the working class as a whole consists in raising the productivity of labour, in lowering the costs of production, and in increasing the quantity of material products at the disposal of the working-class State. It is the duty of the Party and of trade-union workers to give the Soviet director their whole-hearted support in this respect. Attention, perseverance, and economy are the necessary qualities of a Soviet administrative worker. His highest testimonial is to run the enterprise on a basis of soundly-balanced accounts.

It must be made plain to the mass of the workers that a director striving to make the enterprise profitable serves the interests of the working class just as much as a trade-union worker who strives to raise the workman's standard of living and to safeguard his health.

The preparation of new administrative workers must assume a systematic and, at the same time, a highly specialised character. Summary methods, as when instruction was taken in in a hurry by merely watching others at their duties, must be replaced by systematic training according to an exact plan, coupled with a

definite period of experience. Workers placed at their posts in the first period and who have not yet had time to acquire the necessary knowledge must be given the opportunity of filling the more serious gaps.

Specialisation in different kinds of practical activity, however, ought to be closely connected with a raising of the theoretical and political level and with a closer contact with the Party ; otherwise specialisation might prove injurious to the Party as a superficial knowledge of everything is detrimental to any economic enterprise.

The Party and the trade unions must pay the most serious attention to the question of increasing the number of working-men managers of industry and especially of Communists in managerial posts at all the stages in the economic hierarchy.

Technical training ought to be for the new generation not only a question of specialisation but also one of a revolutionary duty. Under the conditions of a workers' State all the enthusiasm of the young working men which formerly used to be devoted to the revolutionary political struggle should now be directed towards the mastering of science and technical subjects. It is necessary that a student who neglects his studies should be treated in the same way as a deserter or blackleg was treated in the struggle against the bourgeoisie. The organisation of a Socialist economy is for the proletarian vanguard not a method of obtaining a career, but an heroic action.

§ 12.—*Party Institutions and Economic Institutions*

Without for one single moment forgetting its permanent revolutionary educational problems the Party must clearly realise that at the present constructive-economic period of the revolution its most fundamental work lies in guiding economic activity in the basic points of the Soviet process of construction. The Party will accomplish its historic mission only if the economic experience of the whole Party grows together with the growth in size and complexity of the economic problems which the Soviet power has to face.

Therefore the twelfth Congress is of the opinion that not only a proper distribution of workers, but also the function of supervising every important branch of economic administration must

be considered by the Party as its bounden duty, especially in view of the new economic policy, which creates the danger of degeneration for a part of the managing staffs and of perverting the proletarian line of policy in the process of economic reconstruction. Under no circumstances whatever should this guidance turn, in practice and as a matter of course, into frequent dismissals or transference of managers, into a meddling in the current every-day work of the administration, or into attempts at their direction.

Directions with regard to concrete questions imposed by Party organisations upon administrative machinery are inevitable and indispensable under existing conditions, but it is necessary constantly to strive that such guidance should bear the stamp of a broad plan, which would eventually lead to an actual diminution of the number of cases where there would be any necessity for direct administrative interference in independent or specialised questions of current practice.

The more regularly the administrative and economic work of the State itself proceeds in the execution of the plans brought forward by the Party, the more completely the leadership of the Party will be safeguarded.

The twelfth Congress confirms the resolutions of the eleventh with regard to the necessity for a division of labour and a delimitation of the work in the economic sphere as between the Party and the Soviets, in particular, and insists that this resolution be carried out more completely and systematically both in the centre and locally. The twelfth Congress especially calls to mind that in accordance with the resolution of the eleventh Congress, the Party organisations "solve economic questions independently only in those cases and in so far as the questions imperatively demand a solution according to Party principles."

One of the important problems before the Party is to give its support to an arrangement under which competent economic organisations would have not only a formal right, but a practical opportunity of gradually educating administrative workers and providing for their regular advancement in proportion as they gain in experience and develop their qualities.

This is only possible if workers are systematically selected according to their economic experience both in business and in

skilled trades, and also if inside economic institutions the principles of discipline and of a corresponding system of co-ordination and subordination among the separate branches of the work and among the workers at the head of these branches are observed.

But in view of the particularly important and responsible work with which the administrative workers are charged at the present moment, the Party as a whole and all its organisations must give them the most hearty support, and systematically take care to create such an atmosphere as would exclude the possibility of groups of administrative workers breaking away from the Party.

§ 13.—*The Printing Trade*

The question of putting the printing trade on a sound basis is not only of economic but also of immense cultural importance.

The Congress recognises the present state of the printing trade as unsatisfactory and considers it necessary to take decisive measures to improve it.

It is necessary first of all to raise the technique of those publications which are meant for a mass sale. The question of the organisation of the typographical trades must be solved as early as possible, and in such a way that the biggest and most important State publishing establishments should be able to put their work on a broad, regular, and technically satisfactory basis.

(The opening portion of the above report was published in the July issue of THE LABOUR MONTHLY, which can be obtained through any newsagent or for 8d. post free direct from the Publisher of THE LABOUR MONTHLY at 162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W. 1.)

FURTHER SELECTIONS *from the* LITERARY REMAINS OF KARL MARX

Translated and Annotated by MAX BEER

V

TAXATION REFORM AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION

EMILE DE GIRARDIN, a noted French publicist and Radical social reformer in the 'forties and 'fifties of the last century, published at Paris in 1850, during the revival of Socialist and Communist agitation, a book, *Le socialisme et l'impôt*, in which he recommended taxation and budget reform as the best means of realising socialism without the social revolution. His plan was to abolish all taxes and to introduce instead national compulsory insurance of all movable and immovable property. France was to be turned into a mutual insurance society in which everybody would insure his property against all sorts of business losses, failures, strikes, upheavals, &c. The whole insurance business to be managed by the State, which would draw its income from the premiums; a secondary source of income would be the conversion of nearly all penalties, imposed by the courts of justice upon guilty offenders, into fines. The premium rate to be equal for all sorts of property, no matter what income they might bring. Such a reform would give security of property, form an incentive to the most profitable employment of capital, facilitate credit, promote solidarity among all citizens, and lead to honesty in dealing, for the insurance policy would show at once with whom one had to do.

Marx, in his *Neue Rheinische Revue*, which he edited from London in 1850, reviews the book at some length, arguing that all advantages which Girardin looked for from his taxation reform scheme would not lead to social peace, but to a higher development of capitalism in France and to conditions similar to those that prevailed in Great Britain.

We take from Marx's review the following pertinent observations:—

“ There are two sorts of socialism, the ‘good’ socialism and the ‘bad’ one: the bad socialism, that is ‘the war of Labour against Capital,’ and it is surrounded by all the scare crows, such as equal sharing-out of property, community of wives, organised plunder, &c.; the good socialism, that is ‘peace and goodwill between Labour and Capital,’ and its attendants are—removal of

ignorance, abolition of poverty, reorganisation of the credit system, broadening the basis of property, taxation reform, in short, as M. de Girardin says, 'an order of society which most approaches the idea of the Kingdom of God on earth. . . .' One ought to make use, then, of the good socialism in order to crowd out the bad one. 'Socialism,' says M. de Girardin, 'has a mighty lever, which is the budget. But it lacked a fulcrum to take the world off its hinges. This fulcrum the revolution of February, 1848, has been found in universal suffrage.' The source of the budget is taxation. The effect of universal suffrage on the budget is thus supposed to have its effect on taxation. And through that effect on taxation the good socialism will come. . . .

"Taxation reform, the hobby of all Radicals, has for its objects (i) either the abolition of traditional, obsolete taxes that impede trade; (ii) or cheaper government; (iii) or a more equitable distribution. The more zeal the middle-class reformer develops in the pursuit of his chimerical ideal of a just incidence of taxation the more it eludes his grasp in practice.

"Taxation can only modify some secondary effects of the conditions of distribution which spring directly from the capitalist production, that is, the ratio between profit and wages, profit and interest, profit and rent, but it can never attack them at their basis. All disquisitions and debates concerning taxation presuppose the permanent existence of the capitalist order. Moreover, the abolition of all taxes, far from establishing socialism, could but result in accelerating the development of bourgeois property and its inherent contradictions. Taxation may favour certain classes and oppress others, as we see this, for instance, under the regime of the financial oligarchy. It can ruin the intermediary strata that are placed between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, since their position does not allow them to shift the burden to the other classes. The proletariat is driven down a degree lower through every new tax; the abolition of an old tax does not result in raising the rate of wages, but that of profit. During a revolution, taxes may be swelled to colossal proportions in order to use them as a lever for attacking private property, but even then they will progressively drive on to new revolutionary measures, or ultimately lead us back to the old conditions of bourgeois property.

“Reduction of taxation, a more equitable incidence of taxation, that is the demand of the commonplace middle-class reformer. The abolition of taxation, that is the socialism of the Radical reformer. This Radical socialism appeals particularly to the industrial and commercial class and to the peasantry. . . . Behind the demand for the abolition of taxation lurks the demand for the abolition of the State. But the abolition of the State is only logical with the Communists as the inevitable result of the abolition of the classes, for only then will there be no need for an organised power of one class to keep down the other.”¹

VI

POST-RICARDIAN SOCIAL CRITICISM

In 1907-1910, Karl Kautsky edited in four volumes a bundle of manuscripts left by Marx on various theories concerning surplus-value. They were written in 1862-1863, but were not made ready for the press owing to his work in the International. They deal among others with Petty, Dudley North, Locke, Hume, James Stewart, the Physiocrats (French and English), Adam Smith and his school, Ricardo and his school, Malthus, Sismondi, Ravenstone, Hodgskin, Cherbuliez, Richard Jones. The following extract is taken from a chapter on the transition from Ricardo to social criticism.

“The disquisition on the Ricardian school shows how it reduces itself to two points:—

“(i) Exchange between Capital and Labour in conformity with the law of surplus-value.

“(ii) Formation of a general profit rate; identification of surplus value and profit; not understood relation between value and price of production.

“In the Ricardian period of Political Economy there arises the opposition to it, namely, Communism (Owen) and Socialism (Fourier and Saint-Simon). The latter are still in their swaddling clothes. According to our plan of work we have to deal only with the opposition which springs from the propositions of the economists. . . .

“In the same measure as Political Economy grew into a science—and this growth, as far as its principles are concerned, finds its clearest expression in Ricardo—it came to regard Labour as the

¹ *Aus dem literarischen nachlass von Marx und Engels* (edited by Mehring), Vol. III, pp. 434-442.

only element of value and the only creator of use-value, and the growth of the productive forces of labour as the only means of a real increase of wealth; the greatest possible development of the productive forces of labour as the economic basis of society. This is indeed the basis of capitalist production. Ricardo's book, by demonstrating the force of the law of value in relation to rent, capitalist accumulation, &c., is really devoted to the removal of all contradictions, or to an elucidation of all phenomena which appear as contradiction to the law of value. But in the same measure as labour comes to be regarded as the only source of exchange value and the active agent of use value, the economists, and particularly Ricardo (and more so Torrens, Malthus, Bailey, &c.), make 'capital' the regulator of production, while labour is in their eyes merely wage-labour, the agent and instrument of which is necessarily a pauper; and this conception is reinforced by the population theory of Malthus. The labourer is but one of the items in the cost of production, whose existence depends on a minimum wage, and who may even sink below the minimum as soon as, from the point of view of capital, he appears as a 'redundant' mass.

"In this contradiction, Political Economy merely expresses the essence of capitalist production or, if you like, of wage-labour—of labour which disowns its own creation, which looks upon the wealth it produces as the wealth of others, which regards its own productive capacity as that of the product (capital), and its own social power as the power of society.

"And this specific, historical, transient form of social labour the economists regard as the general and only form, as something inevitable; and those conditions of production they pronounce to be the absolutely (not historically) necessary—the natural and reasonable conditions of the productive work of society.

"Hopelessly closed in by the horizon of capitalist production, the economists declare the antagonistic form in which the productive work of society appears to-day to be as necessary as social productive service itself when freed from all antagonism. By declaring, on the one hand, *labour* to be absolute, because they identify wage-labour with social labour, and on the other hand, *capital* to be absolute, that is, by pronouncing in the same breath the poverty

of labour and the wealth of non-labour as the only source of wealth, they are permanently entangled in absolute contradictions, without having the slightest idea of it. Sismondi, by getting an inkling of it, is epoch-making in the history of political economy.

“However, it was inevitable that the same real evolution, to which the economists gave theoretical expression, would likewise bring the real antagonistic forces to the surface, particularly through the contrast between the growing wealth of the ‘nation’ and the growing misery of the workers. And as, furthermore, these contradictions found in Ricardo’s work a theoretically striking, though unconscious, expression it was but natural that the intellects who took the side of the proletariat would get hold of the contradiction which theory had prepared for them. You say, the latter argued with the economists, that labour is the only source of exchange value and the only active creator of use value, and yet you say, too, that capital is everything and labour nothing or merely a part of the cost of production. You have contradicted yourselves. Capital is nothing but robbery of labour. *Labour is everything.*”

“This is indeed the last word of all those writings which defend the interests of labour from the standpoint of Ricardo’s theories. But as little as Ricardo understood the meaning of his identification of capital and labour do those proletarian defenders understand the contradiction which they point out; therefore it happens that the most prominent among them, such as Hodgskin, for instance, accept all prerequisites of capitalist production as eternal forms and but desire to eliminate capital, at once the basis and the necessary consequence.”²

VII

ENGLAND AND MATERIALIST PHILOSOPHY

In 1844, Marx wrote “The Holy Family,” a collection of essays directed against his friend Dr. Bruno Bauer, a university lecturer and Liberal theologian (one of the pioneers of higher criticism); the latter edited the *Kritische Literaturzeitung*, in which he gave a superficial view of French materialism, at the same time adversely criticising French Socialism. Marx, on the other hand, gave an analysis of the rôle of Descartes and Bayle, showing

² Karl Marx, *Theorien über Mehrwert*, Stuttgart, 1910. Vol. III, pp. 280, 281, 307-309.

how French materialism arose from the physics of Descartes and the theory of knowledge of John Locke; further, how the deductions from the latter were made the basis of Utopian Socialism. The essay of Marx on those problems is too long and in some parts too concentrated to be reproduced here, but we give the salient points as a specimen of his philosophic mastery. It must be remembered that Marx wrote this essay at a time when his own views of Communism were still in the process of formation.

“ French materialism of the eighteenth century exhibits two currents, one having its origin in Descartes, the other in Locke. The latter exercised a dominating influence on the French mind and led directly to socialism. The former, the mechanical materialism, dominated French science. Both currents crossed in their courses. . . . Descartes, in his physics, endowed matter with creative power and conceived mechanical motion as its manifestation of life. He completely severed his physics from his metaphysics. Within his physics, matter is the only substance, the only reason of its existence and cognition. The French mechanical materialism adopted the physics of Descartes and rejected his metaphysics. His disciples were anti-metaphysicians by profession, namely, physicians. This school begins with the physician Leroy, reaches its culmination with the physician Cabanis, while the physician Lamettrie was its centre. . . . But the man who destroyed the credit of the metaphysics of the seventeenth century was Pierre Bayle. The negative refutation of theology and metaphysics, however, sharpened the desire for a positive, anti-metaphysical system. And it was Locke who supplied it. His *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* came in the nick of time for the other side of the Channel. It was enthusiastically acclaimed as a long-expected guest.

“ Materialism is the born son of Britain. Even one of his great schoolmen, Duns Scotus, asked himself ‘ whether matter cannot think.’ In performing this wonder, Duns had recourse to God’s omnipotence, that is, he made theology itself preach materialism. He was, moreover, Nominalist. Nominalism is one of the main elements of the English materialists, as it is indeed the first expression of materialism in Christian Europe.

“ The real progenitor of English materialism is Francis Bacon. Natural science is to him the true science, and sensuous physics the foremost part of science. Anaxagoras with his ‘ homoimeries ’

and Democritus with his atoms are often his authorities. According to Bacon the senses are unerring and the source of all knowledge. Science is experimental and consists in the application of a rational method to sensuous data. Observation, experiment, induction, analysis, are the main conditions of a rational method. Of the qualities inherent in matter the foremost is motion, not only as mechanical and mathematical motion, but more as impulse, vital force, tension, or as Jacob Boehme said, pain of matter. The primitive forms of the latter are living, individualising, inherent, and essential forces, which produce specific variations.

“With Bacon as its pioneer, materialism contains in a naïve manner the germs of universal development. Matter is still smiling upon us in its poetic-sensuous charm. The aphoristic doctrine, on the other hand, teems with theological inconsistencies.

“In its further development, materialism becomes one-sided. Hobbes is the systematiser of Baconian materialism. Sensuousness loses its bloom and is turned into the abstract sensuousness of geometry. The physical motion is sacrificed to the mechanical and mathematical one. Geometry is proclaimed the cardinal science. . . . Materialism is rationalised, and it develops also the ruthless logicity of reason. Hobbes, starting from Bacon, argues that if all knowledge is supplied by the senses, then . . . only the corporeal is perceptible and knowable, therefore we can know nothing of the existence of God. Only my own existence is certain. . . . Hobbes systematised Bacon, but did not establish the main principle, the origin of the ideas and knowledge of the sensuous world.

“It was Locke who accomplished that work in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.

“If Hobbes removed the theistic prejudices from Baconian materialism, Collins, Toland, Coward, Hartley, Priestley, &c., broke down the last theological barrier of Locke’s sensualism. Theism is, for those materialists, merely a comfortable, lackadaisical way to get rid of religion. . . .

“The direct French disciple and interpreter of Locke was Condillac, who pitted Locke’s sensualism against the metaphysics of the seventeenth century. He published a refutation of the system of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, and Malebranche. In his

Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines he follows up the ideas of Locke and argues that not only the mind, but also the senses, not only the capacity for forming ideas, but also the capacity for sensuous perception, are a matter of experience and habit. On education and external circumstances depends the whole development of man.

“ The difference between French and English materialism is the difference between the two nationalities. The French endowed English materialism with *esprit* and eloquence, with flesh and blood, with temperament and grace.

“ In Helvetius, who likewise starts from Locke, materialism receives its proper French character. He envisages it in relation to social life. The sensuous qualities and self-love, enjoyment, and the well-understood personal interest are made into the foundations of morality. The natural equality of the human intelligence, the harmony between the progress of reason and the progress of manufactures, the natural goodness of man, the omnipotence of education, are the main points of his system. . . .

“ It needs no special ingenuity to discover in the doctrines of materialism (concerning the natural goodness and the equal mental endowments of man, the omnipotence of experience, habit, and education, the influence of external circumstances on man, the great importance of manufactures, the legitimacy of enjoyment) the necessary connection with Communism and Socialism. If man receives from the external world and from his experience in the external world all his feelings, ideas, &c., then it is evidently our business to reorganise the empirical world in such a manner that man should only experience the really humane and acquire the habit of it. If the well-understood personal interest is the principle of all morality, then we must arrange society in such a manner as to make private interest fit in with social interest. If man is subject to the same laws as Nature: if man is not free in a materialistic sense, that is, he is not free to do this or to avoid that, but that he is only free to assert his true individuality, then there is no sense in punishing the criminal, but we must rather destroy the anti-social breeding-places of vice and to allow to everybody social scope for his activities. If man is formed by circumstances, then we must humanise the circumstances. If man is social by nature,

then man develops his true nature in society only, and we must not measure the power of his nature by the power of a single individual, by the power of society.

“ These and similar views we find even literally in the works of the older French materialists. It is not the proper place here to sit in judgment upon them. Characteristic of the social-critical tendency of materialism is Mandeville’s apology of vice. Mandeville, one of the earlier followers of Locke, demonstrates that in the present-day society vice is indispensable and useful. This was by no means an apology for present-day society.

“ Fourier starts directly from the doctrines of French materialism. The Babouvistes were raw, uncivilised materialists,³ but also the more advanced Communism is based on French materialism. The latter, in the French garb, returned to its native country. Godwin and Bentham established their systems on the ethical philosophy of Helvetius, and Owen took it from Bentham and based upon it English Communism. Etienne Corbet, banished to England, brought those ideas back to France and became here the most commonplace representative of Communism. But also the more advanced of French Communists, such as Dezamy, Gay, &c., developed, like Robert Owen, the materialist doctrine into real humanism and the logical basis of Communism.”⁴

(The first four sections of Max Beer’s annotated selections from Karl Marx’s literary remains appeared in the last issue of THE LABOUR MONTHLY (Vol. V, No. 1, July, 1923), which can be ordered through any newsagent, or obtained for 8d. post free direct from the Publisher of THE LABOUR MONTHLY, at 162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.)

³ This severe view was probably evinced before Marx had read Buonarotti. He generalised individual opinions of some Babouvistes against the arts and enjoyments of life.—M. B.

⁴ *Aus dem Nachlass von Marx und Engels*, Vol. II, pp. 225-240.

The World of Labour

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DUTCH EAST INDIES

Railway Strike and Nationalist Movement

THE Javan Rail and Tramway Workers' Union is the oldest and strongest union in the Dutch East Indies. Founded in 1908 by European workers it had in 1914 a membership of 900, of whom half were Europeans. With the intensive colonial exploitation of the war period and the consequent sharpening of the class struggle in the colonies, the native membership of the union rose enormously. In 1922 it was reported to possess 16,000 members, of whom not more than 150 were Europeans. At a delegate conference in February of the present year the general feeling was in favour of a strike against wage reductions. In the early summer wage reductions were proposed, and immediately the Dutch Colonial Government arrested Samaoen, a Communist railwaymen's leader, in order to prevent him organising a strike. At once the railwaymen struck: reports in the bourgeois Press put their number at 8,000, of whom 20 per cent. were highly skilled locomotive grades. In the middle of June *The Times* correspondent at Batavia reported that the strike had proved a fiasco, and that it had been broken by the dismissal of strikers. However, far more significant was the admission that "the suggestion of a strike of natives in Java would have been ridiculed a few years ago," and further, that the strike "is the most serious affair of its kind that has ever happened in Java." As far as it went, the strike completely disorganised transport and so held up the chief industry of Java—sugar-refining. The Dutch sugar capitalists were undoubtedly seriously frightened.

The strike has drawn attention to the importance of the Dutch East Indies as a factor in the complex equation of world imperialism. Dutch exploitation of the East Indies has developed steadily during the last three centuries from the spice speculators of the seventeenth century to the sugar-refinery owners and the petroleum magnates of the present day. The population of the Dutch East Indies is some 50,000,000 (Java accounting for 35,000,000) of whom 25,000,000 are peasants. The industrial proletariat is estimated to number about 1,000,000: in addition to the railwaymen's union there are unions of dockers (at the ports of Soerabaya and Semarang), printers, oilworkers (4,000 organised), State employees, and sugar-workers.

Nationalists and Communists together founded the first central trade union organisation, but this collapsed in 1921 owing to disputes between these two groups. A new revolutionary trade union federation was founded under Communist influence: it claims 30,000 members and is affiliated to the Red International of Labour Unions. A second central organisation was founded by a nationalist union of clerks. The relations between the two organisations are said to be improving, and amalgamation is expected.

The nationalist movement finds its chief expression in the *Sarekat Islam* Party (founded in 1912), which has a membership of a million and a half and five to six million sympathisers. The membership of this party is described as composed of "workers, business men, intellectuals"—it is, in short, a typical nationalist party, embracing different classes, who are united only on the anti-imperialist issue. The *Sarekat Islam* and the other nationalist parties, together with the Communist Party, have founded an anti-governmental *bloc* called the "Radical Concentration," which has adopted the slogan: *Separation from Holland!* The social democrats, who are for the most part only a small clique of intellectuals, vacillate on the anti-imperialist issue: and the Social Democratic Party in Holland is known to support the continuance of Dutch rule in the East Indies. While the Communist influence in the *Sarekat Islam* and particularly in its left wing—the "Red" *Sarekat Islam*—is considerable, the leaders of the *Sarekat Islam* are said to be still under the influence of the social democrats. Accordingly, the *Sarekat Islam* as an organisation did not side with the strikers in the railway strike: and without such support it is not likely that the strike could do other than fail. In the Dutch East Indies the growing working-class movement has to deal with a nationalist movement that is more revolutionary than similar movements in other colonial countries. The difficulty that arises is due to the simple fact that so many working-class militants—especially Communists—are deported or imprisoned by the Dutch imperialist power.

FINLAND

Trade Union Congress

THE Sixth Finnish Trade Union Congress was held at Helsingfors from May 21-26. The White Terror still persists in Finland, and a few weeks before the Congress opened a number of militant trade unionists were arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned. Seventy-six delegates attended the congress, representing 46,000 organised workers. A fact characteristic of the workers' movement in Finland is that more than 80 per cent. of the delegates were reported as having spent over a year in jail.

The struggle in the trade unions between the revolutionary workers and the social democrats was reflected in the congress. That the revolutionary workers are in the ascendant in this struggle is evidenced by the fact that sixty-five delegates were sympathisers with the R.I.L.U. as against eleven social democrats. Further, the new Executive Committee of twenty-six consisted of eighteen adherents of the R.I.L.U., two social democrats, and six non-party.

On the question of affiliation to the R.I.L.U. it was decided to remain outside this International for the time being, in order to prevent the social democrats forcing an immediate split, for which they have been preparing.

The resolution on the relation of the Trade Union Movement to political parties laid down :—

(1) The trade unions of Finland base themselves on the class struggle, and therefore fight side by side with that political organisation of the workers which is actually waging the class struggle.

(2) Common action, for special aims, with this party of class struggle to be secured.

(3) Subject to the foregoing, trade unionists are free to join which workers' political party they choose.

Further, in the resolution on tactics, the congress declared for the united front of the masses of the workers in any activities of the class struggle.

With regard to the work of organisation, the congress agreed on a scheme for the transformation of the existing twenty-one craft unions into thirteen industrial unions.

Finally, the new committee was instructed to prepare a manifesto addressed, in the name of the congress, to all the political and trade union Internationals, calling upon them to assist the workers of Finland in their struggle against the White Terror and for the liberation of political prisoners.

INTERNATIONAL

Enlarged Executive of Communist International

THE Congress of the Enlarged Executive of the Communist International opened in Moscow on June 12: the last session took place on June 24. In his opening speech Zinoviev outlined the existing situation from the standpoint of the International. Fascism is marching onward, as the recent events in Bulgaria testify. At the same time the Second and Two and a-half Internationals have fused, with the British Labour Party—formerly regarded by the Second International with some suspicion as a non-Marxist Party—as the leading party in the new International. The tactic of the United Front is being applied with growing success. The party crises in France and Germany have been satisfactorily liquidated. In the national question and the peasant question there is much yet to be done. The Social Democrats must be fought for the leadership of the peasant masses: the slogan of “A Workers’ Government” must be extended to “A Workers’ and Peasants’ Government.” A genuine dictatorship of the proletariat demands that the support of the peasants be secured, or at any rate that they should be neutral.

The industrial and agricultural proletariat must find allies among the non-proletarian elements of the toiling masses. Of these elements the most important are the working peasants; important because they are not exploiters. On the contrary, the working peasants are themselves the victims of capitalist exploitation—chiefly indirect exploitation, by means of artificial raising of prices of industrial products, and artificial lowering of prices of agricultural

products. Also, big capitalist interests pocket a considerable part of the income of the working peasants in the form of loan capital, monopoly of the means of transport, and usurious commercial transactions. Proletariat and peasantry are thus confronted by a common enemy: this circumstance affords a real basis for a class alliance. Owing to the relatively loose connection of the peasantry with the economic system they are not capable of the large-scale organisation necessary to maintain power as a ruling class in society. During the present historical epoch the question is whether the peasants shall be led, but not exploited, by the proletariat, or led *and* exploited by the bourgeoisie.

The Workers' and Peasants' Government provided the keynote for much of the subsequent discussion. Emphasis was laid on the point that it was a logical continuation of the United Front tactic. Varga wished to make the slogan more explicit, and proposed that its altered form should be "A Workers' and Working Peasants' Government." There was general agreement as to the immediate political value of the slogan, and its importance for countries like Canada and the United States, where the farmers are largely sinking to the position of landless tenant farmers (by mortgages, debts, &c.), was specially emphasised by delegates from those countries.

The question of centralism in the International was intimately connected with the Italian and Scandinavian questions. In the Swedish Party Hoeglund had expressed the view that religion was an entirely private matter, with which the party should have no concern; to which Bucharin replied that religion is a part of bourgeois ideology, and therefore the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat from bourgeois ideology becomes *a fortiori* a struggle against religion—it being understood that this struggle is to be waged with the utmost tact and caution, so as not to antagonise those backward sections of the working class who are still under religious influence. That religion in Europe is frankly counter-revolutionary is sufficiently shown by the recent international campaign against Soviet Russia on the grounds of alleged religious persecution by the Russian Government. To the complaints of the Scandinavian parties—especially the Norwegian party—about the "excessive" centralisation of the International, the final answer was given by an Italian delegate, who said: "The history of the Italian working-class movement is an example of what happens to a movement which ignores the proposals of the Communist International." The initial error of Serrati in refusing to expel the reformists from the Italian Socialist Party, and the further error of certain Italian Communists in refusing to apply the tactic of the United Front till too late, had paved the way for the present chaos of the Italian movement and the triumph of Fascism. A French delegate also pointedly remarked that the attitude of the Norwegian party strongly resembled that taken up by certain elements in the French party (Frossard, &c.), who left the party after the Fourth Congress.

Reporting on the trade union question, Losovsky pointed out the existence of a strong leftward tendency among the masses of trade unionists organised in the Amsterdam International, of which some signs were the Frankfurt Conference and the recent formation of an International United Front of Transport Workers. He concluded by urging Communists to redouble their efforts in the trade unions, for the prospects for the leadership of the trade

union movement by the Communist International and the Red International of Labour Unions were encouraging.

The meeting of the next World Congress was fixed for March, 1924, the fifth anniversary of the Communist International. Resolutions were passed on the Norwegian question, the religious question, the Workers' and Peasants' Government, and on the Anglo-Russian crisis.

Other subjects discussed at the Enlarged Executive included the struggle against Fascism, the Labour Movement in England, and the preparation of a Programme for the Communist International.

Transport Workers' United Front

A Joint Conference of representatives of the International Transport Workers' Federation and the All-Russian Unions of Railway Workers, Transport Workers, and Seamen was held in Berlin on May 23 and 24—the Russian unions being empowered to speak for all the Transport Workers' Unions affiliated to the Red International of Labour Unions. The resolution proclaiming the United Front of the Transport Workers of all countries, and also the manifestoes against War and Fascism, are given in full below.

The Transport Workers' United Front was greeted with enthusiasm by a conference of German sailors at Bremen and by a great meeting of Parisian railwaymen and other transport workers, but already the International Federation of Trade Unions had officiously washed its hands of the whole proceedings by a long resolution passed at the Amsterdam Bureau meeting of May 30-31. This resolution in effect declared that unity could only be achieved within the I.F.T.U., thus demonstrating the hostility of the leaders of the I.F.T.U. to any movement for a United Front of action between different sections of the working class.

Resolution on the United Action of the Transport Workers

The position of the World Proletariat is deteriorating at an ever-increasing rate. The continually extended occupation of German territory by French and Belgian troops, the catastrophic effects of the Versailles Peace Treaty, the dependence of the countries of the Little Entente upon the West European capitalist governments, in consequence of which Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia are nothing else than the serviceable tools of the great imperialist States, the steadily growing reaction, the destruction of the Workers' organisations by Fascism in Italy, the persecution of the working class in Yugoslavia, Rumania, Finland, Spain and other countries, and above all the conspiracy of the reactionary governments to overthrow Soviet Russia, threaten the proletariat with complete enslavement and misery.

The Bureau and General Council of the International Transport Workers' Federation, empowered by the congresses of the I.T.W.F., as well as the All-Russian Unions of the Transport Workers, Railway Workers, and Seamen, empowered on their side by the All-Russian Trade Union Federation and by the Transport Workers' Unions holding the view-point of the Red International of Labour Unions, consider it as their first task to bring about the unity of the Transport Workers in all countries, especially in those countries where the movement is split, and to prevent future expulsions as well as the creation of new parallel organisations.

For the purpose of carrying out this task, the representatives of the I.T.W.F. have conferred with the representatives of the Russian Transport Workers' Unions authorised

by all the Transport Workers' organisations holding the view-point of the R.I.L.U. on May 23 and 24 in Berlin in order to realise this common aim.

The conference, at which the I.T.W.F. was represented by Robert Williams (Chairman), John Doring (Vice-Chairman), M. Bidegaray, Edo Fimmen (General Secretary), and N. Natans (Assistant Secretary), and the Russian Railway Workers, Transport Workers, and Seamen's Unions by A. Andreyev, A. Sadovsky, G. Atchkanov, as well as the All-Russian Trade Union Federation by A. Lozowsky, adopted a series of resolutions with the carrying out of which the organisations concerned on both sides are most expressly charged.

It was decided:—

- (1) To form an equally representative International Committee of Action whose task it will be to propagate, organise, and carry through the struggle of the Transport Workers, Railway Workers, and Seamen of all countries and tendencies against militarism, danger of war and Fascism.
- (2) To organise a constant control of all transport of munitions, in the first place by the creation of Control Committees at the factories, the important docks, railway junctions, and frontier stations.
- (3) To convene a world congress of the Transport Workers of all countries and tendencies for the purpose of creating a united fighting front and for the setting up of a united national and international organisation.
- (4) To adopt the necessary measures for the common support of Transport Workers of all countries persecuted by Fascism, especially through the creation of a common fund.

The conference expressed the hope that it would not only succeed in the near future in realising the unity of all Transport Workers and effectively carrying on their common struggle against Militarism, Danger of War and Fascism, but that the international secretariats of other industries would create the unity necessary in the interests of all the workers.

Manifestoes to the Transport Workers, Railway Workers, and Seamen of All Countries

(1) Against War

Comrades,

The solemn promise of the capitalist governments that the great World War which we have just passed through would be the last of all wars was a despicable lie.

The bourgeoisie never for a moment believed in the truth of this promise. It was nothing but a deceptive catchword which it found necessary to employ in order to incite millions of proletarians to engage in mutual slaughter, instead of uniting in the struggle against their common enemy: International Capital. To-day we are further off from the promised peace than ever. Capitalism has emerged out of the War more predatory than ever. Throughout the world capitalist interests conflict with one another. On all sides the combustible material is accumulating for new bloody conflicts, conflicts among the capitalist States themselves, but more particularly between the capitalist States on the one side and the Workers' Republic on the other. The occupation of the Ruhr area by French and Belgian troops, the journey of Marshal Foch to the countries of the Little Entente, Lord Curzon's note to the Russian Government, the endeavours of the Lausanne Conference to subjugate the Turkish people—all these are unmistakable signs of the efforts of the imperialist governments to plunge the world into a new blood bath. The hatred and aversion towards the New Russia evinced throughout the reactionary and conservative world still continues. The most cherished ideal of the propertied classes in all countries remains that of exploiting the inexhaustible treasures of this vast country. The first desire of all the enemies of the

struggling proletariat is, to overthrow the present form of government in Russia, *i.e.*, the rule of the Workers and Peasants.

The Working Class in all countries wants peace.

In all capitalist wars the working class has nothing to gain and all to lose. No matter what the issue of a war, capitalism is always the victor, the international Proletariat always the vanquished. A war of the united capitalist States against Russia would inevitably mean a new world war. The overthrow of the Workers' and Peasants' Republic would be the severest blow which the International Proletariat could sustain. For no matter what the differences dividing the Proletariat internationally, theoretically, and organisationally, one thing is certain: Soviet Russia is the last stronghold against the growing international reaction which threatens to submerge the revolutionary Working Class.

Comrades!

Convinced that the Working Class of all countries can only offer resistance to the threatening war danger and the ever-increasing reaction, when the strongest United Front is formed, the representatives of the International Transport Workers' Federation and of the Russian Trade Unions of Railway Workers, Transport Workers, and Seamen, empowered by all the Transport Workers' organisations which accept the view-point of the R.I.L.U., have decided to create a *Joint Committee of Action against War and Fascism*.

Determined to overcome all existing divisions in the Transport Workers' movement, and inspired by the wish to create a strong unified power in the interests of the International Proletariat, the representatives of the International Transport Workers' Federation and of the All-Russian Transport Workers' Unions appeal to the Transport Workers, Railway Workers, and Seamen of all countries and all tendencies to follow their example and to proceed to common action against the threatening War and against Reaction.

Comrades, Transport Workers, Railway Workers, and Seamen, do your duty! Set the example to workers in other industries.

Be on your guard!

Continue the strictest control over the transport of munitions and other war material in all countries. See to it that this control is as stringent as possible and that not a single consignment of war material escapes your notice. Notify your organisations of everything and keep them in constant touch with everything that comes to your notice. Be prepared for all emergencies.

War against War!

Down with Militarism! Down with Reaction! Down with Capitalism!

Long live the United Front of the Transport Workers of all countries!

For the Delegation of the International Transport Workers' Federation:

ROBERT WILLIAMS, Chairman.

EDO FIMMEN, Secretary.

For the Delegation of the All-Russian Unions of Transport Workers, Railway Workers, and Seamen, acting for all R.I.L.U. Transport Workers' Unions.

A. ANDREYEV.

A. SADOVSKY.

G. ATCHKANOV.

A. LOZOVSKY.

(2) Against Fascism

Comrades,

The representatives of the International Transport Workers' Federation and the All-Russian Railway Workers', Seamen's, and Transport Workers' Unions (the latter having a mandate from all the rest of the Transport Workers' organisations standing

on the basis of the Red International of Labour Unions), in conference on May 23 and 24, 1923, in Berlin, urgently call attention to the serious dangers which threaten the Transport Workers, as well as the whole of the Labour Movement, from the side of Fascism and Reaction.

In Italy, under the Fascist dictatorship, Trade Unions have been forcibly dissolved, their funds confiscated, their buildings destroyed, the Labour Press suppressed, and leaders and members of workers' organisations arrested. All working-class organisations which challenge capitalism are subjected to the severest persecution.

In Yugoslavia, in Italy, Spain, and Bavaria, as well as in the rest of Europe, the danger threatening the working-class movement from the side of armed Reaction grows daily. Capitalism, shaken to its foundations by wars and armed peace, shrinks at no form of barbarity for its defence. The White Terror in Hungary, the Fascist tyranny in Italy, the mobilisation of special constables in England, are all phases of the international Class Struggle.

Fascism is forming its shock-troops from the military trained bourgeois youth, from the Russian White Guard emigrants, from the impoverished and desperate middle class, and even from the backward sections of the workers. These shock-troops of the bourgeoisie will be employed as instruments for strike-breaking and for terrorising the militant working masses.

The Transport Workers of all countries must take up the defensive against these dangers threatening them from Fascism and Reaction, by systematic counter-measures and solidarity among themselves as well as with the organised workers in other industries.

As the unity of the Trade Union movement is a pre-requisite for the defeat of Fascism, the conference held in Berlin between the I.T.W.F. and the All-Russian Transport Workers' Unions has decided, with all emphasis, to work for the setting up of the United Front of the Proletariat. The conference turns to the Transport Workers and also to the whole working class of all countries and appeals to them to put an end to all petty strife, to establish the unity of the Trade Union movement, and thus undertake the first step for the systematic and ruthless struggle against Fascism and World Reaction.

The danger is great. Fascism is becoming more and more one of the most fearful weapons of the bourgeoisie against the Proletariat. Against this movement it is necessary immediately to mobilise all forces. Otherwise it will be too late and the power of Fascism will for a long time exceed the forces of the organised Proletariat. The greatest determination is necessary in the defensive struggle against the armed enemy of our class.

Transport Workers of all countries!

The power and importance of your organisation is great. Therefore the responsibility which lies upon you is also great. It is up to you, therefore, by determined struggle, to lead yourselves and the whole working class to victory. You have a decisive part to play in the struggle against Fascism and Reaction.

Transport Workers! Comrades!

Our conference, which is of great importance for the whole of the working class, has passed important resolutions. It now lies with you to convert these resolutions into deeds:—

- (1) To carry on an unwearied and systematic propaganda in the Press and through meetings among the working masses in order to enlighten them as to the character of Fascism as a class weapon of the bourgeoisie.
- (2) To make use of all given opportunities, including parliamentary agitation, for the struggle against Fascism.
- (3) To oppose the direct action of Fascism with the direct action of the working class, the armed attack of the Fascisti with the armed defensive action of the Proletariat.

- (4) To organise systematically a watch over the movements of Fascist bands and over the transport of munitions, by special Control Committees at the railway centres and docks.
- (5) To establish connections for this purpose with all labour organisations concerned (Trade Unions, political parties, co-operative societies, &c.).
- (6) To devote special attention to the work of enlightenment among the backward and unorganised sections of the Transport Workers, in order to hinder the possibility of these being used as tools against their own class brothers. This work of enlightenment is to be conducted within the Fascist trade unions themselves, so that their proletarian elements are brought back to the class struggle.

Transport Workers! Comrades!

See to the carrying out of these decisions!

Down with Fascism!

Down with Reaction!

Down with Capitalism!

Long live the United Front of the Transport Workers of all countries!

For the Delegation of the International Transport Workers' Federation:

ROBERT WILLIAMS, Chairman.

EDO FIMMEN, Secretary.

For the Delegation of the All-Russian Unions of Transport Workers, Railway Workers and Seamen, empowered by the Transport Workers' Unions standing on the platform of the R.I.L.U.:

A. ANDREYEV.

G. ATCHKANOV.

A. SADOVSKY.

A. LOZOVSKY.

BOOK REVIEW

AN OUTPOST OF REVOLUTION

The Far Eastern Republic of Siberia. By Henry Kittredge Norton. (George Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d.)

THE history of the Far Eastern Republic is contained in one word—intervention. Along the line of the Trans-Siberian Railway the forces of the counter-revolution advanced to strike a blow for Tsardom (or the Constituent Assembly) and to do what might be done to overthrow the revolutionary Workers' State of Russia. First came the Czechs, then Kolchak, Colonel John Ward and his "diehards," the Americans, numerous bandits of the Semenov and Ungam brand, and, always and ever, the Japanese. When Kolchak had been routed and his forces were reeling back across Siberia under the hammer-blows of Kamenev's advance—the Japanese were always ready to get a stranglehold on Vladivostok, and to support the Semenov gentry in their "campaigns" of pillage and massacre, to say nothing of direct armed intervention by their own troops wherever they thought it of military (and so of political) value.

Japanese intervention did not cease till October of last year, when Vladivostok was finally evacuated. And hardly had the last Japanese soldier quitted the soil of the Far Eastern Republic before a demand went up from every quarter of the Republic for amalgamation with Soviet Russia and the establishment of Soviet authority. Accordingly, the Popular Assembly of the F.E.R., meeting at Chita early in November, unanimously adopted a resolution liquidating itself and establishing Soviet authority in its territory, completely uniting the republic with the R.S.F.S.R.

So the "democratic" Far Eastern Republic, with the studious shunning of Communism in its constitution, appears in its true historical aspect. That is to say, the "democratic" republic was tactically the best means of avoiding immediate suppression by foreign imperialism, and the best screen behind which to carry on the guerilla warfare of the "Partisan" bands against the forces of intervention. This was undoubtedly appreciated by the Communist members of the republic's Government: and by foregoing any attempt at a premature seizure of power by the Soviets they were enabled, directly the national struggle had succeeded, by the evacuation of the Japanese, to secure an immediate and unquestioned transition of power from the hands of the Popular Assembly to the Soviets.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Norton's book, though it was not published till the spring of this year, should close somewhere about the middle of 1921, for the events of last November have thrown a flood of light on the historical and political significance of the Far Eastern Republic, as we have tried to show. Mr. Norton is a liberal-minded American journalist who is disposed to give even Kolchak (or any other counter-revolutionary) his due. But he profoundly disapproves of Japanese "militarism," and his pages outlining the sins and crimes of the Japanese military are piquant reading. He treats us to some amiable chat about the leading personalities of the Far Eastern Republic;

and his narrative of the struggles of the infant republic, the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, the solid non-party "Peasant Majority," the valiant performances of the Partisans, and the hard battle on the railway front is good journalism and full of valuable material. Of course Mr. Norton does not provide us with a searching political analysis, but he is no Marxist and we do not expect it of him. His obvious misconception of the meaning of Communism is, after all, the misconception of all writers about the Russian Revolution who are not Marxist.

G. A. H.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Labour Supply and Regulation.* By Hambert Wolfe. (Economic and Social History of the World War, British Series. Published on behalf of the Carnegie Endowment for World Peace by Humphrey Milford, Clarendon Press and Oxford University Press. 10s. 6d.)
- The Ruhr.* By Ben Tillett, M.P. (Labour Publishing Company. 9d.)
- The Government-Strikebreaker.* By Jay Lovestone. (Workers' Party of America, New York City.)
- Trade Unionism: Past and Future.* By Mark Starr. Foreword by George Hicks. (Plebs League. 6d.)
- The Challenge of Waste.* By Stuart Chase. (League for Industrial Democracy, New York.)
- The Challenge of War: An Economic Interpretation.* By Norman Thomas. (League for Industrial Democracy, New York.)
- The Intellectual and the Labour Movement.* By George Soule. (League for Industrial Democracy, New York.)
- Der Beste Fabrikdirector.* By Frida Rubiner. (Verlag Carl Hoym Nachf. Louis Cahnbley, Hamburg. M : 0.60.)
- My Flight from Siberia.* By Leon Trotzky. Translated from the Russian by Malcolm Campbell. (Young Communist International.)
- The World's Children,* formerly the *Quarterly Record* of the Save the Children Fund. (Edward Fuller. 1s.)
- The Pillar-Box: No. I.* Edited by George Middleton, M.P. (Union of Post Office Workers. 1s.)
- Report of the International Transport Workers' Congress, held at Vienna, in the Grand Hall of the Kammer für Handel, Industrie and Gewerbe, from 2nd to 6th October, 1922.* (I.T.W.F., Amsterdam.)

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NOTES of the MONTH

The Test of Internationalism—The Internationalism of Labour Statesmen—The United Front with Baldwin—The Nationalism of the Glasgow Group—The Deadlock in Britain—Why Labour-Liberal Remedies Fail—The Forgotten Factors—The Deadlock in Europe—The Break-through in Germany—The Labour Party and the Grand Coalition

WHEN the Trades Union Congress meets it is probable that very little attention will be paid to the German situation except in reference to some conventional resolution on reparations and the diplomatic situation. That this should be so means that something is wrong with the working-class movement of the world viewed as a whole. For one large section to enter on a desperate struggle for existence and for another large section to be in no wise practically concerned is an unhealthy situation. It means that the workers are much more nationally self-centred and isolated than the bourgeoisie. This is very natural for the individual unorganised workers, who in the majority of trades have no opportunities of international contact like the bourgeoisie. But it is not natural for organised movements and leaders who make any profession of international organisation. And in this case there is not any question of some wicked other body such as an alternative International having crept across the path and ruined the chances of international unity. The largest official organisations of the workers in Britain and Germany are the two principal props of the Second International. Yet where is there any sign of the remotest common policy and action—not over high diplomatic questions of how much reparations should be paid—but over the workers' struggle in Germany?

ACTUALLY the situation is much more serious. If it were only a case of national self-absorption and obtuseness to the importance of what is happening to the workers beyond the State frontier, such a situation would be bound to remedy itself by the sheer hard blows of experience—just as the hard blows of

experience will knock the sectionalism out of the British movement at home during the next ten years (if the movement as we know it does not go out of existence). But here the evil is much more positive. For the leaders and big men believe they have got an international policy and are very fond of talking about it. And when this international policy comes to be examined it is found to be a policy of the British Government. It is a policy of revising reparations, holding international diplomatic conferences, maintaining "our" Army of Occupation in Cologne, preserving "our" interests in the Near East, protecting the White Man against coloured aggression, invoking American Big Business as the saviour, praising Wilson, praising Harding, praising Baldwin—anything and everything (written mostly by a set of ex-members of the Foreign Office and Civil Service or liberal diplomatic publicists and experts and dubbed a "Labour" foreign policy) except anything to do with the workers' struggle. The workers' movement appears at the most as a piously added tailpiece, something like the world church movement and other movements which may help to realise these glorious aspirations. This kind of farrago is hawked round on every Labour platform and news-sheet as a grand international policy and the one and only cure-all for all our domestic and foreign troubles.

THE result is that the movement is nauseated with international platitudes and at the same time has no conception of its being part of the international working class. The daily issues of the fight, such as the arrest to-day and imprisonment of the whole Executive and all the leading members of the Finnish Labour Party or the shooting yesterday of strikers in South Africa, pass by without a muscle being moved. And when a real crisis arises, such as the present in Germany, the movement has no form of expression or action save to declare its complete solidarity behind a Tory Prime Minister and to maintain a stubborn indifference to the struggle of the German workers. The *Daily Herald* informs us that "the Prime Minister has in this matter the British nation behind him," and that as for the situation in Germany "in any case we must keep our heads cool—even if we see chaos come in Germany." It is no doubt very helpful to the German workers, struggling for bread, to know that the British workers are "keeping

cool." And this is called an international policy, and its exponents claim to come from forming a brand new perfect united international workers' organisation. This travesty of an international policy is even worse than no international policy. It is as if on the home field the leaders of the movement were to answer the charge of sectionalism by saying: "But we are all united in our loyalty to His Majesty the King."

THERE has been so much vague and insincere claptrap talked about international affairs and their importance to Labour (chiefly as a way of avoiding unpleasant home questions from the unemployed and others) that it is difficult for those most genuinely concerned with the international working-class movement to speak much without a sense of unreality on international questions. It is natural to turn almost aggressively from the current high political gossip to questions of the parish pump that do at any rate concern the action of the workers. So much is this the case that the group of Labour M.P.'s most energetically concerned with the action of the working class have defiantly turned away from the liberal foreign policy of their leaders to a kind of aggressive nationalism which has led them into curious paths. But Mr. Wheatley and his friends do not remedy the liberal pacifism of Messrs. MacDonald and Morel by entering into the service of Allied militarism on the Ruhr, nor do they show the clearest understanding of the working-class fight by assuming that Glasgow can cure the ills of Glasgow. The two groups together only reveal themselves as complementary parts of one picture of the present movement: Messrs. MacDonald and Snowden winning the praise of the *Daily News* for their Cobdenite internationalism, and Messrs. Wheatley and Kirkwood winning the praise of the *Morning Post* for their sturdy British patriotism: both alike revealing the poverty of the movement which does not know itself as part of the international working class. But since the meaning of working-class internationalism, the first and also the last lesson of working-class politics, is so little even guessed at here except in a sentimental Christian fashion, it will be desirable, even at the expense of passing over for the moment vital home issues, to see if we cannot get

somewhat closer to it in terms of the present situation. And for this purpose it is not enough to talk of international working-class solidarity—not because this is to be regarded as a conventional catchword to be applauded in the abstract, but because, however sincerely applauded, it cannot in practice mean much to us until it has been burnt in by experience such as has not yet been gone through in this country. Therefore it is necessary to consider in concrete terms what is the importance of the present German situation to the British working class.

IF we are to get a clear view on this, we need to consider more widely what is the present outlook and prospects of the British working class. It is common ground that the British working class is at present at a heavy disadvantage. There are up to one and a-half millions unemployed. Those who are employed are heavily reduced in wages and are working in constant fear of unemployment, thus submitting to the most arbitrary decisions and conditions rather than risk action. The question is: what is the prospect of emerging from this position? The present condition of affairs is now entering its fourth year—thus exceeding in length as well as in severity any previous crisis of modern industrialism. This prolongation is defeating all expectations and calculations. What was before treated as a temporary slump is now seen to be something much more chronic; even the word “permanent” begins to be whispered. The question has now become common in all circles whether there will ever be full employment in England again. What is being witnessed, in fact, is not a simple post-war world unsettlement (America has already recovered for the moment and is booming again), but the sinking of British capitalist supremacy. What, then, are the remedies put forward? The Labour Party planks everything on European restoration. The Baldwin Government looks rather to imperial reorganisation and development. Both these schemes are the same in this, that they are schemes of capitalist reconstruction, differing only in the direction of emphasis. How much justification have the workers to place their hopes in either of these schemes of capitalist reconstruction as their one salvation, even abstaining from action on their own part, as instructed

by their leaders, in the hope of this millennium? Can all the king's horses and all the king's men ever put Humpty Dumpty together again?

THE Labour-Liberal scheme of European restoration assumes firstly that the whole cause of the abnormal distress in England is the unsettlement of Europe, and secondly, that the restoration of Europe can be accomplished by the actions of the British Government. Neither of these assumptions can be regarded as justified. It has already for a long time been clear that the British Government—Tory, National Liberal, Independent Liberal, or Labour—would be only too glad to see a settlement of Europe for the sake of British trade, but that such a wish does not produce a settlement when England is only one factor in a total situation which as a whole constitutes a deadlock of forces. In the second place, and even more important, to attempt to trace the whole of British economic decline to the Treaty of Versailles is wilfully to ignore the biggest factors in the situation from the point of view of their significance for the future.

LET textiles be taken as an example. The president of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce recently declared that the British textile trade with India had fallen from 3,000 million yards of cotton goods exports before the war to 1,000 million yards after the war, or a drop of 66 per cent., representing the loss of two working days in the week for every Lancashire operative. Was this due even indirectly in the main to the Treaty of Versailles? On the contrary, the main contributing causes were the combined campaigns of Gandhi's non-co-operation movement and the import of textile machinery into India, resulting in an increase of India's cotton goods production from 28 per cent. of her own consumption before the war to 61 per cent. after the war. But the same process is true of all the newer capitalist countries after the war. In South Africa the 1915-16 Census revealed 3,998 factories with an output of £40,000,000 worth; the 1920-21 Census revealed 7,005 factories with an output of £98,000,000 worth, or an increase of industrial output of close on 150 per cent. in five years. There are the big, permanent, and increasing factors in the British economic decline

which no juggling with the Treaty of Versailles can affect. Is there any better hope, then, in the Baldwin scheme of imperial development? An examination will reveal the same obstacles and the same failure to affect the permanent factors, as we shall endeavour to show when we deal with the Imperial Conference next month. The British Government can get nothing from the Dominions except at the price of forms of preference or subsidy or assisted loans which in practice go to build up the rivals whose existence constitutes the problem. But it is sufficient for the moment to say that even on their own showing the British Government schemes of imperial development will take at least ten or fifteen years to develop to fruition sufficient to affect materially the English situation. Thus in neither of these directions can the workers see any reasonable prospect of getting out of the present situation.

IN this way the English situation reveals a deadlock with no immediate easy hope of escape. Neither mechanical official campaigns of trade union reorganisation and reuniting, conducted with the prim decorum of a Church of England National Mission, nor desperate unofficial struggles of angry sections of workers as each new economic blow falls upon them, conducted without common aim or objective or revolutionary insight and even in antagonism to the revolutionary elements that alone can help them, neither one nor the other can make any difference to the brick wall of the situation. The inescapable facts of the position force us to turn our attention to the international situation. But here, if we proceed to examine it, we find the same deadlock. The French Government, driven into the reckless adventure of the Ruhr by the fatal imminence of bankruptcy at home, and, after having become inextricably entangled in a long and fruitless warfare with a whole population, unable to withdraw for the same reasons that pushed it in, plunges on with no ultimate goal or vision save the desperate phantom of military hegemony. The British Government, wringing its hands helplessly over the ruin of its trade and now cajoling, now threatening, now blustering, longing to use a pressure that it does not command, unable to face the only logical alternative of ranging itself on the side of Russia and Germany, worsted in the debts and in the economic settlement, alike in paying and in not receiving,

looking wistfully to America for an assistance that never comes, remains in drawn-out indecision and impotence over the European situation, and even turns aside at intervals to wash its hands of Europe with which it is indissolubly bound and tries to find sufficient sustenance in dreams of empire. On the other hand, the German Government, precariously placed between the upper millstone of the Entente and the nether millstone of social discontent at home, remains a formula without power; while the American Government, secure in its magnificent isolation and superiority, based on its self-sufficiency and the financial ability of its capitalists to take advantage of the European chaos, remains a power without a formula.

THUS in every direction the same deadlock presents itself. *The present European situation is a deadlock from which there is no way out save the proletarian revolution.* This is the great key fact of the European situation, and therefore the most important governing factor of policy for the English working class. But in what sense is it possible to speak of the proletarian revolution in view of the immaturity of the working class and the still powerful organisation of Western capitalism? In the same sense in which it was possible to speak of the proletarian revolution as the inevitable and only possible outcome of the world war, namely, as an outcome which, though logically necessary over the whole field, would, owing to the unpreparedness of proletarian organisation, first break out at that point only where the system was weakest and there form the nucleus of future development. That was the significance of the Russian revolution, which remains permanently the greatest conquest of the proletariat, because it was the first conquest from which the rest follows. Had the war passed without the Russian revolution, then not only the future fortunes of the working class, but the whole future of human development would have failed. But the war accomplished its work in that it left embedded in the heart of the existing system the nucleus of the world revolution. Once that conquest has been accomplished and can be maintained by the consciousness of the working class throughout the world, the rest follows like the slow unravelling of a tangled skein. We are now at the second stage of the process. Once again we are

reaching a situation of European crisis and deadlock from which the only ultimate outcome can be the proletarian revolution, and once again the critical point is the point at which the system as a whole is weakest—in this case, Germany. Therefore the German situation is the critical situation, not merely in the sense of common interest and solidarity, but as the immediately decisive centre for the whole European and world working class. If the English workers do not realise their relation now and in time to the German workers' struggle it is their own fortunes that will be pushed back.

WHAT has happened in Germany? The important point of what has happened in Germany is that the masses have begun to act. The Cuno Government was overthrown by the direct pressure of the workers outside under the open leadership of the Communists. That is a tremendous fact, not only by itself, but in its meaning for the future. Previously, since the suppression of the November revolution, the action of the workers has been isolated, passive, or sectional. In the Kapp putsch, they acted as a united body in the general strike; but it was only a defensive action, and the attempt to carry it further to any positive gains ended in confusion and failure. Now they have formed the United Workers' Front in action through the Factory Councils, overcoming the old confusion and irresolution betokened by the division of Social Democrats and Communists, advancing beyond the isolated and sectional economic strikes and bread riots, and proceeding onward to the direct political struggle—the call for the overthrow of the Government—and bringing down the existing Ministry against the declared intention of the combined majority of Social Democrat, Liberal, Catholic, Industrialist, and other "democratic" politicians on the Reichstag benches. The Cuno Government has gone. How long will the Stresemann Government remain? The forward movement of the workers has begun, and will not easily be stayed. The surest sign of the crisis is the return of the Social Democrats into the Cabinet as in the days of the crushing of the November revolution. The Stresemann Cabinet is the coming into the open of the alliance between Big Capital and Social Democracy; and that coming into the open only happens in

moments of **extremest** crisis. But to-day the situation is very different from the days of the crushing of the November revolution. Then the Social Democratic Party led and controlled the working class; the Communist Party did not exist. To-day the Social Democratic Party is only a husk of its former self, hardly existing in daily life outside its officials, broken up with division, and its most active rank-and-file members openly working with the Communists; while the Communist Party has established itself as the party of the working class, leading its action and dominating the Factory Councils and the membership of the most powerful unions. Then the treachery of the Social Democrats was fatal to the revolution. To-day the treachery of the Social Democrats will only be fatal to themselves. It is already clear from news received that the outcome of the entry into the Stresemann Cabinet means the disruption of the German Social Democratic Party and the last stage in its dissolution and decay.

AT this point it is necessary to ask the question fairly and squarely: How does the Labour Party stand in relation to the German Social Democratic Party? Does it stand in with them? Does their policy represent the policy of the Second International? We have always said that the policy of the Second International is a policy of coalition with capitalism. That charge is now receiving a brutal illustration, full of ugly meaning for the future in this country. The suggestion of such a charge, the suggestion of even such a delicate form of it as an electoral alliance or understanding or a future Parliamentary bloc, has always received the most indignant denials here. How do the authors of these denials regard this open realisation of the policy of the Second International? But indeed the Grand Coalition is not so far away from here already. Do we not find Sir Allan Smith and the leaders of the Labour Party declaring themselves in open harmony on immediate economic issues? "Sir Allan Smith speaks for the employers, but he is using the very phrases of the Labour Party," declares Mr. Clynes. And in foreign policy do we not find the same united front of Baldwin and MacDonald? Indeed the situation becomes so open that Mr. Clynes declares at a conference of

General Workers that "the Government and Opposition might co-operate with advantage on specific national business." Why, then, have an Opposition except for appearance's sake? The Grand Coalition is not a peculiarity of Germany. It is the policy of the Second International in its most open form. And as surely as that policy is rotting and destroying the remains of the once mighty Social Democratic Party of Germany, so surely will it bring to the ground their counterparts in this country and leave the workers to pass away from the present lead to new paths and a new direction.

CO-OPERATION AND THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY¹

By N. LENIN

I

IT seems to me that we are devoting too little attention to the Co-operative Movement. Everyone cannot grasp that now, since the October revolution, and unprejudiced by the New Economic Policy (on the contrary, in this respect we must say: thanks to the New Economic Policy), co-operation has attained a unique significance in Russia. The founders of the old co-operatives mingled much imagination with their dreams. They were often ridiculously imaginative people. And why have their dreams been mere imaginings? Because these people have never grasped the fundamental significance of the political struggle of the working class for the overthrow of the exploiting class. Here in Russia this overthrow has been accomplished, and much that appeared fantastic, or even extravagantly romantic, in the dreams of the old co-operators has become a complete reality.

Here in Russia, where the power is in the hands of the working class, where all the means of production are the property of the State, the sole task remaining to us has been to secure a real co-operative alliance of the population. Once given the pre-requisite of complete co-operation by the population, that socialism which hitherto, and rightly, evoked at most an indulgent smile from those who were convinced of the necessity of the class struggle, of the struggle for political power, has obviously attained its end.

But none of our comrades are taking sufficient account of the fact that co-operation has acquired enormous significance in Russia. With the New Economic Policy we made concessions to the peasant, to the merchant, to the principle of private trade; contrary to what is generally supposed, it is precisely this that gives rise to the immense importance of co-operation. All that we essentially need is the union of the Russian population on a sufficiently broad

¹ Written in January of this year.

co-operative basis during the regime of the New Economic Policy; for we have now attained such a degree of unification of private commercial interests, of their supervision and control by the State, and of their subordination to the interests of the general public, that we may claim to have realised what was formerly a stumbling block to very many Socialists. For is not the actual power of the State over all the most important means of production, and this State power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with many millions of peasants and small holders, the secure and leading rôle of the proletariat in relation to this peasantry, &c.—is this not all that is required to enable us to build up, with the aid of co-operation (that co-operation which we formerly treated as petty shopkeeping, and which we may still so treat, from one point of view, under the New Economic Policy), the complete structure of Socialist society? This co-operation is not in itself the structure of Socialist society, but it is everything that is required now for this structure.

It is precisely this circumstance which is under-estimated by many of our practical workers. Co-operation receives too little attention from us; its extraordinary importance is not realised, first and foremost, in relation to the means of production as State property, and secondly, with regard to the transition to a new order on the simplest, easiest, and (for the peasantry) the best attainable lines.

And this is just the most important point. It is one thing to indulge in all sorts of imaginings about labour associations for building up a Socialist structure, but it is another matter when it comes to practically building up this Socialism so that every small holder may have his share in it. We have already reached this stage. There is no doubt whatever but that we, having reached this stage, are not making full use of it.

We were too hasty at the time of our transition to the New Economic Policy, not in the sense that we granted too great concessions to the principles of private industry and free trade, but in the sense that we forgot to think of co-operation, which we still underestimate, and whose tremendous significance, in relation to the two sides of this question mentioned above, we are already beginning to forget.

I want next to discuss with my readers what can and must be done now, practically, starting from this "co-operative" principle. Along what lines can and must we now set to work, in order to so develop this co-operative principle that its Socialist significance becomes clear to everyone?

Politically, the co-operative question should be so treated that co-operation is granted, always and everywhere, certain financial facilities (amount of bank rate, &c.). Co-operatives must be supported by State credits exceeding—if not greatly, at least somewhat—those granted to private undertakings or even to heavy industry.

Every social order owes its existence solely to the financial support of a certain class. It is not necessary to mention those hundreds and hundreds of millions of roubles which the birth of "free" capitalism cost. But we must not forget it, and in actual practice we must realise that at the present time the social order to which we are to lend more than the average meed of support must be a co-operative order. And we must support it in the true sense of the word, that is, it is not sufficient if we understand by such support the support of any co-operative enterprise; by this support we must understand the support of a co-operative enterprise in which real masses of the population participate. It is, no doubt, a correct formula to give a bonus to the farmer who takes part in co-operative enterprise. But his participation must be examined with respect to its consciousness and quality—that is the main point in question. When the co-operative member comes to a village and opens a co-operative store there, the population has no share in this, strictly speaking. But for the sake of its own advantage it will speedily endeavour to have one.

There is therefore another side to the question. From the viewpoint of the "civilised" European (above all from that of everybody who can read and write) we have not far to go before every single individual can be induced to participate in co-operative operations, not merely passively, but actively. Actually there is "only" one further step necessary: to render our population so "civilised" that it will realise all the advantages of personal participation in the co-operative, and proceed to participate—

“only” this one step. But to realise this “only” implies a great stride forward, the covering of a wide stretch along the road of the cultural development of the whole mass of the people. Therefore we must make it our rule: as little philosophising as possible, as little tomfoolery as possible. In this respect the New Economic Policy is a sign of progress in so far as it accommodates itself to the level of the lowest peasant and demands nothing higher from him. But to utilise the New Economic Policy for the purpose of inducing the whole population, every separate individual, to take part in co-operation—this requires a whole historical epoch. We may pass through this epoch in one or two decades. But it will still be a distinct historical epoch, and without this historical epoch, without everyone’s being able to read and write, without adequate insight, without having educated the population to the extent that all can make some use of books, and without having created the material basis for this, without a certain security, let us say, against bad crops and famine—without all this we cannot attain our end. Everything now depends on whether we can supplement that revolutionary *élan*, that revolutionary enthusiasm which we have so often successfully proved, by a capacity—I might almost say—for acting like a sensible and experienced shopkeeper, which is all that is required from a good co-operator. By commercial capacity I understand the capacity to be a civilised business man. This distinction must be learnt by those Russian people who think that, if one trades, that means that one possesses the qualities of a trader. This is entirely wrong. One must know how to trade in the European manner.

I conclude: A number of economic, financial, and banking privileges for co-operation: this is the form in which support will be given to the New Organisation Principle by our Socialist State. But this only draws the broad outlines of our task, for the whole actual contents of this task have not here been practically detailed; that is, we must understand how to determine upon that form of “bonus” (and the conditions under which it is granted) which we shall accord to co-operation, the form of “bonus” which adequately aids co-operation, the form of bonus by the help of which we can educate civilised members of co-operatives. And the organisation of civilised members of co-operatives, given common ownership

of the means of production on the basis of the class victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie—this is Socialisation.

II

In my writings on the New Economic Policy I have always quoted from the article which I wrote in 1919 on State Capitalism. This has given rise to a certain amount of questioning among some of our younger comrades; their doubts, however, were mainly confined to the abstractions of politics and not to the new policy in itself.

It seemed to them that it was incorrect to describe as State Capitalism a system in which the means of production belong to the working class, which owns the State. These comrades did not observe, however, that I employed the term "State Capitalism" as an historical link between our present policy and the position I held in my controversy with the so-called Left Communists. I then proved that State Capitalism would be a higher stage than our present system of economy. For me it was important to establish the continuity of connection between ordinary State Capitalism and that unusual and indeed extraordinary State Capitalism to which I referred when introducing the reader to the New Economic Policy. Secondly, the practical aim was important for me, and our aim was to be able to arrange for concessions, and this under the conditions prevailing here would be a pure type of State Capitalism. This, then, is the main form in which the idea of State Capitalism presented itself to me.

There is another aspect of the matter, another factor, which we can use as a counter-balance to State Capitalism. This is co-operation.

Without any doubt a co-operative society in a capitalist State is a collectivist capitalist institution. Under our present economic conditions we combine private capitalist enterprises, on socialised land and under the control of the State, which is in the hands of the working class, with enterprises of a wholly Socialist type, where the means of production and the land—in fact the whole of each enterprise—belong to the State. Under these conditions it is clear that co-operation, which formerly had no significance

from the point of view of principle, now appears as a third form of enterprise.

Under individualist capitalism, co-operative enterprises are distinguished from capitalist enterprises mainly because they are collectivist. Under State capitalism co-operative enterprises are distinguished from State capitalist enterprises, first, because they are private and, secondly, because they are collectivist. Under our present system co-operative enterprises are distinguished from the private capitalist enterprises that still exist because they are collectivist; but they do not differ from Socialist enterprises if they are based on the land and the means of production that belong to the State, *i.e.*, to the working class.

These facts are not sufficiently taken into account when co-operation is discussed. It is forgotten that with us co-operation assumes a significance different from that which it has elsewhere. Apart from concessions—which by the by have not developed very fast—the spread of co-operation here would completely coincide with Socialism.

I will try to make my idea clear. What were the fantastic plans of the old co-operators, including Robert Owen? They dreamed of transforming modern society peacefully into Socialism without paying the least regard to such a fundamental question as that of the class struggle, the conquest of political power by the working class, and the overthrow of the exploiting class. We are, therefore, quite right in regarding this “Co-operative” Socialism as a fantastic, romantic, and even puerile dream—a dream that it is possible, by merely inducing the population to become co-operators, to convert class enemies into class collaborators, and the class war into a class peace (the so-called civil peace). Undoubtedly from the point of view of the *fundamental* tasks of modern times we are right in this, for without the class struggle for political power Socialism is impossible.

But observe how all this is changed when power is already in the hands of the working class, and the power of the exploiters has been overthrown, and all the means of production are in the hands of the working class—except for those which the workers’ State deliberately and conditionally gives up to exploiters for a time in the form of concessions.

We should now be right to say that the mere growth of co-operation here with us is equivalent to the growth of Socialism.

We are compelled to recognise a radical change in our point of view with regard to Socialism. The radical change is this: formerly we laid emphasis—we were compelled to do so—on the political struggle, on revolution, and on the conquest of power; while now we must lay all our emphasis on peaceful organisation and on “cultural” work. Or rather, I would be prepared to say that we should lay all emphasis on cultural work if we were not compelled to fight for our international position. Putting that aside for the moment, and limiting ourselves to internal economic relations, we can truly say that we now emphasise mainly work that may be described as cultural.

We are confronted by two fundamental tasks; when we have accomplished these our epoch will be ended. The first is to reform our machinery of government which is absolutely worthless. We inherited it from the previous epoch. During the five years of our existence we have not done very much—we could not do very much—in this direction. Our second task is to conduct cultural work among the peasantry; the aim of this is to spread co-operation.

If co-operation was completely developed, we should already be standing with both our feet firmly planted upon Socialist soil. This condition of a complete development of co-operation includes such a development in education and culture among the peasants that it requires a complete cultural revolution.

More than once our opponents have said that we are frivolously trying to plant Socialism in a country that is not sufficiently advanced. Our opponents erred however. We began at the opposite end from that presumed in the theories of the pedants; our political and social revolution preceded the revolution in culture. This revolution now confronts us.

All that we require now is to bring about the cultural revolution and our country will be completely Socialist. But this cultural revolution represents an incredibly vast task, both of an instructional character—for we are illiterate—and of a material character, for in order to be cultured we need a certain development of the means of production, a material basis.

THE ISSUES BEFORE THE TRADES UNION CONGRESS

By HARRY POLLITT

THE Fifty-fifth Trades Union Congress opens at Plymouth on September 3. It will be the usual type of congress, with the usual type of delegates in the majority: comfortable, full-time, well-paid trade union officials, who look on congress week as a holiday and a reunion to look forward to from year to year.

Whether the agenda be long or short, whether it contains unimportant or important resolutions, it is all the same to the majority of the delegates: the discussion of resolutions is the only thing that mars the "holiday."

The Congress at Southport was faced with three important issues, all of which were inadequately discussed and finally shelved. These same issues come up again before the Plymouth Congress, but in a more serious and aggravated form; and they will be shelved again, even though the future of the trade unions represented at congress, for many years to come, depends upon how these issues are faced.

We refer to the problems of

- (1) The Ruhr occupation.
- (2) Unemployment.
- (3) The future of the General Council.

All the other matters on the lengthy agenda are of minor importance compared to these.

At the Southport Congress Mr. Edo Fimmen was sent with a special mandate by the German workers and by the Amsterdam International to ask the Trades Union Congress to lend its support in any international action taken, or needing to be taken, in the event of the occupation of the Ruhr by the French army. In the course of his speech, which received great applause (chiefly because

the delegates never thought they would be called upon to take any action), he said:—

I have to request you, British comrades, to stand at their side (the German workers) and help them in the most distressful time through which they are passing since the war broke out. At this moment the German proletariat is at the limit of its powers against the reactionary powers in that country. They expect international Labour, from the Trade Union international and the political international, to come to their rescue and help them, not only to save their Republic, but also to save their economic life. I think such an appeal will get an answer from British Labour. I read in the 'bus this morning the resolution your Congress adopted in regard to the German situation. I am happy to say that this resolution as it stands will meet what the German workers expect from you ; *but, friends, I also know that resolutions always sound very nice when they are spoken and when we see them on paper, but they have no value if at the moment it is necessary the people who pass resolutions are not prepared or able to stand up for them and to fight for them ;*"

and afterwards, in letting the German workers know of the enthusiastic support they could depend on from the British trades unions, Mr. Fimmen said, on September 15, immediately after his visit to Southport:—

In the event of the Ruhr being occupied, it would be met by a strike of 25,000,000 workers of the International Federation of Trade Unions.

And when the Ruhr had been occupied, and the I.F.T.U. had done nothing, Mr. Fimmen, Secretary of the International to which the British Trades Union Congress pays £7,418 yearly in affiliation fees, made a speech in Paris on the Ruhr situation, in the course of which he said :—

It must be recognised that we have not been able to do what we said we would do. There is a danger that the present International may prove as helpless in facing this crisis as the old International was in 1914. If we cannot organise resistance in every country, civilisation is doomed.

Well, the French have been in the Ruhr eight months. The result is seen in the misery of countless thousands of German working-class homes, in the appalling increase of unemployment that faces this country, and in the tense political situation, making any faith in a trade revival a palpable absurdity so far as this country is concerned. And all the time the British Trades Union Congress has done nothing to prevent the occupation from taking place, and

has even refused to support any movement to bring about the withdrawal of our troops from Germany.

It is obvious that in any crisis which forces the German workers to strike either against the French occupation or against their own capitalists these troops will be used to suppress the German workers. In the debate on this question at the Labour Party Conference, Mr. Thomas, President of the I.F.T.U., stated that it was the wish of the German trade union leaders that our troops should be kept there. Finally he asked the conference to remember that the German trade unionists had another enemy besides the French: "they were the Communists."

The inference is very clear that the use of British troops would be welcomed if they were used either to suppress the Communists or any movement for which the Communists were responsible.

How will Congress face this problem of the Ruhr? Will it decide to organise mass demonstrations of the workers of this country, calling attention to the Ruhr situation, which is the logical sequel to the Peace Treaty? Will it send delegates to France and Germany bearing fraternal greetings from the British workers and demanding common action between the workers of all the countries that can help in ending the present situation? Will it demand that the I.F.T.U. convene a world conference of all trade unionists to organise defence corps against the growing danger of war and Fascism? These dangers are growing as a result of the Ruhr situation. Will it give a lead and call a one-day general strike of British workers to demonstrate practically to the Government our detestation of the Peace Treaty and our demand that it should be scrapped and that all our troops be withdrawn immediately from German territory?

It is safe to say that Congress will do none of these things. It will confine itself to passing a composite resolution on foreign policy, in which there will be a reference to the Ruhr, and the hope expressed that we won't force the Germans to pay more than they say they can pay. If half an hour is devoted to this resolution congress will get restive, especially if it is near dinner time, and delegates will want to know "What's all this to do with England?" and so the problem will be shelved again.

Meanwhile the Ruhr problem grows more serious; the German workers will be sacrificed either to Fascism or to a Franco-German combination of capitalists. The increased exploitation that will ensue will react upon our own workers, the capitalist offensive against our own conditions will increase in intensity, and our standard of living will be brought down to the German level. Unemployment will increase, the goods now being produced in Germany will be thrown on the markets. This must affect our own production, and yet, despite all this, the Trades Union Congress will shelve the problem, because it is not courageous enough to face up to it and boldly carry out the special demands that fall upon the British Section of the Amsterdam International.

The second grave problem is that of unemployment. Everywhere it is now acknowledged that there are not only no prospects of any trade revival, but on the contrary that unemployment will increase to a tremendous extent during the coming winter. Sir Allan Smith has, on behalf of the big industrialists, expressed this view in two memoranda to the Government. In the last of these the following significant passage occurs in reference to the recent speech of the Minister of Labour. Sir Allan Smith says:—

Undoubtedly, there was such a decline for the first five months of the year, but then the weekly decrease became less and less, and the latest figures available show that a turning point has been reached, and the figures have now started to increase. If the present rate of unemployment is maintained (and there was nothing in the Minister's speech to encourage the most sanguine to hope that the rate will be checked) this relief will be quite inadequate to prevent even larger numbers than last year from becoming workless again. The gravity of the position cannot be exaggerated.

These extracts show how serious the position is, but what will Congress do? The Congress will probably receive a speaker from the unemployed organisation. It will listen very sympathetically and take up a collection when he has finished. Then the General Council will put up one of the "big men" of the Congress. He will move a long resolution deploring the evils of unemployment, and putting on record the fact that if the Government had only adopted the policy of the Labour Movement all would have been well. The resolution will probably talk about great relief schemes, and

also demand that recognition be given to Soviet Russia. After the resolution has been seconded Congress will begin to wonder how much more time is going to be spent on this unemployment, and then the resolution will be passed unanimously and Congress will probably adjourn for dinner or pass on to a resolution demanding old age pensions.

The treatment of unemployment by the General Council of the Congress is a sorry tale. The only time any attempt has been made to co-operate with the unemployed was during the Hunger March, when the question had reached such vast dimensions that the Council thought they would reap some publicity out of it—after all the spade work had been done by the men whom previously the Council had refused to look at. They therefore co-operated with the unemployed organisation and held a special Unemployed Sunday, and after that—nothing further has been done. But with the appalling prospects that lie ahead the unemployed will again begin to agitate, and October and November will again witness mass agitation by the unemployed all over the country. What can Congress do in this situation? Its duty is very simple. It must instruct the General Council to commence a joint campaign with all working-class organisations around the slogan: "Work or Full Maintenance at Highest Trade Union Rates."

The past policy of letting the unemployed look after themselves should cease. The idea that the unemployed are a class apart from those workers who happen to be at work must be killed. These things and defects in our present methods can be altered by the General Council calling together representatives from all workers' organisations, forming a joint committee, and then using the whole resources of the movement to bring about a successful conclusion to this campaign for "Work or Full Maintenance for the Unemployed."

If this is done we shall find that the ranks are rapidly closed and that complete unity will prevail. Enthusiasm would be roused as a result of the unemployed problem at last being tackled in a practical manner, instead of light and airy talk and resolutions of pious sympathy. Let every delegate remember that this is the fourth winter we are facing with this problem of unemployment before us, and that the three past Trades Union Congresses have

failed miserably in their treatment of the question. Is the Fourth Congress going to do the same ?

At the Cardiff Congress in 1921 the old Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress was liquidated and the General Council of the Congress elected. This step was hailed by the Labour Press and the trade union officials as a big step forward. At last, we were assured, the trade unions had a General Staff that was going to stop the old sectionalism and lead us forward to victory.

After a year's working the General Council were forced by two causes to apply to the Southport Congress of 1922 for increased powers. In practice they had found they had no power at all, and such a General Staff must be powerless, which of course is exactly the case with the General Council. They have not the power to take a levy, to demand even consultation before a strike takes place, nor can they call one union out on strike in support of another union. This was the first cause that compelled Congress to apply for an increase in its powers. The second was the insistent demand of the rank and file for a General Council that could lead and direct the trade unions in a united manner. The spokesman of the Council admitted that they had been influenced by this rank and file pressure.

Mr. Swales, of the A.E.U., speaking on behalf of the General Council, moved a long resolution, the essence of which was that the Council should have power to make financial levies to help unions whose members are on strike, and also that they should be consulted and kept informed of all developments in regard to strikes or the possibility of strikes. Quite a modest resolution, but when discussion began an amazing spectacle was witnessed. The resolution was fiercely attacked by the very men who never tire of talking about the "need for unity and solidarity." Mr. Cramp, Mr. Clynes, Mr. Hodges, Mr. Bevin, all did their best to strangle the new baby just as it wanted to try and walk. In an immortal passage, Mr. Hodges, with eyes ablaze, said:—

In the nature of the human mind everyone of those thirty-two persons (the General Council) looks at every dispute as to how it is going to affect his trade, and in that degree he unconsciously steps in,

saying, "*I will do my best to prevent that stoppage,*" not because of the principles that are in dispute, but because of his fear of the consequences to his members.

In that passage Mr. Hodges touched the spot. He showed quite plainly and truthfully that the leaders don't want unity of action, because it might mean they lose a little power in their own union. The proposal of the Council was naturally defeated.

This year the Amalgamated Union of Building Trades Unions have placed exactly the same resolution on the agenda. The weakness of their resolution is that it seeks to give the Council power to do everything except the one essential thing that is wanted, namely, the power to be able to call other unions out on strike in support of a particular union whose members are out on strike, and whose action is being weakened by the members of other unions remaining at work. And Congress will discuss this resolution faced with a practical example of where the movement is going wrong and where it could be altered if Council only had the power to take definite action.

The Boilermakers have been locked out of the Federated shipyards for months past. The longer they are out, the more men of other unions, shipwrights, blacksmiths, engineers, labourers, are being stood off. Yet they are not helping the Boilermakers to win because they are not actually fighting with them, and because half of the members of their various unions are still at work.

It is in such a case as this that the Council ought to have the power to call out on strike all the shipyard unions in support of the Boilermakers and stop the industry altogether, then levy all the other unions to support all the men locked out or on strike in this industry.

Congress will, of course, not agree to any such power being given; and even if it did, it is doubtful whether the General Council would use it, composed as it is of men of sectional ideas and craft prejudices. But this is the only line it is possible for any serious-minded delegate to take. The need of the movement is unity. Everyone recognises that. Move among any section of workers, in any industry, during a sectional strike, and again and again you hear the cry, "We all ought to be out together."

This is the cry that will gather force, and soon it will compel the Council to build the organisation that will make it possible for the workers "to be all out together."

The other issues before Congress are many and varied, but the three chief issues are those indicated, and on the manner of their treatment depends the future of the trade unions of this country. The Plymouth Congress may be remembered either as a landmark when the Trades Union Congress changed from a holiday week to a live congress, dealing with pressing problems in a bold and militant way, or, if it fails to do this, it will be remembered as the congress that registered another failure and gave new encouragement to the capitalists to renew their attack upon the unions during the coming winter.

LEO SCHLAGETER— THE WANDERER INTO THE VOID

By KARL RADEK

(We have pleasure in printing the full text of the already famous speech of Karl Radek on the German Nationalist hero, Schlageter. This speech, delivered on June 21, is likely to become one of the historical documents of the European revolution. At the very moment when Fascism and Communism were on the point of coming to grips for the soul of the tortured German masses, Radek, on behalf of the Communist International, sent forth this message into the heart of the Fascist camp—a message of sympathy and comprehension for the ideals and heroism of the Nationalist struggle, inspiring the followers of Fascism among the masses, but relentlessly exposing the double dealing anti-nationalism and subservience to Big Business and the Entente on the part of their leaders and showing that the only way for the realisation of their hopes and ideals and the freedom of the German nation lay through the proletarian revolution. This contribution has aroused controversy throughout the Fascist camp at the moment of their projected coup. We find the columns of the Fascist press thrown open to Radek for the purposes of controversy, and we find Count Reventlow entering into discussions in the Communist press. No more striking blow was ever delivered for defeating the tricks to yoke the nationalist-minded masses to the interests of Capital, or for turning politics into their real class meaning.)

I CAN neither supplement nor complete the comprehensive and deeply impressive report of our venerable leader, Comrade Zetkin, on International Fascism,¹ that hammer meant to crush the head of the proletariat, but which will fall upon the petty bourgeois class, who are wielding it in the interests of large capital. I could not even follow it clearly, because there hovered before my eyes the corpse of the German Fascist, our class enemy, who was sentenced to death and shot by the hirelings of French imperialism, that powerful organisation of another section of our class enemy. Throughout the speech of Comrade Zetkin on the contradictions within Fascism, the name of Schlageter and his tragic fate was in my head. We ought to remember him here when we are defining our attitude towards Fascism. The story of this martyr of German nationalism should not be forgotten nor

¹ Published in the August issue of the LABOUR MONTHLY.

passed over with a mere phrase. It has much to tell us, and much to tell the German people.

We are not sentimental romanticists who forget friendship when its object is dead, nor are we diplomats who say : By the graveside say nothing but good, or remain silent. Schlageter, a courageous soldier of the counter-revolution, deserves to be sincerely honoured by us, the soldiers of the revolution. Freksa, who shared his views, published in 1920 a novel in which he described the life of an officer who fell in the fight against Spartacus. Freksa named his novel *The Wanderer into the Void*.

If those German Fascisti, who honestly thought to serve the German people, failed to understand the significance of Schlageter's fate, Schlageter died in vain, and on his tombstone should indeed be inscribed: "The Wanderer into the Void."

Germany lay crushed. Only fools believed that the victorious capitalist Entente would treat the German people differently from the way the victorious German capitalists treated the Russian and Rumanian people. Only fools or cowards, who feared to face the truth, could believe in the promises of Wilson, in the declarations that the Kaiser and not the German people would have to pay the price of defeat. In the East a people was at war. Starving, freezing, it fought against the Entente on fourteen fronts. That was Soviet Russia. One of these fronts consisted of German officers and German soldiers. Schlageter fought in Medem's Volunteer Corps, which stormed Riga. We do not know whether the young officer understood the significance of his acts. But the then German Commissar, the Social Democrat Winnig, and General Von der Golz, the Commander of the Baltic troops, knew what they were doing. They sought to gain the friendship of the Entente by performing the work of hirelings against the Russian people. In order that the German bourgeoisie should not pay the victors the indemnities of war, they hired young German blood, which had been spared the bullets of the Great War, to fight against the Russian people. We do not know what Schlageter thought at this period. His leader, Medem, later admitted that he marched through the Baltic into the void. Did all the German nationalists understand that ?

At the funeral of Schlageter in Munich, General Ludendorff spoke, the same Ludendorff who even to-day is offering himself to England and to France as the leader of a crusade against Russia. Schlageter was mourned by the Stinnes press. Herr Stinnes was the colleague in the Alpina Montana, of Schneider-Creusot the armourer, the assassin of Schlageter. Against whom did the German people wish to fight: against the Entente capitalists or against the Russian people? With whom did they wish to ally themselves: with the Russian workers and peasants in order to throw off the yoke of Entente capital for the enslavement of the German and Russian peoples?

Schlageter is dead. He cannot supply the answer. His comrades in arms swore at his graveside to carry on his fight. They must supply the answer: against whom and on whose side?

Schlageter went from the Baltic to the Ruhr, not in the year 1923 but in the year 1920. Do you know what that meant? He took part in the attack of German capital upon the Ruhr workers; he fought in the ranks of the troops whose task it was to bring the miners of the Ruhr under the heel of the iron and coal kings. The troops of Waters, in whose ranks he fought, fired the same leaden bullets with which General Degoutte quelled the Ruhr workers. We have no reason to believe that it was from selfish motives that Schlageter helped to subdue the starving miners.

The way in which he risked his life speaks on his behalf, and proves that he was convinced he was serving the German people. But Schlageter thought he was best serving the people by helping to restore the mastery of the class which had hitherto led the German people, and had brought such terrible misfortune upon them. Schlageter regarded the working class as the mob that must be governed. And in this he shared the view of Count Reventlow, who calmly declared that no war against the Entente was possible until the internal enemy has been overcome. The internal enemy for Schlageter was the revolutionary working class. Schlageter could see with his own eyes the results of this policy when he returned to the Ruhr in 1923 during the occupation. He could see that even if the workers were united against French imperialism, no single people was able to fight alone. He could see the profound mistrust of the workers towards the German government and the

German bourgeoisie. He could see how greatly the cleavage in the nation hampered its defensive power. He could see more. Those who share his views complained of the passivity of the German people. How can a defeated working class be active? How can a working class be active which has been disarmed, and from whom it is demanded that they shall allow themselves to be exploited by profiteers and speculators? Or could the activity of the German working masses be replaced by the activity of the German bourgeoisie? Schlageter read in the newspapers how the very people who pretended to be the patrons of the German nationalist movement sent securities abroad so that they might be enriched and the country impoverished. Schlageter certainly could have no hope in these parasites. He was spared reading in the Press how the representative of the German bourgeoisie, Dr. Lutterbeck, turned to his executioners with the request that they should permit the iron and steel kings to shoot down sons of Germany, the men who were carrying out the resistance on the Ruhr, with machine guns.

Now that the German resistance, through the rascally trick of Dr. Lutterbeck, and still more through the economic policy of the possessing classes, has been turned into a farce, we ask the honest, patriotic masses who are anxious to fight against the French imperialist invasion: How will you fight, on whose support will you rely? The struggle against Entente imperialism is a war, even though the guns are silent. There can be no war at the front when there is unrest in the rear. A minority can be kept under in the rear, but not a majority. The majority of the German people are the working men, who must fight against the poverty and want which the German bourgeoisie is bringing upon them. If the patriotic circles of Germany do not make up their minds to make the cause of the majority of the nation their own, and so create a front against both Entente and German capital, then the path of Schlageter was the path into the void, and Germany, in the face of foreign invasion, and the perpetual menace of the victors, will be transformed into a field of bloody internal conflict, and it will be easy for the enemy to defeat her and destroy her.

When, after Jena, Gneisenau and Scharnhorst asked themselves how the German people were to be raised from their defeat, they replied: only by making the peasants free from their former

submission and slavery. Only the free German peasantry can lay the foundations for the emancipation of Germany. What the German peasantry meant for the fate of the German nation at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the German working class means at the beginning of the twentieth century. Only with it can Germany be freed from the fetters of slavery—not against it.

Schlageter's comrades talked of war at his graveside. They swore to continue the fight. It had to be conducted against an enemy that was armed to the teeth, while Germany was unarmed and beaten. If the talk of war is not to remain an empty phrase, if it is not to consist of bombing columns that blow up bridges, but not the enemy; that derail trains, but cannot check the armoured trains of Entente capital, then a number of conditions must be fulfilled.

The German people must break with those who have not only led it into defeat, but who are perpetuating the defeat and the defencelessness of the German people by regarding the majority of the German people as the enemy. This demands a break with the peoples and parties whose faces act upon other peoples like a Medusa head, mobilising them against the German people. Only when the German cause becomes the cause of the German people, only when the German cause becomes the fight for the rights of the German people, will the German people win active friends. The powerful nation cannot endure without friends, all the more so must a nation which is defeated and surrounded by enemies. If Germany wants to be in the position to fight, it must create a united front of workers, and the brain workers must unite with the hand workers and form a solid phalanx. The condition of the brain workers cries out for this union. Only old prejudices stand in the way. United into a victorious working people, Germany will be able to draw upon great sources of resisting power which will be able to remove all obstacles. If the cause of the people is made the cause of the nation, then the cause of the nation will become the cause of the people. United into a fighting nation of workers, it will gain the assistance of other people who are also fighting for their existence. Whoever is not prepared to fight in this way is capable of deeds of desperation but not of a serious struggle.

This is what the German Communist Party and the Communist International have to say at Schlageter's graveside. It has nothing

to conceal, for only the complete truth can penetrate into the suffering, internally disintegrated masses of Germany. The German Communist Party must declare openly to the nationalist petty bourgeois masses: Whoever is working in the service of the profiteers, the speculators, and the iron and coal magnates to enslave the German people and to drive them into desperate adventures will meet the resistance of the German Communist workers, who will oppose violence by violence. Whoever, from lack of comprehension, allies himself with hirelings of capital we shall fight with every means in our power. But we believe that the great majority of the nationalist-minded masses belong not to the camp of the capitalists but to the camp of the workers. We want to find, and we shall find, the path to these masses. We shall do all in our power to make men like Schlageter, who are prepared to go to their deaths for a common cause, not wanderers into the void, but wanderers into a better future for the whole of mankind; that they should not spill their hot, unselfish blood for the profit of the coal and iron barons, but in the cause of the great toiling German people, which is a member of the family of peoples fighting for their emancipation. This truth the Communist Party will declare to the great masses of the German people, for it is not a party fighting for a crust of bread on behalf of the industrial workers, but a party of the struggling proletariat fighting for its emancipation, an emancipation that is identical with the emancipation of the whole people, of all who toil and suffer in Germany. Schlageter himself cannot now hear this declaration, but we are convinced that there are hundreds of Schlageters who will hear it and understand it.

MAHATMA GANDHI: REVOLUTIONARY OR COUNTER-REVOLU- TIONARY ?

A Reply to Romain Rolland and
Henri Barbusse¹

By EVELYN ROY

THE learned articles from the pen of M. Romain Rolland, which recently appeared in the monthly review *Europe*, and the reply thereto in *Clarté* by Henri Barbusse, on the subject of Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of the Non-violent Non-Co-operation Movement of India during the years 1920-1922, have opened a new field of discussion between the two opposing camps of European radical intellectualism. M. Rolland, the protagonist of Non-violence, has offered to the world a new argument and, as he conceives it, a new proof of the efficacy of this doctrine as applied to political struggles. He discovers Mr. Gandhi a year after the latter has been consigned to the oblivion of a six years' gaol sentence, and in eloquent and poetic language describes and interprets his career as leader of the Non-Co-operation Movement, in order to prove his own theory that Non-violence, based upon suffering, self-sacrifice, and brotherly love, is the only philosophy that can save European civilisation from ultimate annihilation.

M. Barbusse, belonging to the opposite camp of those who believe in opposing force to force, dictatorship to dictatorship, and the ultimate survival of the fittest, replies to the articles of M. Rolland by attempting to upset the whole basis of the latter's thesis as to Gandhi's true rôle in the Indian movement. Mr. Gandhi, he asseverates, is not what M. Rolland imagines him to be—an apostle of love, sacrifice, and suffering, come to redeem

¹ *Mahatma Gandhi*, by Romain Rolland; *Revolutionaires d'Orient et d'Occident*, by Henri Barbusse.

the world with a new gospel and a new vicarious atonement. On the contrary, Mr. Gandhi is a revolutionary to whom Non-violence is but a masterly tactic in the face of a difficult situation. Had Lenin been in Gandhi's place he would have spoken and acted as did the latter, declares M. Barbusse ; both are for compulsion; both are realists. Gandhi took care to base himself upon the working and peasant masses. He always defended the poor and the oppressed. The revolutionary movement of India is more a social struggle than a nationalist one, and the fight against the British bureaucracy is a characteristic form of the class-struggle.

So writes Henri Barbusse in a valiant effort to disprove the arguments of Romain Rolland and to defeat his object of using Gandhi as a new stick wherewith to beat the programme and tactics of Bolshevism. It may not come amiss for those who have spoken and written critically on the Non-violent Non-Co-operation Movement in India, during the past two years, to add a few words to this controversy in an effort to shed new light on what is, after all, a dark subject for the majority of European intellectuals. It is not our present purpose to analyse the Non-Co-operation Movement here; this has been done exhaustively in two books by Manabendra Nath Roy, published in 1922 and 1923 (*India in Transition* and *One Year of Non-Co-operation; from Ahmedabad to Gaya*²). Therein the social forces underlying the Gandhi movement, as well as the significance and rôle of the latter upon Indian life as a whole, have been dealt with from the standpoint of historic materialism. Our immediate object is to take the articles of M. Rolland and to point out in them certain outstanding mis-statements of fact and consequent wrong conclusions which are in themselves sufficient to negate the whole force of his argument without going to the opposite extreme of declaring Gandhi to be that which he is not and never will be—a "true revolutionary," whether of the violent or non-violent variety.

M. Rolland is to be felicitated upon his praiseworthy study of the Gandhian polemics, and of his more or less accurate knowledge of the main course of events in Indian political life up to the time of Mr. Gandhi's incarceration. Such knowledge is rare in a European, and betrays a real interest in the subject on the

² The Vanguard Bookshop, Post Box 4336, Zurich, Switzerland.

part of this distinguished *savant* and *littérateur*. It is not his knowledge of the main events of Mr. Gandhi's spectacular career that we call in question, but his interpretation of those events to suit his own purposes. We regret that the first two articles on Mahatma Gandhi which he wrote have not come to our hands. We have only the final two, but they contain enough to prove that M. Rolland, in his enthusiasm for the new prophet that is to save the world, has taken too much for granted as to the rôle of Mr. Gandhi in the Indian Nationalist Movement, and has been too hasty in his conclusion, vital to prove his own thesis, that that movement has already attained its goal, or is indisputably about to do so, as a result of Mr. Gandhi's leadership, based upon the doctrine of suffering, sacrifice, and soul-force.

Let us touch briefly upon some of the threads of M. Rolland's arguments that all tend towards the main conclusion. In the first place he vastly over-estimates the success of the programme of Non-Co-operation in that which concerned the boycott of schools, law courts, and government posts and titles. The number of those resigning their places and titles under government was infinitesimal; the giving up of practice by lawyers was confined to a limited number of Congress politicians and patriots, for a very limited time. The majority returned to their practice before the year was ended. Only in the schools was there a notable response on the part of the young, enthusiastic, and idealistic students, and this was later acknowledged as one of the greatest mistakes of the whole campaign to bring these thousands of young men away from their studies without supplying them with any alternative means of study or of gaining a livelihood. This whole part of the Non-Co-operation programme has been such a recognised failure that it is no longer spoken of nor regarded as part of the national activities, although theoretically it has never been abandoned.

The boycott of foreign cloth and of liquor shops attained greater success, because here Mr. Gandhi and the Congress hit upon a means of directly attacking the government exchequer at its source. The boycott of liquor is not, as M. Rolland mistakenly observes, intended as a measure of "healthful discipline" and "necessary hygiene." On the contrary, it was an attempt to cut off one of the great sources of revenue of the Indian Government,

which retains control of the liquor traffic and reaps huge profits therefrom. The boycott and picketing of liquor shops was so largely successful in cutting off this source of Government revenue that huge deficits were admitted in that Department, and the Government energetically opposed itself to this side of the campaign from the very outset. As M. Rolland rightly observes, Mr. Gandhi deserves to be remembered as a social reformer long after his political triumphs and failures are forgotten. His plea for the removal of untouchability was a righteous one, but we cannot say with truth that it has attained any measure of practical fulfilment among those Hindu orthodox who constituted the chief followers of the Mahatmaji. Social revolutions are not made from above, but from below by the inexorable working of economic laws. Untouchability and caste will disappear from Indian society, and are disappearing, not as a result of the impassioned pleadings of a Mahatma, but because of the advent of industrialism and the break-up of patriarchal traditions.

The boycott of foreign cloth constituted the most important clause of the Non-Co-operation programme, not only because it coincided with Mr. Gandhi's reactionary social philosophy that decried the advent of modern civilisation and preached the cult of the spinning-wheel and homespun, but because the backbone of the Non-Co-operation Movement founded upon sacrifice, suffering, and soul-force was the native mill-owners, whose competition to Lancashire products was immensely stimulated by the preaching of the doctrine of boycott of foreign cloth and the wearing of *Swadeshi* (home-manufactured goods). It was the mill-owners of Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras who financed the Non-Co-operation Movement, who, together with the landlords of India, represent the rising bourgeoisie which insistently claims for itself a place in the sun. The Congress fund of one crore of rupees raised in 1921-22 was largely donated by the rising capitalist class of India, to whom the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms did not grant the economic expansion which it craved. This fund, largely on paper, constituted the string which controlled the activities and dictated the tactics of the Mahatmaji in critical moments; it lay behind his "address to the hooligans of Bombay and Madras"; it lay beneath his exhortation "not to make political use of the factory

workers; it constituted the real reason for his failure to declare mass civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes, and for his insistence on the tactics of non-violence and respect for law, order, and private property.

We do not make these statements for the sake of disillusioning M. Rolland as to the spiritual rôle of his new Messiah, but in the interests of truth and the correct interpretation of historical events. The proof for these statements can be found by referring to the list of contributors to the Tilak-Swaraj Fund, and to certain very interesting disclosures made by members of the Congress opposition on the manipulation of the Tilak-Swaraj Fund in the interests of Indian capitalism. It will be replied that Mr. Gandhi was not responsible for the sins of his followers, but Mr. Gandhi made himself responsible for them on innumerable occasions; does not M. Rolland himself exclaim: "He had become in truth the conscience of India." This was on the occasion of the riot of Chauri Chaura, when Mr. Gandhi for the last time repudiated mass-action and ordered the retreat from Bardoli, which every honest Indian now recognises to have been the greatest betrayal of the movement that could have been made.

The riot of Chauri Chaura and the right-about-face of Mr. Gandhi from the road that led to revolution back to the blind alley of reformism constitute the turning-point of his career and the acid test by which his whole philosophy will be judged by generations to come. Mr. Gandhi, after having for the third time declared the inauguration of mass civil disobedience, for which the Indian masses expectantly waited, for the third time retracted his order and disowned those simple followers who had taken him at his word. Not only did he urge the rioting peasants to deliver themselves up for judgment and make confession, but he stands personally responsible for the passing of the Bardoli resolutions in the face of his countrymen's opposition, which denounced, once and for all, all forms of aggressive action and limited the national activities to weaving, spinning, and praying. Here stands the revolutionary exposed in his true colours as a timid social reformer, terrified at the greatness of the movement he was called upon to lead, and endeavouring vainly to crush it within the limits of his own reactionary philosophy.

The result of Chauri Chaura and the shameful retreat of Bardoli, which M. Rolland describes as "an act of exceptional moral value," was the condemnation of 228 peasants to death by hanging for the crime of having attempted to better their miserable condition (a sentence whose barbarity put even the British Government in India to shame and was later reduced to nineteen death sentences); and the temporary dislocation of the whole Non-Co-operation Movement, followed by the arrest of its leader, and wholesale Government repression and police terrorism throughout the length and breadth of India. But Mr. Gandhi never flinched from his resolution and the Bardoli "Constructive Programme," which enjoins upon the Indian peasants to pay rent to the Zemindars (landlords), and assures the latter that the Non-Co-operation Movement in no way attacks their property rights, remains the measuring stick by which to judge Mr. Gandhi's status as revolutionary or reformer.

"Why did the Government arrest Gandhi?" inquires M. Rolland, naïvely. And he replies, "Because his non-violence was more revolutionary than all violence." M. Rolland is once more mistaken. The British Government in India arrested Mr. Gandhi because it realised that his hold upon the country, and by country we mean the rebellious masses, was so weakened that it could safely put him away without awakening any great popular resentment. And such in fact is the case. The silence that fell upon India at the arrest of the Mahatmaji was not the triumphant vindication of the philosophy of soul-force, nor the disciplined obedience of the masses to the injunctions of their leader, but the acquiescence of the multitudes in the arrest of a leader who had ceased to lead them; whose repeated acts of betrayal of the true interests of the rebellious workers had cut him and the Nationalist Movement as a whole completely off from the dynamics of mass-action.

Never did M. Rolland speak more truly than when he refers to the vast upheavals of the Indian proletariat and peasantry as "having only the slightest connection with the Non-Co-operation Movement." The great mass-awakening that shook the Indian continent at the close of the war, and which came as a result of many world-factors as well as internal economic forces, coincided

with the rise of the aggressive campaign of Non-violent Non-Co-operation, but was not synonymous with it, nor even identified with it until Mr. Gandhi, by dint of his compelling personality and instinctive political sagacity, succeeded in welding the two together into a temporary and artificial unity, much as he succeeded in binding together the Hindu-Mussulman communities. Not by means of an honest, straightforward programme of social and economic emancipation for the Indian masses, even at the expense of the propertied classes, but by means of playing upon the religious superstitions and susceptibilities of the ignorant and illiterate workers and peasants, to whom "Gandhi Raj" was promised within one year and to whom "Gandhi Raj" meant non-payment of rent and taxes and access to land with better living and working conditions for the exploited city proletariat—thus did the Mahatma win his ascendancy over the rebellious mass-movement and seek to combine it with that of the bourgeois intellectuals and propertied classes for an increased share in the exploitation of these same Indian masses.

But such tactics, depending upon the compelling personality of one man and the religious frenzy of the multitudes, were built upon sand. After repeated and innumerable betrayals at the hands of their bourgeois leaders, the Indian workers and peasants have fallen away from the Nationalist struggle and have resumed their interrupted fight for better wages, fewer hours of work, better living conditions, and the amelioration of their desperate economic condition. The divorce of mass-energy from the Non-Co-operation Movement, signed and sealed by the Bardoli decisions repudiating all aggressive tactics and forbidding the declaration of civil disobedience, resulted in the collapse of the latter, and delivered it over as an easy prey into the hands of the waiting Government. The only strength of the movement had lain in its backing by the rebellious masses; it was the threat of direct action on a nationwide scale, of which the demonstrations and *hatisals* during the visit of the Prince of Wales were but a foretaste, that made the Government stay its hand so long. It was only when the movement rendered itself impotent by repudiating all mass-action that the Government lifted its hand and struck with deadly ferocity.

As a result of the Bardoli retreat the Indian movement was

thrown back into hopeless confusion, from which it is only just recovering, slowly and painfully. The arrest of Mr. Gandhi assisted this recovery by removing what had proved to be a force making for reaction and leaving the field clear for new leaders to take his place. M. Rolland is mistaken in observing that "the Movement has victoriously resisted the redoubtable test of the first year without a guide." There have been guides—able and competent ones, who sprang to take the place of those removed from the scene of action. Mr. C. R. Das, late President of the All-Indian National Congress, and founder of the Swaraj Party, is the acknowledged successor of Mr. Gandhi as an All-India leader. He has snatched the fallen standard and is carrying it forward in the struggle between Indian bourgeois nationalism and British Imperialism—a struggle which is destined to be a long one, and which M. Rolland is far too sanguine in declaring: "It appears certain that Indian Home Rule is no longer in question; in one shape or another it is inevitable. India has conquered—morally!"

In that final word lies the whole crux of the dispute at issue. To M. Rolland the gigantic struggle that is convulsing the Indian continent to-day is a moral battle between the forces of good and evil, between the Adversary and the Hosts of Heaven. Mr. Gandhi is the new Messiah who has appeared to lead this spiritual warfare, waged not only on behalf of India, but of the entire world. India's triumph will be a world triumph of the forces of light over darkness, of spirit over matter, of God over Satan. With such a conception of the Indian struggle for freedom we have nothing to do; it embodies the exaggerated subjectivism of the disillusioned post-war intellectual, flying to the realm of metaphysics to escape from the cruel logic of facts and realities. For the scientific Marxist, who conceives the world to be built upon economic forces, subject to material laws, such a conception has all the grotesque mediævalism of the gargoyle, and we conceive of the minds of these sentimental idealists as full of such gargoyles—unreal, grinning, and out of tune with the age in which we live. They cease to be romantic curiosities and become dangerous when they seek to put their conceptions to political use—and the exploitation of Mr. Gandhi in the interests of counter-revolutionary pacifism

is such a political application of these ideas. M. Rolland and the whole school of Spiritual Imperialists, who hold that the world is to be redeemed by soul-force, self-sacrifice, and suffering, are endeavouring to use Mr. Gandhi as a proof of their own thesis that Europe has brought about its own annihilation by the use of violence, of which Bolshevism is the final and concentrated form making for ultimate destruction of all that remains of European culture and civilisation. India, they declare, has been saved by the use of spiritual weapons—let Europe emulate India's example and save herself.

The argument sounds convincing till we examine its premises and find them false. India is not yet saved; she is still struggling to pull herself out of the slough of economic backwardness, social degeneration, and political subjection—all more or less contingent one upon the other. Her present struggle is a very material one for land and bread. It is for this that the peasants of the Punjab, the United Provinces, Bengal, Madras, and the whole of India have shed their blood; it is for this that the rising proletariat has organised great strikes of months' duration, often at the cost of freedom and even life. It was for this that the Indian workers and peasants followed the Mahatmaji, and when he repudiated this goal it was for this that they left him, to resume the struggle on the economic field, eschewing political action. The political struggle, which will enthrone the Indian bourgeoisie in a living partnership with the Imperial overlord, is far from finished; but the lines of class-cleavage in Indian society grow every day more marked, and the development of the class-struggle side by side with the Nationalist one, and often antagonistic to it, is ever more distinguishable. In this struggle Mr. Gandhi definitely aligned himself on the side of the bourgeoisie; and however much of a religious prophet he may be, however largely he may figure as a social reformer, and despite his really great contribution to the progress of Indian nationalism in the field of agitation and organisation in the future development of the Indian revolutionary movement, Mr. Gandhi must be counted among the counter-revolutionaries and not, as M. Barbusse mistakenly supposes, among true revolutionaries. He it was who conceived of the brilliant tactics of aggressive Non-

Co-operation, based upon non-payment of rent and taxes; he it was who found an outlet for the movement by the slogan of Non-violence; he it was who for the first time carried the idea of Swaraj among the Indian masses. But it was equally he who, frightened by the shadow of revolution that hung over the land; alarmed at the threat to the established order which such a revolution implied; terrified at the thought of bloodshed and his own inability to control the forces of mass-energy once aroused—it was equally he who sought to beat back this rising tide of revolution by repudiating those very forces which he was called upon to lead.

The tired intellectuals of Europe may look to the East in search of a new Messiah, destined to appear miraculously to save them from the clutches of reality. But to all honest revolutionaries who understand the real forces that underlie such great movements as the Russian and Indian revolutions, all talk about “spiritual warfare,” and the triumph of non-violence over violence, is dismissed as the babble of children or the fevered eloquence of intellectual degeneration in search of new illusions. Mr. Gandhi sought to pit his individual philosophy and moral scruples against the armed might of the greatest power in existence—the British Empire—and he inevitably failed. But he would not have failed so miserably had he been gifted with the revolutionary understanding which places economic forces and material laws above the weakness of the individual, and had relied upon the resistless power of the Indian masses to fight their way to freedom. Mr. Gandhi sought to interpose his own will between the Indian masses and this inevitable struggle, and was swept aside to make way for others better able to interpret the imperative needs of the movement. Well for him that he is canonised by the disillusioned, post-war intellectualism of the West.

THE TRADES UNION CONGRESS AND WORKERS' EDUCATION

By MARK STARR

AMONG other things to be discussed at Plymouth will be the report of the General Council's Education Sub-Committee. Whether its recommendations be accepted or not the material the Sub-Committee has gathered in its investigation makes the time opportune for (a) a summary of the present position, and (b) a restatement of the differences between the various bodies operating in this field, all anxious to secure T.U.C. support.

Interest began at the Congress held at Cardiff (1921) where the following resolution was adopted :—

That this Congress is of opinion the time has arrived when the Trade Union Movement should consider the best means of providing for the educational needs of its members. It declares that the recommendations of the Trade Union Education Inquiry Committee offer the basis of a scheme whereby the varied educational needs and demands of Trade Unionists may be met.

It, therefore, instructs the General Council to co-operate with the Trade Union Education Inquiry Committee as to the best means of giving effect to the aims and objects of the inquiry, including the taking over and running of existing Trade Union Colleges, including the Central Labour College and Ruskin College.

This was sent round to the affiliated bodies with questions to find out what was being, or going to be, done, and to ask for opinions on the possibility of a joint scheme as implied in the resolution. Printed with these questions were particulars of the recommendations of the T.U. Education Inquiry Committee and the favoured Workers' Educational Trade Union Committee—of which body, more later. In addition to the bodies given below, representatives were met' from the Co-operative Union and the Working Men's Club and Institute Union.

In the Report to the Southport Congress (1922) all these bodies were listed as willing to participate in any scheme *provided it did not essentially interfere with their policy*. However, the General

Council was dissatisfied with existing facilities, even if an all-inclusive scheme could be made. It favoured the specialised education to train T.U. branch officials, and local and national political and industrial representatives, and quoted the Syllabus of the German Trade Union Federation as its model. The Report made reference to the untouched problems of the education of adolescents, apprentices, women, seamen and rural workers, and laid it down that it was necessary "to develop a strong working-class sentiment throughout the movement, supported and made intelligent by such a body of knowledge as will deepen the conviction that industry and society must be organised and run in the interests of the community, and that this can only be accomplished through the growth and development of the workers' own organisations and institutions." In simpler words, that the workers must educate themselves to destroy capitalism.

An ideal Inclusive Scheme concluded the report. It was hoped to influence the Board of Education to recognise the Unions as an education authority for their members. The W.E.A. and Ruskin College have received State grants without interference, so have Works Schools run by, and for, the employers. Why then, in the name of logic, cannot the T.U.C. set up an organisation which would use public funds in every possible case.

However, the recommendations accepted were for the General Council to continue negotiations, and to be empowered to take over Ruskin College, the Labour Colleges, and the W.E.T.U.C., provided that involved no increase in affiliation fees.

The negotiations were continued and the Joint Committee (members of General Council and of T.U. Inquiry Committee) co-opted, in a consultative capacity, representatives of the following educational bodies :—

GROUP A (RESIDENTIAL) : *Labour College, London*.—Jointly owned and financed by the National Union of Railwaymen and the South Wales Miners' Federation.

Ruskin College, Oxford.—Supported by various trade unions, the Co-operative Union, and the Club and Institute Union. (This College receives additional income from Government grants and other sources.)

GROUP B (NON-RESIDENTIAL) : *National Council of Labour Colleges*.—To which are affiliated the Labour College, London, the Scottish Labour College, the Plebs League, forty-four provincial

non-residential Labour colleges, the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers, and by the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers for whom it is organising a scheme of classes throughout the country.

Workers' Educational Trade Union Committee.—A body formed to work the Educational Scheme established by the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation. Controlled and financed by the Confederation, the Railway Clerks' Association, the Union of Post Office Workers, and the Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen.

The Scottish Labour College.—This body, in addition to the usual class work, provides for full time bursary students. The principal Unions supporting it are the Lanarkshire Miners, Fife Miners and Mid and East Lothian Miners, Scottish Shale Miners, and the national Unions of the N.C.L.C.

All the above were willing to become part of the Congress scheme with the stipulations, in the case of the N.C.L.C., of freedom to compete for T.U. branch affiliations, either against the W.E.T.U.C. or the W.E.A., and in the case of the Labour College of the continuance of its present policy and curriculum.

In regard to Group A it was found that the approximate yearly maintenance cost of the board and tuition of ninety students (fifty at Ruskin, forty at the Labour College) would be not less than £47,000, which would be increased when the Scottish L.C. resumed its pre-war day tuition. Hence, the Committee could not recommend taking over while its hands are tied in the matter of calling in further support.

The evidence collected by Group B revealed a remarkable growth in the adult workers' education movement. The N.C.L.C. reported for the winter session 1922-23 :—

<i>Evening Classes</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Whole-time tutors</i>	<i>Voluntary tutors</i>
529	11,998	15	250

There were no separate figures given for the W.E.T.U.C., but the W.E.A., of which it is a part, claims to have enrolled not less than 22,000 students, some of whom have undertaken three year courses of planned study. Although in relation to the eleven to twelve millions of British workers the total may seem small, it must be remembered the N.C.L.C. classes specialise in subjects of direct importance to the workers, and the number of students actually attending classes is no measure of the influence of this work.

In addition to the above investigations, G. D. H. Cole and

J. W. Bowen (U.P.W.) presented a report upon "The Education of Young Workers," which advocated the provision of young workers' clubs with sports, popular talks and lectures, libraries, dramatic and rambling groups, choirs, and such like. Obviously, without enlarged and revived Trades Councils to take over the running of these activities, little is likely to be done. The report will only have eased the conscience of the General Council.

This is the summary of recommendations which Congress will be asked to accept :—

- (1) That the time is not yet opportune for giving full effect to paragraph (b) of the Southport Congress resolution, but that the General Council through the Joint Education Committee shall continue its efforts by consultation with representatives of working-class educational bodies for the purpose of co-ordinating such activities, and with a view to giving full effect to the provisions of the Southport resolutions.
- (2) That the General Council call a conference of representatives of affiliated unions which have provided or contemplate the provision of educational facilities for their members with a view to developing a united purpose and policy in trade union educational work.
- (3) That pending the General Council being able to submit a practical scheme of educational work as required by paragraph (e) of the Southport Congress resolution, the Council be empowered to create a special educational fund by (a) a grant from the Trades Union Congress funds up to a maximum of £1,000 per annum, and (b) by such voluntary grants as may be obtained from the affiliated unions in response to an appeal to be issued by the Council. The fund thus created to be available for assisting such working-class educational institutions as may be approved by the General Council.
- (4) That special consideration be given by the Joint Committee to the educational needs of women trade unionists.
- (5) That the recommendations with regard to the question of education for young workers be endorsed.

Now Congress in discussing this should be as well informed as possible upon the difference between the bodies which it is proposed to link into an all-inclusive scheme. It will not be good enough to belittle the very real difference, or make easy and superficial analogies between the squabbles of religious sects and the division between the W.E.A. and the N.C.L.C. Probably Congress will vote, in the name of "fairness," to support both in order to avoid

the problem of settling between them, but that does not lessen the need of understanding.

As it happens the T.U. Inquiry Committee (save one member) and also its parent, the W.E.T.U.C., and many prominent members of the General Council are already on the side of the W.E.A. Mr. J. M. Mactavish, Secretary of the W.E.A., acts with Mr. Fred Bramley as secretary of the Joint Committee (*i.e.*, the Subcommittee of T.U.C. General Council *plus* the T.U. Inquiry Committee).

The differences between the two bodies are as follows : (a) Source of support, financial and moral ; (b) attitude towards the Universities ; (c) purpose of the educational work.

In regard to (a) : The W.E.A. receives assistance from the bequests of Sir E. Cassel, and its classes depend upon the grants made by State education authorities. Among recent tributes to its usefulness is that of Lord Inchcape (quoted in *The Work of the Seafarers' Education Service*, p. 18). Ruskin College (affiliated to the W.E.A.) was able a few years ago to get an appeal for its support signed by A. J. Balfour, Robert S. Horne, and Lloyd George. And in last June its Principal got Mr. Fisher (ex-Minister of Education), in withdrawing the charge of "reading nothing but Marx at Ruskin College," to pay a tribute to its "excellent work." Like the W.E.A. it accepts State grants and "non-political" bodies find it a safe place for their students. It is not mere coincidence that many of those working for "harmony" in adult workers' education are also prominent in the Alliance of Employers and Employed.

Regarding (b) the controversy in the *Daily Herald* (June 13, 1923) was very significant. The W.E.A. believes in linking the Universities' teachers with the classes of the worker. One writer, from Jesus College, in the *Herald* controversy opined that "for every undergraduate who is feeling the social conscience awakening within, there are at least twenty who are assiduously cultivating the Fascist temper." There are also the Parliamentary election results in those places. It seems the teachers should begin at home. We have not yet descended to the state depicted in Sinclair's *The Goose Step*, but unconscious bias can be seen even in the books of the so-called progressive elements in the Universities. No wonder even

the T.U.C. Report (Southport) said : " Universities do not always provide the best atmosphere for training such teachers," *i.e.*, for T.U. classes.

In the matter of (c) the W.E.A. indulges in " uplift " talk about " developing individual character " and " the exercise of social rights and responsibilities," while the N.C.L.C. advocates the independent education of the workers in social science in order to destroy wage-slavery.

It deserves and needs special T.U. support just because it cannot expect help from the State so long as it is under capitalist control.

In one case an education authority did make a grant to a N.C.L.C. class, but it was not repeated, and in most cases it is difficult even to hire the school buildings.

They who would sup with the devil need a long spoon ; so do those who accept help from vested interests to educate the workers.

The T.U.C. stands at the parting of the ways in workers' education, as it has stood before in political and industrial matters. The road of independence is more difficult, but its end is not in doubt.

FURTHER SELECTIONS *from the* LITERARY REMAINS OF KARL MARX

Translated and Annotated by MAX BEER

VIII

MARX'S SPEECH OF DEFENCE BEFORE THE COLOGNE JURY, 1849¹

ON February 9, 1849, Marx stood on trial before the Cologne jury, charged with having incited the people to sedition in his public appeal of November 18, 1848, calling upon the Rhenish population to refuse to pay taxes and to arm themselves against the Prussian authorities. For the understanding of the whole conflict the following remarks may be serviceable.

The German middle-class revolution broke out in March, 1848. On March 18, the Prussian Guards were beaten in the streets of Berlin. King Friedrich Wilhelm IV promised a constitution, but called the old United Diet together, the majority of which consisted of feudal nobles and landed proprietors, to legislate for the coming Prussian National Assembly and to prepare an "Agreement" between the Crown and the people. The Diet fulfilled its duty in its legislation of April 6 and 8, 1848. At the same time a Liberal Cabinet, with the bankers Camphanson and Hansemann at the head, prepared the elections for the National Assembly. On May 22, the Assembly was opened, but proved powerless or inefficient to secure freedom for the people as against the Crown and the army. None the less, the Assembly was a thorn in the side of the old powers, and it was violently dispersed in the middle of November, 1848, by General Wrangel's troops. Hence the call of Marx to active resistance. The Public Prosecutor, arguing from the laws of April 6 and 8, which were passed by the United Diet, demanded severe punishment of the accused, but the Cologne jury brought in a verdict of "Not guilty." Marx's speech took over two hours in delivery; its purpose was to arraign the Prussian authorities, to explain to the German bourgeoisie the meaning of its own revolution, and to encourage it to carry on the revolutionary work to its logical conclusion—a middle-class democratic republic.

We take from Marx's speech the following passages:—

"How did the laws of April 6 and 8, 1848, come about? By the co-operation of the Government and United Diet. In this way they thought to give continuity to the legal state of things and to patch up the break caused by the revolution, which had just put

¹ *Karl Marx vor den Kölner Geschworenen*. Hottingen, Zurich, 1886.

an end to that legal state of things. . . . For, what was the United Diet? The representation of old and decayed social conditions. The revolution which had taken place had no other aim but to bury the old society. And this representation of a defeated society was called upon to give organic laws which should recognise, regulate, and organise the achievements of the revolution against that very same old society! What absurd contradiction! The United Diet was overthrown together with the personal monarchy. How, then, could it legislate? Whence came the idea of allowing the United Diet, the representative of the old society, to dictate laws to the National Assembly, the representation of the new society born in the revolution?

“In reply to those questions it is stated that that was done in order to uphold the legal foundation of society. But, Gentlemen of the Jury, what do the old authorities mean when they argue in favour of upholding the legal foundation of society? They mean to maintain laws that sprang from the conditions of a past society and which were made by the representatives of obsolescent or past social interests, and which are therefore in opposition to the interests and needs of the new society.

“Society does not rest upon Law. This is a juridical fiction.

“Just the reverse is the truth. Law rests upon society; it must be the expression of the general interests that spring from the material production of a given society against the arbitrariness of any single individual.

“Here, the code of laws, which I hold in my hands, has not created modern civil society. It just happened the other way. The civil society that arose in the eighteenth and developed in the nineteenth century found its legal expression in the code. As soon as it ceases to correspond with the social conditions, the code will be as effete as wastepaper.

“You cannot make the old laws into the foundation of new social developments. They issued from the old conditions, and they must go down with the old society. And they necessarily change with the changing conditions of life. To maintain the old laws against the needs and claims of new social developments amounts really to the hypocritical assertion of obsolete exclusive interests against the interests of all.

“ This plea for the upholding of the legal foundation intends to make those exclusive interests into ruling interests, while they are no more ruling; its purpose is to subject society to laws which are condemned by the very conditions of life of this society, that is, by its manner of creating the means of life, its trade and commerce, its material production. It aims at maintaining the function of legislators who but pursue their own exclusive interests, that is, at going on misusing national power in order to make the interests of an obsolescent minority have precedence of the interests of the majority. It is therefore in opposition to current needs; it impedes development; it prepares social crises, which eventually find their solution in explosive eruptions, in political earthquakes or revolutions.

“ That is the true meaning of the plea for upholding the legal foundation. . . .

“ Gentlemen of the Jury, let us not deceive ourselves as to the nature of the struggle which broke out in March, and which was later on continued between the National Assembly and the Crown. Do not imagine it to be one of those usual contests between the Front Bench and the Opposition, or a fight between politicians who are Ministers and politicians who want to be Ministers. It is quite likely that some members of the Assembly imagine themselves to be involved in such sham fights. The position is, however, not decided by the opinion of those members, but by the historic rôle of the National Assembly as it issued from the March revolution. We have to do not with a political conflict of two parliamentary parties based on the same social principles, but with a conflict of two societies, a social conflict which has assumed a political form. . . . The political expression of the old society was the Crown by the grace of God, an independent army, a hectoring bureaucracy. The social basis of this political power was the privileged landed property. . . . The National Assembly, on the other hand, represents modern society, with its manufacturing and commercial basis, the political expression of which is Parliamentary government, the subordination of the State machinery, that is, public finance, the army, the bureaucracy, &c., to the needs of material production and circulation. Modern society knows no caste-like Estates of the Realm, but classes, formally equal before

the law. Its progressive development depends on the conflict of classes.

“ Royalty by the grace of God, the supreme political expression of the old feudal-bureaucratic society, can never make real concessions to modern society. Its instinct of self-preservation, the interests of the Estates who stand behind it, will continually impel it to withdraw the concessions, to reassert its old glory, to risk a counter-revolution!

“ *After a revolution, the counter-revolution is the vital urge of the defeated Crown, the defeated power. This urge will continually operate and renew itself. But the new society cannot rest unless the official and traditional machinery, by means of which the old society forcibly reasserts itself, in short, unless the State thereof is demolished and removed.*”

IX

MARX ON THE VITAL POINTS OF HIS *CAPITAL*

In the years 1850-1870 Marx and his friend Friedrich Engels lived apart—the former in London, the latter in Manchester. Marx kept him well posted with information regarding the progress of his *Capital*. He was particularly anxious to initiate him into his work, so that Engels might spread the doctrine and continue the mission to which Marx devoted his life. The letters which they exchanged on economic, philosophical, literary, and political subjects contain a great deal of information on the various questions treated in *Capital*. They were published in four volumes under the title *Briefwechsel zwischen Engels und Marx* (Stuttgart, 1912-1913). For the purpose of showing what Marx himself thought of his main achievement in economics, we quote the following from Marx's letters, dated August 24, 1867, and January 8, 1868, respectively:—

“ The best thing in my book (*Capital*, vol. 1)—and on it depends the proper comprehension of the meaning of wage-labour—is, first, the treatment of the two-fold nature of labour, according to the circumstances in which it expresses itself as use-value or exchange-value. Secondly, the treatment of surplus-value is done independently of the special forms, such as profit, interest, rent, &c. This will be shown particularly in the second volume of *Capital*. The treatment of this subject by the classical economists, who mix up the special forms with their general source, is an *olla podrida*.”

“ I read Dühring's review of *Capital*. . . . It is curious that the fellow did not perceive the fundamentally new elements of the book. They are as follows:—

“(1) In contradistinction to all former economists, who from the onset treat the various fractions of surplus-value, in their fixed forms of rent, profit, interest, as something self-evident, as economic categories which need no explanation and no tracing back to their origin, I deal first with the source from which they spring, namely, surplus-value, in which they are still, so to speak, in solution.

“(2) All former economists, without exception, failed to notice that if a commodity has use-value and exchange-value, then also the labour which is embodied in the commodity has a two-fold nature, namely, use-value and exchange-value. The mere reduction of the commodity to labour *sans phrase*, as it is done by Smith, Ricardo, &c., must involve us in an inextricable tangle. The recognition of this point is the whole secret of the critical attitude towards political economy.

“(3) The wages of labour are, for the first time, revealed in my book to be an irrational form, behind which is concealed the social relation between the exploiters and exploited. I demonstrated this relation in both forms of wages—time and piece wages.”

It may perhaps be advisable to give some commentary on those points, which Marx regards as vital to an understanding of his critical attitude. And I can do this best by starting with the two-fold nature of value.

According to the economists who wrote before Marx, the worker received for his labour a certain quantity of means of subsistence or wages sufficient to replace the labour he has expended in the work; the capitalist and the worker exchange equivalent values, one gives a certain quantity of labour, the other a corresponding quantity of means of sustenance. The pre-Marxian economists believed to have disposed of the whole wage problem by showing that the economic relation between employer and employee was based on the law governing the exchange of values.

Then Marx came in and argued, You, political economists, have shown that all commodities have a use-value and an exchange-value. You have further shown that labour is a commodity. If so, then labour must also have a use-value and exchange-value. The capitalist, as a matter of fact, buys the use-value of the commodity labour power, which has this remarkable quality that it produces exchange-value far in excess of its use-value or the wage paid for it.

Now, this excess is surplus-value, the source from which profit, interest, and rent are drawn, or from which all non-productive members of society are fed and clothed and housed. While the pre-Marxian economists, Petty, Smith, Ricardo, &c., did not particularly inquire into or had no consistent

view of the source of profit and interest or did not distinguish between surplus labour and profit, &c., Marx looked, above all, for the source which supplies the accretions of capital, and then showed the distribution of that surplus value, in the form of profit, interest, and rent, among the various classes of society. The only economic category which was much investigated was rent, but only because it constituted a surprofit. Ricardo's problem was not as to source of rent *per se*, but as to its nature of surprofit, or how did it come about that land yielded a profit to the farmer as well as to the owner ?

As to point (3) concerning wages as an irrational form, it will be best to refer the reader to Marx's *Capital*, vol. I, pp. 590-592 (English edition, Chicago, Kerr & Co., 1921), where it is shown that under the appearance of wages, which are supposed to be the value of labour, there is concealed the domination of Capital over Labour. The wage which is but a compensation for the expenditure of labour power, and therefore only for a certain fraction of the working day, appears as the value or the price of the whole working day, which thus includes also that fraction of the working day which is not paid for.

“The wage-form thus extinguishes every trace of the division of the working day into paid and unpaid labour. All labour appears as paid labour. Under villeinage, the labour of the worker for himself and his compulsory labour for the lord differ in space and time in the clearest possible way. In slave labour, even that part of the working day in which the slave is only replacing the value of his own means of existence, in which, therefore, he works for himself alone, appears as labour for his master. All the slave's labour appears as unpaid labour. In wage-labour, on the contrary, even surplus labour or unpaid labour appears as paid. There the property relation conceals the labour of the slave for himself; here the money relation, the cash nexus, conceals the unrequited labour of the wage-labourer. Hence we may understand the decisive importance of the transformation of value and price of labour-power into the form of wages, or into the value and price of labour itself. This phenomenal form, which makes the actual relation invisible, and indeed shows the direct opposite of that relation, forms the basis of all the legal notions of both labourer and capitalist, of all the mystifications of the capitalist mode of production, of all its illusions as to liberty, of all the apologetic shifts of the vulgar economists.”

(The earlier instalments of this series of Max Beer's annotated selections from the literary remains of Karl Marx appeared in the July and August issues of the LABOUR MONTHLY (Vol. V, Nos. 1 and 2), which can be ordered through any newsagent or obtained direct for 8d. each post free, or both for 1s. 3d., from the Publisher, at 162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W. 1.)

The World of Labour

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GEORGIA

Manifesto of Ex-Mensheviks

IN view of the opinion generally held, and supported so passionately by certain prominent Labour parliamentarians, that the masses of the Georgian population are groaning under a hated foreign yoke, the following manifesto (reproduced verbatim) should prove of interest. It emanates from a conference of former rank-and-file members of the Menshevik Party, recently held at Tiflis. Eighteen hundred Tiflis workers sent delegates to this conference, the majority of whom were old militants of the Menshevik Party.

For some months past there have been numerous letters in the Tiflis Press from ex-Mensheviks declaring their entire dissociation from the counter-revolutionary policy of the Menshevik *émigrés*—Jordania, Tseretelli, and their like. The disgust of the rank-and-file Menshevik workers with their some time leaders also found striking expression at a delegate meeting of Tiflis railwaymen in April last. The whole assembly resigned *en bloc* from the Menshevik Party.

The accompanying manifesto is therefore to be taken as one of the culminating points in a process that has been continuing for some time. That process may be described as the liquidation of the counter-revolutionary elements in Russian socialism, the liquidation of the S.R.'s and the Mensheviks. Already the liquidation of the S.R.'s has been completed at the Moscow conference of S.R. members on March 18 of this year : and the most remarkable symbol of the liquidation of Menshevism is the rallying to the Soviet Government and the conversion to Communism of the outstanding Menshevik leader, Martinov.

To the International Proletariat

Comrades, workers! The Tiflis Conference of former members of the Menshevik Party has decided to dissolve its organisation and to rally to the banner of the Communist International.

The Central Committee of the Georgian Menshevik Party has accused us of deserting our Party under fear of coercion and persecution by the Tcheka.

Comrades, before the working class of the whole world we repel this accusation. The Georgian Menshevik Party is being left, not by isolated individuals, but by the masses of workers and peasants, who, during the long years of the Tsarist regime, took part in underground revolutionary action. No one will dare to accuse these masses, who have sacrificed everything for the revolution, who did not blench before Tsarism, before penal servitude, and before torture, of changing their political convictions out of cowardice.

The workers and peasants do not study in universities, but in the day to day struggle, which teaches us that our place is no longer in the Menshevik Party. This Party, which

won its laurels during the first Russian Revolution, when we were struggling against the autocracy, laid down its arms, during the world war, in common with the rest of the Second International, before the imperialist bourgeoisie. After the October Revolution the Georgian Menshevik Party definitely entered on the path of counter-revolution, under cover of the struggle for Georgian independence.

Comparing the conduct of the Menshevik Government with that of the Georgian Soviet Government, we see the first forcing the working class to bow to the yoke of the bourgeoisie, and the second showing the working class the true path to Socialism. That is why we have decided to leave the Menshevik Party.

Our former Menshevik leaders, *émigrés* abroad, spread the myth that the Moscow Communists conquered Georgia for imperialist ends, forcibly occupying the country and suppressing its independence. The reformists help in the diffusion of this myth in order to lead the workers of Western Europe away from Communism.

Comrades, workers! This myth is a mixture of truths that deceive and plain lies.

Our former leaders hide from you the fact that up to the October Revolution they were Russian patriots, standing, in opposition to the Bolsheviks, for "great Russia," one and indivisible. As adversaries of the Russian Federal Republic, they vehemently reproached Lenin with his so-called defeatism, his contribution to the dismemberment of "great Russia," his campaign for the freeing of the oppressed nationalities of Russia, for their right of self-determination and even of separation. Our leaders only became the protagonists of Georgian independence after the October Revolution, solely in order to separate themselves from the Soviets, and not concealing that, immediately the Soviet power was overthrown, Georgia would become part of the Russian State once again.

Our former leaders hide from you, comrades, the fact that while the Menshevik Party was in power, Georgia in reality only possessed the shadow of independence. The Georgian Menshevik Government at first had to act under the orders of the German generals, the defenders of the Georgian landowners, and later under those of the English generals, who only tolerated Georgian independence in so far as the Menshevik Government supported the Entente in the struggle against the Soviets by helping in the recruiting of the Denikin and Wrangel armies.

Our former Menshevik leaders are lying when they say that the Communists of Moscow occupied Georgia for imperialist ends. We know that the Communists of Moscow, Lenin and Trotzky, were opposed to the entry of the Red Army into Georgia. The Georgian Communists took the initiative in bringing the Red Army into Georgia, and then confronted their comrades of Moscow with the *fait accompli*. They did this, we now see, from truly patriotic motives.

The Georgian Communists could not bear that Georgia, with such a glorious revolutionary past, should be transformed into an instrument of counter-revolution, of imperialist machinations against the Soviet power, into an open arena for various nationalist conflicts.

Finally, our former leaders give a totally distorted view of the results of the sovietisation of Georgia. The Georgian Menshevik Government deprived Georgia of its sources of wheat supply by the separation from Soviet Russia. To-day, under Soviet Government, the Georgian workers and peasants are no longer troubled by famine. The Georgian Menshevik Government, whose members changed suddenly from Russian patriots to Georgian chauvinists, excited nationalist passions, and provoked ceaseless internecine strife between the Georgians, Armenians, Abkhazians, Adjarians, &c. The Soviet Government put an end to this strife, and re-established peace throughout Transcaucasia. The Georgian Menshevik Government, while forming a united front with the feudal and bourgeois nationalists against "the Russian barbarians," did not dare to apply even its own modest agrarian programme. The Soviet Government, in the year following its advent, confiscated for the benefit

of the peasants the land of the big proprietors. Under the Menshevik Government in Georgia the eight-hour day only existed on paper. Under the Soviet regime the workers everywhere work only eight hours, or even, if the conditions of labour are too severe, the working day is reduced to six hours.

Our former leaders used to frighten us by saying that when the Bolsheviks came they would put the land to fire and sword, destroying and ruining Georgian civilisation. Actually it was the Menshevik Guard (whose name was changed by the English from Red Guard to National Guard, and which was chiefly composed of bourgeois elements) which ruthlessly burnt down villages while suppressing the revolts of national minorities. These crimes are publicly admitted by their author, Djugelli, in his *Diary*. And the National Guard committed these violences despite the protests of those workers who were in its ranks.

Everyone admits that the Red Army, in contrast to the Menshevik National Guard, has always behaved in the most exemplary manner in Georgia. When the Menshevik Government left Georgia it destroyed bridges and removed money and valuables. The Soviet Government, far from taking anything, shared its meagre resources with the Georgian Republic in order to help in the economic reconstruction of Georgia; and no one will deny that, in two years, the Soviet power has done much in this direction. For instance: the repairing of roads, the rebuilding of bridges, the construction of new railway lines, the building of five electric power stations, the restoration of the Tchatak foundries, the re-fitting of the spas of Borjom and Abastouman, the setting up, with Russian materials, of silk manufacture, the opening of People's Palaces, of rest homes, of kindergartens, of workers' faculties, the publication and distribution of Marxist literature in the Georgian language, &c. All this is not Russification, but contributes to the development of Georgian national culture.

The sovietisation of Georgia has been fatal only to the bourgeoisie, to the priests, to the landowners. The Georgian workers and peasants are only now beginning to breathe freely. Having seen what the Soviet regime is like, they are very naturally leaving the Menshevik Party *en masse*, in spite of the deep-rootedness of Menshevism in Georgia, and of the great services it formerly rendered to the revolution.

To conclude, comrades, we are desirous that our experience should assist you to discern the path which leads the working class to its own emancipation: that of the reformist Menshevik Second International, or the revolutionary path of the Communist International. We have made our decision once and for all.

The Menshevik Government, despite the protests of the majority of our party organisations, replaced the Red Flag on the Palace at Tiflis by the national tricolour. The Soviet Government has hoisted anew the Red Flag, and we swear to defend it against both the open enemies and the pretended friends of the working class.

Long Live the Socialist Revolution!

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Federated Farmer-Labour Party

The Chicago Convention

ON July 3, 4, and 5 the Convention of the Farmer-Labour Party met in Chicago. This Convention marked the most recent stage in the movement for the establishment of an independent political party of Labour in the United States. During the past three years this movement has been steadily gaining in strength, despite many reverses. It has been struggling against middle-class "radicalism" and against the hesitation of the leaders of the movement whenever it came to the point of actually establishing a Labour Party and beginning a great political drive among the industrial and agricultural masses. The Cleveland Conference for Progressive Political

Action, held in February, 1922 (which excluded the Workers' Party), failed completely because its conveners were still dominated by the "non-partisan" ideology of Mr. Gompers and the leading elements of the American Federation of Labour.

The leaders of the Farmer-Labour Party, responding to the growing demand among the masses for the formation of a *bona fide* independent working-class party, summoned the Convention for July 3. In the summons the Convention was described as a "monster political convention" to which all "labour, farm, and political groups," both local and national, were invited to send delegates "for the purpose of devising means for knitting together the many organisations in this country in such a manner as will enable the workers to really function politically."

The reply to this call came noticeably from the rank and file, from local labour bodies, trades councils, union locals, &c. The big International Unions and State Federations of Labour for the most part refused to participate, or else ignored the summons. Giving this refusal as an excuse, the Socialist Party also declined to sit in the Convention. This put the leaders of the Farmer-Labour Party in a serious position: for in the Convention it was quite evident that the militant and revolutionary elements would predominate. From this moment exclusive interest centred on the Workers' Party and the rôle it would set itself in the Convention.

The Workers' Party went into the Convention knowing what it wanted, and determined to get it—a federated party of the agricultural and industrial masses. The Farmer-Labour Party leaders, headed by John Fitzpatrick, President of the Chicago Federation of Labour, did not bring forward any concrete proposals to lay before the Convention. They tried to exclude the Workers' Party by making the Convention a purely Farmer-Labour Party affair, to be followed by a general conference in which "invited organisations" like the Workers' Party should be allowed to participate. When this attempt failed, the report of the Organisation Committee on the Workers' Party resolution

in favour of the immediate formation of a Federated Farmer-Labour Party in which shall be included local unions, central labour bodies, state federations, labour political groups, labour fraternal organisations, and co-operative organisations

was attacked by the Old Guard of the Farmer-Labour Party. They were voted down and the resolution carried, by six hundred to forty. At last, the Old Guard were reduced to attempting to frighten delegates with the bogey of Bolshevism. They moved a resolution declaring against the formation of the Federated Party, demanding that the Convention should continue the old Farmer-Labour Party without change, and that all organisations affiliated to the Communist International or advocating the overthrow of the government by violence should be barred. By five hundred votes to fifty this resolution was laid on the table. Fitzpatrick and his followers were beaten, and left the Convention, taking with them some fifty delegates, mostly, it is said, from an old stronghold of the Farmer-Labour Party—Cook County, Illinois. "The officials of the old Farmer-Labour Party," it has been said, "wanted to isolate the Workers' Party in order to paralyse the driving force toward

a Federated Farmer-Labour Party. The Workers' Party had to isolate the group of officials in order that the Federated Party could be organised."

Except in the Press of the Workers' Party and the Trade Union Educational League, which have greeted with enthusiasm the formation of "the first Mass Party of American Workers and Farmers," there has been, from the organ of the doctrinaire "Marxists" of the Proletarian Party, through the *New Majority* (organ of the Farmer-Labour Party) to the Socialist *New York Call*, a steady stream of abuse of the Communists for "packing" the Convention and causing a "split" in the Farmer-Labour Party. The facts of the case appear to be that, through its own delegation, and through delegates from other organisations who were members of the Party, the Workers' Party had about two hundred of the six hundred and fifty delegates present, representing in all a claimed total of some six hundred thousand workers and farmers. But far more than their actual voting strength and their excellent generalship in the Convention (which is admitted on all sides), the Workers' Party carried the day because they voiced the desires of the four hundred or so non-party delegates. When the Farmer-Labour Party officials were urging that the time was still not yet ripe for a Labour Party, an old farmer dramatically expressed the real wishes of the mass of the delegates by exclaiming: "The time is ripe, over-ripe, the time is rotten." It was to feelings like these that the Workers' Party gave a lead, and, so far, a successful lead.

It is noteworthy that the initial chorus of execration in the Press has now taken a rather different turn. The most vehement opponents of the Federated Party are admitting that, after all, the Federated Party may become "a real force in American political life." "Time alone will show," a writer in the *New York Call* says guardedly, in the issue of July 29. On July 8, a *Call* editorial had said, with scornful certainty, "To consider for a moment that they [*i.e.*, the Communists] have created a party organisation of national scope at Chicago is the last word in humour." Latest reports indicate that affiliations to the Federated Party are coming in from numerous local labour bodies: the largest to date is that of the Los Angeles Labour Party, representing 11,000 workers. A Convention of the new Party is fixed for January, 1924.

Principles and Programme of the Party

The Statement of Principles of the Party opens—

"The government of the people for the people and by the people," which has in the past been the boast of American political life, no longer exists in this country. To-day the Government of the United States is a Government of, for, and by Wall Street, and the financial and industrial system which it represents.

This thesis is developed in several paragraphs. American imperialism is exposed, and the exploitation of the farmers by the banking interests denounced. Such conditions as these, the Statement continues, demand the formation of a political party representing the industrial workers and farmers, who will "wrest control of the government" from the hands of its present masters. Until this control has passed to the workers and farmers there can be no genuine public ownership of industry.

But in order to make more clear the conflict of interests between the employing class and the working and farming classes, and thus aid the masses in their struggle against exploitation and oppression, we propose an immediate programme of public ownership of all public utilities. It must at all times be

remembered that only to the extent that there is a strong workers' and farmers' representation in the Government, and only to the extent that the control of operation is in the hands of workers and farmers, can even this partial nationalisation be realised to-day.

The programme of the immediate demands of the Party is as follows :—

Industrial Programme

(1) We stand for the nationalisation of all public utilities and all social means of communication and transportation.

(2) Industries must be run on the basis of the workers and farmers steadily increasing their control of the management and operation through their own economic organisations.

(3) Industries must be operated in such a manner as to afford the working and farming masses the maximum security against destitution, unemployment, sickness, and high prices.

Programme for Social Legislation

(1) That the Federal Government enact a maximum eight-hour work-day in industry, making any violation of the same by any employer a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment.

(2) That the Federal Government enact a law that will make the Federal Reserve Bank system serve the farmers and workers.

Industry should be encouraged to discontinue its reckless " hiring " and " firing " practices by compensating the unemployed worker temporarily when he is thrown out of employment through no fault of his own.

(3) That the Federal Government enact a Child Labour Law prohibiting the employment of children under eighteen and making the violation of this law a crime punishable by imprisonment.

(4) That the Federal Government enact a law providing for a minimum living wage for all workers—the wages to be fixed in co-operation with the representatives of the trade unions.

(5) That the Federal Government enact a law providing for the compulsory education of all under eighteen. Special attention must be paid to the erection of new and adequate schools in the rural regions.

(6) That the Federal Government enact a law providing for adequate compensation to the ex-soldiers—a soldier bonus—funds for same to be obtained through the levying of inheritance, excess profits, surtaxes and taxes on unearned income.

(7) That the Federal Government enact a Social Insurance Law providing for adequate sick, accident, and death insurance for all city and rural workers. Funds for the same to be secured through the taxation of incomes, excess profits, surtaxes, and inheritance taxes and taxes from unearned incomes.

(8) That the Federal Government enact a National Maternity Insurance Law providing for full trade union wage compensation to all prospective mothers for a period covering one month prior and one month after child birth.

Farmers' Programme

(1) Land was created for all the people, and we demand a system of land taxation that will eliminate landlordism and tenantry, and will secure the land to the users of the land.

(2) Public ownership of all means of transportation, communication, natural resources, and public utilities, to be operated by and for the people.

(3) The issue and control of all money and credit printed by the Government for service instead of profit.

(4) All war debts to be paid by a tax on excess profits.

(5) A moratorium for all working farmers on their farm mortgage debts for a period of five years.

BOOK REVIEW

ROSA LUXEMBURG'S LETTERS TO THE KAUTSKY FAMILY

Briefe von Rosa Luxemburg, edited by Luise Kautsky. (Laub'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung. Berlin, C. 54. 5 marks plus index multiplier.)

THESE are letters which Rosa Luxemburg wrote to Mr. and Mrs. Kautsky in the years from 1896 to 1918, as often as she or they happened to be away from Berlin. There are altogether ninety-seven letters, the first of which is dated from Zurich, March, 1896, dealing with the new social patriotic currents within the Polish social democracy, while the last letter was written in the Breslau prison, July, 1918. They cover a period of twenty years, and although they allow but glimpses of the workings of Luxemburg's mind, they contain sufficient material for forming an opinion of her capacities and her character.

Luxemburg bears a striking resemblance to Ferdinand Lassalle. The same boundless intellectual energy, the same joy of conflict and struggle, the same playing with danger. It was exceedingly easy for both of them to excite the admiration, but difficult to win the confidence of the public. Luxemburg was, however, the more artistic, the more delicate and refined nature. She might have been a painter or a naturalist had she grown up in another atmosphere or born in another period. Her letters leave sometimes the impression that she was more interested in Nature than in social problems; the Labour Movement appears to have been for her an arena in which she could exercise her intellectual strength and her emotional eloquence, but her soul, her inner being, was spontaneously lit up and enraptured when, on a lonely walk, she heard the rustle of the leaves, the murmur of the brook, the warbling of the birds, or when her eyes discovered a rare plant, a beautiful flower, a fine arrangement of colours and tints, an unusual geological formation.

To a letter, in which Mrs. Kautsky spoke of her diligent study of the *Accumulation des Kapitals*, Luxemburg gave the following characteristic reply (from a Berlin prison, October 18, 1915):—

I find it touching, and it makes me feel proud that you are reading my book. But I could not help laughing at your protest against entering into any discussion with me about it. Do you think that anything of it is still present in my mind ! It was a kind of intoxication in which I wrote it. You have my most solemn assurance that the book is from beginning to end the first draft and that I gave it to the printer without my having re-read the manuscript. Such was the hold it got on me, just as painting had had six years ago, when I could think of nothing else but painting. After the book had been published, the matter lost all interest for me and it disappeared from my mind. I now purposely re-read that part which you refer to, in order to see what it was that you liked so much. It was quite unfamiliar to me. . . . About two years ago—and you are not yet aware of it—a passion for plants got possession of me. I began to collect, to dry, and to classify plants. For four months I did literally nothing but make botanical excursions and fill up my herbaria. I have got twelve of them.

It appears from occasional remarks in her letters that Luxemburg was Menshevik up to the first Russian revolution (1905-06), in which she took

part in Petrograd and Warsaw; there are several letters from Warsaw prisons (1906) to Mr. and Mrs. Kautsky. After 1906 she gradually inclined towards Bolshevism, and in the same measure she fell out with Mr. Kautsky; from about 1910 the breach was complete, but this did not prevent her continuing her close friendship with Mrs. Kautsky. After the victory of the Bolsheviks in Petrograd (October, 1917), Luxemburg writes to her (from Breslau prison, November 24, 1917):—

. . . Are you not delighted with the Russians? They will of course not be able to maintain their power in this witches vigil—not because statistics show a backward economic development of Russia, as your clever husband has figured it out, but because the Social Democrats of the highly developed West are a lot of downright cowards and will passively look on now the Russians are being bled to death. But such an end is better than “living for the fatherland.” It is a world-historic deed, the imprints of which will not be obliterated by the passing of ages. I look for great things in the near future, but I should not like to observe the making of history through the prison bars only. . . .

We are grateful to Mrs. Kautsky for having published these letters and also for the information that their writer was treated with much kindness by the Prussian prison authorities during the last war.

M. B.

EDITORIAL NOTE.—An English translation by Eden and Cedar Paul of Rosa Luxemburg's *Letters from Prison* to Mrs. Sophie Liebknecht has just been published by the Young Communist League, 36 Lamb's Conduit Street, London, W.C. 1, price one shilling.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

1905. By L. Trotzky. (*L'Humanité*)
How Labour Governs. By V. G. Childe. (Labour Publishing Company. 12s. 6d.)
Guilds and Co-operatives in Italy. By Odon Por, with a Preface by Æ, and an Appendix by G. D. H. Cole. (Labour Publishing Company. 5s. 6d.)
Fascism. By Odon Por. (Labour Publishing Company. 7s. 6d.)
Labour and Capital on the Railways. Studies in Labour and Capital, No. 4. Prepared by the Labour Research Department. (Labour Publishing Company. 1s. paper; 2s. 6d. cloth.)
Labour and the Rates: A Plea for Labour Councillors. By John Scurr, Mayor of Poplar. (Labour Research Department. 2d.)
English Social Life in the Eighteenth Century. By M. D. George. (The Sheldon Press, S.P.C.K. 3s. 6d.)
Evolution and Revolution. By Mark Fisher. (Socialist Labour Press, Glasgow. 8d.)
Pontius Pilate. By John W. Klein. (Stockwell. 8s. 6d.)
The Industry of Agriculture. By Dr. S. V. Pearson. (The Commonwealth League. 1d.)
The Town versus the Countryside. By S. L. Bensusan, with a foreword by Lord Bledisloe, K.B.E. (P. S. King. 6d.)

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NOTES of the MONTH

The Two Camps in Germany—The Setting and the Picture—Counter-Revolutionary Preparation—The Choice for Europe—Can the German Workers Win?—An Even Balance—The Condition of Success—Do We Stand with Curzon?—Isolation to be Broken

A PIECE of news from Germany of interest to LABOUR MONTHLY readers illustrates the direction of events: our friend and contributor, Max Beer, the last of whose series of unpublished passages of Marx's writings we print this month, tells us that he has joined the Communist Party. This stray evidence of the wholesale streaming into the Party that is taking place (rumour has it that a special staff has had to be established to receive the daily flood of new adhesions) affords a glimpse of the alignment that the crisis is compelling, when the reserved and detached Socialist scholar and historian feels the time has come to step down from his books and take his stand in the ranks of action, and that there is only one camp for every honest man and socialist to meet the Fascist menace—the Communist Party. It is no longer the individual case that is of interest: it is the clear resolution of social forms in the face of the compulsion of events; the disappearance of the hesitating centre, whose passing from the field of socialist theory and discussion we commented on a year ago, translated now into practical action; the definite confronting of the issue of Communism or Fascism which is now facing Central Europe and will shortly face all Europe and eventually Britain.

ALL that is happening in Europe only goes to throw into relief the central situation. The sabre-rattling of Poincaré and Foch are as pigmy a spectacle as the antics of Ludendorff and Hoffmann in 1918 before the social forces they were unloosing. The alarums and excursions of Italy and Spain and the Balkans are manifestly the symptoms of disturbance and not the disturbance itself. Even the Anglo-French crisis, which overshadows every issue and translates it into terms of itself, is only the

division of the imperialist camps as in the war, which by their division release the forces of their eventual conqueror, but close up against these at once when released.

THE central fact of the whole political situation is that the world struggle between the working class and capital, let loose by the war of 1914, is entering on its second stage, and that the second and decisive battle of the revolution is preparing in Germany. Against this the forces of counter-revolution are marshalling all over Europe, seizing points of vantage with sudden, sharp, decisive strokes, in Italy, in Greece, in Bulgaria, in Spain, perhaps next in Czecho-Slovakia or in Bavaria itself. Against this background of gathering storm the isolated military and national ambitions of Italy, of Bulgaria, of Jugo-Slavia, of Spain see their chance of realisation unmolested by hasty pirate strokes amid the general confusion. Against this expected issue the near-sighted greed and calculation of French imperialism reckon the gains to be made from the confusion and the ultimate military domination to be attained. Against this menace to its own prospects British policy wrings its hands helplessly, defeated in Italy and the Balkans, defeated in the Near East, defeated in the Ruhr, and follows in practice at the heels of France.

IN all this welter of confusion the one certain point and hope for the future is if the workers win in Germany, and the union of working-class Germany and working-class Russia can form the rallying basis of social order and cohesion for the settlement of Europe. On no other basis can the present destructive conflicts and reckless rivalries be solved; in no other direction is there any conscious, creative, constructive force at work, equal to meeting and answering the problems of to-day.

CAN the German workers win? The immediate odds are still heavily against them. They are without arms. They are weakened by years of suffering and underfeeding during the war and after the war. Against them the Fascists are well supplied with arms and funds and are powerfully organised. Still more serious, the workers are weakened by division through the Social

Democratic leaders taking service with the big capitalists in the Grand Coalition and busily performing the preparatory work of Fascism by suppressing the Workers' Councils, working-class journals, &c. Although the Social Democratic rank and file are showing signs of dealing with this, it is doubtful whether they will be able to express itself rapidly enough through the official machinery. It is thus certain that the working class will not be concerned to provoke a struggle.

NEVERTHELESS, when the struggle comes—as every sign indicates to be likely to follow on the outcome of the Ruhr occupation, whether that outcome be surrender or collapse—there are elements in the situation favourable to the German workers. They have shown themselves able in their overthrow of the Cuno Government to act as a united force under the leadership of the Workers' Councils and the Communist Party. The very collapse and hopelessness of the existing situation and all bourgeois policy incline whole sections of the population to rally to them as the only hope. The lower ranks of Fascism are susceptible to Communist propaganda, which by its direct appeal to concrete issues and its exposure of class divisions has clearly had some effect. The German workers, it may be said, are readier in many ways than any workers have ever been in any country for the approaching struggle: but the struggle itself is more menacing and formidable than any that has faced the working class since the battle of the Russian workers against world-capitalism on twenty-two fronts.

IN this situation the whole outcome depends, as it did in the Russian case, on one condition—the action of the workers in other countries. The fate of the German revolution will not be determined in Germany: it will be determined in Europe. Germany is ringed round—in Poland, in Czecho-Slovakia, in France, and close at hand in Hungary and Italy—by White armies waiting to give succour to their Fascist friends. The German coasts are at the mercy of the British navy. It will rest with the workers of these countries to determine whether the German workers are to be crushed by military intervention or indirect subvention and handed over to the mercy of the Fascists, or whether

the workers of the other countries will stand solidly by them to the full extent of their power and resources. Everything depends above all on the British, French, and Czech workers. Will they be able to rise to the situation? Let it be remembered that there will be no long protracted period this time, as in the Russian example, for gradual awakening. The conditions are wholly different: the nerves of European politics are now all attuned to the revolutionary issue, and in an industrial country like Germany the decisive period will be short and sharp.

THEREFORE it is at this moment terrible and tragic that British Labour policy is buried in old issues of the revision of the Treaty and the rest, and deaf and blind to the living issue here and now. At this moment of all moments, when the working-class issue is everything and the national alignment is meaningless in comparison, British Labour policy is engaged in proclaiming its national solidarity in foreign policy with a Tory Cabinet, because its Prime Minister has used some phrases of international nomenclature which the Labour Party once used. At a moment when the sword of Fascism is hanging over the necks of the working class of Europe, the Labour Party is openly proclaiming its unity with Curzon, the direct advocate and supporter of every Fascist movement. These statements are not exaggerations, but the actual statements of responsible Labour organs.

Foreign policy [declares the *New Statesman*] is for the time being incomparably the most important sphere of governmental activity, and within that sphere there are no definite party differences. Lord Curzon and Mr. Jack Jones are substantially of the same opinion—which is the opinion of all England.

And the *Labour Press Service* declares:—

The *Spectator* is an influential and reputable Conservative review: but the words which it uses express the sentiments of the Labour Party and indeed of the whole nation.

This at the moment when the sharpest dividing issue since the Russian Revolution is facing the working class and the bourgeoisie. "There are no definite party differences." "Lord Curzon and Mr. Jack Jones are substantially of the same opinion." Is this the expression of British working-class feeling to go out to encourage the workers of the Continent? If it is not, then the speediest

measures need to be taken by every active element of the working-class movement to remedy them: for at present these are the expressions that are going out, and every word is a stab in the back for the German workers and a direct incitement to Fascism.

TO anyone attempting to survey the international working-class situation to-day the British movement presents a disquieting spectacle of self-absorbed isolation and blindness to actual issues. The dramatic appeal and warning of Fimmen at the Trades Union Congress was not a personal episode: it was the impact of the international movement upon the closed national consciousness of the British movement. In the light of the international crisis the public political expression of the British Labour movement during the past month took two forms—the Summer Schools, which broke out in such abundance, and the Plymouth Trades Union Congress. It is only necessary to consider these against the background of the European situation to get a sense of the position. The Summer Schools were happily engaged in mapping out beautiful charts and diagrams of how a Labour Government would administer everything in detail without injuring anybody. This occupation was considered to be a way of being “practical.” The Plymouth Trades Union Congress needs no comment. Last year we analysed with care the contribution of every leader to the Congress in order to illustrate the character of the proceedings. This year it is unnecessary: the comment is universal, and the old leaders by an exhibition they must very much regret have given the order for their own funeral. The new movement is bound to arise and to replace the old leadership; and though it will not at first be very much more clear or positive, it will mark at any rate the beginning of serious politics in the British Labour Movement. But in the meantime the German situation is here now, as the unemployed situation is here now; and it is urgently necessary for every available force in the working-class movement to rally on these at once.

THE IMPERIAL CONFERENCE

By R. PAGE ARNOT

THE forthcoming Imperial Conference has been very little talked about. To the Economic Conference which takes place at the same time a considerable amount of attention and space in the press has been allotted. But the Imperial Conference itself has been kept in the background. The press has been studiously vague about it. No politician has heralded its arrival with eloquent orations. As far back as April last the Prime Minister expressly deprecated any discussion in the House of Commons on this subject. One result of this reticence is that the workers are in almost complete ignorance of the significance of this conference or of the issues it will raise. On the other hand every effort is being made to interest the public in the Wembley Empire Exhibition next spring. It is quite safe and even useful that their thoughts should be concentrated in that direction.

This reticence is not without good reason. It is felt that while the power and the majesty and the vast resources of the British Empire should be prominently impressed on everyone's mind, it is distinctly dangerous that any of the conflicting policies of that Empire should be publicly discussed. Thus, just that very moment when Labour is being reminded of its heavy responsibilities as regards the Empire and foreign affairs is chosen to hide the actual politics of the Empire and prevent the worker from getting any real idea of that for which he is said to be responsible. Labour is told that it has a responsibility. The nature of that responsibility is not revealed to it, nor the fact that a most precarious position has been reached in the Empire's internal politics. In point of fact the thing that Labour is not allowed to know is that the British Empire is faced with certain dissolution.

The Central Government has no longer any political hold over the Dominions. The attempt to gain such a hold by building up from periodical Imperial Conferences to a permanent imperial machinery of government has proved a failure. The experiment

dates back for nearly forty years, but it is in the last twelve years that the experiment was rapidly brought to the testing point. The test failed. The experience of the colonial conferences of 1887 and 1897 was followed by the South African War, when for the first time colonial troops fought along with the regular army. The idea of a closer concentration of power had already begun, and sufficient ground had been covered at the colonial conference of 1902 to transform it on the next occasion into the Imperial Conference presided over not by the Colonial Secretary but by the Prime Minister. This was in 1907. Things had moved much further when Mr. Asquith presided at the Imperial Conference of 1911. The war with Germany was now imminent. The Agadir incident had just occurred. The outlines of foreign policy, the issues of war and peace, were explained to the Dominion representatives. But at that time Mr. Asquith could definitely refuse the Dominions any voice in, any control of, imperial policy.

The war produced a new situation. The Dominion Premiers were constantly in London from 1915 onwards, and in 1917 with the Imperial Conference of that year the movement reached a climax. During that year the Dominion Premiers had formed part of the War Cabinet, and the gigantic problems of the war were subject to an Empire directorate. The whole Empire was for the time being under one political control.

Two or three years before the war, an anonymous group had been formed in various centres throughout Britain and the Dominions for the purpose of working out schemes for a Federation of the British Empire under unitary control. After a little time this group started the publication of the *Round Table*, as a review of the politics of the British Empire. Though mainly drawn from governing class circles, the Round Table group had at first comparatively little influence and their propaganda took little root. Politicians paid no heed to them and continued the simple propaganda of sentiment and flag-wagging. The war proved the best propagandist of the Round Table group. It revealed suddenly to the soldiers and politicians the political and military weakness of their rule. The war did more than propaganda. It actually provided, as we have said above, an Empire directorate. Accordingly in 1917, in the emotions of the Imperial Conference, the idea of

Empire Federation began to take concrete shape. Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues began to see visions of the British Empire becoming a self-contained unitary State. The dream of Empire got hold on them.

The end of the war brought as sudden a change; and the years that follow are the story of the fading of their dream. Not that they were aware of this immediately. Plans began to be laid for alterations in the constitution of the Empire. It was all in vain. At the Imperial Conference of 1921 they received a rude shock; the Dominion Premiers refused absolutely to allow the proposed constitutional conference (generated in the enthusiasms of 1917) to be held at all. Signs had not been wanting of this development. The Dominions had been separate signatories to the Versailles Treaty. They also signed the Two-power Pact by which Britain and America were to have guaranteed military support to France. But to the signatories of this Pact there was one notable exception. Canada refused to sign. This meant that in the event of a war arising from this Pact Canada intended to remain neutral. Now, it would not have been possible for Canada to maintain a position of neutrality and at the same time continue her allegiance to the British Crown. Neutrality meant secession from the British Empire.

Since the Imperial Conference of 1921, these significant signs of break-up had multiplied. The tour round the Dominions of Admiral Jellicoe to co-ordinate Empire defence was met everywhere with coolness and in some cases with openly expressed hostility. This was less so in the case of Australia. Australia is still "loyal," but that is because of the intense need of a supply of capital from Great Britain. The speeches of General Smuts cabled over the wire (it is only General Smuts' speeches that are cabled in any fullness) showed that he was continually trying to persuade his reluctant audiences that South Africa should remain within the Empire. Mr. Lloyd George's famous Chanak telegram urging the Dominions to prepare for a war with Turkey was greeted with resentment in the Dominion Parliaments.¹ Finally, in the spring of this year, the refusal of

¹ For this, and the Halibut treaty, and also the economic penetration of the U.S.A. into Canada, see Mr. H. P. Rathbone's articles in the *LABOUR MONTHLY* in June and July of this year.

Canada to allow the British Ambassador at Washington to sign the Halibut Fishery Treaty between Canada and the United States was treated both in Canadian and American journals as a great point gained in slackening what little Empire control remained in the hands of Whitehall.

The vision of a seated Britannia with all her daughter nations growing about her, growing bulkier every year, has proved to be Mr. Kipling's dream. It was a pretty picture only, embodying the old folks' idea of what family life should be. It has no relation to realities, at any rate in the second decade of the twentieth century. Even Joseph Chamberlain, who might have been the Bismarck of the British Empire, came half a century too late. The dream of a white Empire is gone for ever. The cold realities are showing themselves more and more clearly: and the Dominions of the twentieth century are seen to be going their own way as did the American colonies 150 years ago.

A different, but equally serious, indeed, far more serious, problem faced them—how to allay the growing consciousness and unrest of the four hundred million human beings who were usually lumped together as “the coloured races of the Empire.” Again the war had made a profound change. Policies that had previously been discussed in a dilettante fashion suddenly became a pressing necessity. If the system of exploitation was to be maintained over these four hundred millions, a quarter of the population of the whole earth, it was necessary to find within each subject race some class or section which in return for special privileges would be ready to support the continuance of British rule. In effect this meant an alliance with the native bourgeoisie wherever that bourgeoisie was sufficiently developed. Accordingly, in 1917 the promise was made to India for a measure of self-government; and by the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme the promise was made into a reality for a small section of the peoples of Hindustan. The Indian bourgeoisie were taken into partnership, and it was proudly said that India had started on the road to self-government. To Egypt, to Palestine, to the Mandatory States of Mesopotamia and Greater Arabia the same principle was applied. Even the bourgeoisie of little Malta, after the post-war disturbances, received self-govern-

ment in non-military matters. Throughout the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, which remained formally as well as actually under the despotism, advisory councils were set up, on which again certain sections of the native inhabitants were represented. The pæans over the liberty enjoyed under the British Empire for all its subject races rose higher than ever.

Unfortunately, these measures will only afford temporary relief. The same processes that called into being a more or less developed native bourgeoisie with growing nationalist consciousness are developing a consciousness of oppression and exploitation amongst the native proletariat and the masses of peasants, nor can *their* discontent be allayed in the same manner. For them there is no way out but a complete end to the system of exploitation.

Throughout the whole of the Crown Colonies and in all dominions except Australia and Canada, Empire is maintained on a basis of coloured labour. It is significant that when the schemes of emigration were being discussed that resulted in the Empire Settlement Act of 1923, South Africa made it clear that they had no use for further white labour and could not therefore be a party to the emigration schemes. There is thus being prepared for the future the most embittered form of human strife—a class war which is also a racial revolt. Nothing can stop this, certainly not the granting of privileges to limited sections of the native populations; the black labour empire is a contradiction for which they can find no solution save dissolution.

For an example it has not been necessary to wait for the results of historic development. The social developments that follow in the train of world capitalism are fearfully rapid nowadays. In 1921 at the Imperial Conference it was found necessary, as a concomitant of the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme, for the Indians to be given the assurance of an equal status in the Empire. For two years since then there has been in Kenya a strife at times rising to civil conflict between the white settlers and the immigrant Indian traders. The Colonial Office has been forced to withdraw its proposal of a constitution: it has weighted the balance in favour of the white settlers, and now even tame Indians like the Hon. Srinivasa Sastri are complaining that if this sort of thing happens it becomes impossible for them to keep the Empire together. This case of Kenya

land, on which there was so little discussion in the public Press, is of the same order of historic importance as the attempt of Lord North to impose taxes on the American colonists. The expedients of the British bourgeoisie to maintain their political domination over coloured labour are doomed to failure no less surely than their dream of white empire.

It is under these inauspicious conditions that the Imperial Conference of October, 1923, assembles. Much could be written to show in what spirit, as expressed in their farewell speeches, the Dominion Ministers are sailing to London. But a more concise estimate of the situation is provided by the June and September issues of the *Round Table*. For the Knights of the Round Table the time of great expectations is past: and their sombre outlook confirms the contentions of this article. They point out that the Dominions will refuse to be committed to any foreign policy that may involve them deeply in European affairs: and their melancholy conclusion amounts to this, that Great Britain must have no committal European policy at all. Their own proposals for political solidification of an Empire are few and tentative. (They propose that the Dominions should have accredited ambassadors in London.) Whether their proposals are entertained or not (the latter is more likely) they make no practical difference. Alike in European affairs and in the internal politics of the Empire, their carefully considered suggestions to Downing Street amount to a policy of drift—until the next war, when drift must pass into dissolution. There is only one parallel to their tone of hesitation. That parallel is found in the timid attitude of the Austro-Hungarian statesmen before the Dual Monarchy collapsed. If then it is realised in governing-class circles that the British Empire politically has become as ramshackle a State as the dominions that owed allegiance to the House of Habsburg, to what means will they turn? The answer is clear. The way of salvation for the British Empire is to be sought in economic arrangements; and it is these arrangements that will be the subjects of the separate Economic Conference.

The agenda of the Imperial Economic Conference will include :—

- (1) Fuller development of natural resources.
- (2) Discussion of preference tariffs.

- (3) Shipping and communications.
- (4) Emigration.
- (5) Sundry subjects such as technical research, unification of trade practices, &c.

Preferences which are already mutually granted between this country and the Dominions on a few customs duties will not be much further developed. On the foodstuffs from the Dominions there will be no preference duties. The British bourgeoisie dare not raise the price of their own manufactured goods which would follow from the dearer cost of labour that would result from dearer bread. Nor can they risk retaliation from their present customers, either against their manufactured goods, still less against the one British raw material export—coal. Clearly on the side of Great Britain alone there is little or nothing doing in the way of preference.

To relieve the present burden of unemployment an attempt will be made to speed up emigration schemes, but the poverty of outlook is well displayed by the trifling sum—three million pounds—allotted for this purpose under the Empire Settlement Act. The quality of capitalist statesmanship is even better shown by the following passage from a pronouncement this spring by the First Lord of the Admiralty, in which he relates how he secured a re-christening of the Government Emigration Committee:—

The word "emigration" was, I felt, unsuitable, both because of its associations with old unsatisfactory conditions, and because it conveyed suggestions of expatriation, loss of citizenship and severance of home ties, altogether inappropriate in the case of those who simply changed their domicile in order to settle in some other part of the same Commonwealth. The Committee and Office were accordingly re-named Oversea Settlement Committee and Office, and the words "emigration" and "emigrant" have since then been confined, in official usage, at any rate, to emigration to foreign countries, and have been replaced, where the Empire is concerned, by "migration" and "migrant," when the matter under discussion is the actual passage, and "Oversea" or "Empire Settlement" and "settler," where the aspect under consideration is the future of our fellow citizens in their new homes.

We may omit the other subjects of discussion as less important and come to the development of natural resources. Here it is gravely necessary for the British bourgeoisie to find more of their raw materials within the Empire, particularly in the case of those

that have come from the United States. Our exports to the United States in the past just about balanced our imports from them, and of these one of the largest was raw cotton. Now the British bourgeoisie have to send to America, not only the payment for raw cotton, but also the annual debt tribute. Our exports will not be able to bear this double burden, and the £ will continue to sink in relation to the dollar unless Empire cotton takes the place of the American article. But cotton is only one thing out of many. The Dominions and Colonies, in their wide extent and diverse climates, are rich in every sort of raw material. It only requires the sinking of British capital to make these many countries fructify and bear fruit a hundredfold. Therefore this export of capital to the Colonies is the real meaning of the phrase "development of Empire resources"; and efforts in this direction will be made at the Conference.

A bold scheme of capitalist reconstruction would declare for an Empire Zollverein—or Customs Union—the essence of which would be free trade within the Empire. This Empire free trade would only have a meaning if it built up an industrial system by which the Dominions remained in the position of primary producers furnishing foodstuffs and raw materials in exchange for manufactured goods. This or something like this is the scheme put forward by the *Round Table*. That the Dominions will accept it or even look at it there is not the slightest likelihood. You cannot restrict Australia or Canada to primary production; their career as manufacturing countries has already begun. South Africa, since the war, is beginning to demand that a market shall be found in England for *her manufactured goods*. Indian cotton mills, enjoying a protected tariff, are sapping the life of Lancashire. The new Tariff Board in India is now discussing protection for the Indian steel industry, and the demand is for a tariff of 33½ per cent. against English steel. This means that the dream of the Empire as a self-contained economic whole is also doomed to fail: and every attempt to make it a reality by feverish exports of capital merely shatters the fabric of the dream. The development of Empire resources may proceed apace; capital will be exported from this country to aid that development; but the capital investments will not only be—or even mainly—in primary producers' industries. The capital exported from

Britain will be used to build up in the Empire the manufacturing centres that will soon be free from even a shadow of dependence on British manufactures. If London will not float the loans and capital issues, New York will. Therefore the very steps that are being now taken to bind together the Empire will result in its final disintegration as an economic unit.

Political reconstruction has failed as regards the Dominions. It will equally fail as regards the Empire over coloured labour. A full system of Empire preference they dare not attempt, still less a scheme for Empire free trade. The control of the Government, of the City, over the Empire is reduced to money lending, the same sort of control as the great financial firms like Rothschild, or Baring Brothers, or Schroeder exercise over a South American or Balkan State. And it is just this exercise of money lending that will inevitably loosen and defeat all other bonds, and finally its own.

The sign that our ruling class partially realise the difficulties that encompass them is the changed way in which the Empire is spoken of. Only our grown-up public school boys continue to talk in the old flamboyant manner. The statesmen and big industrialists are more cautious. As may be gathered from Mr. Amery's remarks quoted above, they place much virtue in a change of name. Accordingly the phrase "the Britannic Commonwealth of Nations" was much in favour at the Imperial Conference of 1921, while the sub-title of the *Round Table* now runs "a review of the politics of the British Commonwealth." Similarly, the objects of the Empire are now publicly represented as being cleansed from any taint of domination.

At the 1921 Conference, Mr. Lloyd George, making, as it were, the best of a bad job, said of the British Empire :—

It is based not on force but on goodwill and a common understanding. Liberty is its binding principle. Where that principle has not hitherto been applied it is gradually being introduced into the structure.

Again, the *Round Table*, in its most considered statement on the approaching Imperial Conference, begins as follows:—

The British Commonwealth exists not for purposes of conquest, or exploitation, or power, but in order to secure peace and freedom, and the right to work out their salvation for themselves to all the peoples and races within it.

No doubt they mean what they say. But their meaning and their change of tone has been determined by the change of circumstance.

What is to be the policy of the Labour Party towards the British Empire? In the past the instinct of the working-class movement was sure. Labour interfered in Empire affairs only to take the part of the oppressed nationalities and subject native races. It looked forward to their emancipation and the break-up of the whole system of exploitation. But of late years there has been a change of attitude, if not amongst the masses of workers, at any rate amongst the leaders. An example of the change was the Labour Party Executive's condemnation of the tactics of the Indian nationalist movement. Perhaps the change can be best shown by a quotation from Mr. Snowden's new booklet, "If Labour Rules." Mr. Snowden says:—

So long as a spirit of Imperialism dominates the Great Powers, the withdrawal of British government from dependencies like India and the Crown Colonies will not leave these dependencies in the possession of self-government, but will leave them a prey to the predatory designs of other Powers.

The policy of a Labour Government towards the dependencies of the British Empire will be to ensure the populations humane and just government; to secure for them the enjoyment of their own property; freedom and liberty to develop their own culture; to freely confer upon them powers of self-government as rapidly as they are educated to use them—and, in short, to pursue unremittingly the policy of qualifying these dependencies to become self-governing Dominions.

There is really, as far as words go, not very much to choose between this and the quotations I have given above. It is in exactly the same tone as the honeyed accents of capitalist statesmen bent on reconciling the Dominions and Dependencies to a continuance of "the Britannic Commonwealth." It may be it is wise to soothe the apprehensions of the governing class, anxious already on its own account and doubly anxious with the approach of a Labour Government. But it is no policy for the working class. At the very moment when it has become clear that the Empire is no longer a developing but a disintegrating economic unit, Mr. Snowden, blind to these facts, suggests that Labour should moralise the Empire and hold it together. If this policy is adopted by other leaders, it will simply involve the Labour Party in the inevitable breakdown of the capitalist schemes for Empire reconstruction.

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

By R. PALME DUTT

THE propaganda of the Empire as a cult for popular consumption has been assiduously cultivated in this country, but has never taken root.

The real basis of the Empire is not the artificial cult of Empire Days, Kipling, the King-Emperor, &c., but a severely material basis woven into the lives of everyone and holding them by ties not always seen.

As a result our counter-propaganda has commonly missed the mark. It has made the mistake of fighting the Empire as an idea, by attacking or ridiculing "Empire-mongers" or "imperialism," or occasionally arousing sentiment over especially atrocious samples of British rule.

The result is no real opposition to the Empire, but only a sentimental tradition of opposition, which is not really understood and is therefore never translated into anything positive and is rapidly discarded as old-fashioned prejudice by Labour politicians when they rise to be taken in by the governing class.

We need to change this by attacking the real material basis of the Empire, by laying bare its results in working-class division and corruption, racial separation, tyranny and militarism, and the destruction of working-class internationalism, by making clear the inevitable break-up and destruction of its material structure, by exposing the new plans of the Imperialists as an attempt to arrest this decay and cut off the British workers from the tide of the world-revolution in a prison house under conditions of artificial isolation bound to bring great suffering on the working class, and by showing the way to counter this effectively in attacking the system at its weakest spot, and changing from the position of a White Labour aristocracy having Utopian "sympathies" with other sections to the leaders of a working-class revolt of all the exploited and subject forces against the real seat of power of British capitalism.

This transformation of British Labour politics can only take place as the result of a very patient and widespread explanation of

the real position of the British working class, of the plans of the Imperialists, and of the future prospects awaiting the workers. Socialist propaganda in this country is still almost exclusively national in character (" Britain for the British ") with an added dose of " internationalism " as a kind of preventive against war, and is thus wholly unsuited to modern conditions.

While actual post-war experience is changing and is bound to change this outlook, the expression of this change in programme and policy is still to come. The Empire is still the unspoken premise of all British Labour and trade union politics. Modern capitalism as a conflict of world systems, the displacement of white labour by Asiatic and African, the shifting of the basis of world capitalism and the de-nationalisation of capital, all these fall outside the prim suburban photo-frame of " Labour and the New Social Order."

What is the British Empire? Why has this collection of miscellaneous and unassociated territories, states, populations, and economic systems, scattered and sprawling over every quarter of the globe, come into being as a single political system dominated from this island?

According to the *Daily Herald*, quoting Seeley, it all began " in a fit of absence of mind." The great colonial wars of the eighteenth century were not fought for the sake of the colonies; on the contrary, they were fought because of the quarrels of diplomatists and kings and other habits of the bad old past, and the colonies were an accidental result.

Because the French were in Canada and could be attacked there when we were at war with them, we acquired half of the Continent of North America. *Because* the Dutch were in South Africa when we broke up their sea power we established ourselves at the Cape, whence we have spread far northward.

It was *only when* we found ourselves in occupation of vast expanses of territory in all parts of the world that we developed what psychoanalysts would call the " Imperialist complex."—*Daily Herald*, August 13, 1923.

This quotation is worth noting as a good example of current Labour expression on the Empire. Its servile repetition of imperialist elementary school history, which not even any bourgeois historian of standing would take seriously, is a striking illustration of the political irresponsibility and easy swallowing of capitalist claptrap that follows from a non-Marxian outlook. The practical conse-

quence is that the Empire is blissfully accepted; all that is attacked is a mysterious state of mind called "the Imperialist complex" existing as a bee in the bonnet of certain professors and others who call out for a higher birth rate, larger armies and navies, &c. "Imperialism," declares the sapient leader-writer, "seems to be a kind of lunacy." The "British people," however, intend to have nothing to do with it: they "will not be treated as pawns for crazy Imperialists."

The windmill "Imperialism" having been thus successfully disposed of, the British Empire is of course cheerfully accepted. As John Scurr declared at the I.L.P. Summer School, speaking as hypothetical Labour Minister for the Empire:—

The organised worker was apt to assume Imperialism was wrong. [Foolish organised worker!] We might be opposed to Imperialism, but *we must admit the Empire was a concrete fact*, whose existence carried with it duties and responsibilities that Labour would be cowardly to ignore.

It is this kind of deliberate Imperialist cant, consciously contrary to all direct working-class interests and politics, that we have got to expose, smash, and exterminate from the movement if the British working class is to recover from the yellow associations that entangle it and enter on a clear direct fight with the forces of capitalism. This can only be done by a constant and tireless statement of the plain facts of the position.

What is the British Empire? The British Empire may be defined as the expansion of the first great capitalist State into the non-capitalist world. This condition explains its scattered and unscientific character. It is not the natural association of some large unit, such as the United States, Russia, or Central Europe. It is as haphazard as the pluckings of the ripest fruit in an orchard by the first invader. Britain was the first State to reach that strength of capitalist economy at home to carry through a successful colonial policy, as against France, Spain, or Holland—that is, the domination of territories all over the world for trade, tribute, and monopolies. The success of this early colonial policy made possible the vast development of British manufactures which established Britain as the classic country of industrial capitalism and so brought it first in the field again for the new imperialism of our day—the imperialism of direct finance-capitalist exploitation which has added the remaining threat to the British Empire.

What, then, is the British Empire? It is conquered territory added to the estates of the British bourgeoisie for the purpose of larger scale exploitation. It is thus a great plantation of pure capitalist slavery. It has no other link—racial, religious, geographical, or sentimental—save the single link of capitalist exploitation. Therefore it has no future save for and within capitalist exploitation. Capitalist Germany may become Workers' Germany, a living section of the Workers' International. But the capitalist British Empire can become nothing but the capitalist British Empire, since its only liberation is its dissolution.

Around this slave-plantation is endeavoured to be woven the myth of free association in order to conceal its artificial character. So legends of free settlers, pioneers, explorers are made to replace the records of freebooting, piracy, slave-trading, plunder, penal settlements, extermination of natives, &c., which have accompanied the extension of capitalist rule. The British Empire, where seven in eight are subject to autocratic rule, is held up as the palladium of liberty. Even, so great are the concessions which the bourgeoisie are prepared to make in this present hour of difficulty, they are prepared to call the Empire a Commonwealth—a step that has proved highly successful and popular in Labour circles.

What is the "Commonwealth"? The Commonwealth is the association of *garrisons* of the Empire around their masters, the British bourgeoisie—garrisons a little restive and discontented, inclined to bargain increasingly and insist on their rights, sometimes even toying with the thought of starting on their own or (as with Canada) taking service under a new master, but essentially recognising their identity of interests with their masters so long as these have the cash and the power. Into this circle of White garrisons is being also introduced tentatively, and in the face of considerable distrust and prejudice, the representatives of the rising bourgeoisie of India, who, it is hoped, will help to buttress the weakening White garrison in the Indian treasure-house of exploitation.

Because these privileged garrisons consist of both colonial bourgeoisie and white workers, these two elements, however divided between themselves, are at present united against the vast mass of coloured workers and dispossessed races who form the

basis of pure exploitation in the Empire. Hence arises the peculiar character of "Dominion Labour," even when most "advanced," in its demands for its own members, its isolation from the international movement, its imperial solidarity, its unity with capitalism in all national issues, its citizen-militarism, its bitter opposition to all outside the privileged ranks, and even readiness (as in South Africa) to blackleg on the coloured workers when these are striking to improve their conditions. It is the garrison outlook, politically termed the Imperial outlook.

This hidden spring of capital-Labour harmony, whose results are so conspicuous in the Dominions, is no less operative among the white workers of the home country, although with less consciousness and open expression owing to the lack of direct confrontation with the non-privileged strata. The British workers are nearer in instinct to a simple working-class outlook of sympathy with all workers, and the contrary imperialist outlook has to be laboriously instilled by their leaders; while the conscious expression of imperialism, the Social Democratic Federation, most closely corresponding in outlook to Dominion Labour, is in Britain a manifestly exotic growth without roots in the movement. Nevertheless the deeper workings of the same principle are no less present, revealing themselves in the weakness of working-class solidarity and easy corruption of sections, the unlimited success of capitalist doping processes of sports, Press, and drink, the facile waves of jingo and anti-alien emotions, and the national isolation and capitalist dependence of the working-class movement. This unity with capitalism, which is at the root of the separation of the British workers from the international working-class movement, is simply the reflection of a material situation that has temporarily placed a section of the world proletariat in a peculiar position. This temporary situation is bound to disappear with the advancing tide of world capitalism and world revolution, and the beginnings of that process are strongly visible. But until then the outlook reflecting that situation is bound to be isolated. The outlook of Dominion Labour and, in its own way, of British Labour is "middle class" in the sense of not realising the necessity of ranging itself either with the international bourgeoisie or with the international proletariat, but regarding itself as holding some peculiar position of immunity or

“ freedom ” and sharing with the bourgeoisie a tutelary guardianship of the “ subject,” “ native,” or “ non-adult ” races. The realisation of the falsity of this position, and that the interests of the white workers are not identical with those of the bourgeoisie, is the first step to their own emancipation.

There are no “ free ” and “ subject ” races in the Empire. This is the fundamental fact that cannot be too often proclaimed. There are only jailers and jailed. There are only palace slaves and plantation slaves. And the palace slaves play unconsciously into their masters' hands by looking down upon the plantation slaves as inferior beings, and discuss gravely in their masters' language whether it is “ safe ” to give to them the “ freedom ” that they, the palace slaves, enjoy. That is the epitome of the Empire and of the situation of the British workers in the International.

What, then, are the issues that are now facing this system and the workers within it? Why is the whole form of bourgeois policy now concentrated on the Imperial Conference, and why is every attempt being made to attune Labour expressions to it? The answer to this question is the key to the future in British Labour policy.

On the structure of the Empire as it was in 1914 the war delivered a tremendous shock. The British bourgeoisie was fighting for its existence. Therefore every element of subjection under them was stimulated by the opportunity of the war into asserting itself and becoming conscious of its strength. “ Unrest ” became a universal feature of the Empire, from Ireland to India and from the Clyde to the Rand. The separate garrisons took advantage of their indispensability to establish their claims to independent existence, even while recognising their identity of interest for the moment. But deeper than this seeming “ constitutional revolution ” within the palace came the revelation of the real forces beneath, the seething of the vast masses of exploited and dispossessed on whose backs the Empire is built. The moment the garrisons were weakened by the drainage of the war, revolt broke out on every side.

The eventual victory of the British bourgeoisie in the war, at the cost of placing themselves in the hands of the American bourgeoisie, enabled them to concentrate their attention on overcoming the forces of revolt and rebuilding their shattered structure.

This was the task of the past four years. By the success of the capitalist offensive at home, by the skilful playing of section against section in the different parts of the Empire, by the conciliation of the upper bourgeoisie in India, Ireland, and elsewhere, by open and even humiliating concessions to the Colonies, and by ruthless suppression of all the revolting exploited elements, this task was accomplished. With 15,000 Republicans jailed in Ireland, with Gandhi jailed in India, with the dead strikers on the Rand and the dead tribesmen on the Bondelswartz, with the treacherous surrender of Black Friday, and the shootings of Amritsar and the bombing of the Mesopotamian villages, order was restored in the Empire.

At length in 1923 the imperialists could turn to reconstruction, and the long-delayed Imperial Conference due to settle all questions after the war could be held. With the Imperial Conference comes the new task to repair somehow the damage done and rebuild a stronger system for the coming trials of external and internal struggle. The Imperial Conference is a conference of imperial reconstruction to make of the dissolving and disintegrating Empire a single closely-knit unit.

It is rapidly clear that this unification cannot be achieved simply in political terms, as was hoped in the days of the war and just after. The disintegration has gone too far for that. The independence and even open defiance on the part of the Colonies, revealed above all in the Chanak crisis and the Canadian-United States Treaty, made even the touching on this ground dangerous, and can only leave the hope that the excitement of war, when the time comes, will enable all to work out for the best.

The only hope of unification now is on economic lines. Such a unification would fit in very well with the existing situation and aims of the British bourgeoisie. The failure of Europe and the competition of America in the Pacific field naturally turn attention to the possibilities of a more economic and self-sufficing organisation of their own domains. In the face of all existing facts the conception of the Empire as an economic unit gains ground, and the increasing prevalence of this artificial and essentially militarist conception strikingly reveals the decaying forces and desperate straits of capitalist production.

It is unnecessary here to demonstrate the economic weaknesses of this conception. The proportion of Empire trade is roughly one-third of the total of British trade, and has remained practically at the same proportion both before and since the war: nor is there any prospect of altering this radically in a rapid time save by artificial means (subsidies, preference, special credits, &c.) such as would be far too costly for present resources. The only possible basis of unification would be the abandonment by the Colonies to Britain of the most profitable forms of manufacturing production and relegating themselves to primary production—the exact reverse of their present line of development. On the contrary, at present, the most favourable form of British trade with the Colonies is the export of machinery of production—in other words, the weapons of their own undoing. The whole process of capitalist development of the Colonies and India compels that they shall become increasingly every year the rivals and not the colleagues of Britain.

But what matters here is the immediate significance of these proposals for the working class. For there is no question that these proposals will be presented in an attractive light, in the guise of a busy harmony of international exchange and production, offering work and prosperity for all. And the Labour coquettings with the conceptions of the “British Commonwealth of Nations” and all the other baits of progressive imperialism make the success of such a propaganda fatally easy. Therefore it is essential from the earliest moment to set out in the harshest possible outline what these proposals mean in fact.

The new plans of the imperialists mean in brief three things for the working class.

First, they mean what is euphemistically described as “Scientific Distribution of Surplus Population”—or, in other words, compulsory emigration of the proletariat according to the needs of the moment of capital. This proposal can only be accomplished in the most barbarous form of the planting of slave-colonies after the fashion of the eighteenth century, since all voluntary forms are impracticable, as has been abundantly revealed by the failure of the Empire Settlement Act, which in fourteen months of its operation has only been able to spend one-twentieth of the funds

with which it was provided and settle 32,000 persons. The fate of the unhappy wanderers, dumped as unwanted from home, has been vividly revealed in the fortunes of the harvesters in Canada and the homeless immigrants in Australia.

Second, the plans of the imperialists mean a system of preference, rebates, special freights, credits, subsidies, guaranteed purchases and prices, or whatever other method and juggling may be adopted to establish in fact a protectionist system of the Empire. The Colonial representatives have all made abundantly clear that on no other basis can business be done. The establishment of such a system, with the inevitable raising of prices and creation of monopolies it will involve, will break down all possibility of the maintenance, far less recovery, of working-class standards, and will grind out a temporary and artificial imperial reconstruction from the unlimited exploitation of the workers. The final and inevitable outcome of such a development, of which signs are already not lacking, would be the establishment of some kind of tariff on food (perhaps in the form of control of foreign purchases and a guaranteed price within the Empire) which would mean the final subjection of the industrial workers.

Third, the establishment of such a system, although under the peaceful and benevolent guise of free trade within the Empire, being in fact an exclusive system of so large a part of the earth's surface *against* the world outside, would inevitably mean the bitter hostility and combination of the world powers outside, and in consequence a period of heavy militarist rivalry leading up to a culminating war which would wipe out every gain that could be accomplished by the intensive economic development of the Empire.

These are the real and practical dangers which the new plans of the imperialists are bringing to the British working class. It is because of these dangers that the easy toying with the Empire and Empire development by Labour politicians (the Tory motion in the House of Commons on Empire development was officially received by the Labour Party with "general support": "They were," declared their spokesman, Mr. A. Short, "interested no less than hon. members opposite in the progress and development of the British Empire") is not an act of sentimental folly, but

of direct treachery to the most vital interests of the working class.

To fight these dangers will need the most vigorous rallying of every effective force of the working-class movement. It is no good endeavouring to fight them on the old liberal formula of free trade. Free trade is out of date in its old liberal *laissez-faire* sense and has ceased to hold. It held against the new imperialist attack in the decade before the war because it was maintained by the combination of the industrial workers and the older capitalist interests of textiles and shipping. Both these holds are weakening to-day. The Bradford resolution on a tariff has revealed the weakening hold in textiles. The Glasgow revolt against free trade has revealed the weakening hold in Labour. Tariff reform and the Empire is the British form of Fascism, the British form of winning over the workers to capitalist leadership by appearing to offer them some prospect of solid advantage and development.

Against these it is necessary to set a positive alternative, and not the negative grounds of free trade and national self-government. The new tendencies that are showing themselves are a symptom of the fact that the national basis has broken down, and that a wider than national economic organisation is already essential in the present conditions of production. But the Empire is only the extension of all the old nationalist evils on to a larger scale. The only practical alternative now that meets the actual needs of present-day production is the Workers' International, the World Union of Soviet Republics for the world organisation of production.

We have reached a stage when the only alternative to the Empire is the International, and we have got to show that the International is the only alternative to the Empire. We have got to show that the Empire is a slave-compound, leading nowhere, and with destruction and war as its outcome. And we have got to show that the International is the real path of the British workers as of the Colonial workers in the Empire, united in revolt and in the common struggle of mastering the conditions of production, and united with all the other workers of the world in the future reign of free humanity.

THE "LAST RESERVE" OF THE BOURGEOISIE AT WORK

By A. THALHEIMER

THE "Great Coalition" in the form of the Stresemann-Hilferding Cabinet has now been on the job for some time. It styles itself the "last reserve" of the bourgeoisie, the last constitutional government which Germany can have.

This expression must not be taken too literally. According to the historical experiences of other countries and also according to the present organisation of political forces in Germany, it is necessary to reckon with the possibility, indeed the probability, that while the bourgeois-socialist coalition is the last reserve of bourgeois rule, still other bourgeois-socialist or even "pure socialist" combinations can follow the Stresemann-Hilferding Cabinet.

A comparison with the Russian Kerensky period is very instructive in this respect. The signs of the period of the death-struggle of the Kerensky Republic were precisely these quick changes in the composition of the Cabinet, the hasty alteration of the personnel and the party composition. It would certainly be rash to assume that the German bourgeoisie cannot overcome some of the next revolutionary uprisings by setting up new cabinets or changing the personnel of the existing one. Stresemann and Hilferding may consider themselves the last cards in the hand of the German bourgeoisie, but it will still make half-a-dozen new governmental combinations, will throw overboard its "undesirables" as cumbersome cargo, and will also take on board its leaky vessel the present leaders of the social democratic opposition, Messrs. Paul Levi, Dissmann, Crispian, &c., if it believes that it can thereby keep afloat.

What is still possible in the way of bourgeois-socialist governmental combinations depends entirely upon the tempo in which the now moving popular masses go through the political development which will lead them to a radical break with the bourgeoisie and with bourgeois "democracy."

The fact that the Cuno administration could be followed by that of Stresemann-Hilferding, the "Great Coalition," proves, above all, that only a minority of the working class is ready as yet to fight for a Workers' and Peasants' Government, although, apparently, the majority of the working class has already had its fill of the "Great Coalition."

The hour for a Workers' and Peasants' Government for the first step to the proletarian dictatorship comes when the overwhelming majority of the working class not only desires a break with the bourgeois coalition, but is also ready to fight for the Workers' and Peasants' Government by the most extreme means.

Secondly, it is necessary that at least a strong section of the petty bourgeoisie be sympathetically neutral. Thirdly, that there be a deep cleft in the great bourgeoisie itself.

Organisationally, the class organs of the proletariat, the factory councils, control committees, and defence units, must already have been widely developed and must have acquired for themselves a commanding authority among the masses.

The organisational positions of reformism must be in an advanced stage of disintegration.

Therefore, politically and organisationally, there is still a good stretch of ground to be covered before the conditions are ripe enough to secure victory for the working class.

How much time is necessary for this only history can decide. That the conditions for the victory of the working class in Germany are rapidly ripening is shown by thousands of facts.

The Stresemann-Hilferding Cabinet embodies the attempt of the middle bourgeoisie, with the help of the reformist party and the trade union bureaucracy, to end the Ruhr struggle and reorganise the resources of the bourgeoisie within the country by imposing some sacrifices upon the great bourgeoisie.

It is self-evident that no government can transform the deep-rooted chaos of Germany into order in a few weeks.

But a few weeks suffice to judge whether the government has its eyes fixed on the right goal, and whether it has the strength to reach it.

In this respect a decisive judgment concerning the Stresemann-Hilferding government can already be delivered.

The first step to be taken is the attempt to extract from the industrialists and bankers a definite fund of foreign bills, in order to support the exchange of the mark and, further, to put the standard of currency on a new basis. It is clear that only complete national confiscation of foreign bills can accomplish this purpose. The government did not dare to take this step, it has limited itself to calling for voluntary donations of securities. The exchange already cold-bloodedly anticipates, not in words, but in dry hard figures, the absolute futility of this proceeding.

A confiscation of foreign bills would certainly run foul of the bureaucratic apparatus of finance and taxation administration, which for a long time since has been objecting to any such action.

The class organs of the workers, the factory councils, and control committees could create a new apparatus, but—to appeal to them would be tantamount to declaring the middle-class State ripe for abolition. This could not be considered by any bourgeois-socialist coalition government. The same hold good for foreign trade and price control. The tax reforms which the government announced with a great fan-fare of trumpets are already as good as dead. The employers replied to the new taxation laws, which are by no means drastic (they are only gold taxes), in two ways :—

First, by transferring the burden to prices, even before the taxes are paid (as a matter of fact, they never will be paid). In most industries the level of the world-market prices has already been exceeded; in the heavy industries, many times over.

Secondly, by the stoppage of production. The so-called factory tax, which is calculated according to the number of employees working in the factory, is the immediate occasion of this step. Further motives behind it are to lower wages and to pauperise the working class generally.

The bourgeoisie as a class thus distinguishes itself from the bourgeoisie as a government.

This signifies practically the preparation for a *coup*, for the dictatorship of the right wing bourgeoisie, under cover of the present government and with its timely co-operation. That is the significance of Gessler's remaining in the government. Gessler is the official connecting link with the Right dictatorship towards which the great bourgeoisie is steering.

The liquidation of the Ruhr conflict is naturally dependent upon the success of the attempt, be it by the bourgeoisie or by the working class, to get the sums necessary to pay Poincaré. The government will never get these sums from the bourgeoisie, and in order to maintain them exclusively from the working class a victorious dictatorship of the right is necessary.

The prospects of the Stresemann-Hilferding government liquidating the Ruhr struggle are therefore not great, although its urgency to have done with the business is certainly very great, and the essence of its foreign policy is the desire to liquidate the Ruhr struggle.

But it is well known that good will or bad will alone accomplish nothing in this wicked world.

Meanwhile real wages have fallen further, inflation has increased, and the currency has further deteriorated. The next wave of the mass movement is already beginning to rise. The "last reserve" of the German bourgeoisie has in these few weeks already crumbled to a marked degree.

IMMIGRATION AND AUSTRALIAN LABOUR

By E. R. VOIGT

IN considering the immigration policy of the Australian Nationalist Federal and State Governments in general, and that of the N.S.W. Nationalist Government in particular, it is well to recollect that the vigorous anti-immigration policy of the Trade Union movement—stimulated by the arrival of boatloads of immigrants at a time of unprecedented industrial depression—has forced the Australian immigration authorities to abandon their open industrial immigration policy.

To-day the Australian Nationalist Governments have been driven back to a point where they can only seek to justify an immigration policy covering farm workers and domestics.

No doubt the authorities consider themselves safe in directing the stream of immigrants into these channels, for no comprehensive reports are made to, or published by, the Government concerning unemployment in the agricultural and pastoral occupations, while in domestic service so few workers are organised that very few reports concerning unemployment are made to the Department of Labour and Industry.

It should be emphasised that in no State in Australia does there exist any machinery for ascertaining with any degree of precision the extent of unemployment. There is no Federal or State Unemployment Insurance in Australia, and comparatively few unemployed register at the State Labour Exchanges.

The various State Governments compile their statistics of unemployment from returns received periodically from certain of the trade unions. These unions do not comprise more than 25 per cent. of the workers employed in industry. According to the *New South Wales Government Gazette* (Vol. xxxiii, February 28, 1923) in January this year trade union reports in New South Wales covered only 105,993 workers out of a population of 2,129,693 (1921).

It will be seen therefore that the tendency of all Government reports on unemployment is to minimise its extent. This, of course,

dovetails in admirably with the tendency of the various State Governments to boost Australian industry, for the first task of every new Australian Premier is to journey home to London for financial assistance. What is more natural than that the bagman should praise his wares ?

The demand of the State Immigration Authorities for immigrant farmworkers is discredited by the statistical reports—inadequate as they are—of the various Governments.

A cablegram, dated April 13, 1923, which appeared in the Sydney press referring to Sir George Fuller, Premier of New South Wales, then in London, stated:—

Sir George declares that unemployment in New South Wales is confined to city workers, and now trifling in extent (!), while there is an abundant demand for farm workers and domestics, who are the only kind of adult emigrants Australia is accepting.—*Sydney Daily Telegraph*, April 16, 1923.

Let us examine this “abundant demand” as expressed in terms of agricultural progress or retrogression.

According to the *Quarterly Statistical Bulletin* of the New South Wales Government (Nos. 183 and 187), the New South Wales estimated wheat harvest 1921-22 and 1922-23 was as follows:—

		Grain Area.	Grain Production.
		Acres.	Bushels.
1921-22	.. .. .	3,169,200	45,280,000
1922-23	.. .. .	2,799,600	29,090,000

This great slump in grain production is due largely, but not wholly, to the great drought which still obtains over the greater portion of the State.

It should be evident, therefore, that with a diminution of acreage of over 10 per cent., and with a crop 35 per cent. less than that of the previous year, there is not enough work to-day for the farm workers employed a year ago.

This decline in wheat production is not confined to New South Wales. The Commonwealth wheat production for the past three years was as follows:—

		Bushels.
1920-21	.. .. .	145,873,850
1921-22	.. .. .	129,088,806
1922-23	.. .. .	108,811,162

(*Quarterly Summary of Australian Statistics, Commonwealth Government Bulletin No. 90.*)

It is therefore a cold-blooded criminal act on the part of the Australian Immigration Authorities to attempt to induce large numbers of British workers to emigrate to Australia for the express purpose of farmwork.

Were there a shortage of workers in agriculture in Australia, wages and labour conditions generally would not be so indescribably bad as they are.

Before a large audience in the Sydney Domain last April, Mr. Mahony, M.H.R., proceeded, with the help of statutory declarations and other documentary matter, to prove that engineers and other artisans who had come to the Commonwealth in consequence of literature supplied from Australia House had been forced to accept 15s. and £1 per week on farms because no other work was offering.

The Sydney *Daily Mail* (April 16, 1923), quoting Mr. Mahony, states:—

When the Commonwealth Government got the immigrants on the ship, its welfare officer submitted an agreement for them to sign. This promised to provide work on the land at 15s. a week for the first four months, and 17s. for the following eighteen months.

In his view, the Federal officer was being made use of by the farmers' organisation for the purpose of obtaining adult labour at sweated rates.

The immigrant had to work six weeks before he received any pay.

One of these men had stated that he had to work from 4.0 a.m. till 8.0 or 8.30 p.m., and the agreement provided that such men had to obey all "lawful and reasonable demands" of the employer.

This is a fair sample of bad conditions that obtain on the land in Australia. Worse could be quoted, for in some cases ex-soldiers have been put on the land and received a pittance of 5s. per week and keep that a convict would consider a hardship. (Warriors Farm, Mulgrave, N.S.W.)

The question that arises is: why do the Nationalist governments of Australia pursue a policy of immigration to the land? In Australia, as in Europe, the direct pressure upon the governments comes from finance and industry.

It will, however, readily be grasped that in view of the diminishing wheat production, the bulk of the immigrants (1) either refuse to go on the land after learning on arrival of the unsatisfactory

labour conditions or (2) after securing temporary employment at sweated rates filter back to the towns and industrial centres.

In inducing large numbers of British workers to emigrate to Australia, even for the purpose of going on the land, the Australian Governments are carrying out effectively the demands of the industrial magnates for a still larger surplus of factory labour.

It can well be imagined that with an unemployed pool of—at a low estimate—9.6 per cent. Australian capitalism regards the 14 per cent. pool of its British colleagues with envy, and looks forward to the time when wages will be driven down past the level of that of the British worker to continental coolie standards.

For it must not be forgotten that the geographical isolation of Australia makes immigration difficult and emigration impossible for the average worker. This restriction on the circulation of the Australian workers is further intensified by the isolation of one industrial centre from another by the great arid spaces of the Commonwealth. Let there be no mistake, a 14 per cent. unemployed pool in Australia would place the employers and their Nationalist Parliamentary Executive in a better position to batter down the standard of living of the Australian workers than is the case in Britain to-day.

WHAT NEXT IN THE MINING INDUSTRY ?

By D. J. WILLIAMS

TO present an adequate indictment of the present "agreement" in the mining industry would require many pages. Words can hardly convey a clear idea of the depth of its ravages, both on the standard of life of the miners generally and on the Miners' Federation itself. In many places—in South Wales in particular—its impact has been so severe as seriously to imperil the existence of the Miners' Trade Union.

It did not take the miners long to realise from bitter experience that this agreement was, in fact, no agreement at all. It was as blatant a piece of dictatorship as ever came from the coalowners. Time after time the miners rejected it; eventually the leaders came to the rescue and literally forced it upon their followers. The result was inevitable—a coalfield in bondage. Even from the point of view of what has become classically known as "true" Trades Unionism, the agreement should never have been signed by the leaders.

Its operation is pernicious in the extreme; it gives the miners nothing but a coolie standard, whilst it guarantees to the bondholder, the landowner, and the capitalist all the natural rights of property. Instead of being the first, wages are the last charge on industry. Before the payment of a living wage to the miner comes a whole series of propertied claims on the industry—debentures, royalties, wayleaves, directors' fees, and other costs. The agreement made no provision at all for the war-time developments of the mining industry—the immense amount of over capitalisation that took place as a result of those halcyon days. In many instances the nominal capital was trebled, while, through neglect of repairs and the desire to "make hay while the sun shone," the real capital depreciated. In the terms of the agreement no reference is made to this; yet on the basis of this immense inflation wages and profits stand in the ratio of eighty-three to seventeen. It needs no great stretch of the imagination to realise what the actual ratio is.

The Folkestone Conference has done nothing to alter all this.

A majority of the delegates were instructed to vote for ending the agreement ; at the last moment one group—the Durham delegates—backed out. (The Council of the Durham Miners' Association, representing all the lodges in that field, has asked the delegates to explain "their traitorous action.") And nothing will be done by the leaders, to whose influence this result was due. The Executive meet the owners again on October 5 to propose "modification" of the agreement. But the result of this meeting will be that of all the other similar meetings—nothing. It is evident that the time is opportune for a consideration of some alternative to the agreement. In this respect the trend of recent opinion amongst the leaders is interesting as revealing their attitude to the future of the workers' struggle. "Respected" opinion seems to reveal two main currents. Amongst one section there appears to be a conviction that the agreement is not bad "in principle"—whatever that may mean—but that it simply wants "reasonable application." The remedy suggested is that the ratio of wages to profits should be altered. Needless to say, this will leave untouched all the vicious features of the present agreement—the sectionalising of the industry, the absence of any control in any shape or form by the miners, the relegation of wages to the last charge on industry, the failure to provide for the unemployed of the industry, and its segregating of the Miners' Federation from the rest of the Labour movement. If the destinies of the miners are to be left to the sweet reasonableness of the coalowners, the present era of semi-feudalism is likely to be continued indefinitely.

Many leaders have expressed their opinion that, as an alternative to the present agreement, the basis of cost of living wages regulation should be resorted to. They point out with what success such a policy obtains amongst other sections of organised labour. It must be admitted that such a plea has a considerable fascination for the miners just now, when their own wages are so far below the cost of living figures. That, however, does not mean to imply that the pursuance of such a policy is the proper course to adopt. Quite the contrary. Every policy to be followed in the trade union movement should be judged from the two-fold standard of (*a*) how far it would encroach upon capitalism and give control to the workers; and (*b*) to what extent it would rally the workers to a united front.

Manifestly the cost of living basis has nothing to offer in this direction; all the factors upon which wages are based are determined and regulated outside the industry. Wages move up and down as if actuated by some mysterious, unknown force. Within the industry a free hand is given to the employers to do as they like. The trade union in this case is on the high road to become a glorified benefit society. This is actually what has occurred in more than one union; and unless the Miners' Federation steer clear of such a course the same fate awaits it.

Much has been said and written recently about the need to reconstruct the Trade Union Movement after the debacle of Black Friday. What course this reconstruction should take has never been made very clear. To some, doubtless, it means nothing more than to herd the members back to break membership records in numerical strength. It should have been made abundantly clear that the failures of Trade Unionism in the past have not been caused by lack of numbers. If that were so the problem would be rendered infinitely easier. The defects of the movement lie deeper. Reconstruction, therefore, merely in order to get members back is not enough: indeed, it is only here that the problem begins. To get the members back and follow the same course which led to Black Friday is surely nothing else than to invite a rehash of that disaster.

Here it will be seen that the problems of the miners are more and more becoming general problems for the whole Trade Union Movement. To get a union back to its war-time strength is not enough. What is needed is a new orientation in Trade Union activities; not so much a mechanical retreading of the old paths, as a courageous endeavour to bring the movement into line with the new realities of a new situation. Industrial action has long ago left the stage when a Trade Union fights for and by itself. Once a Trade Union, be it ever so powerful, decides to grapple seriously with the actual realities of the every-day struggle, it will be found that the issues involved are ever more far-reaching. Up to now there has been no uniform attempt to deal with these issues. True, we have been treated to a number of phrases about the creed of unity and the need for unity. But they remain phrases; they lack "the spirit which giveth life." There is hardly a petty craft union but which makes of such phrases an ornamental stock in trade.

Unity, apart from some definite object of unity, is and can be nothing but a figment. What British Trades Unionism needs to-day above all is some clearly defined objective. The strength for this objective will lead to unity as nothing else can. A unity that is to be more than a formal unity must be based on true issues; it must be seasoned in the storms of struggle. A common solidarity in the face of a common foe will be far more effective in bringing about unity than will be the fiat of a thousand conferences. Unity does not "come to pass"; it is forged on the anvil of conflict. In the working-class movement we do not—as some leaders seem to imagine—set out first to achieve a paper unity and then proceed to fight: it is the common experiences of the fight that lead us on to unity of purpose, programme, and objective.

An examination of the aims of the various sections of the workers' industrial movement to-day will reveal that these aims vary from section to section and from union to union. The object of some is still the elementary one of the rights of combination; others place before them the control of industry. Between these two extremes there is an endless variety of aims.

It is evident that this can never lead to common action, can never give that consciousness of common solidarity so imperatively necessary if the mistakes of the past are not to be repeated. In the past these differences always show themselves at the critical moment—at the time when action is contemplated. It will be the same in the future if the old tactics are persisted in.

However strong the miners, or any other body of workers that have built up their unions as independent bodies, whose connection with other bodies is merely a formal one, they will be still subject to the old limitations. If the miners decide on one objective, another union on another objective, these unions can never successfully pull together. In a time of trial the defect will reveal itself. Professions of a common front will serve only to accentuate the collapse when it comes. The only lasting binding tie for the unions is not a nominal affiliation to the Trades Union Congress, but the common objective of the every-day struggle of the whole organised movement.

There are many issues upon which the whole movement could be rallied. The present demand of the miners to scrap the

existing agreement should serve as a starting point for a thorough revision of the whole policy and programme of the Trade Union Movement. A common wages policy for the whole movement would mean a common front to fight for better wages. This would at once broaden the consciousness of the workers to a sense of their common interests; while the actual pursuance of such a policy would go far towards removing the numerous obstacles that at present obstruct the path to a common understanding.

This, then, should be the next step in the mining industry : to bring pressure on the powers that be to bring the whole movement into line upon the basis of uniformity of programme, policy, and purpose.

FURTHER SELECTIONS *from the* LITERARY REMAINS OF KARL MARX

Translated and Annotated by MAX BEER

X

THE FOUNDATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL¹

THE following fragment forms part of a letter written by Marx to his friend Frederick Engels, in Manchester, telling him of the foundation of the International and particularly the drafting of the Inaugural Address and the Rules of the new association. This letter shows at the same time the great importance which Marx attached to any forward movement of organised Labour. Of interest are likewise his critical remarks about the ethical appeals to society.

The other part of the letter deals with Bakunin, who had paid a visit to Marx, after an interval of sixteen years. Marx speaks of the excellent impression which Bakunin made upon him, and also of some conversation with him concerning the denunciation which David Urquhart had published.

From the same letter it is further evident that Marx had contributed economic articles to Ernest Jones's *Notes to the People* in the years 1851 and 1852.

“ London, November 4, 1864.

“ DEAR FREDERICK,— . . . Some time ago London workmen sent to their Paris friends an address concerning Poland and invited common action in this matter. Whereupon the Parisians sent to London a delegation, headed by M. Tolain, the Labour candidate at the last Paris election, a decent fellow. A public meeting was arranged for September 24, at St. Martin's Hall, by Mr. Odger, a shoemaker, chairman of the Council of All London Trades Unions (also of the Trades Unions Suffrage Agitation Society, which is connected with Mr. Bright), and by Mr. Randall Cremer, mason, secretary of his union. (Those two Labour leaders had arranged the great meeting of the trade unions in favour of the Northern

¹ Marx and Engels, *Briefwechsel*, vol. iii, p. 188.

States of U.S.A., which was held under the chairmanship of Bright at St. James's Hall, likewise the Garibaldi Demonstration.) A certain Le Lubez, a Frenchman who speaks an excellent English, was sent to me to inquire whether I would take part on behalf of the German workmen, and send a German workman to speak in that meeting. I sent Eccarius² who acquitted himself exceedingly well, while I assisted as a dumb figure on the platform. I was aware that this time it was no sham affair, but that on the part of London and Paris Labour there came real 'powers' into play. I therefore made an exception to my rule and did not decline the invitation.

"At the meeting, which was crowded to suffocation, for there is evidently a revival of the working classes taking place, Major Wolff (Thurn-Taxis, the adjutant of Garibaldi) represented the London Italian Working-men's Society. A resolution was carried to establish a Working-men's International Association, the General Council of which should have its headquarters in London and should serve as intermediary between the workmen's societies in Germany, Italy, France, and England. It was resolved also to hold a general Labour congress in Belgium. The meeting appointed a provisional committee; Odger, Cremer, and several others—partly old Chartists, old Owenites, &c.—for England; Major Wolff, Fontana, and other Italians for Italy; Le Lubez, &c., for France; Eccarius and myself for Germany. The committee was empowered to co-opt a certain number of members.

"So far so good. I attended the first meeting of the committee. A sub-committee (myself included) was appointed for the purpose of drafting a declaration of principles and provisional rules. Illness prevented my being present both at the meeting of the sub-committee and the subsequent meeting of the provisional committee. I learned, however, that the following occurred in those two meetings: Major Wolff moved that the rules which he had drafted for the Italian Working-men's Societies should serve as material for the drafting of the rules of our new Association. I saw the stuff later. It was evidently the work of Mazzini, from which you may infer

² J. G. Eccarius, a German tailor, who lived in London from about 1850 till his death in 1890. He published a pamphlet in criticism of J. S. Mill's "Political Economy" and was Labour correspondent of *The Times* during the First International.

the spirit and phraseology, in which the real question, the Labour question, was treated. Likewise, how the nationalist business was shoved in. Then Mr. Weston, an old Owenite, now a manufacturer, a very amiable and good fellow, submitted his own programme, an extremely confused document and of unconscionable length.

“ The provisional committee, to whom those documents were submitted, instructed the sub-committee to recast the Weston and Wolff papers. Wolff himself left for Naples to attend there the Congress of the Italian Working-men’s Societies and to get the latter to join our Association.

“ There was again a sub-committee meeting, which I failed to attend, owing to the invitation having reached me too late. Le Lubez submitted a declaration of principles and the remodelled Wolff rules, which were adopted for consideration of the provisional Committee. The latter met on October 18. Eccarius having informed me that there was danger in delay, I attended that meeting and listened with dismay to the reading of the paper which Le Lubez had prepared and which was purported to be a preamble to the declaration of principles. It was a Mazzinian pie, covered with crusts of French socialism. The rules of Wolff were likewise adopted, which, apart from all other defects, were quite impossible, since they presupposed a sort of central government (of course, with Mazzini in the background) of the European working classes. I mildly opposed, and after a discursive debate Eccarius moved that the sub-committee should again recast the rules. On the other hand, the “ sentiments ” of Le Lubez were adopted.

“ Two days later, on October 20, Cremer, Fontana, and Le Lubez came to my house concerning the recasting of the rules. As I had not had the papers of Le Lubez and Wolff in my hands before, I could not prepare anything, but I was determined from the outset to consign the whole stuff to the waste-paper basket. In order to gain time I proposed to discuss first the rules. We settled down to a discussion, and it was 1 o’clock a.m. when we got through the first of the forty rules. Cremer then proposed that the meeting of the provisional committee which had to take place on October 25 should be postponed to November 1, when he hoped we should be prepared to put something definite before the meeting. All the papers were left to me, which I then put aside, and I wrote

'An Address to the Working Classes,'³ a sort of review of the adventures of the working classes since 1845. Instead of the forty rules I put ten. As far as foreign affairs are touched upon I speak of countries and not of nationalities, and I denounce Russia and not the smaller fry. The sub-committee approved my draft, but I was obliged to put into the preamble of the rules two phrases about 'duty' and 'right,' likewise about 'truth, morality, justice,' which, however, are so placed that they can do no harm.

"The provisional (now general) committee adopted my drafts unanimously and with great enthusiasm. Le Lubez was instructed to translate the 'Address' into French and Fontana into Italian. Potter's *Beehive* is meanwhile our official organ. I have to translate the 'Address' into German.

"It was very difficult to write the thing in such a manner that our views should be published in a form which would be acceptable to the present point of view of the Labour movement. The same people, on whose behalf I wrote the 'Address,' will in a few weeks hold meetings under the auspices of Cobden and Bright. It needs time before the revived movement will permit of the old boldness of speech. It was therefore necessary to be *fortiter in re, suaviter in modo*.⁴ As soon as the stuff is printed, you will get it." . . .

XI

MARX'S INTRODUCTORY REMARKS TO HIS ECONOMICS

It has been shrewdly remarked that the pleasure which one takes in reading Ricardo is the best indication of one's general progress in economics. A similar remark may be applied to the subjoined notes which Marx, in August, 1862, jotted down in a letter to his friend Engels, concerning some of the main features of his economic work. Those who take an intelligent interest in these notes of Marx may be said to have an advanced knowledge of Marxist economics. We have here the first attempt to present his theory of surplus value, profit, average rate of profit, rent. While translating them I have somewhat re-arranged and put in a closer logical order the sentences and conclusions of Marx, but in meaning and terms they are not altered.

In the same letter Marx speaks of the chronic crisis of his own financial

³ Since then known as the "Inaugural Address."

⁴ Uncompromising as to principle, conciliatory as to form.

condition, owing to the outbreak of the Civil War in U.S.A., which put an end to his work on the *New York Tribune*, and says: "It is a real wonder that under these conditions I can still continue working on my economic theories." He then presents his friend with the following summary of his theoretical problems about average rate of profit and rent.⁶

"You know that I divide capital into two parts: (1) into constant capital (raw materials, machinery, buildings), and (2) into variable capital, or that part of capital which is spent on wages. Constant capital reappears in the value of the product. Variable capital contains less materialised value than the workman gives in labour back for it. Let us denote constant capital by the letter c , and variable capital by the letter v .

"Suppose that the necessary labour (that is that part of the daily labour which is necessary for the reproduction of the wage) amounts to eight hours, and that the labourer works twelve hours, then he replaces the variable capital plus one-half of it. This 50 per cent. of excess labour I call surplus value.

"You know further that I lay much stress on what I call the organic composition of capital, that is on the proportion of constant and variable capital, employed in the various trades. This ratio varies in the various trades. In highly developed textile industry, for instance, the ratio between constant and variable capital ($c : v$) is 80:20, in the tailoring business it is 50:50, in some very highly developed trades it is 90:10, in another trade it is, say, 70:30. We see, then, that the organic composition of capital varies considerably. And as it is only variable capital which produces a surplus value or profit, since profit is nothing but the proportion of surplus value to the total capital advanced, then it theoretically follows that equal capitals but with different organic compositions will produce unequal surplus values and therefore different rates of profit.

"Suppose, as above, that the surplus labour is equal to 50 per cent. If, for instance, £1 value is the product of one working week, then the total wage bill of thirty labourers will be £20 and the value of the produce of their labour £30. That is, the labourer receives two-thirds of a pound and he produces £1 value.

"The amount of surplus value which a capital of £100 produces

⁶ Marx and Engels, *Briefwechsel*, vol. iii, pp. 77 sqq.

in different trades will vary according to the ratio in which capital is divided between its constant and variable elements. I denoted above constant capital with the letter *c*, variable capital with the letter *v*. If in the textile trade the organic composition is *c* 80, *v* 20, then the value of the produce is equal to 110 (assuming, as above, 50 per cent. surplus value or surplus labour). The mass of surplus value is equal to 10 per cent., likewise the rate of profit, that is £10 profit on a capital of £100, the total profit is £110. Take now the big tailoring trade, the organic composition is *c* 50, *v* 50, the surplus value 25, the total product £125. Take another trade, where the organic composition is *c* 70, *v* 30, the surplus value 15, the total product £115. Finally, take a trade where the organic composition is *c* 90, *v* 10, the surplus value 5, the total product £105.

“ We have here, with the same exploitation of labour, for equal amounts of capital in different trades, very different amounts of surplus value, and hence very different rates of profit.

“ However, if we consider the four capital outlays as forming component parts of a single whole, we get an average rate of profit as follows:—

I. <i>c</i> 80, <i>v</i> 20,	value of the produce	110	..	profit rate equal to	10 per cent.
II. <i>c</i> 50, <i>v</i> 50,	“ “ “	125	..	“ “ “	25 per cent.
III. <i>c</i> 70, <i>v</i> 30,	“ “ “	115	..	“ “ “	15 per cent.
IV. <i>c</i> 90, <i>v</i> 10,	“ “ “	105	..	“ “ “	5 per cent.
Total capital	£400.	Rate of exploitation	50 per cent.	Profit	55 per cent.

“ This amounts to an average profit of $13\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.

“ The total capital (£400) considered as being the property of the capitalist class yields an average profit rate of $13\frac{3}{4}$. And the capitalists are brothers. Competition, transfer of capital, or withdrawal of capital from one trade to the other renders it possible that capital outlays of equal magnitude in different trades, despite their different organic compositions, yield the same average rate of profit. In other words, the capital outlay of any single manufacturing business yields an average profit rate, not according to the surplus value which it produces, but as an integral part of the total capital of the employing class. It is a share capital of a big concern, and its dividend is paid proportionally to its magnitude out of the total mass of surplus value (or unpaid labour), which the whole variable capital of the labouring class produces.

“In order that each of the four capitals given in the illustration, I, II, III, IV, should earn the same average profit, they must each sell their goods for £113. I and IV sell above their value, II and III below their value.

“The price fixed in that manner is equal to the expenses of capital plus the average profit, and it is this price which Adam Smith calls the natural price, cost price, &c. It is the average price to which competition between the different trades (by the transfer and withdrawal of capital) reduces the prices in the different trades. Competition, then, does not reduce the commodities to their values, but to their cost prices, which may be sometimes above, sometimes below, or on par with their values, according to the organic composition of the capitals, as was shown above.

“Ricardo confuses value with cost price. He therefore believes that if absolute rent existed (that is, a rent quite independent of the different degrees of fertility of the soil) then agricultural produce, selling as it does above the cost price (that is, the advanced capital plus the average profit), would likewise permanently stand above its value. Which, of course, would be inconsistent with the law of value. He therefore denies that there is such a thing as absolute rent and assumes only differential rent.

“However, his identification of value of commodities and cost price of commodities is thoroughly wrong, and was traditionally accepted by him from Adam Smith.

“The facts of the matter are these:—

“Assume the average organic composition of all non-agricultural capital to be c 80, v 20 (at 50 per cent. surplus value), then every £100 will emerge from the productive process with a surplus value or rate of profit of £10. Total £110.

“Assume now that the average organic composition of agricultural capital is c 60, v 40. Then the product, at the same rate of exploitation (that is 50 per cent.), will be £120, and the profit rate 20 per cent. If the farmer sells his agricultural produce at its value, he sells it for £120, and not for £110, its cost price, for which he would have to sell it if there were competition in land. But here the landlord comes in and takes from the farmer the £10 as absolute rent, or the difference between value and cost price.

“Low organic composition (that is, relatively high variable

capital) means really low development of the productivity of labour in any sphere of production. The organic composition of agricultural capital, which is, say, c 60, v 40, while the composition of industrial capital is c 80, v 20, shows that agriculture has not attained to that degree of productivity which manufacture has reached. As soon as agricultural capital reaches the composition of c 80, v 20, absolute rent will cease and there will but remain differential rent, which is but surplus profit, and which of course may also occur in certain manufactures as long as they enjoy special technical, topographical, or any other advantages. I shall deal with differential rent in my book, as I think that Ricardo's assumption of a constant deterioration of agriculture is devoid of all foundation.

"With regard to my definition of cost price as distinguished from value I may remark that apart from the difference between constant and variable capital, which emerges from the immediate process of the production of capital, there is still to be considered the difference between fixed and circulating capital, which emerges from the process of the circulation of capital. But this would complicate matters here. I only desired to give you a rough outline of my views about surplus value, cost price, rent, in criticism of Ricardo. But you will admit that by clearly considering the importance of the organic composition of capital a good many difficulties and problems easily solve themselves."

[Concluded]

(The earlier parts of Max Beer's series of annotated selections from the literary remains of Karl Marx, of which the above is the final instalment, appeared in the July, August, and September issues of the LABOUR MONTHLY (vol. v, Nos. 1, 2, and 3), which can be ordered through any newsagent or bookseller, or obtained direct from the Publisher of the LABOUR MONTHLY, 162 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W. 1, for 8d. each post free, or 1s. 9d. for the three numbers together.)

The World of Labour

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INTERNATIONAL

The Communist International and the German Situation

THE Stresemann Government of the "great coalition"—the "last reserve of the bourgeoisie" it has been called—is negotiating terms of surrender with French imperialism. The working masses of Germany are face to face with the most tremendous danger that has so far beset them—a union of the German bourgeoisie with the forces of Entente imperialism. Such a union would ensure the ruthless exploitation of the German masses on a hitherto unheard-of scale. Germany would become, like Austria, the helpless colony of Entente imperialism.

In this situation the forces of the Second International have relapsed into despair and have done little more than proclaim the inevitability of defeat. They have talked much of the collapse of European civilisation, but they have made no attempt to lead the German masses out of the slough into which the German bourgeoisie has betrayed them.

It is striking to remark the difference between the vague and uncertain utterances of all brands of Socialists on the German situation with the vigorous manifesto of the Communist International and the Red International of Labour Unions, which we reproduce in full herewith:—

To the Workingmen and Workingwomen of all Countries!
Comrades,

The German working class and the entire working population of Germany now stand in the greatest danger. The armies of French Imperialism occupy the Ruhr, the industrial heart of Germany. The French occupation officers forbid the export of coal and iron from the Ruhr into Germany, whereby unemployment in the Ruhr must result. Now they begin to interfere with the supply of money which is necessary to pay the workers in the Ruhr. Ever more shameless becomes the pressure of the bayonets of French Imperialism upon the breasts of the Ruhr proletariat. The Ruhr is now a powder-magazine which any spark may blow into the air. There is the danger of bloody massacre.

In unoccupied Germany economic anarchy is on the increase. The German bourgeoisie will not pay taxes and allows the German Government to satisfy the needs of the State by means of the bank-note press. The mark falls every day; prices rise every day. The position of the proletariat is becoming more and more unbearable.

Despite all the efforts of the Social-Democratic leaders and the Trade Union bureaucracy to quieten the working class with promises of strong action, the German

proletariat aroused itself, and by means of a strike-uprising overthrew the capitalist Cuno Government. Its place has been taken by the Stresemann-Hilferding Government, a coalition of the bourgeoisie and the Social-Democrats. They promised to tax the bourgeoisie, they promised to better the position of the working class, but their first act was to dissolve the Central Committee of the Factory Councils, their first act was to threaten the revolutionary proletariat.

Whilst the bourgeois and Social-Democratic Government dissolved the Central Committee which alone was in a position to comprehend the spontaneous movements of the proletariat, to prevent anarchy, to prevent unnecessary conflicts, organised capital began its attack upon the working class. As a protest against the new taxes, it threatens to close the factories. In Berlin the whole tramway system is on the point of being closed down. The workers are to be discharged so that municipal undertakings may be leased to private capitalists. Then the capitalists would make good the deficit by turning half the workers on to the streets, and lowering the wages of the other half. The purpose of all these manœuvres is clear. The working class must be brought to despair, it must be drawn into battle before it has brought its forces into battle array.

Meanwhile the organisation of armed Fascist bands continues. At the given moment they will hurl themselves on the unarmed proletariat.

Comrades, the German proletariat has behind it the revolution of 1918-19, the sad experiences of the rule of "democracy," which was nothing else but a mask for the dictatorship of capitalism. It will certainly not allow itself to be taken by surprise, provoked, or massacred. In ever-increasing numbers the workers stream into the ranks of the Communist Party of Germany, which is growing steadily into a great party of the masses.

The Social-Democrats are receiving retribution for all their traitorous acts, for the unatoned murder of Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht, Leo Jogisches, for the slaughter of 20,000 proletarians by the white guards under Noske, for all the services which they have performed for capitalism. A large part of their working-class membership is deserting them, another part demands an end to the traitorous policy of coalition with the capitalist bourgeoisie, and a return to the class politics of the proletariat. The more decisive the struggles of the German proletariat become, just so much more does the Social-Democratic Party crumble. And with it crumbles the strongest support of the German bourgeoisie.

The situation in Germany is approaching a climax: and unless all signs are false, revolution is the goal.

The German proletariat will in these struggles not only be faced by the armed forces of the German bourgeoisie. There is also the menacing danger that, in the moment when the latter attack it, when it finds itself in the decisive struggle with the capitalists, the bourgeoisie of the Entente and their vassals will forget their hostility to the German bourgeoisie and hasten to its aid. There is the danger that France, Poland, and Czecho-Slovakia will attempt to occupy Germany in order to subjugate the working class and to conclude a definite pact with the German bourgeoisie over the bodies of the German proletariat. There is the danger that British Imperialism and the vassals of the Entente will attempt by blockade to prevent the import of food-stuffs into Germany.

Comrades, Workers of the whole World, we appeal to you to hold out your hands to protect the German proletariat. In mass meetings everywhere draw the attention of the international proletariat to the situation in Germany, above all collect money to support strikers, now beaten to the ground, to support the Press and the fighting organisations of the German proletariat. Demonstrate in the streets with the slogans: "*Peace with the German working class! Hands off Workers' Germany! Withdraw the armies of occupation from the Rhineland, the Saar, and the Ruhr!*" Explain to the soldiers of France, Belgium, and Great Britain that they only strengthen their own

exploiters when they allow themselves to be used as the executioners of the German proletariat.

To the revolutionary workers and Communists of France, Belgium, Great Britain, Poland, and Czecho-Slovakia falls the historic task of imposing an impassable barrier between their capitalists and the German proletariat. To the workers of countries with a high *valuta* falls the duty of making the greatest efforts for the material support of their comrades in Germany.

Up with the fight for the emancipation of the German proletariat from the yoke of Entente and German capitalism!

Down with capitalist intervention against the German Workers!

Long live international working-class solidarity!

Help the German proletariat!

Long live the German Workers' and Peasants' Government!

Long live the Communist International!

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

THE EXECUTIVE BUREAU OF THE RED INTERNATIONAL OF LABOUR UNIONS.

On August 25 an open letter was sent to the Second International and the International Federation of Trade Unions (the Amsterdam International) in the following terms:—

The events in Germany confront the international labour movement with a most serious historical task. Twenty million German workers, the flower of the international proletariat, are entering into the struggle against the German capitalists and against the imperialists of the Entente. The approaching struggles will fill the whole political history of the next period. The outcome of these struggles will decide the fate of the international labour movement for many years. All the events of the political history of the next epoch, and in particular the fate of the whole labour movement of the world, will turn upon the outcome of the German crisis which is now developing.

The events in Germany have, in the most obvious manner, an enormous importance outside Germany. In no country can the workers hold aloof from events in Germany. Every worker whose heart beats true for his class must hasten to aid the German proletariat fighting under the red flag. The cause of the German workers is the cause of the workers of the whole world.

We approach you with the proposal to consider in common all practical measures which can, shall, and must be undertaken by all international labour organisations in support of the revolutionary proletariat of Germany. And this support can take many forms.

- (1) In Germany Fascism is rearing its head. All international labour organisations must help the German revolutionary workers in repelling Fascism.
- (2) The German capitalists are flinging thousands of revolutionary workers upon the streets. These workers are left without a crust of bread. The task of all international labour organisations is to assist these proletarian victims of the class struggle.

To-morrow, perhaps, the French and Polish bourgeoisie will attempt to afford open assistance to the German capitalists in the armed overthrow of the German labour movement. The international labour organisations must be ready to render all these attempts unavailing.

The fight for peace is the chief task of everyone to whom the life and well-being of the workers is dear. The international labour organisations must be on the watch. At your Hague conference you issued the call to fight against war and for the preservation of peace. The danger of war is now, undoubtedly, imminent.

In view of all this we suggest to you to hold along with us a joint international conference which shall be devoted to the following questions:—

- (1) Organising of all round support for the German workers by the international proletariat.
- (2) Appropriate measures for conducting the struggle for peace.

We propose to call this conference for not later than September 10.

The crisis is developing with such rapidity that every day is precious. We suggest that the place of the conference be Moscow, but we are ready to hold it in any other suitable town.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

THE EXECUTIVE BUREAU OF THE RED INTERNATIONAL OF LABOUR UNIONS.

Neither of the Internationals so approached has seen fit to reply.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Anthracite Miners' Strike

ON September 1, 155,000 miners in the anthracite fields struck work. The dispute between the anthracite operators and the United Mine Workers of America is one of long standing. For years the anthracite mine workers have been in an unfavourable position, by comparison with their colleagues in the bituminous (soft coal) fields. The basic wage per day in the bituminous fields, for instance, is \$7.50: while in the anthracite fields it ranges from \$4.20 to \$5.42, sometimes sinking as low as \$3.25. The class of work is the same in both fields.

The operators have argued that, since anthracite miners work an average of 271 days a year, as against an average of something under 200 days a year in the bituminous fields, the inequality in *annual earnings* tends to be eliminated. On the other hand, it appears that while (in 1921) anthracite miners earning \$1,100 to \$1,200 a year worked 272 days, those earning \$1,700 to \$1,800 a year worked 373 eight-hour days. That is to say, these latter worked seven more days than there are in the year in order to earn as much as \$150 a month.

In 1920 the Anthracite Coal Commission awarded the miners a 17.8 per cent. wage increase. But in the same year the soft coal miners, whose wages were already much higher than those in the anthracite field, received a 27 per cent. wage increase. Anthracite miners have consequently felt that they were defrauded of this extra 10 per cent.

A further grievance has been the refusal of the operators to institute the check-off system for the payment of union dues. By this system the company deducts so much from the men's wages, and pays the sum direct to the union treasurer. The system has been in successful operation in the bituminous fields for a quarter of a century. Further, the operators themselves employ the check-off system for a number of purposes: yet on this question of union dues they declare it "illegal."

The miners' demands can be summarised as follows:—

- (a) Increase of 20 per cent. in wages of contract miners and \$2 a day for day workers.
- (b) Adoption of the check-off system.
- (c) Coal to be paid for by weight, instead of by the car of varying size and capacity.

(d) Uniform wage rate to supersede existing numerous local variations.

(e) General eight-hour day, by elimination of twelve- and fourteen-hour shifts.

When the strike began, Governor Pinchot of Pennsylvania was appointed arbitrator. He proposed a 10 per cent. wage increase, the recognition of the union by the operators, but no check-off system. These terms were at first refused by the miners' officials, but further negotiations led, on September 8, to the signing of a two years' agreement on this basis. The eight-hour day was included, and a substitute for the check-off system in a clause which promised the provision of "facilities for the collection of union dues by union officials."

This agreement went to a special miners' convention for ratification on September 17, and work was resumed on September 19.

HUNGARY

Railway Strike

ON the fourth anniversary (August 2) of the establishment of the dictatorship of Admiral Horthy in Hungary, the locomotive drivers and firemen went on strike. Ever-soaring prices were making any wage increase illusory. They accordingly demanded a standard wage equivalent to 50 per cent. of the pre-war rates.

The Hungarian Government immediately took the most violent measures against the strikers. Martial law was declared, strike leaders and many strikers arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned, strike meetings forcibly broken up, union funds confiscated. Blacklegs were enrolled in large numbers and freely provided with arms. The railway workers, in their desperation, took to cutting telephone wires and attacking blackleg-run trains. But individual acts of sabotage were of no avail in face of the organised force of the Government. After lasting for three or four days, the strike completely collapsed. The men returned to work unconditionally: not only were they entirely defeated on the wages question, but they had not even secured any guarantee against victimisation.

It is of supreme interest to observe that this strike was carried out by a "yellow" union, professedly "non-political," and largely led by Fascist and Nationalist elements—the "Awakening Magyars." This union was formed under the direct auspices of the Horthy government when it seized power: the *bona fide* railwaymen's union having been dissolved and declared illegal, and the railwaymen forced to join the "yellow" organisation. The strike has shown that even a government-formed "class-collaboration" union cannot for ever stand aside from the class struggle when its members are forced to revolt through sheer starvation.

That there were political intrigues behind the assumption of the leadership of the strike movement by the Fascisti appears to be generally admitted. It is known that there has recently been a split between the Horthy government party and the extreme nationalists under M. Gömbös, who, with true Fascist demagoguery, is prepared to appeal to the working masses for aid in attempting a *putsch*.

The counterpart of the Fascist leadership of the strike may be found in the attitude of the Hungarian Social-Democrats. Their calibre may perhaps

be best adjudged by the recent speech of Peyer, one of their Parliamentary leaders. He demanded that the Horthy government take "energetic steps" against Communists, and declared that the present activity of the police in this direction was totally inadequate.

It is therefore not surprising to find that the Social-Democratic leaders were meticulous in dissociating themselves from the railway strike. They publicly condemned the movement, both in Parliament and in the columns of the bourgeois press. The excuse offered for this desertion of the striking railwaymen was the singularly hypocritical one that they were not in a *bona fide* trade union, for it must have been perfectly well known to the Social-Democrats that the Horthy régime has not for one moment tolerated any such organisation.

It is in accord with this formation of a united front with Horthy against the railway strikers that rumours are heard of a secret understanding between the Horthy government and the Social-Democrats. At present, it is true, this understanding is alleged only to apply to certain taxation proposals, which have aroused the opposition of the Fascisti. But the "Great Coalition" in Hungary is clearly a political probability.

BOOK REVIEWS

LABOUR OVER THE THRESHOLD

How Labour Governs: A Study of Workers' Representation in Australia.
By V. Gordon Childe. (Labour Publishing Company. 12s. 6d.)

FOR thirty years a great number of earnest souls in Australia have spent their best energies in building Labour parties. Encouraged by the temporary absence of many conditions which have hampered the development of social democratic movements in old-world countries, they have achieved luminous success. At the outbreak of the war Labour was "in power" in the Commonwealth and in five out of the six States. Sympathisers in Britain still point vaguely and enviously to Australia as a place where Labour rules.

What has all this meant to the Australian workers? How do they stand after these thirty years of striving and success? From books it has been impossible for observers on this side to judge. Mr. Childe's is the first to consider the Australian Labour Movement dispassionately and seriously in relation to the needs and aspirations of Australian workers. In spite of its title, *How Labour Governs* does not directly answer these questions.

An elaborate study of this question, and also of the peculiar aims and ideals of the Labour Parties, is promised in a sequel. In the present book Mr. Childe, making practically full use of his personal knowledge of present-day Labour leaders, and of his exhaustive researches in the files of Labour papers, deals primarily with the effect of parliamentary power on the Labour Movement itself. This plan allows him to throw indirectly a great deal of light on the wider question as well.

His book has two themes: the corruption of a movement which began with definite intentions of emancipating the Australian working class, and has become only a vast machine for capturing parliamentary power—with which, when it has been captured, the Movement has not known what to do; and the failure of the many attempts of those who were "tired of the tortuous methods of the politicians" to save the workers by direct action.

In the latter connection, Mr. Childe traces since about 1907 "the periods of revolt against the supremacy of politicalism occasioned by the shortcomings of that policy, its slowness, and at last its evident bankruptcy."

Hardly one of a long series of great strikes has succeeded. The attempts inspired by I.W.W. propagandists to reorganise the structure of trade unionism collapsed, to be revived again recently only in a very watered and hesitating form. His facts show that—whatever may have been the success from time to time of free-lance and systematically revolutionary unions like the seamen and the miners'—the Australian Movement has become incapable of using large-scale strike action successfully.

The corruption of the parliamentary movement is studied in great detail. Numberless instances and illustrations are given of, amongst others, the following four tendencies:—

(1) The history of Parliamentary Labour Parties is one of consistent

insubordination against the movement. Dominating personalities have refused even to abide by caucus decisions. It is safe to say that most leading Australian politicians have acted on the theory that, once they have obtained seats in Parliament, they are the Movement. Nearly every Labour Government has steadily resisted the efforts of conferences to compel them to give effect to the Party platform, especially the Party's industrial demands—preference to unionists, shorter working day, the right to work, &c. Politicians have been able to browbeat their critics by blackmail. They have argued that no one but themselves knows how to win elections, and point to the dangers of a Labour defeat if their freedom is hampered. W. A. Holman, the peculiarly able adventurer who was Premier of New South Wales in 1916, told Conference that he was "the only man who tried to concentrate his mind on how political power is to be obtained." At the 1915 Conference a delegate suggested that "a motion might as well be carried to hand the movement over to Holman to do what he liked with."

(2) A long series of scandals testifies that ordinary common or garden graft, as crude and democratic as the traditional Tammany game, has been an unsavoury characteristic of Australian Labour parties. The corridors of the Houses of Parliament seem at once to affect many of the most earnest Labour leaders. In many cases this graft has been employed not so much to the personal advantage of the deputy as to that of the general electoral chances of the Party.

(3) Dozens of politicians elected by Labour supporters to carry out a Labour programme have soon transferred their welcome services to the anti-Labour Parties. William Morris Hughes and the crowd that with him deserted Labour on the conscription issue are only the most famous of a long series of renegades. One of the first was Joseph Cook, an active young miners' leader in the early 'nineties, who, after twenty years' leadership of whatever anti-Labour Party was in the ascendant, is now a baronet, living an elegant life of peacocking as Australian High Commissioner in London.

Most of the names that loom largest in Mr. Childe's story belong to men who have ended as rats.

(4) Labour Governments have not only neglected to carry their platform into effect; in several cases they have initiated movements directly hostile to the workers. Thus, to please the farmers, a member of the New South Wales Parliamentary Party in 1915 proposed to absolve them from the terms of a Bill requiring decent housing accommodation for shearers and agricultural labourers. In 1913 Labour Premier McGowen called for "volunteers" to man the retorts during a gas strike. It was a Labour Federal Government which passed the merciless War Precautions Act, which was used only against militant workers.

This process of corruption has not ended. In the last two years, with which Mr. Childe does not deal, there have been numerous instances of the same tendencies. The indifference of ex-Premier Dooley to the instructions of the New South Wales Executive required his temporary expulsion from the Party. Revelations of the systematic faking of pre-selection ballots, even by such trusted officials as John Bailey (President of the N.S.W. Section of the Australian Labour Party), led in May to the expulsion of four prominent

members of the Parliamentary Party. *Common Cause*, the official organ of the miners, affirms that "only the fringe of the dirt has been shifted so far." Recent renegades to the anti-Labour parties include two of the oldest and most prominent Federal members. The last days of the Dooley Government in New South Wales were marked by free use of the police to crush unemployed demonstrators, and by a campaign led by the Treasurer to reduce the minimum wage of State employees.

Thus this peculiarly favoured, carefully organised, and successful movement has become so demoralised as to be impotent. Mr. Childe's statement of the facts is indisputable. What is the reason?

Mr. Childe's answer is simple. The proletariat is utterly incapable of governing. It is ridiculous to expect a Labour Movement to have as its aim the alteration of the social structure to put an end to the enslavement of the workers. All attempts become only scrambles to secure benefits for individuals. With an olympian superciliousness Mr. Childe draws a sweeping moral to flatter what would appear to be a private habit of anarchic cynicism.

This is nonsense. The facts do not require any such tired explanation. Mr. Childe himself hits the nail on the head when he says that:—

for three decades the forces of Labour have been concentrated on the effort to capture the parliamentary machine, and the trade unions have been made subservient to the political Labour Parties.

It is a pity that the promised sequel could not have been made a part of the present book. An enumeration of the "achievements" of Labour Governments and a study of the peculiar aims of the Parties would make clear the reasons for the general disillusionment and for the perpetual squabbles. It is because Labour Governments have steadily been more interested in winning the doubtful votes of small farmers and other non-proletarian classes than in standing boldly in defence of the workers that the movement has become so opportunist as to be bankrupt.

Compulsory arbitration has been available to settle Labour disputes. In a time of rising prices and brisk demand for labour it was ready to register imposing wage increases. With easy conditions on the industrial front, what more could a faithful trade union official do for the workers than help put a Labour Government into power and so, presumably, deprive employers of the power to prevent the inevitable march of the workers to greater and greater security? The movement, throwing everything over to put politicians into power, has become almost completely absorbed in one little side-track of the workers' struggle.

Naturally, the politicians have considered that they are the movement. It is this one-sided emphasis, this absorption in the game of putting both hands out for votes, that has detached the politicians further and further from the class-struggle. The industrial movement has been regarded as something quite distinct from the parliamentary, something to which the political leaders owe no obligation, something which must be snubbed and muzzled if parliamentary popularity is to be achieved. Thanks to the deification of simple "Labour-in-politics," the movement has been refined away almost out of existence. There is no adequate machinery to use for the class struggle; there is only an electoral apparatus, at the service of people who have generally swallowed whole the

opportunist philosophy of the capitalist political parties. In these circumstances, there is no reason to be surprised at the demoralisation of Parliamentary Labour or the failures on the neglected industrial front.

During the last three years there have been several signs that important sections of the movement are awakening to the necessity of putting an end to this concentration on vote-catching. At the end of 1920, the President of the Australian Labour Party admitted that "members of the Federal Executive know that the masses of the working class are not satisfied with the reform programme of the A.L.P." What seemed an entirely revolutionary step was taken; an All-Australian Trades Union Congress was summoned by the A.L.P. Executive to prepare a new objective and platform for the Party. This sudden reconciliation of the hitherto distinct industrial and parliamentary wings resulted in the adoption of a new militantly socialist objective for the parliamentary parties, which even the opposition of a number of the old-gang politicians could not defeat. The 1922 Federal elections, when this new objective was shelved, left Labour in a wretched minority. The 1923 Queensland elections, when the new objective was made the central issue, returned a supposedly ruined Labour Government with a greatly increased majority—a moral that has gone deep. At the same time plans for One Big Union have been revived as part of a scheme for the unification of all Labour forces to prepare an offensive against capitalism. The tendencies are still confused, but after thirty years the Australian Movement is coming, painfully and laboriously, to undo its past, and to start again with the definite intention of thinking of the whole class struggle rather than simply of electoral chances.

It is fashionable to look to Australia for examples. The one plain lesson Australian experience teaches is that detachment and emasculation of the parliamentary struggle results simply in the ruin of the movement.

E. M. H.

HOW THE WORKER LIVES—IN INDIA

Report on an Inquiry into the Wages and Hours of Labour in the Bombay Cotton Mill Industry. By G. Findlay Shirras. (Labour Office, Government of Bombay, 1923. R.3.)

Report on an Inquiry into Working-class Budgets in Bombay. G. Findlay Shirras. (Labour Office, Government of Bombay, 1923. R. 3.14.)

IN no other country but India would Government Labour Reports deserve the special attention that these two have attracted. The reason is not far to seek. On account of its size and population, India now claims to rank sixth among the industrial countries of the world. Yet amid the voluminous statistics and reports turned out by the Government of India there is included next to nothing on the conditions of life of the growing ranks of Indian industrial workers. One thinks, for instance, of the casual evidence of the Indian Industrial Commission, 1916-18. The Bombay Government Labour Office, the first and still the only one of its kind in India, was not formed until as late as April, 1921. With the publication of its *Labour Gazette*,

beginning in September, 1921, for the first time a little, though only a very little, detailed information has become available. It has now issued the two reports above, which represent the first fruits of its inquiries into labour conditions in Bombay.

Where accurate data are so scanty, any store of precise and relevant information is likely to receive a ready welcome. But official reports on labour matters can never be accepted without close scrutiny. It is not the more reassuring to be aware that it is an avowed motive behind the Bombay Government investigations to provide the basis for the settlement of labour disputes, now as much a normal phenomenon of Indian industry as in any Western country. It is, accordingly, not surprising that these two reports are no exception to the rule, and can only be regarded as unbiassed from the viewpoint of the ordinary employer of labour. They provide, especially the one dealing with working-class budgets, a mass of interesting data not hitherto available on the conditions and standard of life of Bombay workers; but much of the evidence and general conclusions can only be accepted with reserve, if not condemned as untrustworthy.

Take, for instance, the first inquiry into the wages and hours worked in the mill industry. Its results are not a little vitiated by the fact that they depend purely and solely on voluntary returns made by the employers on forms submitted to them to fill up. Even so, it is interesting to notice that the returns, which relate to rather less than 200,000 workers, indicate an average daily wage, for men, of only twenty annas (about 1s. 8d.). Assuming four weeks of six days worked in the month this would only yield a monthly income of 30 rupees (about £2). Women are, of course, paid much less; the average monthly wage being only half that of men. Even the *average* hours of labour represent a total of sixty hours or over for a working week of six days.

The second inquiry provides some startling evidence of the appalling living conditions necessitated by these incomes. Yet it is very doubtful if the budgets presented (even if accurately compiled) represent more than a small proportion, and that on the whole a relatively better-paid portion, of the total industrial population. Of 2,473 families investigated, only 340 had a monthly income of 40 rupees or below. The average earnings per month for male wage-earners works out in these budgets at over 42 rupees per month. Yet the first report returns the average monthly earnings per head in 1921 for cotton-mill workers throughout the Presidency as 33 rupees (about 44s.) for men and 16 rupees for women. For the 603 single men's budgets compiled, the average income figure is not stated, but it appears as if it would work out at near 45 rupees. As conditions are, factory-workers in Bombay with this income cannot by any means be regarded as belonging to the lowest-paid class. In support of this it may be mentioned that not long ago the Department of Statistics published some figures for January, 1921, of average monthly wages in State establishments and in typical industries. They show clearly that it is by no means uncommon for even skilled workers to receive about 20 rupees (= 26s. 8d.) or less per month.

The rapid growth of the Bombay industrial proletariat, the absence of real legal protection for the workers, and the indifference of the millowners, have resulted in conditions which can only be compared with those described

by Engels in his account of the state of the working classes in England in 1844. The housing conditions of the Bombay millworkers are notorious, and some appalling details are given in the book. The following are some of the conclusions arrived at :—

About 97 per cent. of the working-class families live in single-roomed tenements; 70 per cent. of the total tenements in Bombay consist of one room only, and 14 per cent. of two rooms. Two-thirds of the population of Bombay City live in one room as against 6 per cent. in London. There are 3,125 one-roomed tenements containing at least two families, 270 of them housing five or more families in the single room.

It is eloquent of the quality of these dwellings that out of 2,473 cases, the water supply was reckoned good in 234 because there was "at least one tap for eight tenements." In 1,423 cases there was only one tap for between eight to ten tenements, in the remaining 816 cases the single tap served for more than sixteen tenements.

The natural result is shown in the figures of infantile mortality in Bombay. The average number of deaths under one year per 1,000 births during the five years ended 1922 was 572. The figure in 1921 was 666. The corresponding figures in other towns in 1921 were 281 in Madras, 135 in Berlin, 95 in Paris, 80 in London, 71 in New York. The direct connection between overcrowding and the high rate of infantile mortality is shown by the fact that for whole families occupying one room or less the mortality figure reaches the awful figure of 828, decreasing as the number of rooms increases, until for four or more rooms it is as low as 133.

The comfortable assurance of the sentence in the summary is in the typical tone of official optimism. It says, "the question of housing leaves much to be desired, but is receiving the closest attention by Government and local authorities."

In view of the size of the incomes mentioned, it is not surprising that the investigators discover that "the standard of living and comfort is not a high one." On the average, not less than 56·8 per cent. of the income is spent on food. The expenditure on education is little or nil. The following conclusions drawn in the report testify to the conditions of nourishment dictated by these incomes:—

The quantity of cereals consumed by the industrial workers in Bombay compares favourably with the minimum prescribed by the Bombay Famine Code. *It falls, however, below the scale prescribed for jails.*

Even though the ordinary worker has a somewhat greater variety in his food, the figures are sufficiently compelling for even the British liberal-capitalist organ, the *Times of India*, to admit that:—

It is indeed established that the average Bombay worker is less well-fed than a convict in jail, and can afford to consume only a little more than a man in receipt of relief under the Bombay Famine Code.

Jail prisoners and famine victims are not usually taken as standards of healthy nourishment. The results in the case of the Bombay factory workers might have been even more startling if the standard of comparison had been army rations or some such scale of diet.

At the same time, the report is very careful to please its patrons by its

insistence that the remedy is not to be found in increased wages. Increased wages, it points out, as often as not lead to increased consumption of liquor and increased absenteeism. Thus the conclusion is reached, "in short, extra wages are sometimes spent on what tends not to increase efficiency but to decrease efficiency. Spending wisely may be regarded as the whole crux of the labour problem."

It is stated at the outset that the inquiry "was set on foot at the instance of his Excellency the Governor in consequence, mainly, of the difficulty of ascertaining the true facts of the cost of living." But, as a matter of fact, the information that is given under this head, and the tables and graphs that are compiled, can only be regarded with serious misgivings.

In the first place the budgets are not representative of more than a small proportion of the workers, and there is reason to suspect that budgets of workers earning relatively high wages preponderate amongst them.

In the second place the manner of compiling the budgets is inevitably open to serious defects. With a population so largely illiterate as that of Indian workers, it will be very rare indeed for written accounts to be kept by any of the workers concerned. For information, therefore, casual inquiry has to be relied upon.

Further, only five heads of expenditure are considered, viz., food, fuel, clothing, rent, and miscellaneous, the last amounting on the average to over 18 per cent. and including such items as drink, amusement, interest on debts, &c. But occasional expenditure, as on marriages, funerals, and festivals, is not taken into account, although it is a recurrent item in the lives of the workers. It may be mentioned here that no less than 47 per cent. of the families investigated were in debt (chiefly owing to the extra expenditure involved on marriages, &c.), and "the usual rate of interest is 75 per cent. per annum, and in a few cases 150 per cent."

Another very important reason why the official figures of the cost of living index bear no relation to the actual expenses of the workers is that the prices used in the compilation of the cost of living index are those paid on a *cash* basis. Of the total families investigated, however, only 33·8 per cent. made their purchases on a cash basis, the rest made their purchases partly or entirely on credit (entirely so in the case of nearly 40 per cent. of the workers). The prices they actually pay for commodities are accordingly greater than those used in the compilation of the cost of living index.

A further very significant feature which does not receive the emphasis it requires is the use of the average family budget deduced from this inquiry for the purpose of determining the increase in the cost of living since July, 1914. The method gives not the present cost of the pre-war standard of living but the pre-war cost of the present standard; it assumes that the pre-war standard was exactly the same and certainly no better than the present. Since the rise in prices and the lagging behind of wage-increases during the 1914-21 period have generally involved a substitution by the workers of cheaper articles for more expensive ones, the method adopted gives a figure for the increase in the cost of living which makes out that it has risen less than is actually the case, or as would be shown if the pre-war standard were taken as the basis.

For all these reasons, then, the calculating of the rise in the cost

of living is open to grave suspicion. Most of the factors mentioned, especially the use of cash, if not wholesale, prices and of the 1921 standard as a pre-war one, tend to lower the cost-of-living index. It is, therefore, remarkable to find that the curve of the cost-of-living index during 1921 and 1922, based on these budgets, shows actually higher figures than the official index as published monthly in the *Bombay Labour Gazette*. It can only be concluded that the official index must seriously under-estimate the rise in the cost of living. Is it to be wondered at that Mr. J. Baptista, the President of the All-Indian Trade Union Congress, has given his written opinion that the official index "merely mocks the hard-worked and ill-paid labourer"? Whether the worker himself would corroborate this view we cannot tell, for he is as yet too inarticulate to say. But it would not be surprising if all these Government inquiries into his condition, however accurate their data, seemed to him little better than a mockery.

C. P. D.

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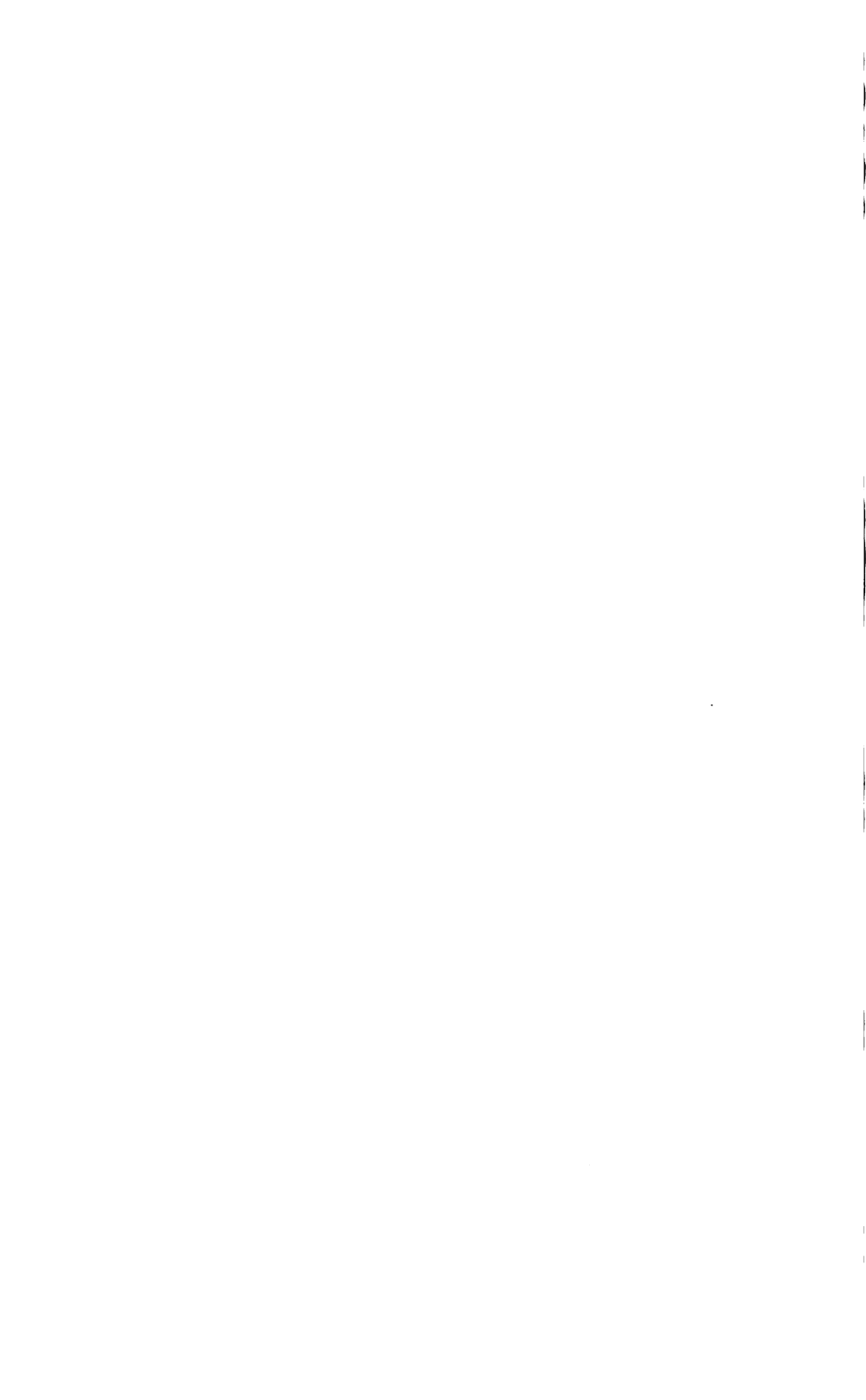
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R. P. D.

The Dictatorship of the Opportunists

T. H. W.

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NOTES of the MONTH

*The Menace in Germany—A Class Issue—Hushing up the World
Revolution—The Silence of Knowledge—Black Dictatorship
or Red—Democracy in Practice—A New Capitalist
Offensive—The Bourgeois United Front—The
Decisive Hour*

BEFORE the terrible state of events in Germany it is not easy to write quietly in terms of theoretical analysis. When crowds of starving men and women are besieging shop windows with no money to buy, and are driven down by armed police with swords and revolvers, then it is difficult to believe that the most constitutional democratic socialist cannot feel some indignation, and not least when he realises that that sword was put in the hands of the policeman by a social democrat instead of helping the starving men and women. Against the black alliance of Stinnes, French militarism, and the Second International, combining at this moment to crush down the German workers to the extreme of exploitation and subjection, it is difficult to believe that every active force in the working-class movement would not rise in immediate opposition or would fail to realise the deadly threat conveyed to the whole European working class. Yet the reaction of feeling in this country to-day is still conventional, indifferent, in terms of obsolete issues, utterly without relation to the present situation.

CAN it not be seen to-day at any rate that the German issue, and indeed the whole European issue, is a class issue? There is no "France" or "Germany," or exacting of reparations from the German "nation." Instead there is Stinnes and Degoutte meeting to arrange how to impose a ten-hour day on the German workers; and the German Government timidly trying to take part in the negotiations and being contemptuously relegated to the rôle of a policeman. What is Stinnes? What is Degoutte? The one is slave-driver, the other is bully, of the same Central European plantation on which both live: and their quarrels and contracts and agreements are only the haggling of slave-driver and

bully over their respective shares of the proceeds. They are the prototypes of post-war European culture: able to meet together as civilised bourgeois representatives and upholders of all political, moral, and æsthetic values (slave-driver and bully) against the rising tide of the proletarian revolution.

YET at this moment in British Labour propaganda the issue is still presented as an issue of France and Germany: the fight is still presented as a fight over reparations; the solution as some kind of settlement over reparations and debts. Why this blindness to the existence of the German workers? Why this compassionate upholding of the cause of Stinnes? Why this heroic applause of Baldwin against Poincaré? Why this indifference to what the settlement preparing must actually mean to the working class? Why this deafness to the actual clash already sounding? Why this complacent acceptance of a dictatorship against the workers established by their own colleagues of the Second International? There is one answer to all this, and only one. Eyes and ears are there: and eyes and ears are daily assailed by the torrent of facts. But to admit the facts to-day is not merely to admit the immediate facts. It is to admit the world revolution.

TO admit the facts to-day is to admit the failure of every theory and assumption on which the present policy of the British Labour Movement has been built up. They preached democracy. Their own side has thrown it over. They preached international peace to be achieved on the sword of the Allies. The Allies have destroyed it. They preached the improvement of the workers' conditions by the "peaceful" progressive methods of German social democracy instead of the "violence" of the Russian workers. To-day the German workers are in the descending hell of misery: the Russian workers are on the rising path of health and strength. They preached capitalist reconstruction and increasing production and prosperity. The outcome has been wholesale unemployment, growing dislocation, and falling standards shattered by the capitalist offensive. Every shred and remnant of which the tattered banner of the Second International was made up after the war has been scorched and shrivelled in the blaze of events, and

the stark issue of the world struggle of capitalist reaction and the workers' revolution stands out clear and inescapable. The leaders of the British Labour Movement are not blind from ignorance. They are well posted through their international contacts in what is happening. They are blind, not from ignorance, but from knowledge. They are silent with too much understanding. Just as two years ago the chatter of the Centre dried up as the real issue became clear between the reaction of the Second International and the united fight of the Communist International, so to-day the Second International has become silent as the supreme battle has become clear between the black dictatorship of Stinnes-Poincaré and the proletarian dictatorship of the Communist International.

“**T**AKE care that for fear of a red dictatorship you do not come to accept a yellow or black dictatorship.” How soon have Fimmen's words to the British Trades Union Congress become realised. Military dictatorship against the workers has been established in Germany—by the Social Democrats. Without the will of the Social Democrats that dictatorship could never have been established. Without the vote of the Social Democrats the Chancellor would never have secured a quorum for his Emergency Powers Act, much less its passage. Without the presence of the Social Democrats in the Cabinet the appointment of notorious monarchists as the dictators could never have been imposed on the workers. In 1921 the establishment of military dictatorship against the working class failed because of the united opposition of the trade unions. In 1923 it succeeded because the Social Democrats helped to establish it. There has been no other purpose in the presence of the Social Democrats in the Stresemann Cabinet. There is nothing they can point to that they have achieved by it. There is not even the fig leaf of constitutionalism: for the Social Democratic President Ebert had declared already that he would proclaim the dictatorship in any case even if it did not pass the Reichstag. There is not a single right or protection for the workers they can claim to have preserved. Even the eight-hour day, on which they made their short-lived stand as (in their own words) “the last remnant of the victories of the revolution,” they abandoned with a formula that preserved it “in principle” while

agreeing to its destruction in practice. Hilferding's financial schemes were soon given up and himself sacrificed. For what then have they abandoned everything? In order to establish a dictatorship of militarists and industrialists, which is engaged in breaking up working-class organisation, smashing the working-class Press, shooting and sabring workers in the streets, and at the same time supporting and consolidating the illegal Fascist and nationalist armed anti-working-class organisations. All this the Social Democrat Ministers in the Cabinet are sanctioning and encouraging by their presence, until the time comes when the workers are finally stripped and helpless before their enemy and the Social Democratic puppets are flung aside as of no further value.

LET every worker who has ever listened to the beautiful phrases of a MacDonald or a Thomas or a Brailsford about the great democratic principle and the violence and cruelty of dictatorship consider this picture: for here are the facts that those phrases conceal. To believe in democracy can be an honest dream, and even a beautiful dream, even though it is the dream of a man blind to the cruel pyramid of existing society. But the Labour and Socialist International does not stand for democracy. Its prospectus may be democracy: but its policy is different. Its policy is dictatorship—but dictatorship of a different kind. Against the dictatorship of the working classes and the peasants, of the vast majority in the interests of the vast majority, it puts forward and supports a dictatorship of a handful of militarists and industrialists breaking down the workers to heavy exploitation with the armed assistance of the foreign bourgeoisie. And this policy is endorsed and supported by Henderson and Thomas and the other leaders of the British Labour Party who are united with the Social Democrats in the Labour and Socialist International. We do not blame them for supporting a dictatorship. We agree that in times of social crisis a dictatorship is inevitable. But we do blame them for supporting a dictatorship of the exploiters and militarists against the workers instead of a dictatorship of the workers against the exploiters and militarists. This, then, is the practical working out of democratic principles. The beginning of the avenue is fair enough—Weimar hurrahs and “the freest Parliament of the

freest State on earth"; the end is Von Kahr and the Emperor Stinnes, the machine guns in the streets and the women shot in the market places. And what is happening in Germany is only an advance working model of what must happen in every country of capitalism in Europe and America. As sure as democracy is democracy, as the Second International is the Second International, and the class war is the class war, so surely will the same scenes be enacted in England: the armoured cars will race through the streets, and the bombs will rain down from aeroplanes on the heads of strikers, and all this will be done under the seal and signature of MacDonald and Thomas.

BUT the dictatorship in Germany is something more than a phenomenon of social collapse. It is the spearhead of a European capitalist offensive against the workers. The nature of that offensive is already clear. It is an offensive for intensified exploitation as the only means of carrying on the broken-down capitalist economy. Its watchwords are the ten-hour day and the destruction of trade union protective standards. Its initial scene of operations is the principal centre of European production, the Ruhr. Its agents are the Ruhr industrialists: but behind them and working with them are the French Government on one side and the German on the other. The Stresemann Government came to power as the representative of a single policy, but with a two-fold aspect. The single policy was the policy of the big industrialists, from whose party Stresemann came. Its two-fold aspect was capitulation abroad and dictatorship at home. The day after the capitulation the dictatorship was set up. In the words of the *Times* correspondent "violent measures have been taken against disorders before those disorders have actually occurred." But what is the meaning of a policy of capitulation abroad and dictatorship at home? It means the united front of the bourgeoisie against the working class.

THE French and German Governments play into each other's hands through the mediation of Stinnes, while the British Government abstains from interference. The French Government, so adamant to German overtures, readily

negotiates with Stinnes. Stinnes, having thus made friends with the enemy behind the Government's back in so open a way as to provoke the cry of "Treason!" is endorsed and approved by the German Government. The industrialists, who were ready to sacrifice all in an heroic national passive resistance hand in hand with their workers, now raise no objection to being protected by French bayonets against those workers. The French troops are used to suppress Communist agitation and clear the streets of Dusseldorf with armoured cars. The British forces, it is announced, are ready to "restore order" if the German forces should be insufficient. The German Government orders the Ruhr workers to take the oath of allegiance to the Franco-Belgian *regie*. Is it not clear that what is being prepared behind the fantastic network of the reparations issue is something very much simpler—the subjection of the German working class to a gigantic industrial combine? And if that subjection succeeds, then it must lead the way to the subjection of the European working class.

IF a Franco-German reparations settlement is reached on the lines of the Stinnes negotiations, if the Ruhr and the Rhineland are made a separate economic domain, if the German workers are provoked into sporadic hunger struggles to be suppressed in blood by the weapons so elaborately prepared against them, and if such a suppression is followed by the consolidation of the dictatorship in some more permanent form, whether monarchic or otherwise, and the extirpation of all militant working-class organisation, then the European Counter-Revolution will have won its battle for the immediate period and set up in the face of economic forces its system of post-war capitalism on a basis of military dictatorship and vast trustified exploitation. In that hour it will be too late for the British working class to move: for their fate will be found to be as irretrievably bound up with that of the European working class as it has proved to be during the past three years. But to act is to act now: for every day that is lost, every day that leaves free and unchecked the military preparations of the German, the French, and the British bourgeoisie, is loading the dice against the working class.

R. P. D.

MAN DOES NOT LIVE BY POLITICS ALONE

By L. TROTZKY

WE have got to soak ourselves thoroughly in this simple idea—"man does not live by politics alone"—and never forget it in our propaganda, written or spoken. Formerly, things were different. The history of our Party before the revolution was one of revolutionary *politics*. Its literature, its organisation—the whole of the Party in fact—was political in the most direct, immediate, and narrow sense of the word. The years of revolutionary transition and of civil war made the political interests and the political tasks still more acute and urgent. During these years the Party succeeded in gathering into its ranks the most active elements in the working classes ; and also the fundamental political teachings of these years are quite clear now in the eyes of the working classes. Simply to repeat them adds nothing to them in the eyes of the workers, and is more likely to weaken their influence than to increase it. Now that we have conquered power and gripped it firmly by civil war, our fundamental duties are changed ; they are to be found within the boundaries of economic and cultural construction ; they have become complicated, fragmentary, and scattered, and, in some ways, more "prosaic." Yet at the same time all our former struggles, with all the efforts and sacrifices that they needed, can only be justified in so far as we succeed in rightly stating and solving these daily inconclusive problems, which can be classed as cultural.

Actually, what is it that the working class has gained by its previous struggles ?

- (1) *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (exercised by the Workers' and Peasants' State and directed by the Communist Party).
- (2) *The Red Army*, the material support of this dictatorship.
- (3) *Nationalisation* of the most important instruments of production, without which the dictatorship of the proletariat would be a meaningless formula.

- (4) *Monopoly of Foreign Trade*, the necessary condition for Socialist construction in a country encircled by capitalist States.

These four factors, definitely secured, form the armour covering all our work. Thanks to this armour, each of our economic or cultural successes—if it is a real success and not merely an apparent one—necessarily becomes a constituent part of the Socialist structure.

What then is our present task? What ought we to learn first? What should our aims be?

We have got to learn to work well, punctually, neatly, economically. We need culture in work, culture in life, culture in our habits. The domination of the exploiters we have overthrown—after a long preparation—by armed insurrection. But there is no lever which can raise at one blow the level of culture. What is needed here is a long process of self-education by the working class and the peasantry.

Of this change in the orientation of our attention and our efforts Lenin has written in an article on "Co-operation." ¹

We are compelled to recognise a radical change in our point of view with regard to Socialism. The radical change is this: formerly we laid emphasis—we were compelled to do so—on the political struggle, on revolution, and on the conquest of power; while now we must lay all our emphasis on peaceful organisation and on "cultural" work. Or rather, I would be prepared to say that we should lay all emphasis on cultural work if we were not compelled to fight for our international position. Putting that aside for the moment, and limiting ourselves to internal economic relations, we can truly say that we now emphasise mainly work that may be described as cultural.

Preoccupation with our international position, then, is the only thing that can distract us now from the work of culture—and that only to a certain extent, as we shall soon see. The most important factor in our international situation is the defence of our State: that is, above all, the Red Army. But here again nine-tenths of our task is cultural: we have to raise the culture of the army, assure its education, teach it to use notebooks, textbooks, and maps, and to develop the habits of cleanliness, punctuality, exactitude, attention, and vigilance. The attempt to create, at the end of the period of civil war, when we were passing to a new epoch of labour,

¹ Printed in *THE LABOUR MONTHLY* for September, 1923.

a "military creed of the proletariat" was a very striking sign of our appreciation of the new tasks before us. It was exactly analogous to the presumptuous attempt to create, in literary laboratories, a "proletarian culture." In this search for the philosopher's stone, despair at our backward position is mingled with a belief in miracles—which is itself a proof of undeveloped mentality. But we have no reason at all for despair, and it is really time for us to give up believing in miracles such as an immediately discoverable "proletarian culture" or "military creed." Covered by the armour of proletarian dictatorship, we have got to extend our daily work of culture, which alone can secure a Socialist fulfilment of the essential conquests of the revolution. Whoever does not see this plays a reactionary part in the thought and activity of the Party.

When Lenin says that our present tasks lie more in the region of culture than in that of politics, it is necessary, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, to pause a moment and consider these terms. In a certain sense politics dominate everything. Even Lenin's advice—to transfer our attention from politics to culture—is *political* advice. When a Workers' Party decides, in one country or another, that it is necessary to put forward in the forefront of its programme demands which are economic and not political, even this decision is political in character. It is quite obvious that the word "politics" is used here in two different senses: first in the wide sense of dialectical materialism, embracing the totality of all the ideas, methods, and dominant systems that give direction to the activities of a community in all the spheres of social life; and then in a narrow and special sense, as applied to one definite side of the activities of a society, closely bound up with the fight for power and contrasting with economic and cultural work, &c. When Lenin wrote that *politics are concentrated economics* he was speaking of politics in general, in the philosophic sense of the word. When Lenin says, "A little less politics, a little more economics," he was taking "politics" in the narrow specialised sense. Both ways of using the word are legitimate in so far as they are customary. The important thing is only that we should understand clearly, each time the word is used, what it is that is meant by it.

The Communist organisation is a political party in the historical or philosophical sense of the word. The other parties are above

all political in that they concern themselves with the (lesser) "politics." The fact that our Party is henceforward concentrating the greater part of its attention on cultural work does not, therefore, mean that its political rôle is diminished. Its historical rôle of (political) leadership is precisely to be found in this calculated switching of attention towards cultural work. It is only after long years of socialist work, crowned by success, within Russia, and of complete security in foreign affairs, that a Party like ours will be able, little by little, to divest itself of its shape as a party, to dissolve itself in the Socialist society. We are still so far from this that it is not worth thinking about it as yet. For the period ahead of us, the Party must keep in their entirety its essential characteristics : unity of thought, centralisation, discipline, and the combative vigour which results from these. But these very qualities of the Communist Party, which are so invaluable, can only be preserved and developed, under present conditions, by the satisfaction of economic and cultural needs and aspirations in the widest, most intelligent, just, and meticulous way possible.

The proletariat is a powerful social unity which, in periods of hard revolutionary fighting for aims which are those of the whole class, comes completely into line. But in this unity we can see an extreme diversity and even a good few incompatibilities—from the illiterate shepherd to the highly skilled mechanic. Without this diversity the Communist task of unification and education would be the simplest thing in the world. One might say that the greater the history of a country, the greater is that of its working class, the richer it is in memories, traditions, habits, old groupings of forces—and the more difficult it is to form from it a revolutionary unity.

Our Russian proletariat has little history or tradition behind it and this certainly facilitated its preparation for revolution in the Red October. But the same fact has since hindered its work of economic construction. Most of our workers lack the simplest habits and abilities of culture (the power to read, to write, to keep healthy, to be punctual). The European worker has had a long time in which to acquire these habits in bourgeois society ; that is why the higher grades of European Labour hold so tightly

to the bourgeois order, to democracy, to the capitalist free Press, and other benefits of this sort. Our backward Russian bourgeoisie has scarcely given anything of this sort to the workers ; that is why the Russian proletariat has more easily broken with the bourgeoisie and overthrown it. But for the same reason it is forced for the most part to win and accumulate only now (*i.e.*, on the basis of the workers' Socialist State) the simplest habits of culture.

The revolutionary armour covering our new society—the dictatorship, the Red Army, nationalisation, and the foreign trade monopoly—gives an objectively Socialist character to all deliberate and conscientious efforts in economics or culture. In bourgeois society the worker was always enriching the bourgeoisie without intending to and without thinking of it—enriching the more as he worked harder. In the Soviet State, the good, conscientious worker, even without thinking of it (if he is non-party or non-political), is doing Socialist work as he increases the resources of the working class. That is the achievement of the October Revolution, and the New Economic Policy has not changed it.

There are a large number of workers, not belonging to any party, who are keen on production and on technical skill and loyal to their factory ; one cannot speak of them as “ politically indifferent ” except in a purely conventional sense. At the gravest and most difficult hours of the revolution they were with us. The vast majority of them were undismayed by the revolution ; they were not deserters, they were not traitors.

During the civil war many of them fought, while others worked their utmost on munitions. From this they passed straightaway to the labours of peace. One has, however, some reason for calling them “ non-political,” because the interest of corporate production or of the family comprises for them, at least in normal times, their whole “ political interest.”

Each one among them wishes to be a good workman, to perfect himself in his trade, to reach a higher degree of accomplishment, as much from a desire to better the conditions of his own home as from a legitimate professional pride. And let us repeat that in so doing each one among them does Socialist work even without knowing it. But we, the Communist Party, are concerned that these

producers should consciously direct their daily, minor, industrial efforts towards the objectives of Socialism.

How can this be achieved? It is difficult to get in touch with this type of workman along the lines of pure politics. He has heard all we have to say. He is not interested. He thinks in terms of his work-place and he is not too pleased with all that is happening at present at his work-place in the shop, in the factory, in the Trust. These workers want to think things out for themselves, they often have a reserved, "shut-up" attitude; it is from this class of workers that self-taught inventors come.

We cannot approach them on the political side, or at least we cannot in that way touch them very profoundly, but we can and we must reach them *through production itself and through technical skill*.

Comrade Koltsov (of the group connected with the *Krasnaia-Presnia*, Moscow), a Communist agitator in contact with the masses, has pointed out the lack of Soviet handbooks of instruction and of textbooks intended to be studied without a teacher, dealing with special technical subjects and separate trades. The old stocks of these books are exhausted; many works are out of date from a political point of view; they are very often impregnated with the most pernicious spirit of capitalism. The new handbooks are too few in number; they are difficult to get hold of as they have been published at different times by different publishers, or by different departments, acting without any concerted plan.

Technically, their use is often small as they are too theoretical, too academic; politically, they are invariably incoherent, as they are usually abbreviated translations. We need new pocket handbooks for the Soviet locksmith, the Soviet turner, the electrical fitter, and for many others. These manuals must be adapted to our actual economic and political conditions; they must take into account our poverty and our enormous potentialities; and they should instil into our productive system the most common-sense habits and new methods. They ought to allow, to a certain extent, the Socialist vista to be seen beyond the needs and interests of industrial policy (the standardisation of labour, electrification, the single economic plan).

Socialist ideas and conclusions ought to be an **integral part of the practical theory** in these books and should **never**

assume the guise of agitation dissociated from the subject matter. The demand for such books is enormous. It is caused by the need for skilled manual labour and the desire of the workers themselves to become more skilful. It is accentuated by the interruption, during the imperialist and civil wars, of all high-grade industrial training. The task before us is the most fruitful and the most important possible.

Let us not deceive ourselves by supposing that it is easy to create a series of manuals of this kind. The experienced workman, even if highly skilled, does not know how to write books. Technical writers often lack practical experience ; moreover, the number among them with a Socialist view-point is very small.

Nevertheless, this task can be accomplished, not by routine methods, but on the contrary with new methods, by combining. In order to write a handbook it is necessary to form a group, of three for example, consisting of a professional writer, with technical knowledge of the subject and acquainted as much as possible with the state of our industry or able to study it ; of a highly skilled workman interested in production and with an inventive turn of mind ; and of a Marxist writer with some technical industrial knowledge. Proceeding thus, or on similar lines, we must create a model library of industrial technique ; of course, well produced, of a convenient size, at a moderate price. This library would have a double rôle : it would contribute to the perfecting of skilled labour and in consequence of the Socialist edifice, and it would help us to get in touch with a valuable group of producers in the Socialist economy in its wider sense, and, therefore, valuable to the Communist Party.

It is evident that the task is not limited to a series of manuals. We have lingered over this example because we think it is a striking example of a new method of working, corresponding to the new objectives of the present time. A diversity of methods can and should be employed to win the non-political producers. We need scientific and technical periodicals, and special ones for each industry, issued weekly or monthly ; we need scientific and technical societies designed to attract the worker of whom we are speaking. A good half of our trade union press ought to be intended for him. But the most convincing political argument in the eyes

of the class of worker we are trying to get hold of will be furnished by *every practical success in production, by every real improvement in the conditions of the factory and workshop, and by every deliberate effort made by the Party in this direction.*

The political philosophy of this productive worker may be expressed—although it is only rarely that he himself gives it expression—in formulæ of this sort :—

“ The revolution, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, that is all clear and definite : we do not need the bourgeoisie or their agents the Mensheviks. The liberty of the Press is not of much importance. All this is not the point. *But how are we going to get on with production?* You, the Communists, have set yourselves out to direct it. Your aims, your projects, are good, excellent, we know ; it is not worth while repeating all this to us. We have heard you before on this ; we agree, we support you—but how are you going to get there in practice ? We put up with the crimes of the bourgeoisie and we can well be patient with the mistakes of the revolution. But not patient for ever, all the same . . . ”

The man who speaks in this way may be an old turner, a scrupulous worker, or a locksmith, or a foundryman—attentive to what he is doing, not an enthusiast in politics, but rather passive, yet reflective and critical. He is often a little sceptical, but always faithful to his class. This is a real work—and one of the best. Our Party in its present work has got to think of him.

This orientation towards the sound workman does not clash with another of the foremost tasks of our Party : to win over the younger generation of workers. For the younger generation is growing up on the basis that our solution of the main problems gives to it. *The younger generation ought before all to be a generation of sound workers, highly skilled and keen on their work.* It ought to grow up in the knowledge that its productive labour is also a work of Socialism. For this reason the orientation of our efforts towards the sound, skilful, and conscientious worker is also the direction we must take in educating the youth of the working class. Without it the advance towards Socialism will be impossible.

ZERO HOUR IN GERMANY

By C. M. ROEBUCK

§ 1.—*The Treachery of the Social-Democracy*

AT the time of writing (October 15) it is not yet clear whether, as reported, a dozen members of the German Social Democratic Reichstag group actually refused to vote for the Emergency Powers Bill, in spite of the threat of expulsion from the Party. If it is true, their names will one day be written in letters of gold on the walls of the palace which houses the German Workers' Government—side by side with the names, if not of Ruhle, who first voted against the war credits in 1914, at least of Haase and Ledebour, the first who broke party discipline the next year.

For the crisis with which the German workers are faced is one as pregnant with meaning for the whole of world history as the crisis at the outbreak of the late imperialist war. The granting of practically unlimited power, for an indefinite period, to the bourgeois government of the Reich to-day is as important an act as the conferring of plenipotentiary power to wage war, by the voting of the war credits, was in the days when the German mark still bore a terrestrial and not an astronomical value. Then, as now, the fate of the whole bourgeois machinery of government was trembling in the balance; now, as then, the proletariat is in an active, fighting mood, prepared to strike heavy blows in defence of its vital interests. And for the Social Democratic Party, a party which claims to voice the demands of the workers, obediently to lead the workers up to the altar, that they may literally immolate themselves and their families, by the sacrifice of their blood infusing new life into the worn-out and corrupted system of capitalist society, is as gross and cowardly an act of treachery in 1923 as it was in 1914.

Of course, treachery, as in 1914, is fast bound up with hypocrisy. Just as then the Social Democracy made the "sacrifice" of its "principles" only for the sake of the sacred cause of national unity, so to-day it sold its honour "only" when another sacred

cause—that of parliamentary democracy—was in dire peril. Incidentally, it is worth noting that this proletarian vestal parts with her chastity only for the sake of principles consecrated in the *bourgeois* revolutions of the nineteenth century—the principles of nationality and of “representative government.” And, like all her bourgeois sisters, she is ready for the sake of these principles to sell her country to the French at the best price her (somewhat depreciated) charms can buy, and accept a lord and master at the hands of the militarist clique, for whom democracy is a term of abuse and parliament a subject for laughter.

This is not an isolated act, or a sudden lapse from virtue, of the German Social Democratic Party. On the contrary, it is the last of a long series of similar betrayals, differing only in the circumstances in which they took place. Consequently it is the most likely to fail of its purpose. For a long time past the German workers have been losing faith in the S.D.P., and have been showing it by leaving its ranks, literally in hundreds of thousands (the paying membership has fallen from 1,800,000 to 700,000 in a year), by transferring their allegiance within the trade union movement to the Communist Party of Germany (K.P.D.), and by rallying, in ever larger and larger masses, to every call of the workshop and factory councils, in spite of the prohibitions and denunciations of the Social-Democratic leaders. During the last few months the gigantic, forty-year-old organisation of the S.D.P. has been literally decaying and falling to pieces: at Hamburg, in Saxony and Thuringia, in Berlin the district organisations have been swept away in the flame of mass revolt, denounced their executives, and have thrown in their lot with the Communists. And to-day, now that the propaganda of the old Party leaders has ceased to be of avail, now that their sole weapon is expulsion, or threat of expulsion, their task will become infinitely more difficult when the workers see that the defence of the interests of the Republic has been entrusted to—Stresemann, the nominee of the Prussian junkers!

The Social Democratic Party, the creation of Liebknecht and Bebel, the pupil of Marx and Engels, has made the last and greatest of its “great refusals”—those refusals to shoulder the burden of historical necessity which determine that those who have evaded their duty shall be blotted out for ever from the history of

human achievement. Henceforth the S.D.P., which at the hour of decisive struggle between the exploiters and the proletariat has taken the side of the exploiters, will itself seek for no better lot than self-extinction and oblivion.

§ 2.—*The Collapse of the Capitalist Economy*

“ It is the ultimate money form of the world of commodities that actually conceals, instead of disclosing, the social character of private labour and the social relations between the individual producers.”

Ever since the Great War the bourgeoisie in all countries has had bitter cause to reflect on the truth of this maxim of *Capital*, and on the destructive results when the social relations between the individual producers are forced out, naked and reluctant, into the light by the refusal of the “ money form ” established by scores of years of usage and custom to act any longer in its true capacity. And in Germany the collapse of the mark has been the first and most violent index (not cause) of capitalist collapse.

Here are the figures for the exchange rate (marks against sterling):—

Par	20.40	July 2, 1923 ..	730,000
January 1, 1922	789	July 16, 1923 ..	900,000
July 1, 1922 ..	1,768	July 30, 1923 ..	5,000,000
January 1, 1923	33,500	August 31, 1923..	47,000,000
February 2, 1923	193,000	September 12, 1923	440,000,000
March 2, 1923	107,250	October 1, 1923 ..	1,100,000,000
April 3, 1923 ..	98,250	October 5, 1923 ..	2,730,000,000
May 2, 1923 ..	146,750	October 9, 1923 ..	25,000,000,000
June 1, 1923 ..	344,500	October 19, 1923	80,000,000,000

Working backwards from this table, and inquiring the causes of this depreciation, we find that they are threefold: (a) the general impoverishment (absolute wastage) caused by the war; (b) the impoverishment caused by losses under the Versailles Treaty and by Reparations, including the occupation of the Ruhr; (c) the inflation of the currency, to cover expenses of government, and to provide credits for the great manufacturers, enabling them to buy coal, iron, and raw materials abroad, without taxing them in return.

It is not of immediate interest to consider losses during the war: they cannot be compared with the disasters suffered by Germany as a consequence of the peace. Out of a possible maximum

output (1913 figures) of 191,500,000 tons of coal, an output of 60,800,000 tons was lost when Alsace-Lorraine, the Saar, and Upper Silesia were torn from Germany by the Versailles Treaty; while, of the remaining 130,700,000 tons, over 114,000,000 tons were produced in the Ruhr and Rhineland, which the French seized in 1923. There remains, therefore, to Germany less than 9 per cent. of the coal she possessed before the war. Before the war, Germany possessed estimated reserves of iron ore amounting to 3,600,000,000 tons: after the war, according to the editor of the *Iron Trade Review*, she possesses no more than 1,374,000,000 tons. Out of a total 1913 production of 19.3 million tons of cast iron, about seventeen million tons were accounted for by territories lost to Germany by 1923; in the same way she has lost 17.2 million tons of steel, out of an annual production of 18.9 millions tons. Finally, while every other great power had materially increased the tonnage of its commercial fleet by January, 1923, as compared with 1914, Germany's tonnage fell from 5,098,000 tons to 2,496,000 tons.

Coal, iron, steel, ships—these are the life-blood of the modern industrial community, without which it becomes, first enfeebled, and ultimately a mere parasite in world-economy, only consuming and not producing. This is most clearly shown by the recent statistics of foreign trade, in which imports remain at a comparatively high level, owing to the huge quantities of coal and iron purchased abroad (in July, 1923, coal accounted for over 50 per cent. of imports, as against 25 per cent. in 1922), while exports fell to a miserably shrunken level, which shows only too clearly the complete economic decay of Germany—notwithstanding that very fall in the value of the mark which has enabled the German capitalists to undersell all the other nations in the world market:—

	Imports	Exports
	(In thousands of double centners)	
Average month, 1913 ..	60,693 ..	61,430
Average month, 1922 ..	38,230 ..	17,964
January, 1923	47,289 ..	13,093
February, 1923	31,661 ..	10,961
March, 1923	52,201 ..	9,382
April, 1923	63,961 ..	10,288
May, 1923	40,131 ..	9,299
June, 1923	48,066 ..	8,897
July, 1923	41,596 ..	10,540

As previously mentioned, it is precisely the burden of maintaining imports at this relatively high level that has caused the inflation of the German currency. While the low value of the mark was a factor that favoured exports, it worked unfavourably in the case of imports, and the printing press was forced to come to the rescue of industry to a greater and greater degree. But the inflation before the present year loses all significance when we see the figures brought into the fiscal calculations by the necessity of providing *Ruhrhilfe*, i.e., the monetary subsidy granted by the German Government to the employers and workers of the Ruhr, the first in order that they might buy coal, iron, and raw materials abroad, and the second in order to maintain unbroken the policy of passive resistance and sabotage. Just as we saw the *Ruhrhilfe* producing the sharp breaks in the value of the mark in January and July of this year, so we see it introducing the arithmetic of astronomy into the statistics of State income and expenditure:—

	Expenditure	Income
	(In millions of marks)	
Average decade (ten days), 1913	70.5 ..	57.7
” ” ” ” 1918	1,223 ..	205
” ” ” ” 1920	1,268 ..	966
Second decade, November, 1922	117,443 ..	15,619
” ” December, 1922	188,955 ..	33,166
” ” January, 1923..	268,863 ..	58,295
” ” February, 1923	607,611 ..	93,424
” ” March, 1923 ..	1,559,398 ..	103,823
” ” April, 1923 ..	885,328 ..	145,080
” ” May, 1923 ..	935,498 ..	570,763
” ” June, 1923 ..	2,794,900 ..	280,700
” ” July, 1923 ..	12,506,600 ..	512,373
” ” August, 1923..	246,000,000 ..	4,000,000
” ” September, 1923	5,455,794,000 ..	84,660,000

Thus the second decade of September showed a deficit of 5,360 million marks. During the week ending September 26, the deficit amounted to 8,500 million millions! In this week, the *Ruhrhilfe* alone was costing forty million gold marks per day—or nearly 2,000 million millions in paper.

How has the worker felt the pressure of all these factors, to which must be added that of unfettered and shameless speculation in foodstuffs and articles of primary necessity? The first indication

is to be found in the cost-of-living index. Beginning in January, 1923, at 1,120 (the 1913 level being reckoned as 100), it climbed comparatively slowly to 3,816 in May, and then doubled itself (7,650) by the beginning of June. From this time, at the insistent demand of the trade unions, the index was calculated weekly instead of monthly, and increased as follows:—

June 20	..	9,272	August 6	..	149,531
„ 27	..	11,785	„ 13	..	436,935
July 4	..	16,180	„ 20	..	753,733
„ 11	..	25,511	„ 27	..	1,183,434
„ 16	..	28,842	September 3	..	1,845,261
„ 23	..	39,336	„ 10	..	5,051,046
„ 30	..	71,476			

Detailed wages scales are not available, but the employers until a few months ago steadily refused to permit wages adjustments by collective bargaining on a weekly basis. The wage tariffs were adjusted monthly, but by the second week of the month turned to the heavy disadvantage of the worker, owing to the increase in the cost-of-living index. In January, 1923, the skilled worker in the principal industries (builders, woodworkers, textiles, metal trades) was receiving on an average a weekly wage equivalent to 63.2 per cent. of his pre-war wage; by May the percentage had risen to 74.9; while for unskilled workers the rate had risen from 83.7 per cent. to 98.1 per cent. In June, however, the index rapidly began to outrun wage increases, in spite of the weekly adjustments: and by the end of August a metalworker was receiving on the average 56-65 per cent. of his pre-war wages, while a compositor, the best paid trade, was receiving 65 per cent. From the middle of September onwards the daily degeneration of the mark has proceeded so rapidly that the average wages of skilled workers are not estimated to exceed 30-40 per cent. of their pre-war earnings.

What these figures mean in practice could be easily left to the imagination were there not abundant evidence in the despatches of British newspaper correspondents. A few slices of bread, occasionally a little lard and a few potatoes, with acorn coffee or some even worse substitute, as dietary: no money left for buying clothes or other necessaries, not to speak of recreation or education: gaunt, pallid faces, bearing the universal stamp of nervous exhaustion to

the last degree; listless, transparent, unsmiling children—these are the impressions anyone carries away from a working-class quarter in Germany of what goes to make up life for the proletariat to-day.

To all these sufferings have lately been added those of unemployment and short time. Until the last two months, these were more prevalent than in any previous year except 1920, the year following demobilisation; but nevertheless, as before noted, the stimulus provided to industry by the possibilities of export abroad, together with the low cost of the wages item in the expenses of production, combined to maintain industry in an abnormal condition of activity. This, however, ceased to be the case when it became absolutely impossible to *buy* raw materials abroad owing to the collapse of the mark, or to turn manufactured goods into stable currency sufficiently quickly to meet the costs of production. Unemployment and short time both began to increase rapidly in September: between September 9 and 15 the percentage of metal workers unemployed rose from 7 per cent. to 7.7 per cent., and working short time from 25.3 per cent. to 28.4 per cent.: while during the second week in October it was reported that the total number of unemployed in all trade unions had risen to not less than 10 per cent. of the membership.

	1913	1921	1922	1923
	Percentage of trade union membership unemployed			
January ..	3.2	4.5	3.3	4.4
February ..	2.9	4.7	2.7	5.5
March ..	2.3	3.7	1.1	5.7
April	—	—	—	7.0
May	—	—	—	6.2
June	2.7	—	0.6	4.0
July	2.9	2.6	0.6	3.7
	Percentage of trade unionists on short time		Percentage of trade unionists on short time	
December, 1921 ..	1.3	March, 1923 ..	23.6	
March, 1922 ..	0.6	April, 1923 ..	28.5	
June, 1922 ..	0.6	May, 1923 ..	21.7	
September, 1922 ..	2.6	June, 1923 ..	15.3	
December, 1922 ..	8.7	July, 1923 ..	14.5	
January, 1923 ..	13.0	August, 1923 ..	26.0	
February, 1923 ..	15.9			

It will be noticed that the summer months helped partly to redress the adverse balance created by the occupation of the Ruhr, in respect both of unemployment and of short time: but the effect, of course, was only temporary. Food riots are now a daily occurrence in the industrial areas.

§ 3.—*The Fascist Dictatorship*

Capitalism in Germany has lost nearly all semblance of a system of production, distribution, and exchange. Realisation of this is being forced upon the workers by the every-day facts of their lives. The Social Democratic Party has thrown in its lot openly and irrevocably with the ruling class. It is therefore practically useless henceforth as a means of stupefying or hoodwinking the working class. Some other way of keeping the workers attentive to their functions in the process of production has to be devised. The only way open lies through force, and its name is Fascism. At the present moment, with a full civil and military dictatorship "constitutionally" installed, with a programme in which the main items are the cessation of passive resistance in the Ruhr (*i.e.*, of resistance by the workers to exploitation by French and German capitalists combined) and the extension of the eight-hour day to ten hours, Germany is not very far off a complete Fascist regime.

The approach made to this state of things is curious and instructive. It has not been a secret that, ever since the suppression of the workers' revolts in 1919 and 1920, Germany has been under the ill-concealed control of the militarists—a control which has been particularly undisguised and brutal during the last twelve months. For well over a year the condition of Bavaria, in particular, has been fully comparable to that of Italy: workers' organisations dissolved or their activity restricted, Communists treated as outlaws, Labour meetings broken up and Labour halls pillaged and burned, the Labour Press muzzled, and the Fascisti—the young bourgeois nationalists, monarchists, strike-breaking associations, &c.—given full freedom of action against the workers and of arming themselves almost without concealment. The principal war and post-war criminals—Ludendorff and the ex-Prince Rupprecht, Ehrhardt, Rossbach, and the murderers of Rathenau—

are permitted to come and go freely, and are even treated with distinction. Elsewhere in Germany the conditions are the same: and if the Reichswehr "militia" and the Security Police have interfered at all in the activities of political organisations and in the formation of "unconstitutional" military units, it has not been against the Fascisti and their kidney, who have been free to preach murder and to practise it without hindrance. But there are large districts of Germany where for years the Communists have not been able openly to participate even in Parliamentary elections; while the formation of "proletarian centuries" in sheer self-defence has evoked the most savage repressions on the part of local and central authorities alike.

From the economic point of view, no less, Germany is ripe for Fascist rule, since she is in the grip of those capitalist groups, principally the Stinnes combine, who have throughout financed the Fascist organisations and military units. Not only are the premier industries, the largest and most productive factories, works, mines, printing establishments, shipyards and docks, shipping lines, &c., in the hands of the Stinnes combine, largely thanks to the fact that the bulk of its capital is invested abroad, but even the financial necessities of the Republic have been exploited to add to the wealth banked abroad. The *Ruhrhilfe* was paid direct to the manufacturers, the bulk, however, being destined to be paid as wages. But it proved a comparatively easy matter to buy stable foreign currency with the money instead, and to force upon the workers as wages "temporary currency" (*Notgeld*), issued by the municipalities and even private companies controlled or owned by the combine, and worthless outside the immediate vicinity. If, in August, the workers' demonstrations were not sufficient to oust Havenstein from the Reichsbank, in spite of the fact that this was the moment when workshop deputations to the Reichstag and a twelve-hour general strike had brought down the Cuno ministry and established a Coalition, it was due to the intervention of Stinnes. And if, in October, passive resistance by the Government has come to an end, it was under pressure from Stinnes, and after Stinnes had already come to terms with the French industrial interests with whom he hopes, later, to negotiate an "All-German" industrial bloc.

Why, if militarily and economically the elements behind the Fascisti are so strong, do they not openly take power? The answer lies in an analysis of the classes represented, although a hint of it is to be found in the declaration of von Kahr, the civil "Republican" dictator of Bavaria: "I am too good a monarchist to proclaim a monarchy just now." Broadly speaking, the forces behind the Fascisti are twofold: the great industrial and financial magnates, whose aim is to establish a continental economic hegemony on the basis of a system of industrial slavery in Germany; and the great land-owning militarist clique, whose aim is the restoration of an All-German monarchy, even more centralised than that which existed before. Thus their coalition represents much the same forces (from the class, not the individual, point of view) as constituted the class basis of the Hohenzollerns. The formal seizure of power by the Fascisti, on behalf of the monarchy, would (1) bring the whole working class out in a united front of resistance, such as met and defeated the Kapp "putsch," with the difference that resort would certainly be had to civil war; (2) give the French a pretext for erecting a Rhineland Republic, undesirable for both the industrialists and for the Junkers; (3) encourage those sections of the Fascisti, principally from the lower middle class, who have little but extreme nationalist or monarchist ideals for their political stock-in-trade to proclaim local monarchies on the old plan, first and foremost in Bavaria and to make attacks on France; (4) it would make the Fascisti group themselves—the national "heroes," Ludendorff, Rupprecht, Hindenburg, the Hohenzollerns, &c.—openly responsible for the disgraceful deal with the French on the Ruhr, thereby shattering their prestige amongst just those middle-class and lower middle-class "idealist" nationalists who constitute the rank and file of Fascism, and who would then become more accessible to direct Communist agitation.

The Junker-Stinnes groups are content to wield power through their puppets, conscious of being able to wait until some more suitable moment has arrived, and particularly until it has been possible to crush the working class once and for all—preferably by a "blood-bath" (as it was definitely decided to provoke on the Ruhr, and from which only the superhuman efforts of the Communist Party saved the workers).

§ 4.—*The Workers' Outlook*

It is zero hour in Germany. The battlefield of civil war has been prepared, as no other country in the world has yet seen it prepared, and the opposing armies—the workers and the bourgeoisie—are each waiting for a move from the other before throwing their forces into the conflict. At such a moment two main factors decide the day—which side has the strongest nerves (discipline), and which side utilises every moment of respite for the maximum effort to organise and consolidate its forces (generalship).

In this respect the proletariat is moving forward and developing with inconceivable rapidity. Not only is allegiance being transferred from Social Democrats to Communists, from trade union leaders to leaders of the factory councils (now being more and more widely transformed into Soviets—*i.e.*, councils of delegates from *factories*); not only are proletarian centuries, in spite of all the violence of the Fascisti and the prohibitions of the Government, being hastily organised wherever there are factories to teach the lesson of the class struggle: but in two of the greatest industrial areas of Germany—Saxony and Thuringia—the working masses have united, irrespective of party, to vindicate their rights and to defend Republican institutions, and have forced a similar coalition upon the Social Democratic organisation. Heckert and Boettcher, two of the best-known members of the Central Committee of the K.P.D., are now Cabinet Ministers in Saxony, in a Government relying as much upon the Factory Councils' Congress as upon the Diet. In Berlin it is generally expected that the Social Democratic district executive will be entirely replaced in the next week or two, and the editorial staff of *Vorwaerts* also, by definitely Left Wing representatives. A sign of the times is the rapid increase in membership of the Communist Party, which now has probably not less than 400,000 members, because it is above all the programme, the watchwords, and the tactics of the K.P.D. which have found abundant justification in the eyes of the German workers during the last few months.

Most striking and significant is the fact that, just as happened in Russia in 1917, the ferment amongst the masses has reached such dimensions as to seize the imagination, as it were in spite of themselves, of all the bourgeois journalists who take the trouble to

ponder over the meaning of present events, with the result that they write more clearly revolutionary and Marxist accounts of what they see than many a Marxist would—or could!

If the Fascist army strikes, or even if it succeeds in provoking hunger disorders (its present tactics), which may inevitably involve the whole of the workers in the defence and support of the section attacked, the proletarian army will be ready for it. On the other hand, if, owing to the "indiscretion" of some local Fascisti (as, for example, the seizure of Kustrin at the beginning of October), a local situation arises which requires prompt action, the working class has learned its lesson of revolutionary discipline and tactics so well that it will not be needlessly provoked into a general engagement.

But a general engagement, when it comes, will involve consideration of more factors than those at present involved in the internal politics of Germany. Suppose, for example, that a civil war is in progress, and a Workers' Government fully established in a considerable area of Germany, with a chance of military success; and that suddenly one of Germany's eastern neighbours—particularly Poland—thinks fit to take the field against her, allured by the bait of East Prussia. A grave responsibility will fall upon the British workers, who proved able to exert considerable pressure upon Poland in the years 1920-1922 in order to restrain the martial ardour of her reactionary landowners: but a much greater responsibility will fall upon the Russian workers, who, besides being the nearest, are also directly interested in seeing that Germany is not made fit for autocracy once more.

The other and more pressing danger is that Great Britain may be involved as the result of the machinations of the British Government. One possible alternative is that, on some pretext or other, the French troops will be ordered to advance, and that then, as in 1914, in spite of all the assurances of ministerial liars, there will turn out to be some unwritten "honourable understanding" that the British Navy occupies the North Sea and Baltic ports and lands expeditionary forces. The other, and still more probable, eventuality is that the British forces now on the Rhine may be sent (as even the *Daily Express* points out) at any moment to shoot down or bayonet German unemployed or factory workers, whether in a hunger riot

or in a violent and unlawful effort to protect themselves against Fascist violence. And in this case experience in Russia has shown us how easily the simple restoration of "order" develops into the Restoration—without any order, but with the capital letter.

Such a possibility cannot be a matter of indifference, or anything but a matter of the most vital urgency, for British Labour. Apart from the natural instinct of working-class solidarity, which will respond to the appeal of a Workers' and Peasants' Government in Germany no less warmly and enthusiastically than it did to that of Soviet Russia, the economic facts of Germany to-day have told in the concrete form of the lower wages and worse working conditions of the British worker. If the German workers are forced down for a generation into the position of slaves of the Iron Heel of Fascist-Stinnesism, a deadly blow will be struck at the economic, and almost immediately at the political, position of the British worker. A year after the crushing of the German workers we should expect to find, not only a grand concerted attack upon Socialist Soviet Russia, but also a Government of unchecked and bigoted Die-Hards at Downing Street. Against that consummation the British worker would be glad of an opportunity to strike a blow in good time. The only opportunity he will have will be when he strikes it on behalf of his German comrades.

It is this problem—the problem of mobilising Labour resistance to any support of German Fascism, of securing the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Germany, of organising material support of the German workers—that demands the immediate and undivided attention of the political and industrial organisations of the British working class.

The TRADES COUNCILS CONFERENCE

By HARRY POLLITT

THE Second Annual Conference of the National Federation of Trades Councils, which is being held in Birmingham on November 17, is an event of great importance and significance. Coming so soon after the debacle at the Plymouth Trades Congress, its proceedings will be watched by millions of workers who are waiting for a lead on the many problems now confronting them.

The present failure and weakness, of which the whole movement is conscious after the Plymouth Trades Union Congress, makes it of vital importance that the earliest opportunity should be taken to retrieve the position. What is wanted is a rallying centre to face up to the mistakes that have been made and show the way to a move forward in order to reverse the present position and give a new lead to the movement.

This is what the Birmingham Trades Council Conference must attempt to do.

The Trades Councils are peculiarly well fitted at the present juncture for this task. Face to face with the local experience of every problem and struggle, they see in direct contact the working out of every mistake and weakness of the movement. Forced to deal with the domestic problems of the movement in every locality, they alone are in the best position to see what the present sectionalism and disunity and lack of policy mean in living practice. They are in a very much stronger position to voice the direct needs and demands of the workers than harassed officials amid the routine of a head office, unable to look outside the blinkers of their particular union. The opportunity is in the hands of the trades councils if they can see the position clearly and show the path ahead.

For this reason the calling of the First National Conference of Trades Councils a year ago was a very important step in the development of the movement. At this conference, called through the initiative of the Birmingham Trades Council, there were present 126 delegates from 67 trades councils, representing a total affiliated

membership of over one million and a-quarter. In addition, sixty other trades councils wrote expressing agreement with the object of the conference and regretting their inability to send delegates owing to financial reasons.

The conference was very definitely given the cold shoulder both by the General Council and the Executive Committee of the Labour Party, because they saw in this conference the nucleus of an organisation that could, if it would, definitely challenge their leadership and be responsible for a big drive forward towards the greater unity and fighting power of the whole Trade Union Movement—something that the "big men" always call for, but never work for. The general criticism levelled against this attempt of the Trades Councils, the Cinderellas of the working-class movement, was that there was no need for them to take this action, as everything was satisfactorily looked after by the General Council and the Labour Party Executive.

Since then a year has passed, every event of which has gone to confirm the correctness of the need which the Trades Councils Conference was trying to fulfil. The confusion and stagnation of the movement has become patent to all, and the crowning exhibition of the Trades Union Congress has revealed the helplessness of the existing official leadership even to attempt to tackle the problem. The Back to the Unions campaign has shown that any attempt to carry out a common campaign depends for its execution on the Trades Councils. When it comes to organising a national campaign, the General Council has no machinery: everything has to be put on the Trades Councils, which are at present not organised or co-ordinated for their task. The General Council has, in fact, to act through the Trades Councils which are not represented either on the General Council or at the Trades Union Congress. In the same way when the threat of war arises, and the Joint Council of Congress and the Labour Party calls for Councils of Action to be formed, it is the Trades Councils that constitute the rallying centre around which such councils are formed. The General Council, in fact, at present is a head without a body. Only the Trades Councils can supply the body and the life-blood.

But the task which falls on the Trades Councils at the present moment is even heavier than this. At the present moment the

central organs are failing to lead. This failure throws additional burdens and problems on the local organs. Not only does it become the rôle of the Trades Councils to voice the immediate feelings and demands of the workers and to afford the means of carrying through the common campaigns: they are also compelled to take the initiative in endeavouring to force a lead upon the central organs.

This is the special task of the Trades Councils Conference. That conference has the opportunity to supply what is the greatest need of the movement, a rallying centre to gather up a common movement that will so increase in volume and strength as to compel a new leadership in the central organs of the movement, a facing of the problems of the working class and unification of the working-class army.

The first conference already made a start with its task. The resolution which it drew up contemplated and outlined a complete reorganisation of the trade union forces on the lines of a single industrially departmentalised trade union organisation. But the first conference did not yet succeed in getting beyond the details of a scheme of organisation to the full scope of its task in facing the immediate needs and problems of the working-class movement to-day, and in making clear its own rôle in relation to those problems. It will be the task of the second conference to work out this wider programme.

The issues that are facing the working class to-day are manifest and need no elaboration.

Unemployment is still the most urgent fighting issue of the working class in this country. On unemployment we have still no plan of action. The adoption even of the unemployed demands is not yet definite, still less any serious attempt to secure them. The recent controversy on the one day general strike in support of the unemployed demands, and the rapid dropping of the proposal by most sections, shows how far we are yet from any campaign that means business. A united programme and united action on unemployment is the first essential to retrieve the working-class position.

Bound up with unemployment is the whole question of common policy on wages and hours issues. At present the confusion of the whole field is at an extreme point. While some sections of the

Labour army are still retreating before new reductions, others are already putting in for increases. There is no co-operation in this; and the federated employers are able to play with the situation in the same way as they did in the initial stages of their offensive. It must be obvious to all that it is no longer any good to attempt to fight on sectional lines. If we are not to continue to be beaten we must have a concerted policy on wages and hours under a common direction. A national minimum wage would undoubtedly now be a rallying cry for the whole movement.

The same applies to other issues. In particular, housing urgently needs a definite campaign and action. The Rents Campaign last year was worked out and carried through on local initiative. But a national lead is essential to secure continuous, effective, and united action.

All these are issues that concern equally and unite the whole of the working-class movement without distinction of sections. A national programme must be of such a character as to rally the whole movement, and to bring into play all the forces of the movement equally on the political and the trade union side. It is a mistake to relegate certain dominant issues so purely the concern of the Labour Party or the Trades Congress respectively: for this means to sterilise the full effectiveness of our forces. Our aim must be to bring the whole of the working-class movement into play on the issues most urgently affecting the working class. And this brings us to what must be the second part of any programme in the reorganisation of the Labour forces to meet the new demands.

On all the issues that confront the working class the central need is united action which can bring the whole power of the movement into play. For this reason any programme that is to rally the working-class movement at the present point must deal with the biggest weakness of the movement—the lack of any central direction or authority. A real General Council must be established with power to direct the whole movement, and not only with power, but under responsibility to Congress to use that power and direct the movement on the lines laid down each year by Congress.

To effect this will mean not only the extension of the powers of the General Council, but the reorganisation of the present trade

unions to establish unity on the only basis on which it can be established—the industrial basis—and to prevent the present overlapping and sectionalism that bar the way to united action.

If a clear and simple programme could be drawn up at the Birmingham Conference to cover these issues, there is no question that it would awaken the support of almost every active element in trade unionism to-day; and what is more, would be the means of reviving the interest and enthusiasm of many who have let themselves fall into indifference and apathy. In addition the campaign for such a programme, going beyond sectional issues and temporary or local agitations, would in itself be the first step to unite the movement.

But to carry out such a campaign the first need is to make the Trades Councils themselves stronger, more representative, and better organised to meet the demands of local leadership responding adequately to national issues.

At present in most cases the Councils are made up of representatives from local trade union branches. This is perhaps inevitable in small places where district committees of unions are non-existent, or in very large towns where in addition to the main Trades Council, say, the London Trades Council, each separate borough has its own Trades Council. Such a position is true of most large places, and practically no means of intercommunication exist between these many Councils, so that all is left to the activity and initiative of the active members, and each locality goes ahead without regard to the lack of support they receive or otherwise from the rest of the Trades Councils.

The conference can tackle this problem of tightening up the local and district machinery of the Councils. When this is done they are in a strong position to force their demands upon the Trades Union Congress.

For example, the various boroughs round London can continue to have their Councils made up of representatives from the trade union branches and the local unemployed committee; from this local council delegates can be elected to serve on the London Trades Council, together with representatives from all the trade union district committees, as well as from the district council of the unemployed. I am aware that something like this is supposed

to exist, but owing to the number of important abstentions it does not function, and in any case the weakness of most large Trades Councils, such as Manchester, London, Glasgow, &c., is that few district committees of unions take an interest in the Trades Council activity.

Yet it is obvious that month by month the Councils are forced to play an increasingly important part in the movement. If from the conference an executive is elected that can meet, say, monthly, it is then in a position to see exactly what activities are being pursued by the Councils. It would be possible for it to work out the details of a programme such as I have indicated, and how best to get for it the fullest support, first through the district Trades Councils, secondly through the local Trades Councils, and finally right through the trade union branches. Such a body, working hand in hand with a leading General Council (on which the Trades Councils should be represented), could revitalise the movement.

If it is an amalgamation campaign, how much easier it becomes to make this possible; if instead of it being left to a few officials of the unions concerned, it has in addition the services of the people on the Trades Councils who are already working and fighting together, and who by their common experience see the value and need for amalgamation, and by pursuing active local amalgamation campaigns are able to make the campaign a success nationally. If, for example, last year when the General Council organised a few amalgamation conferences, which, because they were confined to a few full-time trade union officials, were an absolute failure, the local Trades Councils had been asked to co-operate, it would have meant that a real agitation would have been possible in the union branches, thus creating the will to amalgamation, the spirit that is necessary to overthrow the artificial barriers that exist towards amalgamation that are thrown up by the officials.

It is evident that the trend of the movement generally is towards creating a General Council with greatly increased powers. Some of the things aimed at are foreign to the average conceptions of many trade unionists. It will more and more devolve upon the Trades Council machinery to carry out the plans and campaigns of a centrally directed trade union movement, and it is because of these

facts that the need for a reorganisation of the present Trades Council machinery is so necessary.

The Birmingham Trades Councils Conference can make a new page in the history of the movement if it will. By taking the lead and forcing the pace it can force the General Council itself forward. The opportunity in its hands is a great one, but the need of the moment is also great. This is no time for delay in moving forward: for the condition of the working class is too serious to be dallied with any longer.

LIFE OF A COAL-MINER

By J. T.

(Member of the Yorkshire Miners' Association,
and ex-Deputy)

AT the age of twelve the son of a coal-miner must, owing to the economic side of the home, make preparations for beginning work. The lad will be told to approach the under-manager with a view to being signed on. If he is successful, that is, if he looks intelligent, healthy, and well-made, the under-manager will sign him on or instruct him to go to another official for the purpose. He will require a certificate from the school authorities and his birth certificate.

Having satisfied them with his credentials, he signs the time book. He is now another victim to be exploited, and joins the rest of the wage-slave class—and on returning home he is greeted as a man and appears to himself to have soared into a different atmosphere. The mother will bestow many blessings upon her son and give him every encouragement, especially when Johnny gets six days in. He will be promised many of the good things he never could partake of before because of the tight hand which was put on the few coppers to spare (if any) from week to week; whilst father will sit at the fireside watching the rehearsal he himself and the rest of the colliers have gone through.

Being told when to commence he will probably turn out next morning with his father, who will put him up to how to carry on. Upon receiving the lamp and lamp check number which registers him as another wage-slave, he will go from the lamp station to the pit-head, where the miners descend and ascend; he will be told to stay at the deputies' station (General Rule 4), where the lamps are tried, where "market men," and men and boys who have been signed on, receive their instructions: who to work with and where the direction lies. The under-manager will have previously mentioned to the deputy about the lad signing on. The work may be lamp carrying (that is, getting lamps relighted that have been put out), or it may be greasing tubs, or opening and shutting doors for traffic to pass through, or he may be assisting a pony driver with a view to doing the same work himself when he becomes

efficient. After finishing for the day he will be greeted with cheery words and a smile upon reaching home, with the usual question : "How do you like working down the pit?" After about three months to six months, if he shows signs of being useful, he will find, instead of keeping his first job, that he has jumped into a job that a much older lad was doing at five shillings per day (while he will be receiving about three and sixpence to four shillings per day). If a vacancy occurs he may be, after sixteen years old, transferred to a "corporal," or put in charge of an engine, driven by compressed air or electricity, or he may be clipping tubs on an endless rope, and taking the clips off, if clips are used, or doing the same with lashing chains, or at the bottom of an incline getting the full run coupled on and putting the drag on behind the run, taking the rope off the empty run when it lands, to put the rope on the full run, giving the signal to start off when all is in order, &c.

Most young lads have ambitions. To find out the most suitable lads who show signs of being valuable with further encouragement, someone will approach him in the interest of the company to know how he occupies his time away from the colliery and encourage him to attend the evening continuation classes run in the winter months for mining students to improve them in the knowledge of mining. The subjects taken are arithmetic, mining geology, methods of working and winning coal, methods of timbering and ventilation, gases (how to detect the presence of any of the four general gases found and what to do with them to remove them and make them harmless), air measurement, and hearing. Also the lads are taught to estimate the percentage of gas present by the size of the gas-cap upon one-tenth of an inch flame. The whole course of education given is for the benefit of the boss, to make the student fully efficient to handle and control men in his interest.

When it is known that he has become a student the official who first approached him may be his tutor at the night school (with suitable remuneration for his services). A few minutes now and again will be taken up, either before the end of the shift or at a slack time during the shift, making the student soar into a life of ease and comfort in imagination. But further advance and more opportunities for study are not gained by merit or intelligence or hours of hard serious study, but by some influential friend who

puts your case forward, who moves warily in the circle of the mining educational department.

The lot of the student will have changed for the better. No one will be allowed to tread on his preserves now for some time to come ; every one who works in the same district will fear him, because everybody will soon know or hear of his abilities. He may be as dense as a Robot (machine made), but, in the interest of the boss, exaggerations are a wise policy, because it helps to have a few boss men in each district, since, if the usual official is detained, he knows that when he arrives he will get first-hand information—such as a break-down in the traffic arrangements, ventilation impeded by a fall of roof, accidents and how they happened and what has been done, with notes and why it happened. Each student must attend ambulance classes. As he must not stay at being a deputy he must aim at nothing short of becoming a manager. After a year at the continuation classes success ought to be obtained, providing a smattering has been kept up from school, but this does not finish the mining education career. Courses are taken every winter upon different subjects, steam, electricity, compressed air, walling shafts, tubbing shafts, surveying by miners' dial, levelling by dumpy level or theodolite, &c. Studies range from elementary to advanced mining, and county scholarships are given which entitle the student to go to the University for two years free, giving him a better chance to gain a second class (under manager), first class (manager).

During the time his studies have been improving the relations between himself and the boss have been more amicable; they will have grown into an atmosphere of affinity for one another.

Some stages of experience may be overlooked, such as a deputy's position being offered and accepted without the various stages to go through ; these stages could be worked in by going to the coal-face as a filler or trimmer, picking what stall and who he would like to work with. Then he would be set down later on as a stall-man, or moving with datallers, (stone-worker), erecting doors, timbering roadways, ventilation man, or following coal-cutting machines along the coal-face.

Experience having been gained by theory and practice, the first objective has been achieved by being placed on the official list, to the envy of some of the old staff and with not too much delight

among the younger members. For there will now be a bigger competition for any higher vacancy that may occur, if death or promotion to another mine intervenes. There are possibilities of things being told out of school with a new-comer which it had been agreed to keep dark amongst the old staff. With the new-comer a certain period of careful watching and waiting now would be entailed, or some particular meeting place arranged away from the old ground ; this would mean a split up, and some may break away and make brotherly intercourse with the new-comer ; when this occurs the whole of the staff are not expected to stay very long.

A deputy on arrival at the mine should look and ascertain the height of the barometer and thermometer and record the same ; he must visit the fan-house and estimate the fan speed and the height of the water-gauge. On receiving his safety lamp he will ascertain whether it is put together correctly and see if the wick is cut straight and no corrosion surrounds the tube. He will then descend the mine and look over the last reports made previous to his shift commencing and sign them, after consulting the deputy leaving the mine about how things have been left. If he is satisfied the men and lads are set off when their lamps have been tried ; if things are not in order, the men and lads are sent home now. Since the Datum Line and the " best agreement ever made in mining history " came into being, only a few men are kept to make the place ready ; sometimes it means only an hour's delay and those who shift the debris and get the district ready for work get paid for it.

The deputy visits the men at work once during the shift before snap and once after ; every road is examined leading to and out of his district ; he must see to the safety of the men and lads under his charge, order timber where to be set if extra is required for roof support or sprags for the coal, see that packing is kept up (stone walls at gate sides) and bank packs, and arrange for cloths and doors to direct the air current in the proper directions. He must be able to detect gob-fires in the early stages, be acquainted with the various gases, and measure the air-current, also have good hearing ; he must see that a good supply of timber is kept at each working place, and that bandages and ambulance requisites are always at hand. Before leaving the mine he is supposed to give a " true report of the two examinations made during the shift."

No official must have any political leanings to any other school of thought except the same that his boss accepts. To become a deputy was quite easy previous to the 1911 rules and legislation ; it now requires a certificate to satisfy the management that the applicant has passed through an authorised school, and passed the tests set out therein. Previous to 1911 favouritism was the dominant feature—the runners or place seekers would frequent the beershop the boss puts up at, taking the wife in respectable attire, and in some cases the poor lass was left to find her own way home unless some arrangement was made previous. This she accepts or rejects. Even to-day this kind of morals is carried on. It does not take long to find out the views of a local branch or lodge committee, because recently, owing to the 1921 sell-out by the M.F.G.B., and also the decay of capitalism which brings bankruptcy, poverty, and misery for the miners, their wives, and children, the line of thought must be switched off the master class on to the interests of the working class. If new officials begin with a reformist outlook, they are met with such cases of compensation, victimisation, abnormal conditions, minimum wage disputes, &c., that shake the very life out of the reformist, and he becomes a rebel by mouthing (but as for acting he will back out, or will plan some excuse before the boss at some critical deputation). The mine workers are now beginning to realise that they cannot expect anything from so-called leaders, but that they must learn from mistakes of the past.

The M.F.G.B. is not a fighting organisation, but a friendly benefit society. It has become a talking shop, doing nothing except doing the miners out of their bob a week. Compensation cases get shuffled about from one month to another, so that it drives men back to work unfit. Then they have to go back on the compensation again, and prove to the pit compensation doctor that they are not shamming. How long this will prevail time alone will tell ; the only way to end it is to end the capitalist system of exploitation.

The greatest tyrant who ever drew breath cannot commit a worse crime than to take the bread out of the mouth of another ; he cannot do more than kill his captive ; but in civilised Christian England it is counted far better to starve slowly out of existence any one who dares to speak out and voice a grievance, whether it be his own or his mates'.

Being a victim of circumstances, and putting his views into practice, a man is lucky if, before he reaches home the same night, the under manager hasn't been informed of what he has said, word for word, at the branch meeting by one of the bosom friends of the boss. And this same individual may be the branch secretary or one of that kidney, who is out for his own ends and the betrayal of his class.

Suppose the victim has a good stall, he soon finds out that the deputy has a bone to pick with him. The deputy will make an extra special examination of the working-place, and before he goes something is bound to crop up. Then he is stopped from working in his own place, to be moved into a "making-up" stall or a minimum stall. The victim may weigh up form; he knows that the branch officials are no friends of his; he will in all probability keep quiet and not give further offence. In some cases success can be met, but generally failure lures him on. After serving punishment in an abnormal stall, then in a minimum wage stall, the market claims him as the last hope of a job; he finds mates who once held him in high esteem when he stood on his hind legs to fight for their rights now spurn him, giving him the cold shoulder, keeping aloof for good. Then comes seven days' notice from the boss; the case, after being shuffled over with the branch officials, is sent on to the council, the decision generally being thirteen weeks' victimisation pay; when the term is up a deputation is formed to get re-instatement for the victim. If this fails, he can go to hell for all either the employer or the trade union officials care. At the present time there are more victimisation cases in the M.F.G.B. than ever there were in any previous period. And still the game goes on!

That is how mining conditions are to-day in this "wait and catch the trade revival" period.

POLIKUSHKA

(A Review by E. R.)

SOVIET Russia has struggled long and vainly for recognition as a State. Because she proved herself too strong to be overthrown, it was necessary to suffer her existence, but no more. The States of Europe and America, from the great Powers to the tiniest neutralised zone, adopted a policy of neglect and oblivion, such as in good bourgeois families meets the undesired presence of an illegitimate child.

Diplomatic relations being withheld, the young State turned next towards trade and commerce. This was the Philosopher's Stone, to touch the hearts of the western nations to gold. The illegitimate child of Europe is gradually and grudgingly being admitted within the bankers' halls and the trading marts of the capitalist powers, whose salons and courts are still closed.

But there is still another avenue to public approbation and esteem, and that is by the royal road of Art. Till now, this has been closed to the Government of Workers and Peasants, for reasons both internal and external. A nation fighting civil war, invasion, blockades, and famine has little chance to cultivate the fine arts, much less to disseminate them in the outer world. And the hundreds of thousands of Russian refugees who inundated Europe after the November revolution of 1917 contained a goodly number of intellectuals and artists who have been devoting all their talents to earn a living in exile and, incidentally, to decrying all that exists and struggles to exist in the Russia of to-day. Russian literature, Russian music, painting, and the Russian ballet—all are by-words of this latter-day European culture, whose appetite for novelties has been whetted by the post-war decadence. All the greatest artistic contributions of Russian culture have been poured forth unstintedly at the feet of the European, English, and American speculator, who alone has money to pay for these exotic luxuries. It was always tacitly recognised, however, that this wholesale reception to Russian art vouchsafed by a war-weary Europe was to the Russia of the Tsars transplanted on to friendly soil—it was

the gorgeous, colourful, barbaric culture of the counter-revolution which appropriated to itself the right to speak in the sacred name of Russian art.

Meanwhile, in the Russia of the Soviets, a little band of faithful believers remained to carry through the revolution in the field of art as well as in politics and social life. The struggle of these true artists is written in blood and tears, for they, too, were soldiers of the New Order. Here is not the time to chronicle their triumphs and defeats, their enormous faith and sacrifices, which enabled Revolutionary Russia of the Soviets to maintain and to create a literature, drama, and the opera for the relaxation and heartening of the fighting workers and peasants, while Denikin, Kolchak, and Yudenitch were hammering at the very gates of Petrograd and Moscow. Those who have seen the flaming beauty of Russian opera, which is Russian history embodied and ensouled, and heard the haunting and melancholy magnificence of Russian music in those dark days—who have sat in momentary forgetfulness before the delicate dramas where Russian life was unfolded and interpreted with delicate and consummate genius—they alone can speak of the part which Russian art and culture played in the winning of the five-year battle fronts.

And now comes *Polikushka*, the Russian peasant of time immemorial, depicted by the pen of Tolstoy and for the first time moving in life before us through the six-act tragedy of his simple life in the film version sent out from the revolutionary heart of Moscow. Those who have not read the story of Tolstoy have only to conjure up a mental image of all they ever heard or read of the Russian peasant to visualise *Polikushka*, the oppressed and downtrodden of the earth, yet living and loving and laughing his simple life through to its tragic end, unmindful of its utter wretchedness, and of the revolutionary rôle it was destined to play, when accumulated suffering could bear no longer the burden of life as it was. Greater perhaps than the book is the film, for the stark beauty of its interpretation and the symbolic message it bears to the outer world. The revolutionary peasants of the Workers' Republic send greeting through *Polikushka* to their brothers in other lands—a mute and eloquent gesture through the

medium of art of what horror has been in the Russia of the Tsars and of what heritage of woe they are struggling to free themselves. The privations of the revolution are self-imposed—it is the willing price paid for freedom from the bond-slavery of the past ; and lest those who decry the New Order should succeed in stifling the voice of history, Polikushka steps before us, out of his background of dirt and filth, and lives his little life once more, the life that sixty millions of Russian peasants lived through centuries of oppression. In that life there is a grim sadness too deep for words, and scarcely a written word is needed to explain the action of the film. There is a tragedy too deep for tears, though the tears of the audience fall freely—but the sense of tragedy remains like a wound, long after the tears are dried. Polikushka is the embodiment, not alone of the suffering of his own people, but of the evils of an entire system that has flourished and still flourishes throughout the world and against which the Republic of Workers and Peasants is the only effective negation.

Call it propaganda if you like. It has not yet been so-called by the thousands of fashionable Berliners who thrice nightly wend their way to the shrine of Polikushka, to pay their tribute to the art of revolutionary Russia. Because Polikushka is simple and true and beautiful, it is sheer art, and the first barriers have been broken down on that royal road that leads to the intercourse of nations, apart from king's courts and counting-houses. Polikushka, produced in sacrifice and suffering, by an unnamed artist who has given the best of himself to the revolutionary ideal, was sent as a frail and humble messenger from the land of famine to carry the message of the hungering peasants to the capitalist world. And Polikushka, by the truth that is in him, has succeeded. Polikushka is the mode, the craze, the fashion of idle Berliners, and will be handed by this jovial company to their class in other lands. Money is being garnered to buy food for the famine-stricken, but a richer harvest is still to be reaped. The jaded appetites of the rich will soon turn from the beautiful tragedy of Polikushka to seek new and more cheerful pleasures, but there awaits him a vaster audience than ever dreamed of in the days of Tolstoy. Throughout the world the workers and peasants, brothers and sisters of Polikushka, will flock to live for an hour the tragedy of his life, and a new and deeper

understanding of the great revolution will be borne in upon them as a gigantic protest against the system that made such tragedies a commonplace. Propaganda, perhaps, but propaganda elevated to the heights of art. Such is Polikushka, the messenger from revolutionary Russia to the outer world.

The World of Labour

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INTERNATIONAL

The Reformist Internationals and the German Situation

LAST month we reproduced for the benefit of our readers two important documents relating to the attitude of the Communist International and the Red International of Labour Unions towards the German situation.¹ This month we quote some extracts from the resolution adopted at a joint meeting held on October 3 and 4 of the Bureau of the Labour and Socialist International and the Bureau of the International Federation of Trade Unions. A comparison of the two statements is instructive.

The attitude of the Labour and Socialist International and the I.F.T.U. follows along the lines made familiar by Mr. Keynes. The policy of these two Internationals is symbolised by their recent dispatch of a memorandum to the League of Nations. They concentrate their attention on the means of finding "a just and effective settlement of the problem of Reparations."

The value of the proposals (put forward by the Internationals for the settlement of Reparations) is shown by the fact that experts and men of good faith are becoming increasingly unanimous in favour of them. Particularly are the following proposals finding support in all circles and all countries.

- (a) The obligation on the part of Germany to restore the devastated regions to the full extent of her capacity, this capacity to be determined by an impartial authority.
- (b) The annulment of the charges imposed on Germany for military pensions contrary to the Fourteen Points of President Wilson which were reciprocally accepted as the basis of the Armistice.
- (c) The annulment of inter-allied war debts.
- (d) The adoption of the system of reparations in kind and in labour as far as its application is possible.
- (e) The flotation of loans for the prompt fulfilment of reparation obligations, and the transformation of the German debts to the Allies into an ordinary debt of a non-political character.

¹THE LABOUR MONTHLY, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 237-240.

The Internationals reprove in strong terms the Ruhr adventure of M. Poincaré, but chiefly, it appears, because :—

. . . . This wrong action is also bad business The policy of M. Poincaré, with which the Belgian Government has associated itself, has not produced reparations. The "productive pledges" have proved sterile German distress has retarded the possibility of settlement and is increasing economic difficulties all over the world.

The actual situation in Germany is mentioned in the following words :—

The political crisis in Germany and the chaos which menaces her threatens all Europe. Never before have we been confronted by a crisis of such gravity. The whole of Western civilisation will be imperilled if care be not taken If violence be permitted against the German workers all workers risk being the victims in their turn of war abroad and the brutal dictatorship of Fascism at home.

But what policy do the Internationals put forward to combat this twin danger of war and Fascism? To quote their own words :—

They demand a redoubling of propaganda for peace and International understanding. They address an urgent appeal to the United States to take their full part in securing the peace and financial and economic reconstruction of the world.

SPAIN

The Military Directory and the Working Class

EXCEPT for certain regions, such as Catalonia (of which Barcelona is the centre) and the mines of Biscaya and the Asturias, Spain is not an industrial country. Peasant agriculture, undeveloped and primitive, is the basis of the Spanish economic system. The peasants are exploited in a true feudal manner by the large landowners.

In the mining industry the capital is chiefly foreign and the genuine Spanish bourgeoisie is practically confined to Catalonia. The class conflict between the bourgeoisie and the feudal landowners clearly manifests itself in the Catalan separatist movement.

The campaign in Morocco (which has been intermittently waged since 1909) is another point of divergence between the agrarians and the industrialists, and the disastrous and continued failure of this campaign, coupled with an enormous and ever-growing deficit, has resulted in an acute crisis for Spanish capitalism, relatively weak and undeveloped as it is. The counterpart of the failure of the Moroccan campaign, and the expression of the crisis of Spanish capitalism, has been the violent suppression of the working class. And when the Spanish bourgeoisie cast about it for a Mussolini it naturally supported a man who had already, as Captain-General of Barcelona, become notorious for his savage strike-breaking activities in connection with the recent Barcelona transport strike.

The military dictatorship showed its hand the moment it seized power by declaring that all strike "violence," and all "unofficial" strike movements, would be treated with the utmost rigour of martial law. Within a few days an Exchange message reported that the prisons in Catalonia were crowded with arrested Communists. Further, the loudly trumpeted action against

Catalonian separatism turned out to be simply directed against the revolutionary Syndicalists of Barcelona. The *Daily Telegraph* correspondent wrote that :—

The Catalans nearly all belong to the bourgeoisie, and above all and before all their desire is to give battle to anarchy, preferring a Government opposed to their political ideals, if favourable to their economic interests.

The Directory appealed to the working class to “work more and better,” and issued a manifesto in which the following sentences occurred :—

In work is the salvation of the country, without any thought of Imperialist aims, which can only be pursued by those who are mad. . . . We want trade unions for protection and co-operation, and not for social resistance or to diminish production.

On top of this denial of Imperialism came preparations for an intensive continuation of the Morocco campaign. Further, the Directory took steps to see that it got the trade unions that it—and its supporters the Catalonian bourgeoisie—wanted. In addition to the usual repressive measures, an order was made that in future all trade unions should submit statements of their accounts to the Government.

In face of this grave menace to the whole working class of Spain, the organised working-class movement has been able to offer no effective resistance. The Socialist Party and its offspring, the General Union of Workers (*Union General de Trabajadores*), have been cultivating an “expectant” attitude with regard to the Directory. Manuel Llana, a leading official of the Asturias Miners’ Union and a member of the Socialist Party, has, with the approval of the Party and of the U.G.T., visited General Primo de Rivera and held conversations with him. The ulterior motives of these conversations have not yet transpired, but it seems clear that Llana, on behalf of the U.G.T., is coquetting with Spanish Fascism as D’Aragona and the Italian Confederation of Labour have been coquetting with its Italian counterpart.

The Syndicalist organisation, the National Confederation of Labour (*Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo*), under anarchist domination, has equally failed to give a lead to the working class in the present crisis. Shattered by the Governmental White Terror, and torn by futile pseudo-philosophical anarchist controversies, the C.N.T. has been unable to offer other than a halting and unorganised resistance. The anti-political attitude of anarcho-syndicalism has reacted fatally on itself. A year ago the Spanish Communist Party appealed to the C.N.T. for the formation of a United Front and received the answer that :—

The invitation of the Communist Party to form a united working-class front is not acceptable from the point of view of our Confederation. The reason is clear : the Communist Party should not, and indeed cannot, represent the Spanish working class on the field of the economic struggle.

Between this impossible “no politics” attitude on the one hand, and the bankrupt reformism of the Socialist Party on the other, the Spanish Communist Party has a difficult part to play. Directly the *coup d’état* took place, it proposed a united front to the Socialist Party and the U.G.T., which these bodies refused, and have since done their best to sabotage. It has, however, succeeded in establishing a united front with some anarchist groups in Madrid. Through its organ, *La Antorcha*, it is striving—hampered by a severe Press

ensorship—to propagate amongst the Spanish workers the idea of a united front against reaction. The Socialist organ, *El Socialista*, is contenting itself with articles by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald on pacifism.

The situation in Spain which pre-disposed the seizure of power by the militarists has been effectively summed up as follows :—

A monarchy devoid of all prestige ; two political parties, Conservative and Liberal, both representing agrarian interests, pursuing practically the same policies, and only differing in personal antagonisms ; a great clerical power among the rural and petty bourgeois masses ; heavy pressure of taxation ; a proletariat vanquished by White Terror, betrayed by the Reformists, and split up by the Anarchists who will not learn anything from the Russian Revolution ; a young and courageous, but still inexperienced Communist Party ; a well-organised and numerous officers' caste possessing simultaneous connections with the reactionary landowners, with the industrialists, and with the middle class influenced by the Fascist example ; and the continuation of the Moroccan war.

ROUMANIA

Trade Union Congress

AN Extraordinary Congress of the Roumanian Trade Unions was held, on September 16-18, at Cluj (Klausenburg) in Transylvania. The number of trade unionists represented is variously given as 52,000 or 65,000.

The Roumanian Trade Union Movement is practically a post-war growth, due to the incorporation in Roumania, under the Peace Treaties, of large tracts of Transylvania and Hungary in which industrial capitalism is relatively well developed. In Old Roumania before the war there were only 7,000 trade unionists : directly after the war the number rose to 200,000. This increase in membership was accompanied by an increase in militant activity. Under Communist leadership, the unions engaged in an energetic struggle with the employers, culminating in a general strike. The Government was quick to perceive the danger, and embarked on a campaign of ruthless repression—arresting thousands of revolutionary workers, closing union offices, and confiscating funds. The union membership slumped to 26,000 in 1921. Having broken the back of revolutionary trade unionism, the Government proceeded to enact a law compelling all trade unions to obtain special licences from the authorities, and virtually submitting them to the control of the police. The law also laid it down categorically that no trade union should have any sort of connection with the Communist Party.

Seizing their opportunity, the Social Democrats undertook the task of organising "legal" unions. Those Communists who had survived the Government persecution proceeded to join these new unions, in order to agitate for a united working class front and a fighting policy against the capitalist offensive. This Communist activity is amiably described by the I.F.T.U. as "Moscow's work for the destruction of the trade unions," and the contrary Social Democratic policy of drift and defeatism is called "regular trade union work on normal lines."

The Social Democratic trade union bureaucracy found that the left-wing opposition in the unions was acquiring considerable influence. They therefore

determined to bring matters to a head. Against the general feeling of the membership—who wished to discuss immediate questions of the day-to-day struggle—the agenda of the Trade Union Congress was confined, apart from the Secretary's report, to the question of affiliation to the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions. The town of Cluj was chosen—deliberately it is said—for the meeting of the Congress because it happened to be under martial law. It is reported that two days before the Congress opened two trade union leaders had a meeting with the Prefect of Cluj. This official undertook, in virtue of the summary powers vested in him by martial law, to deal with any left-wingers who might have the temerity to oppose the official elements in the Congress. He was, it appears, as good as his word: and several Communists were arbitrarily arrested during the Congress sessions.

During the first session of the Congress a stormy scene occurred over the reception of fraternal greetings from the Union of Youth. While the tumult was at its height the vote was taken (or so it was alleged later) for the Mandates (credentials) Commission. It so happened that the commission thus elected was solely composed of Social Democrats and members of the Trade Union General Council. The rest of the story we extract from the official *Press Service* of the I.F.T.U. :—

The Commission which verified the mandates proposed to cancel sixty of the 292 mandates which were held by 217 delegates on the ground that they were invalid. This proposal was rejected. [By 26,456 to 25,710.] Thereupon, the President, acting on instructions received from the Trade Union Council, declared the session closed, and called a new session to which only those were admitted who declared themselves to be in favour of affiliation with Amsterdam.

This procedure may at first sight appear to be violent and undemocratic, and under normal circumstances it would certainly be so termed. But there was a universal opinion that it was necessary to act in this way in order to do real trade union work, especially as it was generally known that the Communists would act in obedience to secret instructions, directing them to remain within the trade unions, whatever happened, and to continue their destructive work there.

While the discussions were very stormy before the expulsion of the Communists, the later meetings were a model of orderly and business-like procedure, despite the language difficulties. After the division, it was ascertained that the majority of the delegates, representing 28,423 members, were taking part in the late proceedings of the Congress, and that these counted among them the representatives of the large unions, with the exception of the clothing workers, the woodworkers, and the leatherworkers. Individual delegates were present even from these unions . . . Affiliation with Amsterdam was now unanimously resolved upon.

This amazing statement calls for no comment. But in view of the eagerness with which reformist Socialists and trade union leaders of every stamp have striven to fix the responsibility for splitting the working-class movement upon the Communists, it is interesting to have on record such a frank official confession of a splitting policy on the part of the Amsterdam International.

It is noteworthy that the "majority" vote of 28,423 is, if the figure of 65,000 members represented be accepted, not a majority at all. Even if the official figure of 52,000 is taken, it is only a very bare majority.

The official report concludes :—

In order to do practical work, the seat of the Trade Union Council was removed from the capital, Bucharest, which is not an industrial town, to Klausenburg, an industrial centre, which is already the headquarters of most of the trade union federations. Moreover, in this town there is a widespread knowledge of both the German and the Hungarian languages, which means that the trade unions of Central Europe will be able to exert a greater moral influence.

It may be remarked here that the trade union bureaucrats had already had occasion to demand the dissolution of the Bucharest Trade Union Commission on the grounds of its Communist affiliations. Also Klausenburg (Cluj) happens, as pointed out above, to be under martial law, and the administrators of martial law have been favourably disposed towards the reformist trade union officialdom.

G E R M A N Y

The Crisis in the Social Democratic Party

THE "United" Social Democratic Party of Germany is, at the present moment of acute crisis in Germany, torn with internal dissensions. Masses of Social Democratic workers have left the Party and are streaming into the Communist Party. Those that remain in the Party moreover, are moving steadily to the Left, and the opposition to the Right Wing leaders, with their policy of coalition with the big industrialists, is daily growing in intensity.

The oppositional movement has spread to certain leaders of the Social Democratic Party, among whom it appears as a more or less faint reflex of the leftward evolution of the Social Democratic masses. The Weimar Conference of Social Democratic Deputies of the Left Wing on July 29 was an illustration of this movement. The conference demanded an end to the policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie, co-operation with the Communist Party, and united action against the Fascist danger. Dr. Paul Levi (an ex-Communist), one of the leaders of the Social Democratic Left, some time later expressed the view of himself and his colleagues in a speech at Leipzig. He said :—

Behind the mask of the "Great Coalition," Capital sharpens its sword for the attack on Labour. Inevitably the German Social Democracy must face the question : dictatorship of the proletariat or dictatorship of the bourgeoisie ? Under the semblance of a Coalition Government the Social Democrats have consented to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. . . . The dictatorship of the proletariat is a necessity. Political power does not consist in the possession of seats and votes in Parliament, but much rather in the activity of the working masses. The Communists are one of the most active elements among the working masses. We therefore stand for collaboration with the Communists.

The attitude of the Social Democratic workers who are tending to the Left found expression in a resolution of the workers at the State printing works in Berlin. This resolution demanded :—

- (1) The resignation of the Social Democratic Ministers from the Great Coalition.
- (2) The final abandonment of the policy of coalition, and the dismissal of all the leaders occupying official Party positions who support the Great Coalition.
- (3) The formation of a new editorial staff for *Vorwaerts*.

(4) The formation by the Party and the trade unions of a Socialist Government with the following programme:—

- (a) Liquidation of the Ruhr struggle by the opening of immediate negotiations with France and Belgium.
- (b) Seizure of real values.
- (c) Dissolution of the Reichswehr.

The Communist Party has been quick to criticise the defeatist Ruhr policy such as that advocated in the above resolution, and to stress the point that any liquidation of the Ruhr struggle, or of reparations generally, must take place at the expense of the bourgeoisie. It is to this end that the demand for the seizure of real values is put forward.

Most striking as an instance of the move to the Left of the Social Democratic masses was the Berlin District Conference of the Party on October 7. A motion in favour of the Great Coalition failed to find sufficient support even to be put to the conference. By 219 to 215 votes the election of a new District Executive and the dismissal of the present editorial staff of *Vorwaerts* was demanded. As a result of the activities of the conference executive, a decision on these points was, however, deferred till the next meeting, to be held on October 21. (This meeting confirmed the previous decision.) Such was the temper of the conference that many leaders, such as Hilferding, found difficulty in securing a hearing. Appeals for confidence in the leaders of the Parliamentary Party met with derision. A liberal observer, the correspondent of the *New Statesman* (Robert Dell, who in his wavering reflects very closely the ups and downs of the revolutionary wars, sneering at the Communists when weak and applauding them when strong), was moved by this conference to remark that, in spite of all the efforts of the Right Wing leaders, now thoroughly discredited, there could be no sort of doubt that the Social Democratic rank and file were rapidly moving forward to the formation of a united front with the Communist Party. The *Observer's* correspondent estimated that 80 per cent. of the Social Democratic membership had passed away from the old leaders.

The Workers' Governments

The chief weapon of the German working class in the present struggle against White dictatorship is the Workers' Government. In its preliminary stage this consists of a Social Democratic Government which depends for its parliamentary majority on the votes of Communist deputies: as a result, the Communist Party is enabled to secure the acceptance of certain demands, such as the establishment of a Workers' Defence Force and of Workers' Control Committees to check food speculation. In its later stage the Workers' Government becomes a true Workers' Government by the entry of Communists into the Cabinet and the drawing up of a common Communist-Socialist Governmental programme.

The preliminary stage occurred in Saxony in March of this year: it was described fully in these notes in the May LABOUR MONTHLY.¹ In Thuringia it was reached early in September. With the Ruhr surrender, the setting up of the dictatorship throughout the Reich, and the attack on the eight-hour day, together with the ever-growing Fascist menace in Bavaria, negotiations for the entry of Communists into the Saxon and Thuringian Cabinets were set on

¹ Vol. 4, No. 5, pp. 313-314.

foot. These negotiations were successfully concluded, for Saxony on October 10 and for Thuringia on October 17. In Saxony the Communist Ministers were Paul Böttcher (Finance) and Fritz Heckert (Economic Affairs), with Heinrich Brandler as State Secretary; in Thuringia Dr. Korsch (Justice) and Tenner (Economic Affairs).

The programme of the Saxon Government included the following points:—

- (1) All important official posts to be filled by tried Republicans, in place of reactionary elements.
- (2) Arming of the Workers' "Centuries" for resistance to Fascist attacks.
- (3) The passing of a law forbidding the closing down of factories and workshops by the employer.
- (4) The formation of a working committee of the Social Democratic and the Communist parliamentary fractions for the common consideration of Bills and the organisation of common parliamentary action.
- (5) The Control Committees to have police powers to deal with profiteers and speculators.
- (6) Organised relations with other Workers' Governments in Germany.

The attitude of the Communist Party towards the new Saxon Government was expressed in an important manifesto which was issued immediately on the formation of the new Government. It runs as follows:—

The Central Committee of the German Communist Party entirely approves of the entry of three of its members, Comrades Böttcher, Heckert, and Brandler, into the Saxon Government. We are on the eve of an offensive on the part of the big capitalists, the landowners, and the monarchist generals, against the working masses. A military dictatorship, destined to drown the working class in its own blood, is at hand. The Communist members of the Saxon Government are instructed by the Party to organise and to direct, with the Left Wing Social Democratic members of the same Government, the defensive front of the working class. The Communist Ministers are placed under the direct control and supervision of the Party.

The entry of our comrades into the Saxon Government is not the result of parliamentary bargaining: it expresses the determined will of the working masses to oppose the United Front of the working-class struggle to the capitalist offensive. For the Party, this event must act as a stimulus towards the realisation of the United Working-class Front throughout Germany.

The Government of Workers' Defence in Saxony must be a real signal for the whole German working class. But this Government needs the support of the working class throughout the Reich. The attempt has been made in Saxony, at the moment of greatest danger, to form a united Government of Workers' Defence with the Left Wing Social Democrats. It will only succeed if the Party can mobilise the working class of the whole Reich in the formation of a United Front against its class enemy.

From the programme of the Thuringian Government the following extracts have been taken:—

The new Government will be a Government of Workers' Defence. Its policy will be such that it will serve the interests of the working masses only.

The Thuringian Workers' Government will fight in every possible way against Fascism, against a war of revenge, against reaction and military dictatorship.

To this end, and for defence against Bavarian reaction, the Communist-Socialist Government of Thuringia will remain in close relations with the Communist-Socialist Government of Saxony.

The two States will form together a "red bloc" and will take common defensive measures against reaction and military dictatorship.

The "red bloc" of Workers' Governments is likely to be augmented in the near future. Latest information indicates that the masses of the workers in Brunswick, Anhalt, and the Free City of Hamburg are demanding the formation of Workers' Governments in their respective States. Over one hundred Works Councils in the biggest factories in Brunswick have voiced this demand. We reproduce a typical resolution :—

- (1) The Social Democratic Party should enter into relations with the Communist Party with the view of forming a Workers' Government modelled on those of Saxony and Thuringia.
- (2) The Workers' Parties should send a delegation to Dresden to greet the new Saxon Government and to discuss with the Saxon Workers' Parties the possibility of forming a similar Government in Brunswick.

The solidarity of the Workers' Governments of Central Germany with the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics is about to find practical expression in an agreement which is now being negotiated. By this agreement Russia will supply Saxony with grain and other food produce.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE COLLAPSE OF THE WORLD OF WEBB

The Decay of Capitalist Civilisation. By Sidney and Beatrice Webb. (Allen and Unwin. 2nd edition. 4s. 6d. cloth, 2s. 6d. paper.)

[SECOND REVIEW]

THE world revolution, having shaken many other things, has also disturbed the peace of the Webbs. With their usual quickness for the perception of facts once these are well above the surface, they have discovered in 1923 that capitalism is collapsing, that the class war which they denied is increasing in intensity, and that the reforms and programmes which they have advocated and laboured for during thirty years are being thrown aside as so much lumber by the bourgeoisie in the moment of struggle. This collapse of the whole edifice of pseudo-socialism to which they have given their life's work has shaken them so severely as to lead them to write a new kind of book.

After writing for thirty years about the "Parish and the County," "The Manor and the Borough," "Statutory Authorities for Special Purposes," "The Story of the King's Highway," "English Prisons under Local Government," "The Relief of the Poor and the Repression of Vagrancy," "The History of Liquor Licensing in England," "The Consumers' Co-operative Movement," "The History of Trade Unionism," "Industrial Democracy," "Problems of Modern History," "The Works Manager To-day," "Grants in Aid," "English Poor Law Policy," "The State and the Doctor," "The Break-Up of the Poor Law," "The Public Organisation of the Labour Market," "Men's and Women's Wages," and "The Prevention of Destitution"—they have now for the first time discovered and written a book about—Capitalism.

This fact is itself a revolution in the minds of the Webbs. For the first time they have tried to express their general outlook. The result is invaluable. Without this crowning book the array of their books would be incomplete. With it the ironic last chapter added by history to their work in 1914 finds expression. This book is the confession of their failure.

"For over thirty years," they write, "our time and energy have been devoted to municipal administration, to research into the facts of social organisation, and to devising and advocating measures by which the existing profit-making system may be replaced, with the least political friction and the most considerate treatment of 'established expectations,' by a scientific reorganisation of industry as a democratically controlled public service . . . Before the Great War there seemed to be a substantial measure of consent that the social order had to be gradually changed in the direction of a greater equality in material income and personal freedom. . . . We thought, perhaps wrongly, that this characteristic British acquiescence on the part of a limited governing class in

the rising claims of those who had found themselves excluded both from enjoyment and control would continue to be extended, willingly or reluctantly, still further from the political into the industrial sphere; and that while progress might be slow, there would at least be no reaction." And they go on to describe the violent reaction and even "counter-revolution" they have experienced in England since the war.

Perhaps wrongly! What the revolutionary socialists demonstrated at the outset, it has taken the slaughter of the best part of a human generation, the destruction and chaos of half of the world, and the smashing and crushing of the working class in all the leading countries to awaken the Webbs to the possibility of their error. The price of their education is too expensive.

And at the end of it all what have they to say? Nine-tenths of this book is taken up with the repetition of the familiar arguments that capitalism is inefficient, wasteful, and productive of vicious results. This is, no doubt, the section which led the simple-minded British Marxist, to whom all criticisms of capitalism are more or less the same, to acclaim this production of the Webbs in a "Marxist" magazine as "a good book—one which Plebs will do well to buy and enjoy." The actual argument is contained in the remaining tenth, and is a simple exposition of the bankruptcy of the last stage of reformism. The old artillery of reformism—the denial of classes, the theory of increasing happiness and progress, the belief in the super-class character of the State—are all thrown overboard under the shattering stress of facts. Only the impotent reformist conclusion remains in all its bareness, stripped of the premises that gave it support, and lingering on only as a touching, half-despairing confession of faith in the magic formula of political democracy and evolution to socialism by consent of the bourgeoisie.

They admit the division of classes—not simply as an economic classification, but as the essential living truth of capitalist society.

"The division of the community into two permanent and largely hereditary castes" (p. 21). "By capitalism we mean the particular stage in the development of industry and legal institutions in which the bulk of the workers find themselves divorced from the ownership of the instruments of production, in such a way as to pass into the position of wage-earners, whose subsistence, security, and personal freedom seem (*sic*) dependent on the will of a relatively small proportion of the nation; namely, those who own, and through this legal ownership control, the organisation of the land, the machinery, and the labour force of the community, and do so with the object of making for themselves individual and private gains" (p. xi).

They admit the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie—

"the peculiar kind of tyranny now exercised even in the most advanced political democracies by a relatively small class of rich men over a mass of poor men" (p. xv). "Seeing that no individual owner recognises himself as a dictator, let it be at once added that the dictatorship is a class dictatorship" (p. xiii).

They admit the nullification of political democracy by this dictatorship.

"The typical phenomenon of twentieth-century democracy, in which private wealth, concentrated as to direction in relatively few hands, is seen very largely to control, by its dominion over the newspaper Press, the mental

environment of the whole population ; and by its power in this and in various other ways even to nullify universal suffrage " (p. 184).

They admit the failure of the hopes of gradual progress and reform.

" We thought, perhaps wrongly, &c." (p. 233).

" Worse things than any citizen thought possible ten years ago have happened and are still happening daily " (p. 222).

They admit the increasing intensity of the class war.

" The twentieth century found the feeling of a class-war—of an irreconcilable cleavage of interest between the 'Two Nations' in each land—rapidly spreading to nearly every section of the wage-earners, in practically all countries in which the capitalist system had become dominant " (p. 212). " To stave off this extremity of social disaster the Italian bourgeoisie are arming themselves to subjugate the proletariat by open violence. For some years past the capitalists of the United States have been waging quite extensive wars against the labourers' unions " (p. 223). " The class-war, if and when battle is joined in earnest, will be one of the wars of religion, and may be waged on a scale, and with a ferocity, a self-sacrifice, and a persistence which will make the religious wars of the seventeenth century seem mere riots by comparison " (p. 225).

And what is the conclusion from all this ? In the face of the dictatorship of the capitalists, of the nullification of political democracy, of the collapse of hopes of progress, of the growing intensity of the class struggle and the growing violence of the capitalists, what is the proletariat to do ? Is there any alternative but to fight or to submit ? The reformist, driven into a corner by the hard stress of facts, compelled to admit the facts now visible in the eyes of all, has only one alternative to offer. To those who are accustomed to treat the Webbs as serious political writers, the conclusion may seem incredible ; yet it is the correct and logical last position of reformism. The sole solution of the Webbs is—to appeal to the better nature of the capitalists !

" We therefore solemnly warn our capitalists . . ." So set out the Webbs in their final verdict, speaking in terrible judgment and awaiting the bourgeoisie to hear and tremble.

The thunder of the revolution is turned into stage thunder for the benefit of the reformist to enable him to show the bourgeoisie why they should give him power.

And then, with a pitiful last failing of confidence, in the final sentence of all, this study of the tremendous forces of world capitalism and revolution after the war by the intellectual leaders of British Socialism concludes with a pathetic, half-hopeless appeal for—better relations between employers and employed . . .

" recognition that there is a better way for both. In an attempt, possibly vain, to make the parties understand their problem and each other better—in the hope that it is not always inevitable that Nature should harden the hearts of those whom she intends to destroy—we offer this little work."

This, then, is the final outcome of the whole Webbs' philosophy. This pitiful product, this little parson's offering—" possibly vain "—is the final outcome of that vast and elaborate edifice of reformism which Webb set

himself out to build thirty years ago when he rejected the despised Marxism that he did not understand and set out from the precincts of the Colonial Office and the Temple to show a new path to the working class.

R. P. D.

THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE OPPORTUNISTS

Guilds and Co-operatives in Italy. By Odon Por. With a Preface by "Æ" and an Appendix by G. D. H. Cole. Translated by Mrs. Emily Townshend. (The Labour Publishing Company. 5s.)

Fascism. By Odon Por. Translated by Mrs. Emily Townshend. (The Labour Publishing Company. 7s. 6d.)

THE village that voted the earth was flat did not need facts or figures to support its thesis; it was democratically expressing the people's will. The author of these books, who seems to have aimed mainly at expressing his own inner sociological consciousness, is just as free from the need for detailed accuracy. It is scarcely possible to find a date, a fact, and a figure on the same page in *Fascism* and there are no significant economic facts and figures whatever. *Guilds and Co-operatives* is only a little better in this respect.

Yet Signor Por, criticising the narrowness of orthodox revolutionaries (and of "plutocrats"), points out sagely that "the processes of history do not develop according to theoretical formulæ . . .; they proceed along the track which is laid down for them by economic factors."

This sentence occurs on page 6. The unreality that it represents for Signor Por is shown at the beginning of chapter 6, where he says, "Before writing this book, and in order to detach myself spiritually from history in the making, I have re-read Machiavelli's *The Prince* and 'Æ's' *The National Being*. One might have thought that the economic factors which brought about the historical process known as the Fascist Revolution could be more easily found elsewhere.

But while it is impossible to discover from *Fascism* exactly what Fascism represents in Italy's economic development (or collapse), or what are the big forces behind it, it is possible to disentangle one thread from the jumble of narrative, philosophy, and declamation. And once that thread is picked out the book becomes as exciting as a detective story. Clues can be discovered on almost every page. It even becomes possible to understand the appreciation with which Signor Por quotes this sentence from a Fascist writer:—

The Fascist State, although following a rigid course peculiarly its own, is, in view of its origin, most complex, Catholic, Reactionary, Democratic, Liberal, Reformist, and Trade Unionist; for it eliminates all these parties and takes their place.

The Fascist State is in fact a synthesis, a little obscure still in some respects. . . .

The clue that gives this book a meaning—that even makes it a delight to read—comes in the analysis of Fascism by Clara Zetkin:—

Large numbers of the petty bourgeoisie, including even the middle classes, had discarded their wartime psychology for a certain sympathy with reformist Socialism, hoping that the latter would bring about a reformation of society. They were disappointed in their hopes. . . . These masses are joined by large circles of the proletariat, who have given up their faith not only in socialism, but also in their own class. *Fascism has become a sort of refuge for the politically shelterless.*

It is this element in Fascism which we need most to consider ; those who think of Mussolini as simply a White Guard leader like Horthy have to confine both their analysis and their propaganda to execration; we have got to realise that the Fascist Revolution was made possible only by working-class support—and that this working-class, Socialist support was given, not because Fascism is a “development of Socialism” or even a rather hazy synthesis of Socialism with most of the other isms, but because of a big flaw within Socialism itself, the flaw which is best named Opportunism.

Fascism was born from Opportunism : Nationalist Socialist during the war, the Fascisti joined in the Fiume adventure, and then deserted D’Annunzio; “neutral” during the seizure of the factories by the metal-workers, they later spent much of their energies in smashing the workers’ organisations; republicans, they became monarchists. Their promises of workers’ control and no exploitation in industry seem to have got lost in the “synthesis” already mentioned (which reminds one of the synthesis achieved by Gilbert and Sullivan’s seaman, who announced that “Oh, I am the cook and the captain too and the mate of the Nancy brig,” having devoured those individuals).

Fascism is itself, then, opportunist to begin with; it attracted to it opportunists of all shades. It took with it the masses of the workers and of the bourgeoisie that the political opportunists represented and had been leading. It held these masses and drew strength from them, while, at the bidding of the industrialists and financiers, trade unions, guilds, co-operatives, socialised municipalities, and all the organisations and achievements of the workers were brutally destroyed.

And the thing that is so fascinating in Odon Por’s book is that he is one of the most perfect types of opportunist possible, and that he relates with placid candour (though without direct intention) the reasons why, as a “Guildsman,” he rallied to Fascism !

One feels somehow that this “exclusive revelation” ought to have appeared in the Sunday Press. Here is this eminently respectable gentleman—an idealist of a particularly fanciful type—describing how he was led into “a life of crime.”

But actually it has an importance, a seriousness, this intimate and detailed document, that deserves more exact study. For the position from which Signor Por begins—outlined in *Guilds and Co-operatives*—is so reminiscent of the position of many British Socialists that it is impossible to dismiss Signor Por as an eccentric product of Italian conditions.

He represents an international tendency; and the fact that he belongs to the Guildsman sect of the opportunists makes him all the more interesting. State Socialists and their use and abuse as agents of capitalism were already well known to us; until Fascism appeared it was only theoretically clear that guildsmen would be no less malleable.

It is difficult to find short phrases to show the limits of Signor Por's spiritual detachment before the Fascist Revolution. From *Guilds and Co-operatives* these sentences stand out :—

A Socialist Government in Italy would not need to experiment. There would be no need to destroy, nor to impose institutions on the masses. . . . Socialism would follow up tendencies already existing and already producing results.

In exercising the novel functions of partnership in industrial and commercial undertakings, the State will acquire the technical and financial knowledge which will enable it to supervise the whole industry of the country.

We have come to the conclusion that social transformations can become effective only when the struggle between classes or political parties give rise to such a mentality, to such capacities, to such institutions and functions as anticipate materially and spiritually the Utopia for which the struggle is waged.

A class struggling for social ends must cease to be a class before it can attain those ends.

The " Dictation of the Proletariat " is not practicable in Italy, and, what is of more importance (*sic*), it is not indispensable to the revolution.

These particular echoes of all the Opportunists of all the world were put in print before the Fascist Revolution. In *Fascism* we find a defence of the new " dictatorship of the opportunists," qualified of course by the admission that, although it is unfashionable, " we instinctively refuse to believe that violence, bloody and destructive, is inevitable." Dictatorship without violence has surely already been patented by Herr Kautsky.

Later in the book it is described how Socialism failed in Italy. The failure was due to lack of " statesmanship "; the Socialists were " anti-national " and did not support the Fiume adventure. . . .

We could go on to almost any length tracing the thread of Opportunism. Obvious reasons forbid this; but one thing needs emphasising again—this is a book which ought to be read and studied. We may laugh at the theories of Reformism when we only have to do with publicists or lay preachers; but when they lead to the last dictatorship to shelter the bourgeoisie, they want careful analysis.

We need a book on Fascism that will answer the obvious questions. There was an industrial-financial crisis in Italy, in the spring of 1922, so severe that the issues of new capital fell steadily from 250 millions lire in February (a normal figure) to less than a million and a half in May. Has this crisis any connection with the gamble on which the bourgeoisie of Italy embarked when they decided to give Fascism a slack rein? And there are many similar questions to be answered. But when this book is written, the author should turn to Odon Por for a glimpse of the psychological machinery by which the politically shelterless became a shelter, under which alone capitalism could be continued, the workers crushed, wages cut down, hours lengthened, and profits increased.

T. H. W.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- Land Reform in Czechoslovakia.* By Lucy Elizabeth Textor, Ph.D. (Allen and Unwin. 5s.)
- Oil and the Germs of War.* By Scott Nearing. (Nellie Seeds Nearing, Ridgewood, New Jersey, U.S.A. Cloth 60 cents; paper 10 cents.)
- Struggle of the Trade Unions Against Fascism.* By Andreas Nin. With an Introduction by Earl R. Browder. (Trade Union Educational League, Chicago, Ill. 15 cents.)
- America The Peacemaker.* By Jaime C. Gil. (Veritas Publicity Bureau, New York. \$1.00.)
- Christianity or Materialism : The Church and the Worker.* By Alf. Wilson. (Australian Labor News Publishing Bureau, Melbourne. 3d.)
- New Standards.* No. 1, October, 1923. Edited by G. D. H. and Margaret Cole. (Lake View, Vale of Health, London. 3d.)
- Since Leaving Rome.* By Albert Wehde. (The Tremonia Publishing Company, Chicago, Ill.)

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NOTES of the MONTH

A Permanent Crisis—Unreal Tariff Issue—Labour Party's Lost Offensive—Bourgeoisie Recovers Initiative—A Political Throw-back—Result of Confused Leadership—A New Policy Daily—Coalition Danger—Capitalist Reconstruction Danger—Election Programme—A Real Programme Wanted

THE present General Election is a signal that Britain is entering on a period of recurrent political crises. The Baldwin Government would not have plunged into a General Election unless it were compelled. No one likes General Elections, least of all a Government newly entered on power with a secure majority and years of life before it. Nor did that compulsion come from their followers, who were as much disconcerted and annoyed as any. It did not come from any powerful wave of feeling or sudden discontent in the country. Therefore the compulsion came solely from events, and nothing else. It was the bare force of events that drove the Government and their supporters and opponents, all equally against their will, into a sudden dissolution. The Baldwin Government was helpless before events and did not know what to do. It had tried its hand with France and had only made public its impotence. It looked at home and saw only the menace of the fourth winter of unemployment refusing to be exorcised. A miserable still-born infant of a proposal to spend a doubtful fifty millions on unemployment was brought forward and met with universal derision. The Baldwin Government gave up the insoluble puzzle and seized on the first pretext to dissolve.

SURRENDER in so few months is a very striking symptom of the helplessness of post-war British capitalism. It is impossible to treat the tariff issue as the serious occasion of the dissolution. The tariff issue was taken up with such complete confusion, vagueness, and halfheartedness, and only so slowly elaborated into any kind of form at all, as to suggest strongly that it came second in the order of thought and was left to be worked out later. Had the only object been import duties on manufactured

articles, the Safeguarding of Industries Act was available and could easily have been adapted. Indeed it has been justly said that Britain was already Protectionist in practice and Free Trade in theory, and the only change proposed is that she should become Protectionist in theory and in practice as before. Hardly was the tariff proposal made than its own sponsors began to whittle it down and step away from the issues raised. Thus every indication reveals that what was being sought was not so much a tariff as a change—some change, any change. And here comes the most striking fact of all. For when all the forces of British capitalism are pushing towards a change in one form or another, the only actual forms of that change presented are, on the one hand, the resurrection of an antique fetish in a mangled condition and, on the other, the hoary form of Asquith rising from the sleep of the dead. These, then, are all the changes that capitalism has left to ring. Back to the old statesmen under whom the present crisis took shape and who have no remedies to cure it. Feverishly the dice-box is shaken again and again at ever shorter intervals for a fresh throw. In vain: from the dice-box of capitalism there are no more dice to fall.

BUT while the decay of capitalist energy and resource should be an occasion for rejoicing to the working class and the opportunity for pressing forward a successful attack, the actual situation is not so satisfactory. For if the hour of the capitalist has long since struck and they can only cumber the scene, the hour of the workers is here at hand and the workers are not ready. This is, indeed, the kernal of the whole situation, both in Britain and abroad, and the explanation of the present slow and long-drawn-out decline. The fact is that the present election was forced *on* the Labour Movement, instead of being forced *by* it. The experience of last year's election has been repeated. What was the position last year? Here was capitalism at a deadlock, its Government discredited and on the point of downfall, and an ever-growing sweep of opinion rallying to the Labour Party. And in the face of this, instead of the Labour Party taking the offensive and launching a vigorous attack to overthrow the Government, it failed so completely in this task that it was actually possible for a section of the existing discredited Government to step into the vacant place, first detaching itself for

the purpose and then winning the credit of holding the Government up to obloquy and bringing it down. Thus capitalism was able to save itself; in place of the move to working-class politics, for which all was ready, power passed into the hands of a small extreme reactionary clique within capitalism.

ONCE again the same process has been repeated. The Baldwin Government was discredited and helpless and completely vulnerable to attack. But was the Labour Party pursuing this attack? On the contrary, it was supporting the Baldwin Government three months ago, declaring its enthusiastic approval of Baldwin and readiness to back him, because it actually imagined that he was pursuing in relation to France a policy which was in accordance with its own. Was the Labour Party doing anything to voice and arouse the anger of the unemployed and of the wage-cut workers against this Tory Prime Minister? On the contrary, the Labour Party was declaring through its official organ that Baldwin "has the British nation behind him." There was almost a universal sigh went up from the Labour leaders when it was discovered that their idol was giving himself over to the heresy of the tariff. Here at last their years of Liberal training compelled them to take up a position on the principle of Free Trade. Working-class principles might count for nothing. Troops in Germany to suppress the German workers counted for nothing. The starvation of the unemployed on the "gap" counted for nothing. Imperialist junketings and rhetoric and militarism won their applause. All this went with support of Baldwin. But the sound Liberal principle of Free Trade at last compelled their opposition. When was the vote of censure moved on the Baldwin Government? Only after the issue was over, after the Dissolution was fixed, after Baldwin had summoned MacDonald to him to arrange that a suitable Vote of Censure should be moved in order to give him the occasion for a Dissolution. Then the docile Parliamentary Group moved its Vote of Censure and found it was too late. The issue was already fixed. Once again the extreme reactionaries had taken the offensive first and made the issue. The discredited Baldwin Government was able to come forward as the challenging Party and not the Labour Party.

WHAT is the result of this historic failure? The result is a complete throwback in the political situation. At a time when every institution and policy of capitalism is impotent and bankrupt, when all the cards are in the Labour Party's hands, it is unable to play them, and the initiative remains with the bourgeoisie. At once, on this failure of the Labour Party to take the lead, comes the restoration of bourgeois politics and the old Liberal Party is revived to carry on its twenty-year-old controversy with the Conservative Party at the point where they last left off, and the Labour Party is to be relegated again to the third position. Every preparation is made for the re-establishment of a Liberal Government, which would have at any rate the tacit support of a considerable section of the Labour Party. The old bourgeois political issues dominate the situation afresh. The principal opponent, declares Birkenhead for the Tories, is no longer Socialism, but reunited Liberalism. Back to 1910 becomes actually the hope of capitalism in the political situation, when in every other direction the attempt to restore the pre-war position has failed. Such an attempt cannot succeed in view of the total situation: but it means that once again a hard and costly path has to be travelled by the working class to recover the lost ground.

WHAT is the reason of this weakness which has thus thrown back the position and held up the advance of the Labour Party? Partly it is actual shrinking from power and responsibility in the present situation, on the part of the leaders, which has led them to refrain from attacking the Government too vigorously. Partly it is actual personal implication in bourgeois politics and society, which has prevented them from standing clear, and in effect shut their mouths. Partly it is fear of the working-class forces behind them, if these should be roused to real attack. But all these may be summed up into one essential point—confusion of leadership. Confusion of leadership, inability to mark out a clear working-class policy and stick to it, inability to distinguish between a working-class and a bourgeois policy, running after every gust of bourgeois politics in turn, uncritical association with a hundred forms of bourgeois political and social activity (the recent occasion on which the Labour organ officially castigated the criminal

tomfoolery of a banquet attended by Henderson and Thomas was only a striking example of the daily confusion)—all these have taken the edge off Labour's fight and prevented the effective rousing of the workers to a clear issue.

THE confusion of thought and policy runs right through the movement. It is hardly possible to name a single policy or a single issue which has not at some time been advocated by the Labour Movement or is not now being advocated in some way or by some particular leader—or indeed by the same individual leader on successive days. On November 11 Mr. MacDonald declared at Dewsbury: "I put foreign policy right in the forefront of my programme." On November 12 Mr. MacDonald declared at the Caledonian Road Baths: "The Labour Party was going to fight on the ground that the purchasing power of our own people was the dominating factor in the producing capacity of the country." In the same way in a single day's issue of the *Daily Herald* the following "solutions" for the industrial crisis were to be found on successive pages: (1) High wages on the American model—Mr. Hodges, the front page and the Editorial; (2) Foreign policy "first and foremost"—Mr. MacDonald, Leader of the Labour Party; (3) International financial unification "the most urgent step to end the world chaos"—the I.L.P., Mr. MacDonald's Party and the dominating force in the Labour Party; (4) Socialism—Mr. Brockway, the Secretary of the I.L.P. This is a single day's issue. If all the thrice-weekly programmes of the I.L.P., &c, to cure every ill in the world in a thousand different ways each day were brought together into a book, it would be only necessary to compile an index for sufficient comment. Is it surprising that in such a situation the Labour Party is unable to lead and is always in practice at the mercy of every stream of bourgeois politics—running after now Wilson, now Harding, now Baldwin, now Sir Allan Smith and the F.B.I., but never a working-class policy.

NOW this position means a very great danger for the Labour Party, not only immediately for the election, but in the issues approaching. It means that wherever there is a big hole or bog in capitalist politics at hand, the Labour Party is

going to be the first to fall in. And there are some very big holes in front. One is an old familiar one: the question of coalition with the Liberal Party. The election is probably going to produce a very unstable parliamentary situation. Is the Labour Party proof against bourgeois coalition? Not only against open coalition, but against the more insidious forms of private understanding with a Liberal Government or abstention from opposition as in the 1910-14 Parliament? Recent utterances of MacDonald, the *New Statesman*, and others suggest the opposite. The membership of the Party will have to see to this by their vigilance, because Conference pledges count for little once the excitement of a Ministerial crisis begins.

THE second hole is a new one and more serious, and it may be most briefly described as Capitalist Reconstruction by Inflation. The signs are plentiful that powerful forces of Big Industry are pressing for a programme of capitalist reconstruction for British industry on modern lines as already largely carried through in France, Germany, and America. Such a tendency is foreshadowed in the speeches and statements of the National Liberals, of McCurdy, of Lloyd George, of the Federation of British Industries, of Sir Allan Smith, of McKenna, of Sir Eric Geddes. Such a programme would only be based on a policy of Inflation, however concealed. It would offer the bribe of absorbing the unemployed and higher wages. And it would mean in practice high profits for the big manufacturers, but for the workers rising prices and the path on which the German workers have been driven. Now every tendency in the Labour Movement plays into the hands of this. The Restoration of the Home Market is the ideal catchword. We have already seen the *Daily Herald* and the leaders of the Labour Party applauding enthusiastically the statements of Sir Allan Smith and McKenna. We have already seen the City Editor of *The Times* (in answer to a letter of Colonel Wedgwood asking for his approval of the Capital Levy as a measure of deflation) twitting the I.L.P. with its support of the Federation of British Industries programme of inflation. Not only does the reactionary Right Wing, represented by Hodges, come out with enthusiasm in support of Alliance with Capitalism and Higher Wages. The Left, represented by the

Glasgow M.P.s, is also caught; because in so far as they have only spoken of restoration of the purchasing power of the working class, without putting forward a positive programme, their propaganda has only gone to serve the Big Business Campaign for Higher Wages. Thus the dangers in front are very real, until the working-class movement can develop a definite working-class policy.

IN this position what is to be done? It is no good looking to the existing leadership to produce a working-class programme: they are too far gone in confusion and capitulation already. The Election Programme of the Labour Party is a tired programme, assembling stale demands without rallying power or clear direction, and covering the whole with spiritual glue in place of Socialism. The fighting programme of the working class will have to come from the workers themselves. In this election now the situation will have to be taken as it is. The workers will have to fight, as they will fight, on the simplest instinctive working-class issues. All that can be done at present is to keep clear of all the intricacies of bourgeois politics, foreign policy, economic theory, restoration of markets, empire trade, tariffs, free trade, inflation, deflation, &c., &c., and concentrate on the plainest immediate issues. It is no good discussing rival theories for the cure of unemployment. What matters is that the two million unemployed are there now, that Protection is unable to meet the most elementary needs of the workers, and that it is the business of the State to take charge now of the production of the country (including its credit and trade) so as to employ the unemployed and supply the needs of the workers, and that if to do this means trenching on wealth and property, whether by capital levy or otherwise, we should do it without fear—and to get it done we should set up a Labour Government which shall be made to do it. That is the plain, direct agitation of the election.

BUT the question of a real working-class programme and a united programme still remains. Unless that is achieved the whole movement will break up. From where is that programme to come? The impulse towards it has got to come from the local bodies of the workers themselves. And that is the

tremendous significance of the Trades Councils Conference which held its second annual meeting at Birmingham last month. For it is the Trades Councils Conference which will have to hammer out the common programme of the workers if any body is to do it. The tremendous response to the invitation to the conference, in spite of small publicity or possibility of organisation, revealed the latent feeling that is struggling to find expression. But that expression will not be found simply in resolutions on the machinery of trade union organisation. The chairman's address to the conference, which well deserves to rank as a real document of the movement, for the first time gave a lead that expressed the new spirit. His lead was applauded, but it was not yet followed. The conference was still too uncertain of itself, too overloaded in the agenda, to be ready for all that lies upon it. There are still the remains of the old outlook, existing in the Left no less than in the official movement and essentially similar in both, that thinks in terms of Trades Councils, of the General Council, of the Labour Party, of industries, and all the rest, but cannot think in terms of the working class and the elementary immediate issues that have to be faced to-day. But more and more rapidly on every side the understanding is developing that the supreme need is a definite agreed programme of concrete aims on which all the forces of the working class that mean to fight can concentrate on occasion, and once this is achieved then the way is open.

R. P. D.

THE GENERAL ELECTION— WHY ?

By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD

THE General Election which is now upon us has been occasioned, as all such events are, not by the exigencies of the parliamentary situation or by any mere political antagonisms such as reveal themselves upon the surface of affairs, but as a reaction to deep-seated causes at work in the economic and social life of the modern world and, more especially, of Europe.

This political *dénouement* of an election became certain as an event of the near, of the very near, future from the time that it became evident that Mr. Baldwin's negotiations in Paris with M. Poincaré had not resulted in a manner satisfactory to those particular interests with which the Premier is connected. So certain was I myself of the early approach of a political crisis, of the character of the one which is now upon us, that I sent an urgent communication to my agent six weeks ago to prepare for an immediate General Election. The development of the position has been exceedingly rapid, but not more rapid than it was necessary for the Premier that it should be in order that he might maintain a position as favourable to himself as that which, by the hazard of economic circumstance, has, for the time being, developed.

The question of the Ruhr and its reaction upon the relations of Britain, France, and Germany has, during a quarter of a century, passed through a series of stages, one cycle of which produced the "First World War" and the second of which now seems exceedingly likely to bring about the "Second World War" at no very remote date.

Since the period, approximately, 1896-1898, when the French began to develop and the Germans to draw upon the prodigious iron-ore reserves of French Lorraine, the marriage of French ore and German coke has had a profoundly disturbing effect upon British capitalist politics. It was the expansion of the German steel industry consequent upon this and the resultant growing

independence of the Ruhr of ore imports from British properties overseas that occasioned the Tariff Reform outburst of Joseph Chamberlain in 1903. His method was a tariff against German steel. He failed, but, when his method was rejected, the alternative method of fighting the German steel menace (which resulted from the growing productivity of Germany relying on French ore) became the ever-closer knitting together in *entente* and alliance of Britain and France and, in the end, war with Germany.

At the end of that war, Lloyd George wrote into the Treaty of Versailles an ingenious settlement, which, of course, was no settlement, whereby the French obtained even more iron-ore than hitherto, *i.e.*, by the recovery of Lorraine from Germany, the Germans retained the indispensable complementary of these ore-reserves, the coking coal of the Ruhr, while the British shipowners, whom economic development has made shipbuilders, steelmasters, and coke-oven operators, retained the ships in which to carry alternative Newfoundland iron-ore to Rotterdam *en route* to the Ruhr and alternative Durham coke to France *en route* to Lorraine.

For some three years this settlement attained its object: the economic divorce of French iron and German coke. About a year ago, however, France resolved to go into the Ruhr and to possess herself of the coke. The French and the German capitalists were upon the eve of arriving at a friendly arrangement when a gentleman, himself previously in business as a merchant in the Newfoundland iron-ore trade, the late Mr. Bonar Law, intervened in such a way as to strengthen Germany's negotiating will and power and to bring about a quarrel which had the effect of disorganising the Ruhr and at the same time embarrassing the steelmasters of Lorraine. As an immediate consequence came a revival in the British steel industry and an improvement in the trade prospects of Mr. Baldwin's own firm of Baldwins, Ltd.

When, however, the French pressure reduced the Ruhr capitalists to the very edge of submission (a submission made all the more attractive by reason of the threat of a social revolution in Germany from which, as from a worthless currency, they might escape by getting themselves into the borders of a State in actual association with France), the British Premier, this time Mr. Baldwin, endeavoured to arrive at a new understanding with M. Poincaré.

This should have been the more easy having regard to the interests behind and around each of them. Mr. Baldwin was formerly a director of Lloyds Bank, Ltd., and is still the second largest shareholder in Baldwins, Ltd., coke-exporters and steelmasters, a firm which, with its associates, shares three directors with Lloyds Bank, Ltd. Also connected with Lloyds Bank, Ltd., is the Royal Dutch "Shell" oil combine. This latter is working in Paris with the Banque de l'Union Parisienne which, in its turn, heads the financial group behind M. Poincaré. Lloyds Bank, Ltd., has heavy commitments in France and is said to have been making liberal advances to Stinnes to buy coal and iron-ore.

Mr. Baldwin's plan, according to the usually well-informed paper, the *Outlook*, was to include a big loan to be advanced by the London banks to the French Government. Such a loan would have helped to stabilise the French franc, to strengthen the finances of the Poincaré Government, to keep France going with ready money until she receives something on account of reparations from the Ruhr, and would have been secured, no doubt, upon these very reparation payments, probably in the form of blocks of shares in the properties of the Ruhr. In such a way might Baldwins, Ltd., and Lloyds Bank, Ltd., have secured admission, together with Schneider, St. Chamond and Wendel, into the great corporation to exploit the Ruhr.

However, such a project would have raised higher the rate of interest on that ample credit which the industrialists cannot get, at terms that will suit them, from the bankers of London.

Just at this time, Mr. Lloyd George was touring on the grand scale through Canada and the United States, proclaiming the new evangel, preaching the crusade of Anglo-American co-operation to restore Europe to stability. Sir Eric Geddes, his old lieutenant, was denouncing the credit-restriction policy of Mr. Baldwin at home.

What was really happening in America was that Mr. Lloyd George, ever the "man Friday" of British industrialism, was searching for and succeeded in securing the aid of American-Canadian high finance, which was quite willing to come to the assistance of British industrialism writhing in the strangle-hold of Mr. Baldwin's banking friends.

Mr. Lloyd George, bankrupted politically by the economic bankruptcy of the British industrialists, has come back from obscurity via Wall Street with the approbation of American finance. He came back in the expectation of forcing Mr. Baldwin to go to the country in the New Year. Mr. Baldwin has anticipated him by an immediate appeal to the country relying on the sentiment of the electorate to prevent a second appeal in Mr. Lloyd George's own time.

Mr. Baldwin wants a tariff "for purposes . . . of tariff negotiation." He has been very careful to stress that he wants a tariff for bargaining purposes. Thus far, also, he can carry Lord Derby. He cannot carry Lord Birkenhead, newly returned from a head-turning tour in America, nor can he carry Mr. McKenna.

Mr. Baldwin does not himself want a tariff except for the purpose of bargaining his way into M. Poincaré's Franco-Belgian Syndicate for the exploitation of the Ruhr.

Mr. Lloyd George, let us mark well this fact, has to accept the leadership of Mr. Asquith. Not only have we here an example of magnificent and justifiable caution on the part of a man who knows how humiliating may be the experience of a British Premier in these days of eclipse, but we have an evidence of the force behind the stubborn pride of the Right Hon. the member for Paisley—a cotton spinning purgatory—namely, the desperate *putsch* made by cotton and woollen and worsted capitalism to check Baldwin and at the same time not to deliver themselves over to Lloyd George.

Textile capitalism wants the "scrapping" of the Treaty of Versailles. Textile capitalism does not, however, desire to capitulate to American finance capital—especially does Lancashire desire independence of the American cotton growers' monopoly. In the same way, Lord Cowdray, the associate of the Royal Dutch "Shell" oil group, has every inducement to support his "man Friday," Mr. Asquith. Lord Cowdray does not want to have to yield ground at Vera Cruz and elsewhere in Mexico to the United States capitalists.

The British capitalists, the dominant section of the British capitalists, would, as an alternative to Mr. Baldwin, select not Mr. Lloyd George but Mr. Asquith.

Then there is another aspect of the situation, but, except for the possibilities of German revolution, not so pressing as to explain an immediate General Election. That is the desire of the capitalists to blur the issue of the class conflict which, on the political stage, becomes more clearly marked every day. The workers will not accept another series of wage cuts with docility and there is danger—at least so the capitalists believe—of an increase in the political strength of the Labour Party. Not only so, but under an industrial pressure that would give greater influence to the left-wing elements in its ranks. Consequently, the capitalists desire to start a false scent and to commence a sham fight.

The Liberals have no policy or programme and, therefore, accept with the utmost enthusiasm a campaign in which they will be waging a war of negation against, on the one hand, the tariff and, on the other, the capital levy.

Moreover, both are agreed upon the desirability of distracting the attention of the advanced section of the Labour Party from the situation in Germany, and the dangers of counter-revolution and of a new war in Western Europe. The capitalists wish to relegate the Labour Party to the third position in the State so as to prevent it, now that it moves more towards the Left, choosing the topics of discussion and waging the political conflict over issues that are of any importance to the world's workers.

Finally, the capitalists know how depleted are the funds of the unions and the resources of individual socialists and labourists. They intend to eliminate the Labour Party, in a perfectly legal and constitutional manner, by the mere process of repeated elections which will exhaust the funds and so, automatically, cancel out the Labour Party.

GERMANY IN THE THROES OF REVOLUTION

By J. B. ASKEW

WHAT the last few months of life in Germany have been like will be perhaps harder for anyone to describe who has passed through it than for one who has read of it, say, in the columns of a well-informed English newspaper.

Events have succeeded each other with such rapidity that hardly had the observer recovered his breath before a new blow or series of blows had knocked him once more out of time. I have never experienced an earthquake, but often enough during the past few months I imagine most people in Berlin must have had a similar sensation as if the very ground under their feet was giving way and the whole edifice of society crashing down.

Hardly was one crisis over than we were in the midst of another. No one knew what was coming next—the hope that was eternally arising that things had at least touched bottom was dashed almost before it was out of the mouth. How often has the mark been stabilised for a couple of days, just long enough to allow a few articles to be written heralding that Dr. Hilferding or some other genius had found the philosopher's stone or a magic wand for transforming worthless paper money into solid cash—and that without infringing on property rights—when the whole building thus elaborately set up crashed down like Humpty Dumpty. The mark had touched a new record in its downward course.

Dr. Hilferding, the pupil of my old master Kautsky, sums up the bankruptcy of Menshevist Marxism. Dr. Rudolph Hilferding wrote a very able book on financial capitalism before the war, but his practice since the war has been the exact contrary of the principles laid down in that book. More striking, however, was the fact that when the great expert on finance was called upon in August to save the desperate German financial situation, he put forward a programme, or, rather, said that he would apply the programme put forward by his predecessors ruthlessly; only, after a few weeks

in office, to find himself put on the doormat before almost an attempt had been made to carry out that programme.

The day after this had occurred Rudolph Hilferding was announced as among the speakers at the Berlin Divisional Conference of the Social Democratic Party, and it was confidently expected that he would seize the occasion to explain what had caused his failure or who, if anybody, had crossed his intentions. Dr. Hilferding spoke, but on the one subject where he could have given useful information he was strangely silent, and up to now he has said, as far as I am aware, not a word on the point. The truth is in all probability that he knew perfectly well that the cause of his failure was that the measures which he had to take would have to be forced on the banks and the propertied classes and he had neither the strength nor the moral courage to say that. On the contrary, he did his best to damp down the fighting spirit of the workers by dwelling on the strength of the counter-revolutionary forces, insinuating that they had better be on their best behaviour or the German Mussolinis would teach them manners—advice which all experience in similar situations shows is the surest method of bringing on the very dangers against which it is an attempt to guard. To put it in other words—whatever line you take with a bully, don't show him that you are afraid of him. Above all must this advice be given to the workers, who only require to realise their own power to smash their opponents.

Rudolph Hilferding and Kautsky it was who, when capitalism was on its last legs as it would seem in 1918, when it had hopelessly broken down and Socialism was obviously the only way out, said : “ No. We cannot socialise bankruptcy—let the capitalists clear up the mess and hand over the concern to us.” The plan was very clever, but too clever by half. If capitalism had been really set up again does anyone in his senses think that we would then have the power to dispossess them ?

It is idle, however, to speculate. Capitalist reconstruction is a dead failure. After nearly five years' effort, after promise after promise has proved to be Dead Sea fruit, we are farther off than ever.

Soviet Russia—which was the bogey for German Social Democrats in 1919, which was always being held up as a terrible

warning for all misguided enthusiasts who believed in revolutionary action, and which Fritz Adler and other pundits of the Austro-Marxist school assured us could not hold its own for a year—Soviet Russia is now making steady progress and is infinitely better off than the Germany which spurned her help in 1918.

The German Social Democrats were offered in 1918 the alliance of the Soviet Republic as well as Russian wheat. They refused both, relying on the Western democracy whom they feared to offend. The Western democracy replied by allowing every single promise, on the strength of which the Germans had laid down their arms, to be violated. German Menshevism preferred capitalist culture to Communist barbarism—and capitalist culture in the person of Poincaré has replied.

Germany is the classic land of Menshevism, where the boast of the Social Democrats was that by sticking to legality they had broken Bismarck's power. That no doubt is true. Bismarck could only have smashed the Social Democrats in 1890—when as is well known he proposed to declare the whole party as well as the parliamentary group outlaw—by smashing German industry. That, or something very like it, the German capitalists obviously were afraid of when the Kaiser decided to drop the pilot—and there can be little doubt that in so acting the Kaiser reflected the wishes of the German capitalist world, who were also opposed to Bismarck in the question of imperialist world politics, on which Bismarck always remained the statesman with a purely continental outlook.

The maintenance of the *status quo* against attacks from the reaction was the strong point of the old Social Democracy—it was to get breathing time for the movement to organise and develop in the respective countries. To a certain extent it may be said to have fulfilled its function, but to a far greater degree the contradiction between the revolutionary phrases and the timid policy pursued demoralised the entire movement, and when the final test came in 1914 Menshevism—or the Second International—broke down utterly.

In one of the letters, quoted by Mehring, written by Marx on the Turco-Russian war in 1878, he says that a great part of the responsibility for the Turkish defeat lay in the fact that they had neglected to get rid of the old Serail rulers who were the best

defenders of the Tsar. A people that in such moments cannot make a clean revolutionary sweep is lost. That applies, it would seem to me, to Germany. Germany owed her defeat not least of all to the fact that they supported the military authorities till disaster had already overtaken them—and even then they did not abolish the old system, rather it was the old system that fell automatically to pieces and William who disappeared.

From that date instead of radical revolutionary changes, such as were obviously required in the system of administration, the old administrative system was practically maintained, but Social Democrats were placed in charge to do the dirty work of restoring order, so-called, till the reactionaries were once more powerful enough to kick them out.

That, all the same, in many respects great and revolutionary changes have been made in Germany it would be idle to deny. The Workers' Councils, the Eight Hours Law, the Tenants' Councils in the houses, to mention only a few, are great achievements of the revolution which it is the aim of the reactionaries to get undone. The workers have a tremendous power in Germany and they know it.

For that reason I am not inclined to think that we shall see a direct Fascist dictatorship in Germany now except in so far as it has already been achieved by the present Government by a side wind. The reactionaries know very well that even to-day they cannot rule against the Labour Movement as a whole—above all, all their bullets and poison gases will not enable them to feed a single man, woman, or child—and, as Radek pointed out some time ago, the problem of government in Germany is who can enable the people to get bread.

Despite the many failures and disastrous incidents that have occurred, the united front of the workers in Germany is on the way. It is for the British and other comrades to see that they are allowed fair play; above all, to absolutely prohibit the transformation of Germany into a colony or protectorate of any Power as Egypt was transformed in the 'eighties by the joint efforts, be it remembered, of England and France, who afterwards nearly came to blows in the matter. *Absit omen.*

THE COUNTER- REVOLUTION IN EUROPE

By G. A. HUTT

WITH the collapse of capitalist economy after the imperialist war, it seemed that the forces of the working-class revolution would sweep Europe. But the working class as a whole was unready and imperialism had bitten too deeply into the ideological fabric of the old Labour and Social Democratic Parties. They sabotaged the struggle for power, and turned to coalition with the bourgeoisie in order to achieve "reconstruction"—of capitalism.

The White Terror triumphed early in Finland and Hungary. In Germany the Social Democrats took the lead in the suppression of the revolting workers. Fascism has risen to power in Italy, in Bulgaria, in Spain. The Fascist National Democrats are now the most influential political group in Poland and dominate the Government. In Austria the forces of reactionary clericalism are in power. The rising workers' revolution in Germany has led to a close military alliance between the Poincaré Government and Czecho-Slovakia.

As the struggle between revolution and counter-revolution in Germany reaches its moment of extremest tension the counter-revolution in Europe has either won, or is in process of winning, all the strategic positions surrounding Germany. German Fascism, centred in Bavaria, is in relations with its brethren in Austria, in Poland, in Hungary. French, British, and American imperialisms are in varying degrees lending their moral and financial support to the growing counter-revolution throughout Europe.

The progress and fortunes of the proletarian revolution in Europe are relatively well known. But the other side of the barricade is shrouded in darkness and not a little mystery. However, it is possible to construct, from occasional hints and references in the bourgeois Press, something of a picture of the actual state of the European counter-revolution to-day. This article will attempt

briefly the task of constructing this picture, of drawing together, from the tangled web of revolution and counter-revolution in Europe to-day, the threads of counter-revolution.

In the first place there is the question of the associations between the Bavarian reactionaries and their political confrères in Austria, Hungary, and Poland. The *Manchester Guardian* published at the end of October certain details of secret negotiations between Bavarian and Polish reactionaries. These negotiations were directed to securing Polish support for Bavarian separatism. In return for this support, Poland would receive East Prussia. The scheme thus broached received, from its association with agrarian reaction, the name of the "Great Green Plan." Its inspiration, too, was largely clerical: and it is therefore not surprising that the "Christian Socialist" (*i.e.*, reactionary clerical) Government of Austria has also become involved. In fact, a union between reactionary Austria and reactionary Bavaria—seceding from the German Reich—has now become an integral part of the scheme.

It is interesting to note that one of the chief Polish promoters of the "Great Green Plan" appears to be none other than the notorious Monsignor Cieplak (though this is not finally certain), over whose "persecution" some time ago by the Soviet Government certain leaders of the British Labour Party waxed indignant. The *Manchester Guardian* further reports that the scheme is receiving financial assistance from influential American sources: while it is evident that such a scheme would win the active countenance and support of French reaction.

There has been close contact all through between the Bavarian Fascists under Hitler and the Austrian "Haken Kreuzler," and also between Hitler's forces and the Hungarian Nationalists under Gömbös. The intimate nature of the Hitler-Gömbös alliance received spectacular illustration a few days ago in the proposed Hungarian Fascist *coup d'état*, which was to be undertaken at the end of November with Bavarian aid. A secret military agreement, signed by plenipotentiaries on behalf of the Bavarian and Hungarian Fascist organisations, has been discovered. The aim of the alliance is clear. As the Balkans correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* wrote:—

The Gömbös Government, which was to have been set up with Bavarian help, would have joined Bavarian reaction to defeat "Marxism" in Central Europe.

In Poland, the move to the Right in the last few months has been notable. It has evoked comment from *The Times*, which observed recently:—

This swing to the Right has been very self-conscious. It was made to the accompaniment of loud applause from the rank and file and the Government Press, which interpreted it as part of a great wave of reaction against Socialism which was sweeping over Europe.

Czecho-Slovakia, too, has its Fascists. Under the leadership of Dr. Kramarcz they were already reported as strong enough to be planning for a *coup d'état* in July last. Kramarcz, in the words of the *Daily Herald*:—

claims to have the support of 85 per cent. of the officers of the army, of a majority of the State officials, of the big Zivnostenska Bank, of the landowners, of a great part of the "Sokols" (the athletic clubs, which have played such a big part in Czech politics).

It was further reported that Kramarcz was very hopeful of British support—including financial support. The reason for this is clear. The Czecho-Slovakian Fascists are anti-French, and therefore useful pawns for the British imperialist bourgeoisie in its struggle with French imperialism.

At present Czecho-Slovakia is making the best of both worlds by signing treaties with both Powers. With a large army and a budget deficit, Czecho-Slovakia has just signed a military and political treaty of alliance with France. The outward and formal sign of the alliance was the visit of President Masaryk, full of years and learning, to Paris. Significantly enough, the Paris Press compared his visit with that of the Tsar Nicholas II years ago. The political calibre of Dr. Masaryk may be best judged from his oracular remark:—

Now that Germany is surrendering unconditionally to France . . . the course of European reconstruction has advanced a further step.

This military alliance, as *The Times* points out, is quite incompatible with the hitherto pacific policy of Czecho-Slovakia. It is, in short, more than a defensive alliance. Against whom, then, is it directed? The answer is supplied in a report from the Prague correspondent of the *Daily Herald*. After pointing out that the officially proclaimed

policy of Czecho-Slovakia towards civil war in Germany is one of complete neutrality—except that Czecho-Slovakia would take the necessary steps to “protect her frontier”—he says:—

I gain a definite impression that Czecho-Slovakia would not abide by such a passive policy were France to demand the active intervention of Prague. It would not be the first occasion on which “incidents on the frontier” have been artificially evoked with a view to justifying interference. Czecho-Slovakia’s intervention would be far more probable in case of a proletarian dictatorship in Germany than in the event of a dictatorship of the Right.

The counter-revolutionary ring is completed by Finland, since 1918 a classic country of the White Terror. To Finland may now be added Sweden, where lately Hederstierna, Foreign Minister in the Conservative Government, openly advocated a military alliance of the two countries. This alliance was to be frankly counter-revolutionary, in that it was directed against Russia.

On the outskirts of the counter-revolution come Fascist Bulgaria, Rumania, where Fascism is increasing in strength, and Yugo-Slavia, where fierce repression of all working-class activity has long been the order of the day.

So far as the relation of Entente imperialism to the European counter-revolution is concerned, the outstanding rôle of French imperialism has long been a matter of common knowledge. Poland and the Little Entente—Czecho-Slovakia, Yugo-Slavia, and Rumania—are notoriously French protégés. In the course of the present year credits to the tune of some 800 million francs have been granted by France to Poland, Rumania, and Yugo-Slavia. *The Times* says:—

It is understood that these credits have not taken the form of cash payments, but that they are being used for the purchase of war material belonging to the French Government or manufactured in France.

Reports are now current that the new French budget will contain an item of one and a-half milliard francs, for a loan to the Little Entente. Other large sums are mentioned as intended for Austria and Hungary. The Paris correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune* wrote:—

The loan to Hungary will enable that country to improve and enlarge the mammoth Skoda ammunition works . . . making the plant bigger than Krupps during the war.

He points out that Schneider-Creusot secured control of Skoda after the war, and continues:—

Consummation of the scheme will give France control over all the munitions industries among its little allies.

The recent Franco-Polish oil convention, with its "extravagant privileges" for French capitalists, has been one further illustration of the dominating power possessed by French imperialism in Eastern and Central Europe.

However, it is totally false to omit any consideration of the relations of British or American imperialism with European reaction, as liberal and pacifist writers on foreign affairs in this country are so accustomed to do.

British imperialism was mainly responsible, acting through the League of Nations, for the capitalist "reconstruction" of Austria, which has proved such an enormous boon for the Austrian reactionaries. It is also angling for the lead in a similar "reconstruction" of White Hungary. It has floated loans to Czecho-Slovakia. It is credited with a far from unimportant part in the Bulgarian Fascist coup. It has, as pointed out earlier in this article, relations with Czecho-Slovakian Fascism. Vickers control the Rستا armament works in Rumania. Great interest has lately been manifested in Poland, not only by financial experts like Mr. Hilton Young, but by certain big industrialists of the calibre of Mr. W. L. Hichens, of Cammell Laird.

Finally, that certain forces in American imperialism have their fingers in the pie of European counter-revolution may be seen from the recent Finnish loan, which was eagerly taken up by Wall Street. It should not be forgotten, either, that Hitler is commonly reputed to receive considerable financial assistance from American sources.

This, then, is the picture. Throughout Europe the counter-revolution is either the wielder of State power or has a large and increasing voice in the control of that power. Further, through its associations with the great imperialist groups, the counter-revolution in Europe appears as part of a world-historical process, the process of capitalist decline. As night falls on capitalism, the gathering forces of the world revolution are faced by the world counter-revolution.

AMERICAN LABOUR'S CHAMBER OF COM- MERCE

By Wm. F. DUNNE

(Wm. F. Dunne, one of the leaders of left-wing trade unionism in America, was expelled at the Portland Convention of the American Federation of Labour. This ominous sign of the repetition of continental tactics of expulsion and division, already practised with ruinous results by the right wing in France, Germany, Czecho-Slovakia, and other countries, and attempted unsuccessfully by the British Labour Party Executive against the Communists, is a revelation of the growing crisis within the American Movement.)

IF the convention of the American Federation of Labour was a working-class gathering the result of its deliberations at Portland could arouse nothing but black despair on the part of the left-wing elements in the American Labour Movement. It was not a convention of workers, however, but a gathering of professional Labour leaders whose interest in the Labour Movement is exactly the same as the heads of any other well-paying business.

For weeks before the convention it was evident that the red menace of Communism was to be made the issue at the Portland meet. The series of articles sponsored by the officials of the United Mine Workers containing an invitation to the employers to join hands with the Labour leaders in stamping out radicalism sounded the key-note of the convention and outlined the policy of the Gompers machine.

The Portland Convention spent its time in hunting heretics and in unseating the writer, who acknowledged without equivocation his disbelief in the divine character of the officialdom of the American Labour Movement. This proceeding took up almost a whole day of the convention and was the feature of its sessions.

It was no spontaneous outburst of indignation on the part of the delegates, but a carefully prepared climax to an official scheme, which had for its object the defeat of all resolutions dealing with

amalgamation, a Labour Party, and the recognition of Soviet Russia. I was unseated on the second Monday of the convention, but as early as the preceding Tuesday the reporters of the capitalist Press had been told by the A.F. of L. publicity agents that I would be unseated ; the information was not given, however, to the correspondent of the Federated Press.

Two days before the proceedings against me were started John J. O'Leary, personal Press agent for Gompers and " Labour expert " of the *New York Herald*, in a special article in the *Portland Oregonian* predicted my unseating.

Never at any convention of the Federation has there been such close co-operation between the capitalist Press and the officialdom of the A.F. of L. Unlimited space was at the disposal of the reactionaries, and in not a single instance did a word of criticism of A.F. of L. officials or policies creep into the four employer-owned Portland sheets. The convention responded to this, and from beginning to end everything of a working-class character was carefully eliminated from the proceedings. So strong was this complex that two working men, who were one day watching Gompers get into his limousine after adjournment, were seized, searched, and manhandled by the police lieutenant in plain clothes who drove his car ; they were suspicious characters, you understand, because they did not fit into the picture.

There can be no doubt that the machine was frightened at the resolutions for amalgamation, the Labour Party, and recognition of Russia that cropped up from unexpected places. The convention of the Moulders' Union, whose president, Joseph Valentine, is a member of the Executive Council of the A.F. of L., had endorsed the Labour Party and Russian recognition just as the A.F. of L. went into session. Something like thirteen big international unions had expressed themselves in favour of one or all of the three propositions at conventions, to say nothing of the State federations and city central bodies who had taken similar action. The situation was full of dynamite for an officialdom which is trying to prove that it loves the wage-system more ardently than the employers themselves.

The high-salaried business men who speak for Labour did not give one moment's consideration to the idea that fighting against

progress is the job of the employers. They hold the same views as do the capitalists who employ the dues-paying workers in the unions, and acted accordingly as one knew they would do. Employers are more inclined to deal with organisations that have the viewpoint of the masters, so every effort was made to convince the employers that Labour hates anyone who advances the idea that the present system is not all it should be and that Labour organisations can never achieve power by catering to the employers' love of the capitalist system.

This was the strategy of the convention—to outdo chambers of commerce, commercial clubs, advertising associations, Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, and the Bar Association in denunciation of anything that could be interpreted as un-American, and into this category were placed recognition of Soviet Russia, amalgamation, and the Labour Party.

To attain this objective the full strength of the Gompers machine was mobilised. The first days of the session were taken up with religious and patriotic speeches in which the radicals were flayed. Frank Hodges, whose name will be mentioned with a curse by the British workers for many a long day to come in connection with Black Friday, warned the convention against the “borers from within”; Mayor Baker, elected by the Klan, and various ministers and relief workers, all sounded the same note; the local Press played up every such denunciation, and the not too courageous delegates were duly impressed.

Thus the stage was all set by Monday, October 8. In the report of the educational committee, the Federated Press was scored as an agency for the dissemination of Communist propaganda. Matthew Woll, heir apparent to the throne, speaking for the committee recommendation, urged the convention to unseat me. Bill Green, Secretary of the United Mine Workers, was recognised and opened the case for the prosecution without any motion being made, the report of the educational committee on the Federated Press being forgotten in the excitement. The evidence of the inquisitors consisted of articles, headlines, and editorials in one issue of the *Butte Bulletin* in which the charges of bribery made by Lewis and Farrington against each other were published. In an editorial I had referred to Lewis in connection with his Herrin

publicity as trying "to turn members of his union over to the hangman after they had been acquitted by a jury," and while these excerpts were being read I heard more than one grunt of approval from the delegates in my vicinity, nor were there any expressions of disapproval or anger such as the reactionaries expected; on the contrary, the convention was extremely silent and attentive.

Green ended his indictment by stating that a precedent for the proceedings could be found in the Scriptures as Lucifer had been expelled from heaven. I could not keep from laughing as I thought of the tremendous wing-surface that would be required for some of these Poland-China-swine-built Labour leaders to play the part of angels. Green also read letters seized by the Department of Justice raid on the office of Fred Merrick in Pittsburgh which showed that I was in that district during the 1922 strike of the coal miners. Phillip Murray, Vice-president of the U.M.W.A., made the motion for my expulsion after Green had finished his exhortation, and it was only then that it was remembered that the report of the educational committee had not yet been put before the convention. That matter was hurriedly disposed of and real business resumed.

Murray denounced me as a Communist and a bitter opponent of the officialdom of the United Mine Workers and of the A.F. of L. Green had read extracts from a speech I made at an open meeting the night before, in which I referred to the officialdom as "fat boys," and had stated that "I did not know it would be necessary to throw anyone out to prove their respectability," and, further, "that these people were more conservative than the employers." These statements were supposed to prove that I was not a good trade unionist and should be cast into outer darkness.

I secured the floor and spoke for about forty minutes. I think in justice to myself it is fair to say that never before at an A.F. of L. Convention have the bureaucrats of the Labour Movement heard the truth about themselves worded in so clear a manner. I mentioned the fact that Labour is only about one-seventh organised in the United States, "and yet," I said, "you strut around as though you had capitalism by the throat." I told them that I had heard much boasting of the revocation of charters, but nothing about

the spread of organisation. I told them that the Scriptural precedent discovered by Green "gave the proceedings a religious atmosphere that was quite in keeping with the heresy-hunting proclivities of the A.F. of L. officials." I mentioned the fear for their good jobs that was expressed in their hostility to amalgamation and the Labour Party, and told them that I did not consider them workers; that they were as far removed from the struggles of the rank and file as were the employers they sought to placate. I told them that it was not the first time I had faced a white-collared mob bent upon my destruction and that I had no intention of defending anything I had said or done; in a capitalist court I would defend myself, but not before the lackeys of the capitalist class; any statement I might make would be for the purpose of making my position clear and not to apologise for it.

Adjournment was had before the discussion was finished, and upon convening in the afternoon there occurred what was, to me, the most pitiful spectacle of the whole convention. Fred Mooney, of West Virginia, one of the U.M.W.A. delegates, was forced by the Lewis machine to support Murray's motion and attack me. He was placed in the position of doing the bidding of the machine or of being deprived of all financial assistance in his coming trial, arising out of the march of the miners three years ago. He based his attack upon my speech and said that, only for that, he would have opposed the motion; he stated that I was being "framed" in Michigan just as he was in West Virginia, but that I had no place in the convention because of my beliefs; he became hysterical and incoherent many times during his speech, his voice rising to a scream in which no words could be discerned. I felt genuinely sorry for him, but he is only another fighter in the ranks of Labour who has been ruined to serve the ambitions of cowardly and dishonest officialdom.

Tracy, of the Brick and Clay Workers, took umbrage at my blue shirt, and used most of his time in denouncing Foster. Greenstein, of the Jewellery Workers, resurrected the exploded canard about my alleged Ku Klux Klan affiliation, but I was given no opportunity to reply. I trust that Greenstein has been repaid for his services and is now in good standing with the Gompers machine after having been out of the A.F. of L. for two years.

The vote was overwhelmingly in favour of unseating me, but it was not unanimous although every effort was made to have it so. The few who braved the machine will undoubtedly suffer for their temerity. Among them were Sillinsky and Soderberg of the Tailors' International, Ed. Launer of the Paper and Sulphite Workers, Ohls of the Wisconsin Federation of Labor, Burns of the Tacoma Central Labor Council, Duncan of Seattle, and Stevens of Minneapolis.

Following my unseating, the work of railroading amalgamation, the Labour Party, and recognition of Soviet Russia began. The amalgamation resolutions were lumped together, the report of the committee denounced them as communistic, no discussion was permitted, and no roll-call obtained.

The Labour Party resolutions met almost the same fate, although a number of delegates supported them ; they too were denounced as un-American and against the interests of the Labour movement, but a roll-call was secured nevertheless, and a surprising sentiment in their behalf was disclosed in spite of the intimidation of the machine. One vote out of every thirteen was cast for the Labour Party.

Recognition of Russia also commanded support that surprised the administration after the anti-red offensive was supposed to have terrorised every delegate. Gompers and Woll were the only ones who took the floor against the resolution. Hays of the Typographical, Healy of the Stationary Engineers, Smart of the Switchmen, and Johnston of the Machinists all spoke for it.

It can be safely said, I think, that the offensive against the left wing reached its height in Portland. Another period of industrial depression is just around the corner and the A.F. of L. now has less than 3,000,000 members ; the militants have brought their programme on the convention floor and it was necessary to expel one of them to prevent the machine being challenged on all fronts. Nothing was done that could possibly strengthen Labour, except perhaps to endorse the Workers' Educational Bureau and that is now safely under the patronage of the bureaucracy. Trying times are ahead of American Labour and in throttling proposals advocated by the militants the A.F. of L. dynasty has done the one thing necessary to convince the intelligent trade unionists that the only

hope for American Labour lies in the programme of the Trade Union Educational League and in the rallying of the rank and file of the unions around that programme for a merciless fight against any and all officials who oppose it.

THE CRITICISM OF PROLETARIAN ART

By A. BOGDANOV

ALL creative work, whether it is the creative work of Nature or of man, elemental or systematic, leads to organised, harmonised, enduring forms only by way of *regulation*. These are two closely combined and mutually indispensable sides of every organisational process. Thus, in the elemental development of life, the creative quality is "mutability," it is this that is constantly creating new combinations, new departures from the earlier forms; these are then regulated by "natural selection," which eliminates from their number all those that are not adapted to the environment, while it preserves and strengthens those that are well adapted. In production the creative quality is labour, for ever changing the combinations of things; the regulator is systematic control by the consciousness which, constantly watching the results of the effort, stops it when the direct aim has been achieved, or changes its direction when it departs from this aim.

In the work of the artist we have the same relations: new combinations of living images are always being created, and at the same time they are regulated by conscious, systematic selection, by the mechanism of "self-criticism," which eliminates all that is not harmonious and does not correspond to the task, and preserves all that is suitable. When self-criticism is insufficient, the result is contradiction, incoherence, an accumulation of images without art.

The development of art on a social scale is regulated by the whole social environment, which accepts or rejects the works introduced into it and supports or kills new currents in the arts. But there is also a systematic regulation, which is accomplished by *criticism*. Its real basis is of course also the social environment: the work of criticism is done from the standpoint of a certain collective—in a class society, from the standpoint of one class or the other.

We shall now examine the way, the directions, in which the proletarian criticism can and should regulate the development of proletarian art.

The first thing we have to do is to establish the limitations of proletarian art, to define clearly its scope, so that it shall not dissolve in the surrounding cultural environment or mix up with the art of the old world. This is not so simple a task as it might seem at first; so far, blunders have always been made and confusion caused in this respect.

In the first place, there is seldom a distinction made between proletarian art and peasant art. No doubt the working class, especially our Russian proletariat, has come from the peasantry, and there are many points of contact between these two classes. The peasantry, in its mass, is also a toiling and also an exploited element of society; it is owing to this that a prolonged political union can be created between the workers and peasants. But in co-operation and in ideology, in the fundamental methods of thought and action, there are deep distinctions between them *on points of principle*. The soul of the proletariat, its organisational basis, is collectivism, fellowship, co-operation; it becomes conscious of itself as a class in the degree that this basis develops in its life and penetrates it. Peasants and small freeholders are mostly inclined toward individualism, toward the spirit of personal interest and private ownership; they are "petty bourgeois"—an incorrect and mechanical name, because "bourgeois" really means an inhabitant of the city, but expressing correctly the real character of the vital strivings of the peasantry. Besides, the patriarchal order of the family household preserves among the peasants the spirit of authority and religion; the inevitable narrowness of horizon characteristic of the village and the dependence of backward agriculture on elemental forces (which to the peasant are mysterious) all tend to produce the same result.

Examine the whole of peasant poetry, not only the pre-revolutionary, but even the most modern, that of the Left Social-Revolutionaries: even the "Red Sound" and the "Almanach," by the talented poets Kluyev, Essenin, and others. Here you meet everywhere with the fetish of "our earth," and of the bases of "*our own household*"; here also is the whole Olympus

of the peasant gods—the Trinity, the Virgin Mary, George the Brave, and Nicholas the Benefactor; then note their constant gravitation towards the past, the honouring of leaders of the unorganised, elemental forces of the people, such as Stenka Rasin (the bandit hero). All this is quite alien to the consciousness of the socialist proletariat.

And yet such works are printed in workers' papers and magazines as proletarian, and are considered by critics also as such. It is true that many of the proletarian poets started out with peasant poetry—either because they recently had come from the village and still preserved their connection with it, or simply by way of imitation. The first periodicals of the workers' poets, *Our Songs*, which were published in Moscow in 1913 and then destroyed by the Tsarist censors, are full of purely peasant poems. A great part of the poetry is also of a transitional type.

Another source of confusion was the influence of the soldiers, to which the proletariat submitted in some degree during the years of war and revolution. For the most part, the soldiers are these same peasants, torn away from production and living in masses in conditions of communism in consumption, and trained for the business of destruction or largely engaged in that business. The struggle for peace, the hostility towards the rich, a hostility less conscious and less abstract than that of the proletariat, brought the soldiers temporarily into political alliance with the proletariat and caused a close communion between the two, although as social types they are not related to each other and are even opposed to each other by their rôle in life. The fellowship in the fight caused the ideology of the soldiers to find its way into some workers' papers and taint the mind of some of the more facile proletarian poets. Hence it happened that the fighting songs of the revolution were sometimes tinged by specifically soldiers' ideas, and thus the nobility of tone, which is obligatory and natural to a class bearing higher ideals, was impaired. In these verses the spirit of narrow personal hatred toward individual representatives of the bourgeoisie was introduced, a spirit which may have some justification in life, but is inadmissible in poetry because it degrades the ideal of the struggle of a great class. And even excesses were admitted, such as malignant jeerings over the beaten enemies, praise of lynching,

and sadistic exultations—we are sorry to say there were even instances of these. Of course these things have nothing to do with the ideology of the proletariat. For the ideology of the proletariat contains characteristic fighting motives, but not vulgar soldiers' motives; a firm hostility towards capital as a social force, but not a petty maliciousness towards individual representatives of that class, who are the inevitable product of their social environment. Of course the proletariat must resort to arms when this is demanded by the interests of its liberty, its development, its ideal; but it fights against that social primitiveness which is the cause of all armed struggle. The brutality which this struggle breeds in the human soul may for some time master the mind of the fighters, but it is strange and hostile to the proletarian culture, which admits severity only of necessity. The spirit of real power is nobility, and the labouring collectivity is a real power. It is destined to become the new aristocracy of culture—the last in the history of mankind, the first that really merits such a name.

Another line of separation should be drawn by our criticism between proletarian art and intellectual socialism. Here the confusion is very natural, because of the closeness of the ideals. But still there are deep and important divergences. The toiling intellectuals have come from the bourgeois culture; on that culture and for it they have worked, and on it they have been brought up. Their principle is individualism. And the very character of intellectual work is apt to maintain this tendency: in the work of the scholar, the artist, or author co-operation is not felt directly, the rôle of the community is not manifest, there is more external distinctness, an illusion of perfectly independent personal activity. And when co-operation is evident, then the intellectual occupies the authoritarian position of leader and organiser—as an engineer at the factory, a physician in a hospital, &c. Hence comes the element of authority which is inevitably preserved in the bourgeois world and its culture, as an organisational supplement to their anarchical basis of life.

Owing to all this it so happens for the most part that even when the toiling intellectual rises to a deep and sincere sympathy with the working class, to faith in the Socialist ideal, the past still preserves its influence on the manner of his thought, on his

perception of life, on his conception of the forces and the paths of its development.

An instance of this is Verhaeren's drama *The Dawn*, which is the first play mentioned whenever the question of plays for a Proletarian Theatre is raised, and is considered as meriting production in such a theatre, without any comments, as entirely "belonging" to us. This is a mistake. The play is excellent, and it is a valuable inheritance for us, but still it is an inheritance from the old world. In it the spirit of Socialism is clothed in an authoritarian individualistic shell, which must be understood but cannot be accepted at face-value. The whole piece is constructed around the heroic personality of the people's tribune, who leads the masses. This personality is the soul of the strife and victory; without him the masses are ignorant and blind, unable to find their own way. It is on the tragedy of this character that the author centres the interest of his drama. This is the way the old world looks upon the significance of personality. Collectivism has another way of constructing life and explaining it. Of course the community recognises heroes, it may even create a hero—but as a personification of the forces of the *collectivity*, as an expression of its collective will, an apostle of its ideals.

And as long as there is a different attitude towards heroes, this is only a proof that the collectivity has not yet matured to a clear conception of itself.

The great Belgian sculptor, Constantine Meunier, in his statues depicting the life of the workers, made an actual cult of Labour. But notwithstanding the deep love of the artist towards the things he depicts, notwithstanding all his sympathetic understanding—still it is not the cult of the *Collectivity*. His merit is great, despite this; but the proletarian artist should know that Meunier's work is not a perfect model for him: his tasks lie further on.

The artistic self-consciousness of the working class must be pure and clear, free from every foreign element. This is the first task of our criticism.

Our criticism of proletarian art should be directed in the first place to its content.

In the nascent culture of a class that is young and living under difficult conditions, a certain *narrowness* of content is quite natural, as a result of the lack of experience and the inevitable limitations in the field of observation. Thus fiction, at the beginning, takes its themes and material from the life of the workers themselves and the revolutionary intellectuals who are connected with them; only little by little, and so far to a very small degree, does it widen its field. Yet there can be no doubt but that proletarian art must enclose in the field of its experience the whole of society and Nature, the whole life of the universe.

What can be done by our criticism in this regard? Of course it is not in a position to give the nascent art what it wants. But it can and it should put before it constantly the problem of widening its field; it can and should note every success attained in this direction, and point out the new possibilities connected with this success. And, indirectly, it may render real assistance in the making of such successes by comparing, wherever opportunity offers, the works of proletarian art with the works of the old art which are similar in their "artistic idea," *i.e.*, in the organisational problem they try to solve. It will then be found that in the old art both the material and the point of view, and sometimes even the very principle of solution, are quite different.

Especially this will be found in relation to the favourite problems of classical literature—the organisation of the family, the struggle between "lower" and "higher" motives in the human soul, the passions which master men, the education of character, &c.

Some of these and similar problems have already been put and solved in one way or another by science or philosophy. Our criticism should point out and compare these solutions with the artistic solutions of the same problems: the great collectivism of the universal experience of man, which is stored beneath the shell of the scientific world, will in many cases prove a precious guide for young, searching, and hesitating creative effort.

The narrowness of artistic content may consist not only in the limited field of organised experience, but also in narrow one-sided perception, in the limited nature of the primary attitude towards the material of experience. The most typical case is an excessive concentration on the social struggle, the limitation of art to an

organising and fighting rôle. This is very natural for a youthful and fighting class, fighting moreover under the most difficult conditions. It is even a necessary phase, during the first stages of development of this class, while it is still discovering itself through its consciousness of opposition to another class in society and is working out the fighting aspect of its ideology. But afterwards this point of view inevitably becomes insufficient.

The working class advances towards its ideal through struggle, yet its ideal is not one of destruction, but of a new organisation of life. This organisation is, moreover, to be *all* new, immeasurably complex, and harmonious. Consequently the cult of the fighting consciousness in itself does not give us a solution of our main problem. It is necessary to work out an ideology of Socialist construction. This course has already been taken here in Russia by proletarian science, and proletarian art must develop in the same direction. It will do so faster, and with greater energy, as the working class comes nearer to the accomplishment of its ideal.

In our present-day proletarian poetry the agitational content predominates—thousands of poems calling to the class struggle and glorifying the victories in that struggle, hundreds of short stories exposing capital and its servants. This must be changed. The part should not be mistaken for the whole. To give oneself up to a universal study of life is of course much more difficult than to join in an attack on the hostile lines; but for Socialism it is more necessary, because only a universal understanding of life in all its concrete forces and forms will furnish the necessary support for all-embracing creative effort.

The narrowing down of poetry to social agitational themes has an unfavourable effect even on its artistic side, which is essentially its organising force. It becomes stereotyped, and it dulls the sympathetic perception which fuses the masses with the poet.

Then, even when the content unfolds further, it is still frequently viewed from this same angle as narrower than it really is. Thus in a book by A. Gastev, which has been recently published, the chief theme is machine production—its gigantic organising force, the way in which it unites the labouring collectivity, and the might and power over the elements which it gives to that collectivity.

This is one of the primary ideas of the *cultural-creative* proletarian consciousness; yet Gastev named his book the *Poetry of the Workers' Blow*, as though his task had not crossed the limits of the *fighting* consciousness of the proletariat. For it is evident that the words "Workers' Blow" (especially in an atmosphere of a stormy revolution) will be associated with the idea of the social struggle, but not with the idea of a blow by, let us say, a blacksmith's hammer. And even this is quite an insufficient symbol of machine technique.

The agitational narrowing down of artistic ideas is manifested also in the fact that the capitalists and bourgeois intellectuals are represented as though they are *personally* bad, cruel, dishonest people. Such a conception is naive and contradictory to the collective method of thinking. It is not a question of personal qualities at all, as between one bourgeois or another; it is not against individuals that revolutionary feeling and revolutionary effort should be directed. It is a question of the position of classes, and the struggle is waged against a social system, against the collectivities which are connected with that system and defend it. The capitalist may personally be even a very noble man; but in so far as he is a representative of his class his actions and thoughts will necessarily be determined by his social position. Even at the moment of battle he should be regarded by the conscious proletarian, not as a personal enemy, but as a blind link in the chain forged by history. In order to gain the victory over the old world it is more useful to understand it in its better representatives and its sublimer revelations than to imagine that there are only bad people and vicious motives in it. The collective thought and will of the working class should not be exchanged for pettiness.

In close relation with the agitational narrowing down of creative work is another theory, recently brought forward, according to which proletarian art must infallibly be "buoyant" and exulted. We are sorry to state that this theory is quite a favourite, especially with the younger and less experienced proletarian poets, although it is merely childish. The scale of collective class feeling could not and should not be so limited. No doubt it is natural for a labouring collectivity to have a lively and vivid sense of its power. But it should not be forgotten that this force is also liable to defeats.

Art must, first of all and always, be perfectly sincere and true, for the very reason that it is an organising factor of life—how can untrustworthy art, untrusted, organise anything?

It is true that despair is not worthy of fighters; but the deception of rosy glasses is still less worthy of them; it is a flight from reality, a deceiving mask for that very same despair. This theory would degrade poetry to the level of that which put for its slogan:—

Elevating deception is dearer to us,
than the mass of common truths.

No, not sweet glorification, but unshattered will and historic pride—these are the things necessary for the proletariat surrounded as it is by enemies on all sides:—

Si fractus illabatur orbis
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.¹

The ancient poets, individualists, knew what real courage is; all the more should it be known to the poet of the new community.

In its whole regulating work our criticism of proletarian art should constantly have this thing in view: *the spirit of Labour collectivism is in the first place objectivity.*

The criticism of proletarian art from the standpoint of its form should pursue one perfectly definite and clear object: harmony between form and content.

Of course the proletariat must learn artistic technique from its predecessors in the first place. Here necessarily the temptation rises to take as a model the very latest that has been worked out by the old art. And here it is easy to make blunders.

In art, form is inseparably connected with content, and this is the very reason why the latest is not always the most perfect. When a social class has accomplished its progressive rôle in the historical process and is going toward decadence the content of its art inevitably also becomes decadent; and after the content follows the form, which is made to suit it. The decadence of a social class takes place as it passes towards parasitism. In the wake of this follows satiety, the sense of life becomes dull. Life is deprived of the main source of new, developing content for art—social creative activity. Life becomes empty, it loses its "rationale," *i.e.*, its social sense.

¹ Though the earth fall asunder he'll not know
Fear of its ruin.

In order to fill up this emptiness the members of the dying class search for new enjoyments and for novel sensations. Art organises these searchings: on the one hand it stimulates failing sensuality and passes into decadent perversions; on the other hand, refining æsthetic perceptions, it strives to complicate its forms and embellish them by various petty devices. All this has been observed in history more than once at the decay of different cultures—the Oriental, Antique, and Feudal; and it can be observed during the last decades in connection with the decay of bourgeois culture. The greater part of the new currents in art is included in the decadent “modernism” and “futurism.” Russian bourgeois art in 1917 was dragging along behind European art like our anæmic and flabby bourgeoisie itself, which tended to wither without having ever bloomed.

It is necessary to learn the technique of art, not from these organisers of the decadence of life, but from the great masters of the arts, who came at the period of the rise and flowering of the classes now decaying—the revolutionary romanticists and the classics of different times. From the “latest” one may learn some small details, in which they are frequently very skilful, but even in that one should be careful not to become contaminated by the germs of decay.

The simplicity and purity of the forms of our great masters, Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Nekrassov, and Tolstoy, correspond best to the tasks of the new culture. Of course, the new contents will inevitably work out new forms; but it is necessary to start with the best of the past.

In its first steps our workers' poetry manifested a tendency to regular rhythmic verse with simple rhymes. At present it manifests a tendency to free rhythms and complicated new and frequently unexpected rhymes. This is clearly the influence of the modern poetry of the intellectuals. It is doubtful whether it should be encouraged. The new forms are more difficult. The labour of mastering them implies an unnecessary expenditure of energy, which detracts from the more important task of working out and developing the artistic contents.

Let there even be a certain amount of monotony in regularity. It has its justification in life. The worker at the factory lives in a

kingdom of regular rhythm—simple elementary rhyme. In the “steel chaos” of machines and motors, the waves of varying, but on the whole mechanically regular, rhythms are intermingled with each other; further, the continuity of the smaller repetitions is crossed by rarer and heavier repetitions (as by cæsura or rhyme in verse). These sounds with their constant repetitions forge out the measured word-images, in which the worker with an artistic nature strives to clothe his emotions.

Later on, when the worker has an opportunity to absorb the rhythms of living Nature, where there is less repetition and regularity, this monotony will disappear naturally. But to overcome it by imitating the poets of a strange environment and atmosphere is an unnecessary task, which only increases difficulties that are already numerous.

The most difficult form for the new poetry is the prose-poem. While dispensing with rhyme and any obvious rhythm, it demands a stricter rhythm of images, and at the same time a sufficient harmony of sound combination. These demands are not fulfilled to a sufficient degree in the work of A. Gastev, *The Poetry of the Workers' Blow*, where most are prose poems. In this is manifested the inexperience of young creative work, which follows the most difficult ways, perhaps for the simple reason that it is not quite aware of the actual difficulties. Our criticism may assist in saving artistic efforts by explaining the hidden difficulties of different forms—a question which is not dealt with in the old theory of art.

Step by step our criticism will create a new theory of art which will include also all the variety of the experience of the old criticism, but revised and systematised anew on the basis of the higher universally organisational viewpoint.

It should be noted that in some cases the criticism of form cannot be separated from the criticism of the content; as a matter of fact they become fused with each other. This is so especially in the question of artistic symbols. Such a symbol is a living image which serves as a kind of designation for a whole series of other images connected with it; it is a means of introducing them to the mind simultaneously and in an organised manner. Thus the Ghost of Hamlet's father is the symbol of the vague echoes of the

criminal deed, which gradually spread through the society concerned and disclosed the secret. The "Great City" in Verhaeren's *Dawn* is the symbol of the whole organisation of capitalist society. But being a living image, and not only a naked designation, such symbols have their own contents, which are, moreover, depicted in the first place. The Ghost is a spirit, the Great City some capital town. These contents are themselves subjected to all the rules of art and the corresponding criticisms. If, for instance, the Ghost of Hamlet's father behaved in a fashion unlike that in which ghosts are supposed to conduct themselves in the fancy of the people, then it would be grossly inartistic. The *Blue Bird*, of Maeterlinck, notwithstanding its deep idea, would not have become a great work of art if the symbols in themselves had not formed a beautiful, harmonious fairy tale, appealing immediately to children.

Of course our criticism should consider the symbols from this side, beginning with the very selection of the symbols.

Our cruel and coarse times—the epoch of militarism in action—sometimes prompt our artists to use cruel and coarse symbols. A worker fiction writer, in order to give strong and acute expression to the idea of renouncing everything personal in the name of the great collective cause, will symbolise this by having the hero murder the woman he loves. Our criticism points out that this kind of symbol is inadmissible; it contradicts the very idea of collectivism; for the collectivist, a woman is not merely a source of personal happiness, but a real or potential member of that same collectivity. Or, for instance, one enthusiastic poet, in his desire to express readiness to struggle against the old world to the end, without stopping even before the greatest and most fearful sacrifices, threatens:—

In the name of our To-morrow we will burn Raphael,
Destroy the museums, tread down the flowers of art.

In connection with this, one reviewer remarked quite correctly but too mildly that "this is not ideology, but psychology," *i.e.*, that the poet, while submitting to the impetus of his own feeling, has forgotten the social organising rôle of art. This is a symbol which might appeal to a soldier, but never to a worker. A soldier

may and should shell Rheims Cathedral if there is or if there is supposed to be an observation point of the enemy in one of its towers. But what makes a poet select this Hindenburgian image? The poet can only be sorry for such a cruel necessity, never praise it. When creative work itself follows the current to such a degree, then it does not elevate it. The proletariat should never forget the co-operation of generations, which is not at all the same as the co-operation of the classes at the present time. The proletariat should not forget the respect we owe to the great dead who trod smooth the way for us, who bequeathed us their spirits, and from their graves extend to us their helping hand in our striving to this ideal.

In the questions of the forms of art, as well as in those of its contents, our criticism should constantly remind the artist of his responsible rôle as organiser of the living forces of a great collectivity.

Criticism regulates the life of art, not only in its creative aspect, but also in its perception. It explains art to the wide masses, it points out to men what and how they should take from art for the arrangement of their lives.

In respect to the art of the old world this is the only task of our criticism, for we are unable to regulate its development. But in respect to our new art, both tasks are equally important.

It is not only a matter of disclosing the meaning of the symbols when they are difficult to understand, or explaining what is hidden behind the images—things that the artist himself may find difficulty in formulating. It is not a simple question of drawing conclusions which the artist perhaps was unable to express clearly. Criticism should also point out the new problems that arise from the results attained by each work, and the new possibilities which go with them. And the most important thing is that criticism should introduce each work of art into the whole class culture of the masses, into the general scheme of proletarian relationship towards life. In living images it should find and point out the universal scope of the all-organisational standpoint.

This is the way that our criticism must follow in order itself to become creative work.

The World of Labour

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INTERNATIONAL

Peasant Congress

A GROUP of peasants who were present at the Moscow Agricultural Exhibition in the summer of this year decided to summon an International Congress of working peasants. The Congress met in Moscow on October 10. There were more than one hundred delegates present from peasants' organisations in twenty countries. All the European countries were represented except Italy, England, and Ireland. There were delegates present representing American farmers' organisations; and a delegate from Mexico.

The political complexion of the Congress was essentially non-party. There were very few Communists among the delegates.

The Agenda of the Congress included the following points :—

- (1) The struggle against war.
- (2) The situation confronting the peasantry in capitalist countries.
- (3) The results of the agrarian revolution in Russia.
- (4) Peasants' co-operatives in Russia and other countries.
- (5) Closer relations between the peasantry and the working class.

Zinoviev was invited to address the Congress, and welcomed the proposal to set up a Peasant International. He reported that Lenin, who is now convalescent, displayed particular interest in the movement for the creation of a Peasant International, considering it as an event of the utmost significance.

The Congress discussions found expression in a manifesto addressed to the working peasants of all countries from which we take the following extracts :—

Brothers and comrades ! Since primeval times we have been winning the fruits of the soil at the price of heavy labour. At first we did this in free comradeship : each for all and all for each. The land was free ; forest and meadow, hunting and fishing, belonged to each and all. But the power seized by the nobility robbed us of our freedom, degraded us into slaves. For a thousand years we bore the yoke. Then came the emancipation of the peasantry. But this brought us no relief from serfdom. We were robbed of our rights to forest and meadow, hunting and fishing. Broad tracts of the best land remained the property of the great landowners, whose sole activity consisted in extorting high rents from us, in leading the lives of feudal lords, and in hunting over our fields.

Now a new race of lords has sprung up beside the old : the capitalists. And these too live by preying on us. They join together in cartels and trusts in order that they may force high prices on us. In autumn the speculators come and buy up our crops at low prices, to sell them again in the spring at double the price they paid. In America the high tariffs of the railroads deprive the farmers of half their income. On every side we are encompassed by deceit, usury, robbery. In the colonial countries the broad peasant masses are impoverished beneath the predatory yoke of foreign imperialist capitalism.

The large landowners and capitalists are backed up by the bourgeois State with its hosts of officials and police, its cliques of army officers. A mighty organisation opposes us. It forces our sons to fill its barracks, it carries on wars of plunder, and wars for the division of plunder, in which wars we working peasants are driven in millions to our deaths

The working peasantry is beginning to awaken at last, it is beginning to realise that it must no longer entrust its fate to the landlords and capitalists. It has already attempted to organise parties in various countries, and to seize State power. But it has not yet struck the right path. It has attempted to govern in collaboration with its enemy, with the ruling class ; but the cunning business politicians of the ruling class have outwitted, corrupted, and bought the leaders of the peasantry. The peasants' parties have thus been tools of the ruling class instead of weapons aiding the working peasants in their struggle. In Bulgaria, where the peasantry attempted to seize power for itself alone, it was taken by surprise by a small band of conspirators, one-time officers and rulers. The peasants were driven from their position of power and crushed ; thousands of them were thrown into prison or murdered.

The peasantry cannot wield State power, either in co-operation with the ruling classes or alone. If it is to rule, it must have an honest ally in the towns, for in the modern State the centre of power is in the towns. They that rule the towns rule the country. But the working peasant lives in the village, his companions are scattered over the fields. His honest ally in the town—this is the working class, which suffers as much from exploitation by the ruling class as does the peasantry. But the working class of the towns, dependent on its own resources, is too weak to carry on a victorious fight against the bourgeois State. The workers in the towns and the peasantry must fight together for their joint victory

Hitherto the ruling classes have adopted the successful tactics of inciting peasants and town workers against one another. They have persuaded the peasantry that increased power on the part of the workers would imply that more land would be taken from the peasants, that property would be divided, all liberties suppressed. We have been able to convince ourselves with our own eyes, in the Workers' and Peasants' State of Russia, that all these assertions are falsehoods. The peasants of Russia have not only retained their land but they have received that of the former great landowners as well. They enjoy perfect liberty. Their property is protected, they can sell their products without restriction. They administer the affairs of their villages by means of their own Soviets. Nobody offends their national feelings, or interferes with them in the exercise of their religion. Emancipated from Tsarist, landowning, and capitalist oppression, they are co-operating with the town workers to become free, creative, and cultured human beings. We must follow their example

You must emancipate yourselves from the dictatorship of the ruling class. You must learn to regard the workers as your allies and comrades in the struggle. You must fight together with them to crush the power of the ruling class, and to establish the Workers' and Peasants' Government all over the world.

An additional appeal was addressed to the poor peasants in the colonial countries. Emphasis was laid on the misery of their position and the intensity of their exploitation at the hands both of capitalist imperialism and the native ruling classes. The need for a common struggle side by side with the workers and peasants of the mother countries was stressed: "Pariahs of the colonies, unite!"

An International Peasants' Council has been set up to carry on work in the spirit of the Congress manifesto. It contains representatives of every country present at the Congress, with power to add to its number as organisations in fresh countries affiliate. The secretary is Smirnov, Russian People's Commissar for Agriculture.

GERMANY

The Political Situation

THE last month in Germany has seen chiefly victories for the counter-revolution. On October 29-30 the Saxon Workers' Government was overthrown by the Reichswehr under General Müller. One or two prominent Social Democrats visited Dresden and succeeded in persuading several Social Democratic deputies to break the united front: a new coalition government was formed, comprising the Social Democrats and the bourgeois Centre Parties. The left-wing Social Democrats, like Zeigner, Premier in the Workers' Government, were not equal to the occasion. At the Chemnitz Works Councils Conference they advised against an immediate general strike.

A few days after the *coup d'état* in Saxony the Social Democrats, their task accomplished, resigned from the Great Coalition. A Fascist dictatorship now appears to be imminent. Negotiations between Stresemann and the Nationalists have been proceeding for some time, so far without final success. Already there have been a succession of separatist *coups* throughout the Rhineland. The separatists are most obviously in the pay of France, and, as one of their proclamations said, their intention was to free the Rhineland from any "radical" or left-wing movements among the masses of the population. A Fascist *putsch* in Bavaria has failed because of a quarrel in the Fascist ranks.

Stinnes and other big industrialists, Thyssen and Krupp, are openly fighting for the ten-hour day. Stinnes has locked out all the workers at one of his concerns, and has refused to take any back except on the ten-hour-day basis. Meanwhile, the negotiations in the Ruhr between the industrialists and the French continue.

An isolated workers' rising at Hamburg was crushed after many days' severe street fighting. Rumours of impending civil war are continuous. The Thuringian Workers' Government still stands at the time of writing, but a coup similar to that performed in Saxony is being prepared against it.

The ruin and degradation of the Social Democratic Party is now complete. Mr. Robert Dell, the *New Statesman* correspondent, who was quoted in these notes last month, wrote, immediately after the Saxon *coup d'état*:—

Should there be a general strike in Saxony I suppose *Vorwärts* and the Socialist and Trade Union leaders would do their best to wreck it. *Vorwärts* is doing its utmost to wreck the United Front where it exists and prevent it where it does not The once great German Socialist Party is, indeed,

a sorry spectacle. Cowardice, self-seeking, and corruption have done their work, and the rank and file drift helpless, like a rudderless ship.

Communist Tactics

In face of the changed situation, the tactics of the Communist Party are of the first importance. Accordingly we reproduce a special circular issued by the Central Executive of the Party at the end of October :—

Thanks to the treachery of the left-wing Social Democrats, who united with the right wing and the Federation of Trade Unions (A.D.G.B.) on the occasion of the dissolution of the Saxon Workers' Government by the Reich, the fighting strength of the united working-class front—which had just been achieved—was weakened to such a degree that it was necessary once more to draw back from the decisive struggle. The left-wing Social Democrats and the trade union bureaucracy, in thus aiding the reaction, did their work thoroughly. The working class was faced with the alternative, either to go into battle disunited, divided, and risking defeat, or to avoid a decisive action in order to re-establish, as quickly as possible, the fighting front that the Social Democratic leaders had broken. This last to be done in spite of these leaders, or with new leaders chosen from among the Social Democratic rank and file. It is generally recognised that the left-wing Social Democratic leaders shirked a fight : in Saxony, the Zeigner group, the so-called "left" in Thuringia, the whole of the Berlin District Executive. But it is also recognised that these left-wing leaders still possess the confidence of the revolutionary-minded Social Democratic workers, of which they took advantage.

The Chemnitz Conference, where the left-wing Social Democratic leaders succeeded in obstructing the vote of a resolution declaring for an immediate general strike, is an excellent example of this. In the same way the left-wing Social Democratic leaders at Berlin have even yet been able to prevent the formation of a Committee of Action to prepare for the struggle.

The military strength of the enemy has now reached its climax. There are, however, certain factors making for disunity, such as the opposition between Bavaria and the Reich. This is essentially an opposition within the ranks of the militarists—the von Seeckt group on one side, the Ludendorff group on the other.

To enter on a decisive struggle with the working class divided in two against an adversary who is still united and who has achieved the maximum of his military strength would be an historical catastrophe of the first order. It would bring certain and final defeat, not only to the German, but also to the Russian Revolution. On the other hand, victory is assured if we prepare the way for the attack by uniting beforehand the forces of the working class by propaganda and partial actions, and by dividing the forces of the enemy. Every member of the Party must understand that in the present situation the political general strike means the struggle for power, and consequently armed insurrection, which we must carry through without a pause till the enemy is completely crushed—under pain of being completely crushed ourselves.

This being so, there can be no half-measures. We know that the enemy are relying on an attack from our side without sufficient military or political preparation. The enemy know that time is working against them. Time works for us if we use it with the greatest energy, rapidity, and foresight in order to complete the political, technical, and organising preparations for the decisive struggle.

The time left to us is clearly very short. Party members must use all their efforts to re-establish the United Front which had been achieved.

The Social Democratic workers must be completely separated from their present left-wing leaders, or else they must choose new left-wing leaders able and ready for action.

We must secure that a number of these left-wing leaders will join with us in proclaiming the general strike. Otherwise, if we proclaim it ourselves, supported by

the Works Councils and the Committees of Action, these left-wing leaders must be already discredited and we must sufficiently possess the confidence of the working class to lead it into action as a solid phalanx.

Our chief tasks are :—

(1) To negotiate locally, regionally, and nationally with the Federation of Trade Unions (A.D.G.B.), the Federation of Officials' Union (A.D.B.), the Clerical Workers' Federation (Afa-Bund), and the Social Democratic Party, with, as a common objective, the struggle for bread and against Bavarian reaction, and the preparation of the general strike.

(2) To strengthen and improve, with the utmost energy, our technical preparations and our organisation. To this end, we must put ourselves in a position to take part in all the partial day-to-day conflicts, which are increasing in number, and in which we must take the lead, so that we can use them as a basis for the decisive struggle. We must show the greatest activity in all spontaneous conflicts. We must make the Party firm by establishing it on an illegal basis of the utmost strictness, and by taking part in the whole wide movement of the masses.

(3) To gain the active support, or to neutralise, the petty bourgeois elements who are divided chiefly among the Fascist organisations, the Reichswehr, and the police.

The decisive struggle can only begin on a rising wave of spontaneous mass conflicts, in which we must take part, and which we must lead and organise. Inevitably, there will be isolated local conflicts, looting, &c. We have not to oppose these, but to consider coolly and precisely just how far we can go without being prematurely defeated.

The most important slogans and demands to be put forward in these revolutionary skirmishes must be :—

- (1) Payment of wages in dollars (*i.e.*, in the currency in which prices are quoted). Economic relief.
- (2) Provision of food products. Confiscation of the stocks of the big wholesalers, millers, and landowners. Distribution by the co-operatives, by small traders' associations, by the Control Commissions.
- (3) Defence of the eight-hour day.
- (4) Distribution of bread and other foods and fuel to the unemployed, to children, to the aged.
- (5) Re-opening of shut-down factories, to be set going again by the Works Councils with the help of credits from the State.
- (6) (a) The struggle against Bavarian reaction, the withdrawal of the Reichswehr from Saxony, the raising of the state of siege.
(b) Confiscation of the wealth of those capitalists who sabotage production.
(c) Imprisonment of the big capitalist traitors, Stinnes & Co. Trial by a People's Court.
- (7) Liquidation of the Great Coalition. Formation of a Workers' and Small Peasants' Government.

Hamburg must be an outstanding example to the Party of what not to do. As a result of the treachery of the Social Democrats our comrades at Hamburg allowed themselves to be isolated. Hamburg was a genuine wide mass action. But it had been insufficiently prepared, and, beside a well-armed enemy, there were found yet against us important sections of Social Democratic workers. The example of Hamburg shows that we must not neglect to exploit thoroughly the sabotage of the treacherous Social Democratic leaders, and to consolidate the mass forces, in order not to sacrifice uselessly the *élite* of the working class. Hamburg has been and is an episode which should not discourage us, in spite of the local set-back, if we can draw from it a political lesson for the whole of Germany.

CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

Miners' Strike

THIS strike was essentially a continuation of the big coal strike in the spring of this year. Like that strike, the struggle began, and centred in, the Ostrau-Karwin coalfield. At the beginning of July a meeting of mineowners in the Ostrau-Karwin field announced that they found themselves under the necessity of "regulating" afresh the wages of miners and workers in the cokeries. As the time approached for the expiry of the latest collective agreement, they put forth a demand for a 30 per cent. wage reduction. This was refused by the miners. After the mediation of certain Social Democratic leaders, in the manner of certain Labour Party leaders in this country, the employers reduced their demand to 18 per cent. Even this, according to the *Daily Herald* Prague correspondent, would have meant sheer starvation for the miners.

The National Conference of the miners, meeting on August 16, rejected also the reduced demand, and decided on a general strike, in all the coalfields of the country, for August 20. The strikers numbered 120,000.

It became apparent from the first that the attack of the mineowners was part of a general capitalist offensive. The mineowners were acting in close accord with the Czecho-Slovak Federation of Industries. The large agrarian capitalists were also involved, knowing that wage reductions in industry would enable them to launch a successful attack on the agricultural workers and the small peasantry.

The revolutionary Trade Unions, especially the International (*i.e.*, German and Czech) All-Trade Union Federation, endeavoured to widen the front. The national question, as always in Czecho-Slovakia, proved to be a serious bar to genuinely united working-class action. There are three miners' Unions, for instance, the Czech Social Democratic Union, the Czech Nationalist Union, and the German Union, which had only been forced by economic stress to form some sort of a coalition.

Meanwhile, the Social Democratic leaders were continuing their work of mediation. Hampel, a Social Democrat, Secretary of the Metalworkers' Union and President of the General Council of Czecho-Slovak Trade Unions, entered into conversations with the Minister of Labour, also a Social Democrat, in order to bring about some compromise settlement. The result of these efforts was that the mineowners proposed a 10 per cent. wage reduction in the Ostrau-Karwin field and proportional reductions in other fields. After the refusal of this offer, Hampel again used his good offices with the Government and the mineowners, this time for a proposal of gradual wage reductions, spread over a period. This, too, came to nothing.

The strike was by this time six weeks old, and the feeling was growing among the workers that some effective assistance should be given by the rest of the Trade Union movement to the miners in their struggle. Accordingly, a conference of the Central Committees of all Trade Unions was called for September 27. At the same time the International All-Trade Union Federation made several proposals to the central strike committee on this point of aid for the striking miners, including a proposal for a general strike of transport and

metal workers. On October 1 representatives of the Trade Union Central Committees and the railwaymen's organisations held a conference with the central strike committee. It was unanimously resolved to bring pressure to bear on the Government and to make a general appeal for financial aid for the miners on strike. The railwaymen were to decide for themselves what further action they thought necessary.

A temporary lull had taken place in the mediatory efforts of the Social Democrats. This was, perhaps, not unconnected with the municipal elections, and the natural desire to refrain from any action which might alienate the working-class vote. (It is noteworthy that the chief successes of the Social Democrats were in mining districts.) Once the elections were over, however, mediation again came to the fore. Hampel again took the lead : and this time his efforts were successful.

The final proposals of the Government and the mineowners included the following wage reductions : 13 per cent. in the Ostrau-Karwin field ; 12 per cent. in the Rositz-Pilsen and Schatzar fields ; 10 per cent. in the Teplitz and Carlsbad fields ; and 9 per cent. in the Kladno field. There was to be no victimisation. Work was to be resumed on October 8-9. The new agreement was to remain in force till May 31, 1924.

At the National Conference of miners held to consider these proposals the Social Democrats adopted a frankly defeatist position. They declared that no better terms could be extracted from the Government, which was obdurate, and that there was no hope of any assistance from the rest of the Trade Union movement. Only the Communist delegates opposed this view. The Conference decided to accept defeat, by 58 votes to 13.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE COLLAPSE OF THE COLE INDUSTRY

Labour in the Coal Mining Industry. By G. D. H. Cole. (Published on behalf of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace by Humphrey Milford at the Clarendon Press, Oxford.)

TEN years ago the miners were in the forefront of the Labour Movement. They were far the best organised section of the workers. They had gained certain alterations in their conditions which were still being unsuccessfully demanded, if demanded at all, by many other sections of the workers. Their national organisation, the Miners' Federation, had been rapidly becoming not merely a defensive organisation but a force of revolutionary significance. The minority movements had already become well recognised as the units responsible for effecting and maintaining this change in outlook. Capitalism had been forced to grant higher wages, shorter hours, and minimum working conditions and capitalism knew that the miners were moving forward to demand yet more drastic concessions. Nor were the miners forgetful of the fact that it was not by their own strength alone that they, a section of the workers, could move forward. It was at their instance that the Triple Industrial Alliance was formed and it was they who pressed forward demands which were afterwards adopted by the whole Labour Movement. Their resolutions on nationalisation, their demands for more adequate pensions for old age pensioners, are but instances of this fact. They were, in fact, the spearhead of the movement.

Yet to-day the miners are faced with starvation. They are not out of work, but they are faced with starvation. Their national organisation is there, is larger numerically, it may be, but is useless, powerless, divided, and defeated. Districts are set against districts, pits against pits, workers against workers. There is still the minimum wage, but the miners are cheated of it. There are still safety regulations, but they are broken in every case. There are still checkweighers, but they are prevented from carrying out their functions. The seven-hour day is the law, but miners are compelled to work eight, nine, or even ten hours a day. Workers are victimised with impunity; they are evicted from their homes; they are cheated, oppressed, murdered, and treated like slaves, like dogs.

Yesterday, ten years ago, the miners were the strength of the working-class movement; to-day they are its weakness. This is the terrible situation that the movement has to face. How has it happened?

When war was declared, the capitalists were uncertain of the attitude of the miners. Their strength was a source of concern to the Government. They were alternatively vilified and cajoled. Their leaders succumbed to the cajolery; the minority movements were swamped by the wave of patriotism. The industry became controlled, was in a privileged position, was vitally necessary for the success of the war. Then came the armistice; their leaders were there to lead, but they let themselves be sideracked into the by-paths of the Coal Commission, dazzled by its limelit avenues. The industry was

still in a privileged position, it still possessed a monopoly in the export trade. But the leaders had forsaken their class in order to win the war for the capitalists; they had again forsaken it in order to make peace safe for the capitalists. Then came the attacks of the capitalists; the blows fell on an already defeated organisation. The leaders had compromised themselves at home, they were willing to compromise themselves abroad: they demanded that the workers of Europe should be exploited by maintaining export prices in order to increase the profits of their employers at home. They supported the International of the Capitalists, the League of Nations; they demanded for their own capitalists reparations from the German workers. This they did, and thus did they forsake their class, both at home and abroad.

But Mr. Cole, what does he say? He professes to write a book which will "recount the facts and not moralise over them"; he states that he has aimed "not at a definite interpretation of the events, but at a simple narration which will provide material for the interpreter." He talks of the "collapse of the industry itself."

What does he mean? Mr. Cole, like the leaders of the miners, has forsaken the working class. He speaks of the collapse of the industry. Yet to-day exports are now far above the pre-war level; production has reached that level. Is that "a collapse of the industry itself"? Higher and ever higher profits are being disclosed by colliery companies, and higher and ever higher dividends are paid. Is that "a collapse of the industry itself"? The miners have been beaten down to an unexampled degradation, but the mine owners are making "record" profits. Does that imply "a collapse of the industry itself"? Mr. Cole has forgotten the class issue. The class issue in the mining industry to-day is displayed in all its naked brutality.

What attitude does this lack of appreciation of the class issue, of the existence of a class struggle, force Mr. Cole continually to adopt? He is continually betraying a lack of analysis not only of events but of his own phrases. For instance, when in 1916 the South Wales miners were trying to obtain increased wages to meet the huge rises in the cost of living, Mr. Cole with incredible insolence accuses the miners of "pig-headedness"—an accusation made more incredible by the admission on the same page that during this period "the South Wales coalowners were making very high profits." Then Mr. Cole with the true journalistic outlook of the Rothermere type refers to the fact that "public opinion" was against the miners (p. 46) and further on "that the industrial position was exceedingly threatening" (p. 75). Mr. Cole, in the face of the miners' leadership of the Labour Movement before the war, described the miners (p. 7) "as narrow and slow to understand others" or to feel the "influence of outside public opinion." Mr. Cole makes definite controversial statements in spite of the fact of his professed desire to be impartial. For instance, he states that the Yorkshire dispute "confused the public mind in relation to the issues arising out of the Sankey report" (whatever "the public mind" may be). On page 174 he gives the impression that deControl even at the time it was effected was of no advantage to the owners and on page 244 he refers to the "premature removal of Government control" (as if the miners' conditions in Great Britain, Germany, India, or South Africa would not have been as they are to-day if the British Government

had returned to capitalism control over the British mining industry six months or a year later than it actually did).

Finally, true to the objects of this series, which are laid down in the Editor's Preface as providing "an institution dedicated to the cause of international peace," Mr. Cole so far forgets his impartiality as to declare, in almost the same breath as he affirms this impartiality (p. 243), that "the decline of the past two years, far more than the apparent prosperity of the preceding period, is the real outcome of war . . . Opinions differ in the apportioning of blame for this or that incident of the calamity, but the calamity as a whole is the fruit of war" (p. 244).

Such is the nature of opportunist research. Mr. Cole has collected an enormous amount of facts together in a book of 243 pages and appendices of 20 pages more. But, after all his labour, the only remedy he suggests—and he obviously suggests it with the full sense of his responsibility—is that the Labour Movement should demonstrate against war. While Mr. Cole is walking in the processions of the National Peace Council, miners are being forced down to the position of slaves in every country, are being evicted, starved, broken, defeated, and murdered, not by war, but by the bloody greed of capitalists.

H. P. R.

TEMPERING THE WIND

If Labour Rules. By Philip Snowden. (Labour Publishing Co. 1s.)

THE economic situation in this country is one which hardly requires any deep analysis. Taking full advantage of the opportunities which developed in the war and after the war, capitalism has tightened its stranglehold on the workers. It has increased the burden of taxes on necessities, it has reduced production in order to maintain profits, and thereby it has thrown a million and a-half workers out of employment and weakened the workers' organisations. Then it has proceeded to relentless wage reductions, using the State machinery to break down all resistance by the workers. Meanwhile, British capitalism has used British workers to serve its ends in Mesopotamia, in Africa, in India, Egypt, Ireland, and Germany, with the double object of making those countries safe for capital and at the same time keeping down the workers' standard of living, so that they can in turn be used to depress still further the standards of British workers. Throughout the world the class struggle stands out as the one issue that matters, the destruction of capitalism as the one aim of the workers.

The political situation in this country is ripening quickly, taking its character from the economic situation. Mr. Snowden himself realises that the openly capitalist Governments will soon be unable to withstand the pressure of the masses. Tory and Liberal must give way to Labour. And it is at this point that Mr. Snowden steps into the ring to stay Labour's hand from dealing the final blow.

The Labour Party, Mr. Snowden explains, is dominated by Mensheviks: "a Labour Government would not be a class Government." Mr. Snowden's

contempt for the workers is openly expressed: he apologises for their wanting to free themselves on the ground that they know no better:—

Men who have been roused to a consciousness of the injustices they suffer, especially when they have little education and have had their experiences confined within a narrow horizon, are apt to be violent in their denunciation and uncompromising in their demands.

Mr. Snowden, having enjoyed much education and wide experiences, knows better: his demands are exceedingly compromising. His ideal Labour Government will “wholly subordinate class interests”; inconvenient class resolutions might be passed by the Party conference; but “no Labour Government could be hidebound Conference resolutions are not Parliamentary bills.” As for what Mr. Snowden’s Labour Government *will* do, Mr. Snowden is quite clear that national interests demand public ownership of land, mines, railways, &c. But, of course, Mr. Snowden’s Labour Government will pay the present owners, or will let them go on drawing interest and dividends just as before. In other words, it will make a gesture which it hopes will deceive the workers, but which will leave capitalism entrenched more firmly than ever.

What about the Capital Levy? It is something rather more than a gesture. Therefore, Mr. Snowden’s Labour Government would not really insist on it: if it could persuade the capitalists that the Levy would be for their good, the Levy would be imposed; but, says Mr. Snowden:—

If, *of course*, the commercial classes, and those who would have to contribute to a Capital Levy, will not have it a Labour Government would have to look in other directions than the Capital Levy for revenue to enable the food taxes to be removed.

So Mr. Snowden passes on from subject to subject, describing with accurate touch the rôle of his Labour Government. It would be anti-national; if it opposed war, this would only be because it honestly believed that the country wouldn’t get anything out of it; it would feel to the full the responsibilities of Empire. It would, in a word, try to save capitalism for as long as possible from the wrath to come.

Is Mr. Snowden’s view of the rôle of a Labour Government justified? Mr. Snowden himself has no doubts: although not the official spokesman of the Labour Party, he has, he says, “long been associated with it” and “knows its mind and heart.”

It is well that the rank and file of the Labour Party should realise the rôle which their leaders have accepted for the first Labour Government. And we thank Mr. Snowden for his candid admission that “the extremists” in the Labour ranks will be the greatest difficulty for such a Government: for the masses will not lightly be turned aside from their objective.

E. B.

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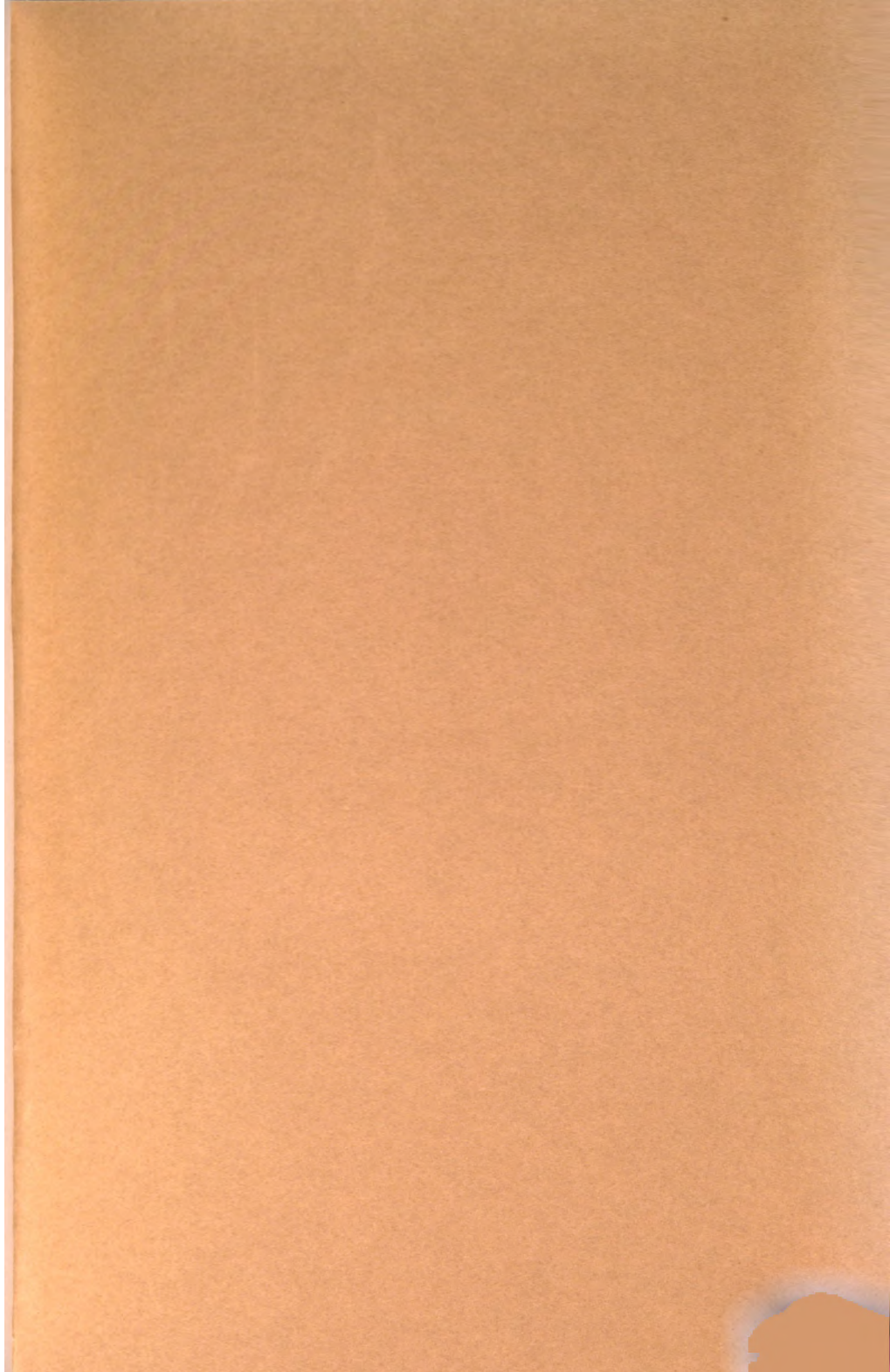
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